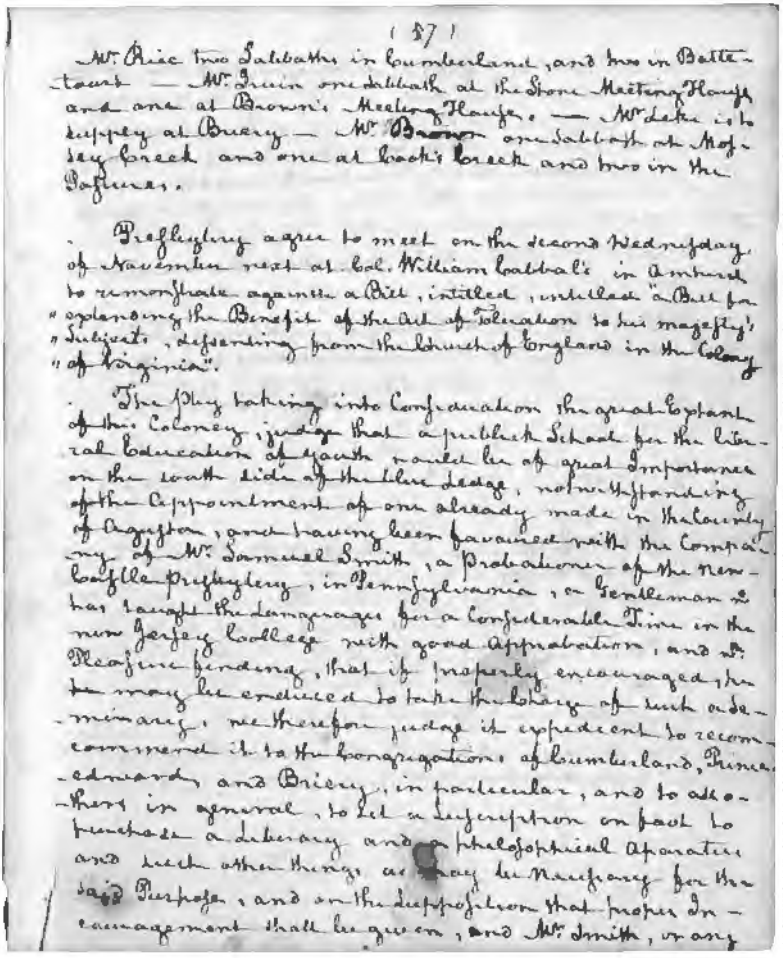
HAMPDEN-SYDNEY COLLEGE

Between Athens and Jerusalem

Enlightenment Faith, Religious Revival, and the Shaping of Hampden-Sydney College, 1774-1820

J. Michael Utzinger



(87)

Mr. Rice two Sabbaths in Cumberland, and two in Bottetourt — Mr. Irwin one Sabbath at the Stone Meeting House and one at Brown's Meeting House. — Mr. Leake is to supply at Briery — Mr. Brown one Sabbath at Mossy Creek and one at Hoch's Creek and two in the Forkes.

Presbytery agree to meet on the second Wednesday of November next at Col. William Cabbal's in Amherst to remonstrate against a Bill, intitled, intitled "a Bill for "explaining the Benefit of the Act of Toleration to his majesty's "Subjects, dissenting from the Church of England in the Colony "of Virginia".

The Presbytery taking into Consideration the great Extent of this Colony, judge that a publick School for the Literal Education of youth would be of great Importance on the south side of the blue Ridge, notwithstanding of the Appointment of one already made in the County of Augusta, and having been favoured with the Company of Mr. Samuel Smith, a Probationer of the New-Castle Presbytery, in Pennsylvania, a Gentleman who has taught the languages for a Considerable Time in the new Jersey College with good Approbation, and Mr. Pleasure pending, that if properly encouraged, he may be enduced to take the Charge of such a Seminary, we therefore judge it expedient to recommend it to the Congregations of Cumberland, Prince-edward, and Briery, in particular, and to all others in general, to Let a Subscription on foot to purchase a Library and philosophical Apparatus and such other things as may be necessary for the said Purpose, and on the Supposition that proper Encouragement shall be given, and Mr. Smith, in any

Minutes of the Hanover Presbytery, meeting at Cub Creek Church on October 13, 1774, at which a motion was passed that the Presbyterian congregations of Cumberland and Prince Edward should take subscriptions to purchase a library and other equipment for the establishment of the proposed academy in Prince Edward.

Between Athens and Jerusalem

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VOLUME III
in a series of booklets published
on the occasion of the
250TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF
HAMPDEN-SYDNEY COLLEGE
in 1775-1776

250th Anniversary Volumes

To celebrate its two and a half centuries of service
to Commonwealth and Nation, the College commissioned
this set of six studies on various aspects of its institutional history.
The Network for Vocation in Undergraduate Education (NetVUE),
a program of the Council of Independent Colleges
supported by the Lilly Endowment and member dues,
generously funded this project.

ON THE COVER

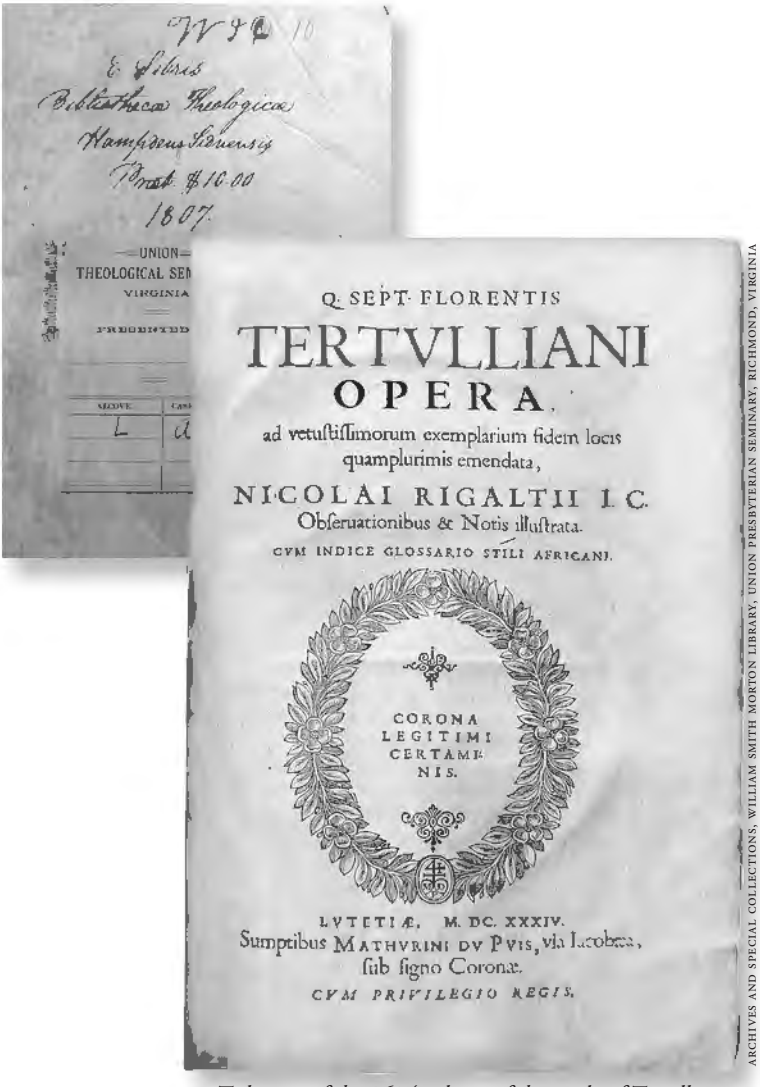
Archibald Alexander, third president of Hampden-Sydney College
and celebrated Presbyterian preacher and theologian.

HAMPDEN-SYDNEY COLLEGE

The marbled paper was produced by
Will Thomas '25
in the class "English 360: Authorship and the History of the Book,"
taught by Evan Davis.

Where are the conquerors who subdued the earth?
Where are the wise who spread the empire of science,
wherever the conquerors spread
the dominion of the sword?
Where are the eloquent tongues who ruled,
with so much glory, the republics of Athens and of Rome?
Where are the great legislators who established
and governed the nations of the ancient world?
Nay, where are those nations themselves?
And, then ask, in how short a time
shall our posterity, in like manner, search for us
and we shall not be found?
They shall tread over our silent and insensible dust,
as we do over that of our ancestors!

SAMUEL STANHOPE SMITH
(1781)[1]



Title page of the 1634 volume of the works of Tertullian, and the Latin inscription on the flyleaf: "From the books of the Hampden-Sidney theological library. Price $10. 1807."

MOSES HOGE, THE FOURTH PRESIDENT OF Hampden-Sydney College,[2] left a meeting of the American Bible Society in New York in May 1820 to attend the Presbyterian General Assembly, the annual national meeting of Presbyterians, in Philadelphia. His travels had been a welcomed respite from the duties of being a college president since 1807 and the professor of divinity at the fledgling seminary he had founded on the campus in 1812. On his way to Philadelphia he stopped in Princeton, New Jersey, to visit his long-time friend and colleague Archibald Alexander.[3]

Though a generation younger than Hoge, Alexander had preceded him as the third president of Hampden-Sydney. In 1810 he and Hoge were both awarded honorary doctorates from the College of New Jersey (now Princeton University), then under the leadership of Hampden-Sydney's first president, Samuel Stanhope Smith. Smith's star had fallen well before his death in 1819, in part because Alexander concluded that Smith's philosophical commitments had compromised the soundness of his doctrine. Alexander and others campaigned against Smith's leadership, leading to his resignation as the president of the College of New Jersey in 1812. That same year Princeton Seminary opened to promote sound Presbyterian doctrine, and Alexander was appointed its first professor.

Moses Hoge

UNKNOWN ARTIST - MORRISON, ALFRED J. (1912). THE COLLEGE OF HAMPDEN–SIDNEY, CALENDAR OF BOARD MINUTES 1776-1876. RICHMOND, VA: HERMITAGE PRESS.

On this visit, Hoge not only reunited with Alexander but visited the new seminary in Princeton. In a letter to his wife, Susanna, he expressed his thankfulness "to see so many promising young men preparing for the most important office in the world." Reading the letter one almost senses his envy after attending the students' examinations, the result of which he found "creditable to the greater part of the students, as well as to their teachers."[4]

Perhaps a portent of the days ahead, Alexander recorded that, before he left town, Hoge visited the Princeton graveyard reading headstones of the "illustrious dead" in a heavy rain. Alexander believed "very probably this exposure was injurious to his health." [5] Days later Hoge attended the General Assembly in Philadelphia but soon fell quite ill.


HAMPDEN-SYDNEY COLLEGE

Archibald Alexander

After offering the invocation for one of the Assembly's sessions, he found he could only intermittently perform his duty as a delegate. He became bedridden for weeks, though he forced himself to attend a church service, exclaiming that "I must hear Dr. Alexander once more." [6] He finally died on July 5. His family buried him in the Old Pine Street Presbyterian Cemetery in Philadelphia, right next to John Blair Smith, the second president of Hampden-Sydney College, and near Drury Lacy, Hampden-Sydney's longtime Vice President and interim president. [7] With the death of Hoge the revolutionary generation of Hampden-Sydney's leadership had come to an end.

This pamphlet outlines the early religious movements and conflicts at and around Hampden-Sydney College from its beginnings until the unexpected death of Moses Hoge. The pamphlet's title originates from one the few theological books in the Hampden-Sydney library when Moses Hoge assumed the presidency of the College in 1807. Planning for the eventual creation of a seminary at the College, the Synod of Virginia had begun purchasing theological books, including a 1634 Latin edition of the works of Tertullian, the actual volume of which, we believe, is still held in the special collections of the Union Presbyterian Seminary in Richmond. [8]

At first glance it may seem odd to mention the work of a second-to-third century theologian, but Tertullian introduced important metaphors

to Christian thought, particularly regarding the relationship between the church and the wider culture. So, within that 1634 edition, one can find printed one of Tertullian's most famous metaphors, wrapped in rhetorical questions, which translated reads: "What has Athens to do with Jerusalem, the Church with the Academy?" [9] In answer, Tertullian believed that the Christian faith was incompatible with worldly culture and contemporary philosophy. "We want no curious disputation after possessing Christ Jesus, no inquisition after enjoying the gospel!" [10] Tertullian was no Presbyterian of the revolutionary era.

If Tertullian's moral and religious rigor rejected the world of Athens and the Academy, those who shaped the religious, moral, and educational life of Hampden-Sydney attempted a different path. They struggled, sometimes unsuccessfully, to find balance between faith and learning, the church and culture. Indeed, rather than standing against culture, they stood between Athens and Jerusalem, sometimes shaping culture but always being shaped.

Returning to Moses Hoge for a moment, we can observe that his tenure as president of Hampden-Sydney embodied the many religious tensions representing the founding of the College as well of the nation itself. He struggled to lead an institution of liberal learning, while such learning at times appeared to grate against traditional religious doctrines and ideals. He recognized the importance of deep, personal, religious commitment forged by religious liberty, yet found expressive revivalism excessive and often misleading. He professed the injustice and ungodliness of the institution of slavery, while having been himself an enslaver and advocating African colonization. Hoge embodied all of Hampden-Sydney's early tensions surrounding religion, morality, and culture, while resolving none of them. Given Hoge's example, it might seem easy to trample over our ancestors' "senseless dust," as Samuel Stanhope Smith opined in the epigraph to this pamphlet. Still, there is a chance we might learn something about ourselves from their struggles, forged as it was by excitement and foment, faith and promise, development and contradiction.

The Founding

The religious world of Virginia at the time of Hampden-Sydney's founding was marked by religious variety and competition. While Anglicanism was the officially established state church, its privileges were increasingly challenged by dissenters (those who chose not to join or ascribe to the tenets of the Church of England), including Presbyterians, Baptists, Quakers, Lutherans, and Anabaptists settling throughout the Piedmont and Shenandoah Valley. The colonial lieutenant governor, William Gooch, approved of these settlements because they offered a buffer and protection on a frontier that he believed might otherwise suffer from French incursions or attacks by Native Americans, defending their lands. In 1738 Scots Irish Presbyterians led by John Caldwell settled at Cub Creek within Charlotte County, south of modern-day Hampden-Sydney. More Scots Irish families settled along Buffaloe Creek in Prince Edward County, under the leadership of the Presbyterian minister John Thomson around the same time.[11] These immigrants planted churches, setting up Presbyterian meeting houses throughout what is today Prince Edward, Cumberland, and Charlotte counties, notably Cub Creek (c. 1738), Buffaloe (c. 1739), Cumberland (1754), and Briery (1755) congregations.

On October 13, 1774, the Hanover Presbytery, the clerical body representing Presbyterians in Virginia, met at the Cub Creek Meetinghouse. (As members of a dissenting sect, Presbyterians could not legally call their meeting house a "church," although it certainly functioned as one.) Two significant agenda items dominated the presbytery meeting: consideration of a response against a recent bill that disadvantaged religious dissenters in Virginia and a proposal to establish a "publick School for the liberal education of youth on the southside of the blue ridge." The presbytery had very recently agreed that they would establish a different academy in the "Blue Ridge Valley," the

future Liberty Hall Academy (later Washington and Lee University), but the ministers present believed a recent migrant to southside Virginia, the licensed preacher named Samuel Stanhope Smith, had the skills to lead a second academy, if only he could be convinced to take such a position. Smith brought important qualifications that the presbytery certainly found attractive.

A recent graduate of the College of New Jersey, Smith was described in the presbytery minutes as a gentleman, who had taught "the languages" at his alma mater "with approbation." [12] Smith's Presbyterian pedigree was even more impressive than his language skills. His father Robert Smith had founded an academy in Pequea, Pennsylvania, at the Presbyterian church he pastored. The elder Smith had a conversion experience soon after arriving in the colonies, having heard the famous evangelist George Whitfield preach. He had subsequently met and then married Betsy Blair, when he was a student at her father Samuel Blair's academy at Fagg's Manor, Pennsylvania. Betsy's uncle John served as a trustee and was acting president of the College of New Jersey, when Samuel later entered the school. Samuel Stanhope Smith and his brother John Blair Smith, who would join later him at Hampden-Sydney, therefore, had descended from Presbyterian ministers and educators on both sides of the family. [13]

HAMPDEN-SYDNEY COLLEGE

Samuel Stanhope Smith
PORTRAIT BY DAVID DODGE LEWIS, OIL ON PANEL, 2025

At Cub Creek, a motion was also passed that the Presbyterian congregations of Cumberland and Prince Edward should take subscriptions to purchase a library and other equipment for the establishment of this academy with the hopes of encouraging Smith to run the school. [14] Cumberland, Briery, and Buffaloe congregations

managed to raise enough money that Smith ultimately accepted the position. After a fund-raising tour of his own, Smith returned briefly to Princeton to marry Ann Witherspoon, the daughter of his mentor John Witherspoon, the only clergyman to sign the Declaration of Independence. So, at only 24 years of age, he returned to Prince Edward County with his new bride and, for the academy, a new name, after two English revolutionaries: John Hampden and Algernon Sidney.

Volume Two deals with the lives of Hampden and Sydney and why the American revolutionaries admired them.

To Form Good Men and Good Citizens

In the vernacular of the time, Hampden-Sydney College was sometimes referred to as an academy, other times as a seminary, and, of course, as a college. While these terms were then essentially interchangeable, it is important to note that the term "seminary" did not necessarily mean a place for education of future clergy. (Union Seminary would not be founded at Hampden-Sydney until 1812.) It is true that certain professors (usually the president) guided and prepared tutors for ministerial fields, but "divinity" was not taught at the undergraduate level. Instead, liberal arts provided the center of the school's curriculum. Rather than divinity, for example, the College's first professors optimistically believed that moral philosophy, the study of human nature and cultures, could lead to a universal and practical ethics. Therefore, it hardly mattered whether one professed Anglicanism or was a dissenter, so long as one rightly utilized God-given rationality to act in virtuous ways.

Indeed, the original 1775 advertisement for the College in the *Virginia Gazette* pledged to prospective students and their parents that the College's goal "to form good men and good citizens" rested upon the "common and universal principles of morality, distinguished from the narrow tenets which form the complexion of any sect." [15] So, while the College maintained a Presbyterian ethos, it was neither intended to

be a training center for ministers nor sectarian in nature.

The non-sectarian nature of the school was important in the context of colonial Virginia, where dissenters were often stereotyped as individuals who threatened social and political order. Indeed, a subsequent issue of the *Virginia Gazette* published an attack against the advertised school. Under the pseudonym of "Luther," an individual accused Smith as one who "believes and professes doctrines which are not only repugnant to the Church of England, but … even subversive to morality." [16] The sting of the label "dissenter" remained even after the American Revolution. As late as 1785 Hampden-Sydney's second president, John Blair Smith, wrote to his former classmate James Madison complaining that Carter H. Harrison, a Cumberland County Delegate to the General Assembly, maligned his character by stating that "the greatest curse which heaven sent at my time in this Country was sending Dissenters into it." [17] Given such attacks against dissenters, it is important to read the College's advertisement to "create good men and good citizens" as an apology as much as a positive mission. If the critic "Luther" implied that orthodoxy (right faith) was a prerequisite for good character, Samuel Stanhope Smith sought a rational foundation for virtue that transcended sectarian divisions, while being compatible with biblical faith.

It is important at this juncture to acknowledge that the content of Samuel Stanhope Smith's teaching at Hampden-Sydney remains a matter of conjecture, because the records of the College are incomplete. We do have a decent understanding about Smith's training under his mentor and father-in-law John Witherspoon. Smith was part of the first graduating class at the College of New Jersey under the new presidency of Witherspoon. In his last year of college, Smith drank deeply from the well of Scottish common-sense philosophy, which formed the cornerstone of Witherspoon's educational vision for the new American republic. We also have Smith's later lectures on moral philosophy, based on the classes that he taught at the College

of New Jersey. Along with the fragmentary evidence preserved from Smith's time at Hampden-Sydney, these sources allow us to reasonably speculate about his thinking at this time.

Witherspoon is often credited with showing the compatibility of the Scottish Enlightenment with Presbyterian theology.[18] One should be careful not to overstate this. The success of his synthesis may owe more to his person and prestige than to a rigorous synthesis of orthodox Presbyterianism and Scottish philosophy. Nonetheless, Witherspoon attracted the attention of the trustees of the College of New Jersey in 1768 because of his public attacks in Scotland against Presbyterian "moderates" who, according to Witherspoon, exchanged the primacy of personal conversion for intellectual and social refinement. Despite Witherspoon's bona fides as a Presbyterian who embraced conversion experiences, or perhaps because of it, his gradual embrace of the very moderate trappings he previously criticized went unnoticed. While he could and did speak the language of the Bible and railed against an "unconverted" ministry, he increasingly stressed what Douglas Sloan identified as "moral conduct more than conversion itself."[19] This emphasis on morality over conversion meant that individuals fit for service in the new nation needed liberal learning and training in manners.[20]

Following the lead of Scottish philosophers like Thomas Reid and Francis Hutcheson, Witherspoon believed he could retain the empirical rigor of philosophers like John Locke while avoiding the skepticism of thinkers like David Hume. Further, Scottish enlightenment philosophy seemed tailor-made for the new American republic, because it offered confidence that all human beings had an innate moral sense, or a common sense of good and bad. Witherspoon also believed that a proper atmosphere of sound learning was necessary to develop and nurture these natural, moral sentiments. In other words, education was not just a necessary component to develop the mind but also crucial for developing a moral citizenry.[21]

As Witherspoon's student, Samuel Stanhope Smith not only followed the philosophical trail that his mentor had blazed but more openly showed the implications of Witherspoon's ideas for an educational institution. Not surprisingly, Smith presented to the Hanover Presbytery in Virginia a curriculum that looked quite similar that of the College of New Jersey, "save a more particular attention … paid to the cultivation of the English language." In November 1774, the minutes of the presbytery record that students at the proposed Prince Edward Academy should learn Latin and Greek, natural philosophy (what we would call the natural sciences), geography, history, mathematics, eloquence, literary criticism, and, of course, moral philosophy. [22]

Smith's *Lectures on Moral and Political Philosophy* were not published until he left the presidency of the College of New Jersey in 1812. Even so, one can see his indebtedness to Witherspoon and other Scottish philosophers, particularly Francis Hutcheson. In his *Lectures,* Smith argued that all human beings had an innate moral sense. He further argued that "although the Author of our being has planted within the human breast the seeds of moral discernment, they require, in order to arrive at full maturity, to be carefully cultivated." [23] Smith's moral philosophy used a broad observation of human cultures that, he believed, could determine "laws" of human behavior analogous to natural laws by other sciences. His arguments presaged later social scientific fields of the late nineteenth century which similarly tried to find "laws" of human behavior like E. B. Tylor's field of "ethnology." In Smith's own words:

> In the moral, as in the natural world, by an attentive induction of facts, that is, by observing the operations of the human mind in every variety of situation in which it may be placed, in solitude, or in society, in prosperity, or in adversity, in its various relations, to [the C]reator, or our fellow men, or in positions in which all the passions may be successively called into action, which observation may, with propriety, be stiled moral experiment, we arrive at

length, at a knowledge of the laws of our moral nature.[24]

The implication of this line of thinking, of course, was that all human beings, naturally possessing "the seeds of moral discernment," could be trained to act virtuously without recourse to revealed religion. And this was exactly the charge made against Smith by his later opponents at the College of New Jersey, like Archibald Alexander and Ashbel Green, who ultimately accused him of heterodoxy and forced his retirement from the presidency there.

Charges of heterodoxy aside, such thinking promoted by Witherspoon and Smith, as Thomas S. Kidd has argued, provided an intellectual foundation to reject the need for British political and Anglican religious traditions as a foundation of social cohesion, because innate morality could be nurtured to create a virtuous citizenry. These ideas also promoted confidence in an inclusive, non-sectarian morality which, if properly nurtured, could provide a bulwark against destructive moral license, which many Americans, especially those with Christian sensibilities, feared might otherwise be the consequence of a revolution appealing to liberty.[25] As Mark Noll has argued, biblical language and Scottish commonsense ideas about morality helped make palatable Real (i.e. radical) Whig ideology, especially its "near messianic belief in the benefits of liberty" to a form a "Christian-republican synthesis."[26] Not surprisingly this bled into ideas about religion generally. In its less tolerant forms, the synthesis often took the shape of anti-Roman Catholicism, insofar as Catholics became the symbol of authoritarian religious corruption. It also spawned a push to promote liberty of conscience in religious belief and practice, as well as sentiments to disestablish religion and separate it from the state.

Religious Liberty

Thomas Jefferson dictated that the following epitaph should be inscribed on his tombstone: "Here was buried Thomas Jefferson,

An ACADEMY.

PRINCE EDWARD, *Sept.* 1, 1775.

BY the generous Exertions of several Gentlemen in this and some of the neighbouring Counties, very large Contributions have lately been made for erecting and supporting a public ACADEMY near the Courthouse in this County. Their Zeal for the Interests of Learning and Virtue has met with such Success, that they were enabled to let the Buildings in *March* last to several Undertakers, who are proceeding in their Work with the greatest Expedition. A very valuable Library of the best Writers, both ancient and modern, on most Parts of Science and polite Literature, is already procured; with Part of an Apparatus to facilitate the Studies of the Mathematicks and Natural Philosophy, which we expect in a short Time to render complete.—The Academy will certainly be opened on the 10th of next *November*; It is to be distinguished by the Name of HAMPDEN-SIDNEY, and will be subject to the Visitation of twelve Gentlemen of Character and Influence in their respective Counties; the immediate and acting Members being chiefly of the Church of *England*. The Number of Visitors and Trustees will probably be increased as soon as the Distractions of the Times shall so far cease as to enable its Patrons to enlarge its Foundations.——The Students will all board and study under the same Roof, provided for by a common Steward, except such as choose to take their Boarding in the Country. The Rates, at the utmost, will not exceed 10*l.* Currency *per Annum* to the Steward, and 4*l.* Tuition Money; 20*s.* of this being always paid at Entrance.

The System of Education will resemble that which is adopted in the College of *New Jersey*; save, that a more particular Attention shall be paid to the Cultivation of the *English* Language than is usually done in Places of public Education. Three Masters and Professors are ready to enter in *November*, and as many more may be easily procured as the increased Number of Students may at any Time hereafter require. And our Prospects at present are so extremely flattering that it is probable we shall be obliged to procure two Professors more before the Expiration of the Year. The Public may rest assured that the Whole shall be conducted on the most catholic Plan. Parents, of every Denomination, may be at full Liberty to require their Children to attend on any Mode of Worship which either Custom or Conscience has rendered most agreeable to them. For our Fidelity, in every Respect, we are cheerfully willing to pledge our Reputation to the Public; which may be the more relied on, because our whole Success depends upon their favourable Opinion. Our Character and Interest, therefore, being both at Stake, furnish a strong Security for our avoiding all Party Indignations; for our Care to form good men, and good Citizens, on the common and universal Principles of Morality, distinguished from the narrow Tenets which form the Complexion of any Sect; and for our Affiduity in the whole Circle of Education.

SAMUEL S. SMITH.

P. S. The principal Building of the Academy not being yet completed, those Gentlemen who desire their Children to enter immediately will be obliged to take Lodgings for them in the Neighbourhood, during the Winter Season; which may be done in Houses sufficiently convenient, on very reasonable Terms. 4

WAS left at the Subscriber's, in *Fredericksburg*, in 1773, a very large STILL-TUB and WORM, marked I H, N° 1. The Owner is desired to take it away, and pay all Charges. JACOB WHITLER.

Samuel Smith's announcement of the College's opening and philosophical foundations.

Author of the Declaration of American Independence, of the Statute of Virginia for religious freedom, & Father of the University of Virginia." Indeed, it would have pleased Jefferson that school-aged children are taught the significance of his celebrated 1786 Statute for Religious Freedom, but too few are taught that Jefferson's allies, religious dissenters, had also petitioned him, George Mason, and James Madison, as well as the Virginia General Assembly, to allow for the free exercise of religion and the disestablishment of the Church of England. In southside Virginia, for example, Baptist representatives met in Buckingham County in August 1786 to protest taxation to support any establishment of religious institutions. They ultimately sent a memorial, written by famed minister John Leland, to the General Assembly to promote the free exercise of religion and anti-establishment policies.[27] Presbyterian dissenters had also been part of this public chorus even before Jefferson's failed 1779 attempt to pass a bill securing religious liberty in Virginia.

Recall that at the same 1774 Presbytery meeting at Cub Creek meetinghouse, where the first plans for an academy in Prince Edward were discussed, the Rev. Caleb Wallace (likely) wrote and presented to the presbytery a remonstrance against a bill pending before the Virginia House of Burgesses to extend privileges of the English Act of Toleration to dissenters in the colony. He was certainly not against the extension of religious rights to dissenters (which all Presbyterians were); rather, he was opposed to the way in which toleration was circumscribed in the proposed bill. For example, Wallace protested that the bill only allowed dissenting congregations and their minister to assemble, preach, and worship at appointed times, requiring open doors and windows. The lack of clergy in the region meant the churches required itinerancies to meet the religious needs of the Presbyterians in the region. Wallace noted that it was not reasonable that a minister be required to hold services at a specific time when he might practically need to hold services in the morning in one place and the evening at

another. He also complained that the open door and window policy improperly implied that dissenters were disloyal to the Crown. Wallace emphatically declared:

> We trust that we petition for nothing but what justice says ought to be ours; for as ample privileges as any of our fellow-subjects enjoy; 'to have and enjoy the full and free exercise of our religion, without molestation or danger of incurring any penalty whatsoever.' We are petitioning in favor of a Church that is neither contemptible nor obscure. [28]

In 1776 citizens in Prince Edward County went even further than Wallace, appealing to the newly created Virginia General Assembly, not only for religious equality but also for liberty of conscience and disestablishment of religion from the state. The memorial shows how the call for political liberty was often connected intimately with the appeal for religious liberty.

> We also esteem as the rising sun of religious liberty, to relieve us from a long night of ecclesiastic bondage; and we do most earnestly request and expect that you would go on to complete that which is nobly begun: raise religious as well as civil liberty to the zenith of Glory, and make Virginia an asylum for free enquiry, knowledge, and the virtuous of every denomination. Justice to ourselves and posterity, as well as a regard to the honor of the commonwealth, makes it our indispensable duty, in particular to entreat, That without delay, you would pull down all church establishments; abolish every tax upon conscience in private judgment, and define accurately between civil and ecclesiastical authority; then leave our Lord Jesus Christ the Honor of being the sole law giver and Governor in his church. [29]

The first signer of the memorial was the Presbyterian minister of the Buffaloe meeting house, Richard Sankey, and the majority of the

signatories were likely under his pastoral care. A year later, Sankey would be the moderator of a 1777 presbytery meeting at Timber Ridge, Virginia, that proclaimed:

> We beg leave to observe, that to judge for ourselves, and to engage in the exercise of religion agreeable to the dictates of our own consciences, is an unalienable right, which upon the principles that the gospel was first propagated, and the reformation from Popery carried on, can never be transferred to another. Neither does the church of Christ stand in need of a general assessment for its support; and most certain we are that it would be no advantage, but an injury to the society to which we belong and as every good Christian believes that Christ has ordained a complete system of laws for the government of his kingdom, so we are persuaded that, by his providence, he will support it to its final consummation. In the fixed belief of this principle, that the kingdom of Christ, and the concerns of religion, are beyond the limits of civil control, we should act a dishonest, inconsistent part, were we to receive any emoluments from human establishments for the support of the gospel.[30]

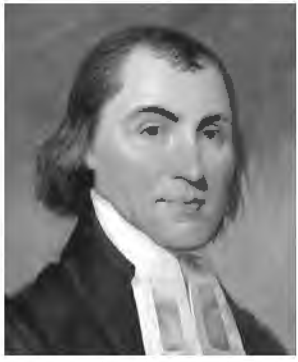
The minutes of the presbytery credit Samuel Stanhope Smith and a Hampden-Sydney trustee, the Rev. David Rice, as the committee members who drafted this memorial.[31]

All this is to say that Hampden-Sydney was never far from the cause of religious freedom in Virginia. Smith's 1775 advertisement explicitly stated that "parents of every denomination may be at full liberty to require their children to attend on any mode of worship which their custom or conscience has rendered agreeable to them." Even Board membership, while initially appointed by the Hanover Presbytery, reflected a "most catholic plan," such that "the immediate and acting members [of the Board of Trustees] being chiefly of the Church of England."[32] Anglicans not only slightly outnumbered Presbyterians

AUTHOR PHOTO

Plaque at the Cub Creek site, recalling both Wallace's petition for religious freedom and the Presbytery's motion to found the College.

on the Board of Trustees but included the priest for St. Patrick's Parish (the local Anglican parish in Prince Edward County), Archibald McRobert. It would be easy to dismiss this inclusive, nonsectarian orientation as a Presbyterian ploy to solicit much needed Anglican money, but there is reasonable evidence to suggest that, at least for Samuel Stanhope Smith, this was a matter of principle. In 1779 he wrote to Thomas Jefferson that "the partialities of sects indeed ought to have no place in a system of liberal education. They are the disgrace of science and would to Heaven it were possible utterly to banish them from the society of men."[33]



John Blair Smith

PORTRAIT BY DAVID DODGE LEWIS, OIL ON PANEL, 2025

John Blair Smith, Samuel's brother and successor as Hampden-Sydney's president, became a significant, if complicated, figure in the debates that ultimately led to the 1786 Statute for Religious Freedom. The drama began in January 1784, when Patrick Henry submitted a bill to the Virginia General Assembly to require the collection of assessments to support religion throughout the Commonwealth. The debates surrounding religious assessments were hardly new in Virginia, but Henry thought this bill was compatible with the religious liberties granted in the 1777 Virginia constitution. Further, he also firmly believed that a successful state needed to support the teachers of morality to ensure a virtuous citizenry. Henry's bill gained traction in no small part because of his celebrity and oratorical prowess. Given that the bill did not align with previous Presbyterian positions on the subject, when Smith and William Graham, the President of Liberty Hall Academy, penned a memorial that supported assessments, it seemed, in the words of Debra R. Neill, "a stunning retreat."[34] Smith and Graham's memorial was recorded in the presbytery minutes:

1. Religion as a spiritual system is not to be considered as an object of human legislation that may be in a civil view, as the existence of promoting the happenings of society.

2. That public worship, and public periodical Instructions to the people be maintained in this view by a general Assessment for this purpose.

3. That every man as a good Citizen be obliged to declare himself attached to some religious Community, publicly known to profess the belief in one God, his righteous providence, our accountableness to him, and a future state of rewards and punishments.

4. That every Citizen should have liberty annually to direct his assessed proportion to such Community as he chooses, and

5. That twelve Tithables, or more, to the mount of one hundred and fifty Families, as near as local circumstance will admit shall be incorporated, and exclusively direct the application of the money contributed for their support.

Messrs. Todd, Graham, Smith, and Montgomery are appointed to present the Memorial and attend the Assembly with this plan of Assessment.[35]

As the presbytery minutes make clear, the clergy had not retreated from the idea of religious liberty, but the memorial stopped short of disestablishment, so long as individuals had the right to direct their assessment to the faith community of their choice. The "retreat" was predicated on the principle that one must declare to the state one's belief in God and an afterlife with eternal consequences to ensure the moral behavior and social order of citizens. This view was hardly original and many states before and after the Revolution considered or adopted such language in their constitutions. In fact, such language was proposed for the U.S. Constitution.[36] The presbytery's statement did, however, diverge from the more rational sentiments or innate

moral behavior that Samuel Stanhope Smith had espoused on behalf of the presbytery a decade earlier.

The presbytery minutes do not explain why the clergy voted to support a modified version of assessments. John Holt Rice, a professor of divinity at Union Seminary at Hampden-Sydney, argued in 1826 that Smith and the clergy perceived that the passage of the bill assured, so the memorial represented an accommodationist approach "to modify the plan, as to make it as harmless as possible." [37] Given that Patrick Henry wrote the bill, Smith may have felt the need to bend to a politically powerful trustee of the College. Perhaps, the degenerating behavior of students at the College after the war may have convinced Smith that public virtue depended upon state-supported religious institutions. In the end, the answer is lost to history. With Presbyterian support, the proponents of the assessments bill in the legislature were confident enough of its passage that they concluded their 1784 session without its passage to allow for public comment (giving some credence to Rice's argument). This proved unwise since it gave opponents a year to mobilize against it.

The bill generally, and the memorial written by Smith and Graham particularly, created an upheaval among Virginia Presbyterians and their allies. Smith's former College of New Jersey classmate James Madison, another trustee of the College, wrote to James Monroe that he was stunned by what he saw as the hypocrisy of Virginia's Presbyterian clergy, "who seem as ready to set up an establishmt. [*sic*] which is to take them in as they were to pull down that which shut them out. I do not know a more shameful contrast than might be formed between their Memorials on the latter & former occasion." [38] Against the bill itself, Madison wrote his now famous "Memorial and Remonstrance against Religious Assessments," in which he declared liberty of religious conscience an inalienable right and that "every man who becomes a member of any particular Civil Society, do it with a saving of his allegiance to the Universal Sovereign. We maintain

therefore that in matters of Religion, no mans [*sic*] right is abridged by the institution of Civil Society and that Religion is wholly exempt from its cognizance."[39] Madison published his memorial anonymously to avoid drawing attention to himself, while he worked behind the scenes to scuttle Henry's bill, including, perhaps, helping to orchestrate Henry's election as governor in 1784, so he would not be able to shepherd the bill through the legislature personally.[40]

Meanwhile, popular Presbyterian sentiment, particularly in the western part of Virginia, lined up squarely against the bill and the presbytery's memorial. Presbyterian congregations in the west demanded a general convention, including clergy and laity, to discuss the issue. At the convention, the clergy were asked to account and clarify their position. In response, all of ministers, including Graham and Smith, stated unequivocally that they disapproved of any religious assessments. The Convention, therefore, tasked Graham to draw up a new memorial, which would represent all Virginia Presbyterians, to oppose the bill.[41] John Blair Smith presented the revised memorial to the Virginia General Assembly in November 1785 and was given the privilege to address a committee of the whole in the House over three days, during which he debated against Governor Henry and his bill.[42] The bill failed by only three votes. William Hill, a student of Smith's at Hampden-Sydney, reported that delegate Andrew White from Winchester declared "that he thought that debate between Henry & Smith one of the ablest & most interesting he had ever listened to; & that he thought Smith deserved the victory he had gained."[43] With Henry's bill defeated, Madison seized the initiative and reintroduced Jefferson's 1779 bill for religious freedom, which ultimately passed in January 1786.

Religious Revivalism

By the end of John Blair Smith's presidency, Samuel Stanhope Smith's vision of rational morality began to give way to revivalistic

conversions. Such religious expressions, emphasizing emotional preaching and prayer to create an environment favorable to conversion or reconversion, had become unfashionable during and immediately after the American Revolution. All of that changed once the various statutes of religious freedom across the nation created a "marketplace" in which religious leaders, who had the talents and energies to move or entertain audiences, could influence communities and compete for new members. Revivalism flourished in an era transformed and energized by a religious populism guaranteed by legal protection of religious liberty and disestablishment.[44]

Between 1785 and 1787, Methodists in Virginia were in the vanguard of revivalist activity and gained a reputation for what seemed to many, shocking emotional and physical displays of religious frenzy. Jesse Lee, an observer of a Suffolk County revival in July 1787, recorded that "some were lying and struggling as if they were in the agonies of death, others lay as if they were dead. Hundreds of the believers were so overcome with the power of God that they fell down, and lay helpless on the floor, or the ground; and some of them continued in that helpless condition for a considerable time."[45] Such animated expressions of Methodist piety spread as far as the Amelia Circuit (modern-day Amelia and Cumberland counties) under the leadership of renowned Methodist presiding elder and revivalist James O'Kelly. By 1788, Methodists could boast two new preaching circuits in Cumberland and Buckingham counties, guided by four ministers and five assisting preachers.[46] Local legend also suggests that Lorenzo Dow, a nationally famed itinerant preacher, "cursed" the town of Cartersville (on the James River in Cumberland County) to remain obscure and small, because no one in the town offered him lodging.[47] In fairness, Dow was infamously abrasive, unkempt, and, perhaps, unhinged, a fact which apparently did not stop the town's residents, curse notwithstanding, from otherwise flocking to his sermons.[48]

The revivalistic exploits of Methodism around Hampden-Sydney

also had their impacts on the students. William Hill, a student at Hampden-Sydney between 1785-1790, recalled that a classmate named William Spencer, an individual of "wild and dissipated" behavior, became "spiritually awakened" after traveling to hear James O'Kelly preach in several nearby residences. His subsequent conversion to Methodism led him to leave Hampden-Sydney and become a preacher. Hill was quick to quip that "his talents were quite slender & his literary attainments still more so." [49] He further recalled that his fellow students reacted with "disgust" to Spencer's conversion and sudden departure from the College.

Perhaps, more significant, Cary Allen, one of the four young men whom Hill credits with beginning a revival at Hampden-Sydney, had his spiritual awakening because while on fall break he visited a Methodist itinerant who was preaching in a local residence in Cumberland County. [50] Hill reports that Allen "was so wrought upon that he fell at his full length on the floor, & began to cry for mercy. He called upon those around him, to behold a vile rebel against God, & hear him utter the first prayer he ever had uttered in all his life. There he lay & cried for mercy until after an hour or two, he arose, & professed to have obtained pardon & the forgiveness of his sins." [51] Upon hearing about Allen's experience, College president John Blair Smith was concerned that the young man's experience "was all a delusion" and put Allen through "the most rigid examination," making him read "Bellamy's *True religion delineated & distinguished from all counterfeits*." [52]

Methodists were not the only denomination to employ revivalistic techniques to convert Southside Virginia to their gospel message. A talented Baptist preacher, John Williams, working around Charlotte and Lunenburg counties, roused fears that members of the Briery Presbyterian congregation, including one of its pastors and later President of Hampden-Sydney Archibald Alexander, might defect to the Baptists. In this broader context of exploding evangelical

religion, John Blair Smith soon stumbled upon and ultimately helped nurture a Presbyterian revival on campus and throughout surrounding communities in November 1787.

Hill's religious assessment of the student body before the revival was hardly positive:

> Of all the Students in college about 80 in number, there was not one who was known to be any way serious & thoughtful upon the subject of religion; but they were generally very vicious & profane, & treated religion & religious persons with great contempt & ridicule; tho' attentive to their studies & the acquisition of knowledge. [53]

By Hill's account, he asked to borrow the family Bible of John Morton, the College's steward, who loaned it to him on the condition that he would return before nightfall. Fearing reprisals from his fellow students, he took Morton's Bible to read it "alone, at least half a mile in a thick forest for privacy." [54] He was so consumed by his reading that he missed dinner. Having read the entire Gospel of Matthew, Hill remarked the Bible "appeared a new book, & wonderfully confirmed my resolution to lead a religious life, & to be more consistent in seeking an interest in the Saviour." [55]

The eighteen-year-old Hill was soon joined by three other students (Allen Cary, James Blythe, and Clement Read). [56] They met in wooded areas outside the campus to encourage one another in the pursuit of religion, by reading the Bible and singing hymns. [57] While the four also took turns hiding a Bible in their rooms, their fellow students "caught" them.

> The group was soon found out when they had to meet indoors because of rain.
>
> We were overheard by some of the Students, when it was noised about thro' every room in college, & a noisy mob was raised, which collected in the passage before our door, & began

> to thump at the door, & whoop & swear, & threaten vengeance if we did not forbear, & cease all such exercises in college, for the future. We had to cease, & bear the ridicule & abuse of this noisy riot, which could not be quelled, until two of the professors interfered & ordered them all to their rooms. Information of this riot was given to Dr Smith. In the evening the college was wrung [*sic*] to prayers. When prayer was ended, Dr Smith demanded the cause of the riot, & who were the leaders in it. Some of the most prominent leaders stept forward, & said there were some of the students who had shut themselves up in one of the rooms of college, & began singing & praying, & carrying on, like the Methodists, & they were deterned [*sic*] to break it up, & not suffer such things to be introduced within the walls of the college to the annoyance of the rest of the students. [58]

Quite to the surprise of many of the students, Smith publicly reproved the hecklers and invited the four young men to his parlor the following weekend to continue their exercises. Half the student body showed up to the parlor, and within another week the gathering extended to the surrounding community and required the space of College Hall. Not surprisingly, given that Smith and his Vice President Drury Lacy regularly preached at the Briery and Cumberland churches, the revival under their leadership spread to those churches and then beyond, including communities at Buffaloe and Cub Creek.

Throughout his later ministerial career, Hill championed the New School Presbyterian emphasis on conversion experiences and tolerance of revivalism. In fact, Hill left the pulpit at Briery Presbyterian Church in 1837 during the schism between the two schools. So, it is not surprising that his description of the Hampden-Sydney event, almost certainly written after 1837, used textbook language for revivalists, describing a community in spiritual lassitude awakened by the power of God. (So, reader beware).

> The effect that was now produced upon the former professors & members of the church, was wonderful indeed; after having been so long in a cold & lukewarm state of a backsliden condition, *they* seemed to awake as from a profound lethargy, & now appeared in a new character, & took an active part in helping forward the good work. Some were not only reclaimed from a stupid indifference, but professed a new convertion, declaring that *they* had never experienced a real change of heart before. [59]

That his classmates feared that he and his associates were "carrying on like the Methodists" suggests a student body representing a range of religious proclivities from Old School Presbyterians to deists. For his part, Hill no doubt took a certain delight pointing out that the "vicious and profane" student body acted more like Methodists in their contemptuous displays of irreligion than did Hill and his associates in their pursuit of piety.

The revival which unfolded at Hampden-Sydney mirrored Scottish Presbyterian traditions and forms that Smith no doubt learned from his father, a Pennsylvania revivalist of an earlier generation, rather than from the raucous worship of the Methodists or Baptists in the surrounding counties. Leigh Eric Schmidt has shown that early revivalism at the close of the revolutionary period, including the revival at Hampden-Sydney, followed traditional elements of Scottish Holy Fairs, or "communion seasons," marked by "the action sermon, the tables, the tent, the successive servings, the large number of ministers coming together to assist each other, and the role of elders." [60]

A preserved letter from Smith's father describing the revival bears out this assessment. Robert Smith traveled from Pennsylvania to help in his son's revivalistic endeavors. Recalling his own religious quickening during the eighteenth century awakenings under the preaching of George Whitfield, he wrote of the revivals in Prince Edward that he had "seen nothing equal to it for extensive spread, power, and spiritual glory, since the years '40 and '41." [61] His first-hand

account provides one of the best descriptions of what happened on campus at the time of the revival led by his son.

> When they go to sermons or societies, they commonly go in companies, either conversing on spiritual subjects or singing hymns. When they arrive at the place of worship, they enter the house and sing hymns till the minister enters. Such sweet singing I never heard in all my life. Dear young Christians, how engaged, how heavenly, how spiritually and innocently they look and speak. I have seen an hundred wet cheeks, some deeply penetrated with convictions, some fainting with love-sickness as it were, in the Saviour's arms, and others rejoicing for the day of God's power and grace, all under the same sermon. The rejoicings were much among some old disciples. We dispensed the sacrament of the Supper at each of my son's congregations. … Every weekday we had two sermons besides other exercises. The concourse of people on the Sabbath was large. Beside the morning sermon and serving the tables, which lasted till near sundown, they had sermons almost all day out of doors. O, it was a most sweet, solemn, and powerful day.[61]

Although their relationship had been cool since the debates surrounding religious assessments, Smith invited William Graham to visit the revivals.[63] Graham brought two students to observe the revivals. One of those students, Archibald Alexander, later became a regular itinerant minister in the area and then the next President of the College, a decade after Smith's departure. Alexander remembered that, as they rode horseback "over the mountain" to observe the revivals, Graham cautioned them against emotional style over religious substance. They arrived in time to attend a "communion season" at Briery Church.

> Though the morning was clear, the appearances of rain were threatening; after consultation it was therefore determined to

> administer the sacrament within the house. Notice was given that while arrangements were making, Mr. LeGrand would preach in the grove behind the church. I resorted to the place, where I first had a sight of this successful young minister. At this time there was much that was striking in his aspect. He was tall, but rather bending in his attitude, and his countenance was solemn and benignant, with a shade of melancholy. He stood upon a horse-block, and preached a discourse which, though inaccurate and incoherent, was delivered with peculiarities of voice that made their way to the feelings. After the communicants had retired, the Rev. Samuel Houston preached to the non-communicants under the arbour. After hearing Mr. Houston, whose sermon was interrupted by the rain, I pressed with much difficulty into the house, where Mr. Graham was preaching. Little did I think that I should ever preach in that pulpit, and become the pastor of that people![64]

Graham may have been initially suspicious of the revivals, but soon he was also preaching. Alexander recalled that Smith confided in him that one of Graham's sermons during the revival was one of the best he had ever heard.

Despite the displays of emotion recorded by Robert Smith and Archibald Alexander, William Hill nonetheless recollected that John Blair Smith would often stop preaching to exhort his audience to "compose your feelings, brethren."[65] If Smith intended no unbridled spectacles of faith under his watch, such cautions hardly satisfied his critics. Thomas Jefferson wrote to William Short that Hampden-Sydney was "going to nothing, owing to the religious phrensy they have inspired into the boys young and old, which their parents have no taste for."[66] Indeed, the parents of future U.S. President William Henry Harrison apparently found even the somewhat restrained revivalism of Smith to be beyond the pale. In the words of Adam Jortner: "It would not do for the Harrisons to have their son risk his immortal soul by

cavorting with those who considered emotion and feeling to be the essence of religion."[67] Harrison left the College before completing a degree.

Other itinerant preachers visited Hampden-Sydney's revivals, such as James McGready. McGready had completed his theological studies at John McMillan's Log College in Pennsylvania. On his way to return to his native North Carolina, McGready stayed with Smith to observe the revivals on campus and the surrounding community. Deeply moved by what he saw, he began a series of revivals in Orange County, North Carolina. His fiery exhortations to repent or face hellfire won him converts and enemies. Not only was his life threatened but his church was burned to the ground. He soon found more fertile ground for his message on the frontier in Kentucky, where he took charge of three Presbyterian churches in Logan County. The revivals he began there in 1800 ultimately spread to places like Cane Ridge and marked the beginning of the Second Great Awakening.

Religious Life on Campus

It is difficult to depict adequately the religious life of students on campus. The accounts we have are almost exclusively written by students, who typically became ministers. Not surprisingly, therefore, there seems to be a repetition of allusions to problematic student behavior and conversions from such behavior. So, while the few accounts of religious life from the perspective of students are precious, one should be cautious about drawing firm conclusions.

As previously noted, students were not required to be Presbyterians to attend the College, but, since the presidency of John Blair Smith, they were expected to go to a church service, Presbyterian or not, on Sundays, as well as daily chapel. That said, it is unclear how this was regulated, especially since it seems that administrators and professors acted more like absentee landlords than watchful parents. One presumes the majority of students attended services at College

Hall, regardless of their religious proclivities. After 1789, the Board of Trustees increasingly adjudicated problematic student behavior. While the minutes reveal serious student infractions, they do not contextualize that behavior as unusual or not. Ignoring common infractions like gambling, vandalism, and intoxication, the minutes suggest that student conduct deteriorated during the interim presidency of Drury Lacy (1791-1797) and the subsequent presidency of Archibald Alexander (1797-1806). The Board suspended or expelled numerous students for such misconduct as insubordination toward professors, stealing bells, throwing bricks through windows, placing a timber against the door of a professor so it would fall on him, and firing pistols. Drury Lacy seemed to handle this by essentially moving off campus and teaching private classes. Archibald Alexander resigned the presidency twice, the final time writing, "about this time, the conduct of the students became very irregular, and I grew weary of governing them." [69] During Moses Hoge's presidency, he responded by pouring his energies into establishing the theological seminary on campus. Writing to his son Samuel, Hoge confided "we had to dismiss three of our disorderly students this session. It will, however, I doubt not, be attended with advantage to the Seminary. I expect good order will now prevail." [70] Enforced religious participation clearly did little to stop the misconduct of bad actors.

Other sources are necessary to gain better insight into the religious lives of students. Besides the previously mentioned account by William Hill, written long after he had graduated from Hampden-Sydney, the biography of Daniel Baker contains excerpts from his journals while he was a student between 1811 and 1813. Baker eventually became a Presbyterian evangelist and founding president of Austin College in Texas. In his journal entries Baker recounted the agony of his constant vacillations between religious uncertainty and assurance. There was no church building on campus at that time, so services took place in Common Hall, also called College Hall. French's Episcopal Church

in Kingsville may actually have provided timbers for the construction of Common/College Hall.[72] The presidents of the College split their time between the Cumberland Presbyterian Church and Common/College Hall. In fact, Baker called the services held at "College Hall" by the moniker of "College Church."[73] Samuel Davies Hoge, the son of then President Moses Hoge, revealed in his diary that communion services were held in College Hall, not only for the students but also the surrounding community.[74]

Though practiced infrequently, the Lord's Supper (or Communion) seems to have been central to the religious life among Presbyterians at this time. It is unclear to what extent the "College Church" practiced protracted "sacramental seasons," as in the time of John Blair Smith (as described earlier by Leigh Eric Schmidt), but, if Samuel Davies Hoge and Daniel Baker are representative, Presbyterians prepared for the "sacramental board" with sober self-reflection, confession, and prayer. Several sermons, praying, and singing typically accompanied the ritual. Further, participants expected these events to evoke emotions (they would have said "affections"). Hoge, who was studying divinity under his father at Hampden-Sydney, found himself deeply disappointed when he "felt but little, & enjoyed little" after he "sat under affectionate preaching & at the table of Christ." He confided to his journal that "the reason no doubt was that I had not made suitable preparation by self-ex[amination], prayer, and meditation."[75] Baker took his first communion while a student at Hampden-Sydney and recorded that "all seemed to feel deeply a sense of their unworthiness, and the love and compassion of Christ, and gave vent to their feelings by tears and sobs, and even my heart was melted."[76] Indeed, Baker was generally partial to affective religion, noting that "dry, logical sermons, with round periods, delivered in a cold formal and heartless manner, I can never relish"; rather, he preferred preaching that was "full of fire, breathing love and compassion."[77] By this time, revivalistic style and more emotional religion had eclipsed the kind of rational religion

exemplified by Samuel Stanhope Smith.

Perhaps, most extraordinary, Baker and some of his classmates started a Sunday afternoon praying society on campus to minister to enslaved members of the community. Less surprising was the sparse attendance at those meetings, including only a few enslaved and white people. One can understand why attending student-led prayer meetings, even if conducted by those aspiring to ministry, would not have generally appealed to those who were forced to work every other day of the week. Samuel Davies Hoge more generously described in his diary that Baker's ministry was a "feeble attempt" of those students "who intend to preach" but nonetheless "seem to have been blessed." [78]

The "democratization of religion," as Nathan Hatch called it, meant that religious groups and individuals competed for the attention and allegiance of Americans in the early republic. It also meant that individuals might switch from one denomination to another or choose not to practice religion at all. After the Revolutionary War, founding trustee Archibald McRobert, the priest for St. Patrick's Parish, left the Episcopal Church to be an independent preacher and subsequently joined the Presbyterian fold. Daniel Baker arrived at the College at the age of nineteen, not having yet made a public profession of faith nor belonging to any Christian denomination. The mode of baptism bothered him the most, though in the end he chose to align with the Presbyterians over the Baptists, despite his sister's choosing the latter. [79] Concern over Baptism also bothered Hampden-Sydney president Archibald Alexander and Briery Presbyterian Church minister Matthew Lyle, enough that they announced to the congregation that they would refrain from infant baptism until they studied the issue. It took close to a year before they decided firmly to remain within the Presbyterian fold. Hampden-Sydney tutor Conrad Speece, who was also studying for the ministry, actually converted to the Baptist faith, only to change his mind several months later to return to the Presbyterians. [80] Religious liberty could also mean leaving religion

behind. Baker bemoaned that Thomas Paine's *Age of Reason* led at least one of his classmates into religious infidelity.[81] Such examples are part of a larger tapestry of religious competition and individualism that was unleashed by the sentiments of religious liberty and antiestablishment nationally.

It is worth noting that any impact upon student religious life from Hoge's nascent seminary, founded in 1812, seems negligible. J.D. Paxton, who eventually became the pastor of the Cumberland congregation, arrived at Hampden-Sydney in 1811 to study divinity under Hoge. "In this," he opined, "I was disappointed. … The doctor gave us some general advice as to our course of reading, subjects, and books; at times, on some particular subjects, we got his views, more or less fully, in conversation. We had no regular class-meetings nor regular recitations."[82] It is hard to imagine, but, given Paxton's description, the Seminary's future seemed more auspicious under the direction of John Holt Rice, who met with Seminary students in the kitchen of Hoge's successor, Jonathan Cushing.

Religion and Enslavement

Writing to Virginia educator and abolitionist Robert Pleasants in 1773, Hampden-Sydney trustee Patrick Henry confided:

> Would any one believe that I am Master of Slaves of my own purchase! I am drawn along by ye general inconvenience of living without them, I will not, I cannot justify it. However culpable my Conduct, I will so far pay my devoir to Virtue, as to own the excellence & rectitude of her Precepts, & to lament my want of conforming to them.[83]

Henry illustrates well the contradictions, hypocrisy, and disconsolation of men committed to liberty while owning human beings. Henry, at least privately, had the integrity to admit it. Hampden-Sydney's Presbyterian founders confronted religious

entanglements with what Henry called "this lamentable evil." It is impossible to write about the religion and morality of this era without engaging the enslavement and lives of those of African descent, who lived, worked, and created the spaces that made education at the College possible. Dr. Caroline Emmons, in another volume in this series, has recounted the African American history of Hampden-Sydney, and I will not repeat her research for this pamphlet. Instead, I will add a religious texture to that work and offer a too modest outline of how the institution of slavery intertwined with the Presbyterian faith and churches that supported the College's founding.

Volume Five deals in detail with the history of African Americans at Hampden-Sydney.

It would be hard to overstate the moral dilemma slavery posed for the religious faithful, especially among white Presbyterians. Having fused together Real Whig ideology with biblical narratives and Christian theology, Americans often expressed their calls for liberty in religious as much as political language. This meant that enslavement not only posed an intellectual problem of political hypocrisy but also rendered "the faithful" complicit in religious and moral evil. Most important, Presbyterians generally, and the founders of Hampden-Sydney specifically, clearly understood the religious and moral dilemma slavery posed. We know this because, like Henry, they told us so.

While it is true that the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church later accommodated itself to the slave system, this was not always the case. By a unanimous vote in 1818, it declared that "we consider the voluntary enslaving of one part of the human race by another, as a gross violation of the most precious and sacred rights of human nature; as utterly inconsistent with the law of God, which requires us to love our neighbour as ourselves, and as totally irreconcilable with the spirit and principles of the gospel of Christ." [84]

One need not read too far into this statement to see the compatibility of this language with the kind of reasoning used to

defend religious liberty and disestablishment. Such bold statements, however, did not stop Presbyterian clergy, laity, or churches in Virginia from enslaving those of African descent, causing a discontinuity between principle and practice. The white Presbyterians who constituted the College's revolutionary generation grappled with the morality of slavery, even while they continued to benefit from it.

For example, every president of the College until Jonathan Cushing (who was the first layperson to serve as president) drew part of his salary from either Briery or Cumberland Presbyterian Church. These churches owned and rented out enslaved individuals to provide income for congregational expenses, including the salaries of their ministers and preachers.[85] At different times in their history, both congregations struggled with the moral implications of enslaving, disciplining, and selling enslaved individuals, even if it meant dividing families. While there is no direct evidence that either Samuel Stanhope Smith or John Blair Smith enslaved individuals while living in Virginia, Samuel did own enslaved individuals after he returned to Princeton. Archibald Alexander and Moses Hoge inherited enslaved persons through their spouses. Important trustees like Nathaniel Venable, Patrick Henry, and James Madison were enslavers. The College contracted with stewards and builders, who owned enslaved workers and employed them on campus to fulfill their contracts, and students often brought enslaved individuals to campus with them or paid for their education based upon the enslaved labor. If slavery was "utterly inconsistent with the law of God," then the webs of sin throughout the College and area churches were pernicious.

Clergy, in particular, tried to find ways to resolve the gap between principle and practice. The Rev. David Rice, an original trustee of Hampden-Sydney College and uncle of Union Seminary professor John Holt Rice, pushed for the abolition of slavery through gradual emancipation. Rice emigrated to the new state of Kentucky, and, as both a member of the Kentucky Abolition Society and a delegate to

the 1792 Kentucky constitutional convention, gave a speech urging the other delegates "To RESOLVE UNCONDITIONALLY to put an END TO SLAVERY IN THIS STATE." [86] Rice ably undermined scriptural defenses of slavery, but he stopped short of immediate emancipation, thinking it not politically possible.

> We may now do it in a peaceable manner, without going a step out of the way of our duty, and without hazarding what might be attended with ten-fold more confusion and danger. The slavery of the negroes began in iniquity; a curse has attended it, and a curse will follow it. National vices will be punished with national calamities. Let us avoid these vices, that we may avoid the punishment which they deserve. [87]

His warnings of judgment may have proved prescient on this side of history, but the delegates at the Kentucky constitutional convention did not share Rice's moral concerns or prophetic predilections. Even gradual emancipation was a bridge too far, and slavery was incorporated into Kentucky's state constitution. Other ministers simply did not have the fight like Rice did. Samuel Davies Hoge wrote to his brother that he was looking to leave Virginia because "my desire to leave the 'land of the slaves' is not at all abated, nor will it likely abate." [88] He eventually left Hampden-Sydney and his father's house to take the pastorate of the Presbyterian Church in Athens, Ohio, and to teach moral philosophy at the University of Ohio.

Colonization was another strategy to resolve the gap between principle and practice. Colonization typically appealed to clergy and laypersons who were simultaneously uncomfortable with the slave system and with living in a society side by side with free black men and women. Although his ideas about slavery and race were complex, Samuel Stanhope Smith helped lay the foundation for colonization. Smith advocated for the freeing and resettling of enslaved persons into the western territories of the United States with the expectation

that the government would pay white people (through land grants in these settled territories) to marry newly emancipated black people. Smith thought such racial "amalgamation" would not only end racial hierarchies (because of the natural desire of parents to love their children) but would essentially eliminate race entirely. This somewhat astonishingly naïve plan was based on Smith's idea that racial differences were primarily based on environmental differences. In Smith's estimation, separation acknowledged the humanity of those with African descent, protecting them from white bigotry and the savagery of enslavement, while marriage would provide social and cultural uplift.

Many of Smith's disciples embraced his idea of racial separation, while dismissing or ignoring his beliefs in racial mutability; therefore, they embraced the idea of African colonization. For example, Presbyterian minister Robert Finley, the founder of the American Colonization Society (ACS), studied under Smith at the College of New Jersey. Archibald Alexander and Moses Hoge also publicly supported such colonization efforts. In fact, Moses Hoge helped found the Virginia chapter of the ACS. He and his wife Susannah emancipated those they had enslaved and sent them to Liberia under the auspices of the ACS.[89] J. D. Paxton, who studied theology under Hoge at the Seminary, eventually became the pastor of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in 1823. While there he wrote a series of letters against slavery to the congregation that were eventually published is 1833. He also pushed the congregation to free those enslaved individuals owned by the church. Like Hoge, he emancipated his enslaved servants, whom his family inherited from his wife's side of the family, and bought passage for them to go from Norfolk to Liberia in 1826.[90]

Not all Presbyterian ministers in Virginia found gradual emancipation or colonization an acceptable moral position. George Bourne, for example, judged slaveholding a grievous sin and said so to his Presbyterian congregation in Harrisonburg, Virginia. He also

had nothing kind to say about half-way measures or colonization. He specifically attacked what he believed was Samuel Stanhope Smith's absurd and naïve ideas about the generally benevolent system of enslavement.

> Dr. Smith exemplifies the difficulties, which a man must surmount, who endeavours to combine truth with error, and rectitude of principle with corruption of practice. A descendant of the stolen Negros cannot be enslaved with greater equity and benevolence than his ancestors; and it is the very acme of delusion to assert, that 'the form of slavery at present is mild, or that a humane treatment is exercised towards the coloured people.' Evangelical philanthropy is as far removed from the daily exhibitions of Slave-Dealers as Lazarus in Abraham's bosom is separated from Dives in Hell. [91]

Bourne was defrocked by the presbytery for his troubles after he raised the issue of the sinfulness of slavery at the Presbyterian General Assembly in 1815. All of this is to note that among Virginia Presbyterians the religious issue of enslavement was hardly settled during the College's early years. The range of choices also meant that, when individuals made choices, one can reasonably presume they understood the full moral and religious dimensions at stake.

The religious dimensions of slavery, of course, went well beyond moral arguments made by white ministers. As Melvin Ely noted, the majority of enslaved individuals did not join churches in Prince Edward County. [92] The few who did join were able only if their enslavers allowed it and if they adequately acquitted themselves before the session's examination. Church membership did not generally grant the enslaved equality, voting privileges, or avenues for leadership in white-dominated church spaces, though, it should be noted, this was also true of women, enslaved or not. On the one hand, membership allowed enslaved individuals to participate in communion services, which, as we

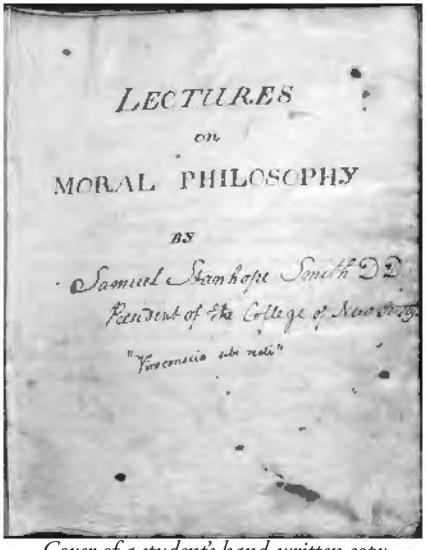
have seen, were deeply important rituals. On the other hand, church membership also allowed masters to bring those they enslaved before the session to punish them religiously beyond what they might do legally. For example, one enslaved individual from Buffaloe Church, named Dick, was brought before the session by his master Thomas Price, who himself was the clerk of the session. Dick lost his church privileges for seven years before they were restored, having tried at least twice to restore them.[93] More often privileges could be restored after a month or two.

White ministers also did not provide the only voices for justice and equality in the context of the slave system. If enslaved individuals found themselves subjected to white sermons and admonitions to obey and not steal from their enslavers, they also were also more than capable to understand and embrace the egalitarian impulses of evangelical religion. When Robert Smith attended the revivals in Prince Edward County, he wrote in a letter about an encounter with black communicants during a revival meeting:

> After the tables were served, I stepped a few perches below the meeting-house, where there was a cluster of black communicants standing, weeping and rejoicing, and an old negro man, addressing them in such strains as these: "We poor negroes were miserable, wretched creatures, taken captives and brought from our country in bondage here to men, and what was worse, slaves to sin and the devil. But, O! the goodness of God to us poor black folks. He has made us free men and women in Christ, joint heirs with his own Son. He has sent his servant to preach this gospel to us, who takes us to the Lord's table with himself, and calls us his brothers and sisters in Christ! O! the love of Christ to us poor black folks! Our colour is black; but his blood washes our souls whiter than snow! We shall live among the redeemed forever with the Lord. O the love of Christ to us poor black people! O!

> his service is sweet! it is very sweet. Hold on in it, hold on till you get the prize." When I heard and saw, my head was a fountain, and I stood astonished. Indeed, I could wish frequently to see such a sight, and hear such an address. [94]

Although the imagery about black skin contrasted with redeemed souls washed white may understandably startle the modern reader, the speech, at least as Smith remembered it, reveals the way that black communicants, many of whom (if not all) were enslaved, refracted the gospel message of the revivalists. Being denied shared spaces of worship ironically allowed black preachers to lead and to speak their own religious vernacular of shared suffering and divine promises not contingent on white Christian hypocrisy.



HAMPDEN-SYDNEY COLLEGE ARCHIVES

Cover of a student's hand-written copy of Samuel Smith's lectures.

DONATED TO THE COLLEGE BY THE PROSPERO SOCIETY.

Conclusion

As I researched this pamphlet, I saw an oft-repeated story about a meeting between Samuel Stanhope Smith and his brother John Blair Smith. As the story goes, John had left Union College, where he had become president, to hear his brother preach in New York. After the service, Samuel asked his brother what he thought of his sermon, to which John replied, "Brother Sam, you don't preach Jesus Christ and Him crucified, but Sam Smith and him dignified." It is a story that would have delighted Tertullian, an early nineteenth-century response to the question, What has Athens to do with Jerusalem? And, as Tertullian himself believed, it is a story that suggests that separating true religion from culture, faith from reason, is simple and clean.

The problem is that the story is apocryphal, and, in the words of John Maclean, who wrote one of the first histories of Princeton University, "a remark made by a rude and ignorant man of the coarser sort, a better judge of strong drink than of sound doctrine." [95]

Similarly, history is rarely, if ever, neat and tidy. If the founders of Hampden-Sydney, and their Presbyterian co-religionists, found themselves between Athens and Jerusalem, rather than in one place or the other, we may do well to remember that they could do no other. They sought to shape their time and following generations, sometimes failing, sometimes succeeding, but always endeavoring, in the words of Hampden-Sydney's mission, "to form good men and good citizens in an atmosphere of sound learning."

Further Reading

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Notes

[1] Samuel Stanhope Smith, *A Funeral Sermon on the Death of the Hon. Richard Stockton, Esq., Princeton March 2, 1781* (Trenton: Isaac Collins, 1781), 17.

[2] In the earliest literature and letters, one can find the College's name spelled both as "Hampden-Sydney" and "Hampden-Sidney." I have chosen to use consistently the spelling used consistently today, unless it is spelled differently within a direct quotation. Similarly, I have chosen to retain abbreviations, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation of direct quotations, even if they do not conform with modern conventions.

[3] William Hill, *Autobiographical Sketches of Dr. William Hill: Together with His Account of the Revival of Religion in Prince Edward County, and Biographical Sketches of the Life and Character of the Reverend Dr. Moses Hoge of Virginia.* (Richmond: The Library, Union Theological Seminary in Virginia, 1968), 133.

[4] "Moses Hoge to Susanna Hoge 15 May 1820." Hoge Family Papers. RG453-4-1 Box 1 Folder 5. Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia, PA.

[5] John Blair Hoge. 1964. *Sketch of the Life & Character of the Rev. Moses Hoge, D.D. : President of Hampden Sidney College and Professor of Divinity in the Theological Seminary of the Synod of Virginia.* (Richmond: Library, Union Theological Seminary in Virginia), 165.

[6] Ibid., 166.

[7] Peter Hoge, *Moses Drury Hoge: Life and Letters* (Richmond: Presbyterian Committee of Publication, 1899), 8. Hill, 133.

[8] *https://www.upsem.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Appendix-01-Original-Library-Books.pdf*

[9] "Quid ergo Athenis et Hierosolymis? Quid Ecclesiae et Academiae?"

[10] Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe. *Ante-Nicene Fathers.* Vol 3. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 1999), 246

[11] Joseph D. Eggleston, "The Buffaloe Settlement and Its Makers," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 49:3 (July 1941), 235.

[12] Minutes of Hanover Presbytery, October 13, 1774, 57. Archives and Special Collections, William Smith Morton Library, Union Presbyterian Seminary, Richmond, Virginia.

[13] W. C. Alexander, *History of Pequea Presbyterian Church Delivered September 8, 1876* (Lancaster, PA: New Era Steam Book and Job Print, 1878), 14-16.

[14] Minutes of Hanover Presbytery, October 13, 1774, 57. Archives and Special Collections, William Smith Morton Library, Union Presbyterian Seminary, Richmond, Virginia.

[15] 'Samuel Stanhope Smith, "An Academy," *The Virginia Gazette* October 21, 1775, 4.

[16] Luther, "To the Printer," *The Virginia Gazette* November 18, 1775, 1.

[17] "John Blair Smith to James Madison, [ca. 16 May] 1785," *Founders Online,* National Archives, *https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Madison/01-08-02-0151* . [Original

source: *The Papers of James Madison, vol. 8, 10 March 1784–28 March 1786*, ed. Robert A. Rutland and William M. E. Rachal. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1973, 282

[18] Mark Noll, *Princeton and the Republic, 1668-1822* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), 36, 44-45.

[19] Douglas Sloan, *The Scottish Enlightenment and the American College Ideal* (New York: Teachers' College Press, 1971), 136.

[20] Sloan, 134.

[21] Noll, 36-43.

[22] Minutes of Hanover Presbytery, November 12, 1774, 136. Archives and Special Collections, William Smith Morton Library, Union Presbyterian Seminary, Richmond, Virginia.

[23] Samuel Stanhope Smith, *Lectures on Moral and Political Philosophy Vol. 1* (Trenton: Daniel Fenton, 1812), 311-312.

[24] Smith, 16-17.

[25] Thomas S. Kidd, *God of Liberty: A Religious History of the American Revolution* (New York: Basic Books, 2010), 101.

[26] Mark Noll, *America's God: From Jonathan Edwards to Abraham Lincoln* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 56, 64.

[27] H. J. Eckenrode, *Separation of Church and State in Virginia: A Study in the Development of Revolution* (Richmond: Davis Bottom, 1910), 118.

[28] William H. Whitsitt, *Life and Times of Judge Caleb Wallace* (Louisville: J.P. Morgan and Co., 1888), 37.

[29] Eckenrode, 46.

[30] William Henry Foote, *Sketches of Virginia Historical and Biographical* (Philadelphia: William S. Martien, 1850), 326-327.

[31] Foote, 327.

[32] Samuel Stanhope Smith, "An Academy," *The Virginia Gazette,* October 21, 1775, 4.

[33] "Samuel Stanhope Smith to Thomas Jefferson, [March? 1779]," *Founders Online,* National Archives, *https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-02-02-0094.* [Original source: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson, vol. 2, 1777–18 June 1779,* ed. Julian P. Boyd. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1950, 246–249.]

[34] Debra R. Neill, "The Disestablishment of Religion in Virginia," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography,* 127:1 (2019), 25.

[35] Minutes of the Hanover Presbytery 10-27-1784, 177-178. Archives and Special Collections, William Smith Morton Library, Union Presbyterian Seminary, Richmond, Virginia.

[36] Kidd, 212-215.

[37] John Holt Rice, "Memorials to the General Assembly of Virginia," *The Literary and Evangelical Magazine 9 (*1826), 38; Cf. Eckenrode, 90 and John A. Ragosta, *Wellspring of Liberty: How Virginia's Religious Dissenters Helped Win the American Revolution and*

Secure Religious Liberty (New York: Oxford University Press), 121.
[38] "James Madison to James Monroe, 12 April 1785," *Founders Online,* National Archives, *https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Madison/01-08-02-0141* . [Original source: *The Papers of James Madison, vol. 8, 10 March 1784–28 March 1786*, ed. Robert A. Rutland and William M. E. Rachal. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1973, 260–262.]
[39] "Memorial and Remonstrance against Religious Assessments, [ca. 20 June] 1785," *Founders Online,* National Archives, *https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Madison/01-08-02-0163* . [Original source: *The Papers of James Madison, vol. 8, 10 March 1784–28 March 1786,* ed. Robert A. Rutland and William M. E. Rachal. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1973, 295–306.]
[40] Eckenrode, 94-95.
[41] Foote, 342-344.
[43] John Holt Rice, 43; Foote, 345-346.
[43] Hill, 188.
[44] See Nathan O. Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989).
[45] M. H. Moore, *Sketches of the Pioneers of Methodism in North Carolina and Virginia* (Nashville: Southern Methodist Publishing House, 1884), 66.
[46] Horace E. Cromer, "Methodist Churches," *Today and Yesterday in the Heart of Virginia* (Farmville: Farmville Herald, 1935), 361.
[47] Horace E. Cromer, 361-2.
[48] This is a common legend about Dow. The closest I can come to verifying the legend is in Lorenzo Dow's journal which notes his visit to Cartersville in 1804. He says "No one offered a place, except one man a room … but now [his next visit] there was a stage erected for me, and I spoke to about two thousand. I observed to the people their former coolness and told them that [I] would neither eat nor drink with them this time; but intended to clear my skirts from their blood." Lorenzo Dow, *The Life, Travels, Labors, and Writings of Lorenzo Dow* (New York: Miller, Orton, & Mulligan, 1857), 141. The "curse" is a reference to Jeremiah 2:34.
[49] Hill, 106.
[50] Hill, 107.
[51] Hill, 107.
[52] Hill, 107.
[53] Hill, 107.
[54] Hill, 108.
[55] Hill, 108.
[56] William Hill (Presbytery Minutes, 10-19-1789, 48), Clement Read (Presbytery Minutes 10-10-1788, 28), and Cary Allen (Presbytery Minutes 1-15-1789, 33) all became ministers. Blythe (in NC Eggleston, 67). Minutes of the Hanover Presbytery. Archives and Special Collections, William Smith Morton Library, Union Presbyterian

Seminary, Richmond, Virginia.
[57] Hill, 110.
[58] Hill, 110.
[59] Hill, 112.
[60] Leigh Eric Schmidt, *Holy Fairs: Scotland and the Making of American Revivalism.* 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2001), 61-62.
[61] Foote, 422.
[62] Foote, 422-423.
[63] James W. Alexander, *The Life of Archibald Alexander* (New-York: C. Scribner, 1854), 52.
[64] Alexander, 57-58.
[65] Hill, 114.
[66] *https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-16-02-0022*
[67] Adam Jortner, *The Gods of Prophetstown: The Battle of Tippecanoe and the Holy War for the American Frontier* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 48.
[68] See Alfred J. Morrison, *The College of Hampden-Sidney Calendar of Board Minutes 1776-1876* (Richmond: The Hermitage Press, 1912).
[69] Alexander, 258.
[70] Moses Hoge to Samuel Davies Hoge, October 25, 1813. Hoge Family Papers RG453-4-1 Box 1 Folder 3. Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia, PA.
[71] John Luster Brinkley, *On This Hill: A Narrative History of Hampden-Sydney College, 1774-1994* (Hampden-Sydney, VA: Hampden-Sydney College, 1994), 13-14.
[72] The College's Trustees' Minutes of July 19,1784, mention the intent to move French's Church to campus and then postponed that plan on September 2, 1784. After this entry, there is no definitive record of the Board's plan to use the church. Herbert Bradshaw preserves a story that Nathaniel Venable converted French's Church into a barn, based on a story proffered by Episcopal Bishop William Meade. Meade wrote between 1829-1830. Cf. William Meade, *Old Churches. Ministers, and Families of Virginia Vol. II* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippencott, 1910), 24 and Herbert Clarence Bradshaw, *History of Hampden-Sydney College, Volume 1, From the Beginnings to the Year 1856.* (Durham: Privately Printed, Fisher-Harrison Corporation, 1976), 387, n. 39. Charles Pearson finds it more probable that the timbers were used in Common Hall, since the church stood on land which was escheated and subsequently granted to the College in 1784. Cf. Charles E. Pearson, "The College's Escheated Lands at King's Tavern," *Newsletter of the Atkinson Museum of Hampden-Sydney College* (Winter 2021) and Sally Bruce Dickinson, "French's" *The Farmville Herald* (June 3, 1938), 3.
[73] William M. Baker, *The Life and Labours of The Rev. Daniel Baker* (Philadelphia: William S. & Alfred Martien, 1839), 49.
[76] Baker, 17.
[75] Samuel Davies Hoge, *Practica Selecta: Journal of Rev. Samuel Davies Hoge D.D.,* SC-000144, Hampden-Sydney College Archives and Special Collections, Hampden-

Sydney, VA.
[76] Baker, 51.
[77] Baker, 66.
[78] Hoge, 24.
[79] Baker, 48-49.
[80] Alexander, 201-206.
[81] Baker, 45.
[82] J.D. Paxton, *A Memoir of J. D. Paxton* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippencott, 1870), 46.
[83] Patrick Henry. "Letter from Patrick Henry to Robert Pleasants (1773)". Letter, January 18, 1773. From Teaching American History. *https://teachingamericanhistory.org/document/patrick-henry-to-robert-pleasants/*
[84] *Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America From Its Organization A.D. 1789 to A.D. 1820 Inclusive* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1847), 692.
[85] See Jennifer Oast, *Institutional Slavery: Slaveholding Churches, Schools, Colleges and Businesses in Virgina, 1680-1860* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 87-100.
[86] David Rice, *Slavery Inconsistent with Justice and Good Policy* (New York: Samuel Wood, 1812), 12. Empasis in the original.
[87] Rice, 13.
[88] Samuel Davies Hoge to John Blair Hoge, September 18, 1818. Hoge Papers. Mss1H6795a5. Virginia Museum of History and Culture; Richmond, VA.
[89] Nicholas Guyatt, "Samuel Stanhope Smith" *https://slavery.princeton.edu/stories/samuel-stanhope-smith*
[90] Paxton, 73-79.
[91] George Bourne, *The Book and Slavery Irreconcilable with Animadversions upon Dr. Smith's Philosophy.* (Philadelphia: J.M. Sanderson & Co., 1816), 4-5 in the Animadversions.
[92] Melvin Ely, *Israel on the Appomattox; A Southern Experiment in Black Freedom from the 1790s through the Civil War* (New York: Alfred A. Knoff, 2004), 318-319.
[93] Session Minutes, Buffaloe Presbyterian Church. 8-31-1804; 5-31-1806; 10-6-1811, Hampden-Sydney College Archives and Special Collections, Hampden-Sydney, VA.
[94] Foote, 423.
[95] John Maclean, *History of the College of New Jersey from Its Origin in 1746 to the Commencement of 1854.* Vol 2. (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1877), 133. The earliest version of this story that I can find is in the *New York Observer,* February 17, 1876, which protests the story as slander. A response by an editor in the *Kansas Chief,* March 2, 1876, makes fun of the *Observer's* editor for clearly missing the joke.

250TH ANNIVERSARY VOLUMES

I. *Neither All the Questions nor All the Answers: A Brief History of Hampden-Sydney College*
Thomas H. Shomo
Drawing primarily from the two official histories of the College—Brinkley and Bradshaw—this volume summarizes the College's history from the founding through the late 20th Century. The style is accessible and answers many frequently asked questions about Hampden-Sydney while encouraging readers to expand their knowledge through the other 250th Anniversary pamphlets and, for the more seriously interested, the many other publications and resources housed in the Bortz Library.

II. *John Hampden and Algernon Sydney: Making Heroes in the Seventeenth-Century*
L. Nicole Greenspan
The lives, careers, and contributions of Hampden and Sydney shaped the fabric of seventeenth-century society, religion, and politics. Their struggle for liberty and opposition to tyranny, coupled with their reputations as heroes and martyrs of their time, later inspired American revolutionaries. Understanding the lives of Hampden and Sydney sheds light on why Hampden-Sydney College is named in their honor.

III. *Between Athens and Jerusalem: Enlightenment Faith, Religious Revival, and the Shaping of Hampden-Sydney College, 1774-1820*
J. Michael Utzinger
In 1774 the Presbytery of Hanover met at Cub Creek Presbyterian Meeting House in Charlotte County, Virginia, to discuss hiring Samuel Stanhope Smith as the head of its proposed academy in Prince Edward County. Smith maintained a confidence in both human reason and revealed faith as complementary means to shape individuals and the wider society. The creative tension between reason and faith continued to mark Hampden-Sydney College and its founding Presbyterian dissenters. Further, those associated with the College made important contributions toward conversations surrounding religious liberty and disestablishment, revivalism, and the ethics of enslavement.

IV. *From Academy to College: Hampden-Sydney in the Revolution*
John C. Coombs
This volume examines the early development of Hampden-Sydney within the broader context of Virginia's transformation from British dominion to independent Commonwealth over the course of the revolutionary era. The tumultuous events roiling America in the last years of the imperial crisis with Great Britain— which president Samuel Stanhope Smith referred to as "the Distractions of the Times"—would exert a profound influence over the formative years of the new "public Academy" that extended far beyond the decision to name it after two great champions of English liberty. Virginia's struggle for independence and adoption of a republican constitution not only created the political conditions that allowed the College's leaders to successfully secure a charter of incorporation from the General Assembly in 1783, but would also give new import to the stated mission "to form good men, and good Citizens, on the common and universal principles of Morality" and through constant attention to "the whole Circle of Education."

V. *Climbing the Hill: African American History at Hampden-Sydney College*
Caroline S. Emmons
In the early period of the college, enslaved individuals' labor and presence on campus helped shape the College's founding. While often unnamed in the College records, there is nevertheless abundant evidence of their contributions, which were critical in enabling the construction and operation of the campus. The institution of slavery itself was regularly debated in a variety of settings. After emancipation, African Americans continued to contribute in critical ways to the success of the college, as members of the staff and eventually, in the late 20th century, as students and even as President.

VI. *The First Buildings at Hampden-Sydney College: Their History, Architecture, and Archæology*
Charles E. Pearson and Richard C. McClintock
Construction at Hampden-Sydney College began in the summer of 1775 and, by 1820, a dozen or so buildings existed at the school. By 1850, the original campus of the school was abandoned and the locations of the first buildings were forgotten. A 2017 geophysical survey revealed the buried traces of several original buildings. This volume presents what is known about the earliest buildings at the school.