



J. Tackaberry

REV. JOHN C. TACKABERRY.

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HE REV. JOHN CRANWILL¹ TACKABERRY was born in the town of Wexford, Ireland, September 8, 1799. His parents, John and Jane (Cranwill) Tackaberry, were connected with the people called Methodists. Fossey Tackaberry, a brother of the subject of this sketch, was a very distinguished Methodist preacher in the Irish Conference, whose life was written by the Rev. Robert Huston and published in Belfast.

When J. C. Tackaberry was eighteen years of age he emigrated to America, and resided some time in Quebec. There, in July, 1817, soon after his arrival, he obtained the joy of pardon, and before many days united with the people of God. His conference memorial says:

In 1819 he received license as an exhorter, and faithfully and zealously served the church in that capacity until 1821, when he was licensed as a local preacher. For a year or two subsequently he was employed under the presiding elder to labor within the limits of the Canada Conference. In 1826 he was ordained as a local deacon by Bishop Soule.²

Thenceforward he received the following

APPOINTMENTS: 1827, (Pittsburgh Conf.,) Greenfield cir., Pa., with P. Buckingham; 1828, Washington cir.; 1829, ordained elder,—(New York Conf.) Troy, N. Y., with S. Merwin; 1830, Kingston, with F. W. Smith and E. Andrews, 1831, Catskill and Saugerties cir., with D. Poor; 1832, Brooklyn, with J. C. Green; 1833, Stratford and Bridgeport cir., Conn.; 1834, New York, west cir., with J. B. Stratton, F. Reed, J. C. Green and D. DeVinne; 1835, ditto, with J. B. Stratton, D. DeVinne, L. Mead and E. E. Griswold; 1836, visited Europe on business and to see his friends; on his return, Harlem mission, with John Luckey and D. DeVinne; 1837, Montgomery cir., with David Webster; 1838, Harlem mission, with J. Floy; 1839, ditto, with S. H. Clark; 1840, Stamford, Ct., and Poundridge, N. Y., with S. J. Stebbins and I. San-

¹ This is said to be one form of the celebrated name Cromwell. The widow of J. C. Tackaberry says Cranwill was her husband's name, not Cranville, as it is spelled in the Conference Minutes and elsewhere. He usually omitted the second name in writing his own signature. See *Life of the Rev. Fossey Tackaberry*, p. 298, where his grandmother Cranwill is mentioned.

² Conference Minutes, 1852, p. 42, and *Hist. St. James' M. E. Church, New York*, p. 57.

1841-1843, sup'd; 1844, New York, Seventh-street, with A. M. Osbon; 1845, sup'y, Brooklyn, Sands-street, with H. F. Pease; 1846, ditto, with N. Bangs; 1847, sup'y, New York, Forsyth-street, with J. B. Stratton; 1848-1849, sup'y, New York, Greene-street, with Daniel Smith; 1850, sup'y, ditto, with Davis Stocking; 1851, sup'y, New York, Bedford-street, with Addi Lee.

His ministerial life, as above outlined, comprises many important details, of which no record has been preserved. We must be content with a few interesting incidents. In a letter addressed to the Rev. W. H. Dikeman, of New York, and published in one of our church papers, he describes a terrific storm at sea, which he encountered on his return from Europe, April 19, 1837. The following extract conveys a vivid impression of the thrilling event :

At half past two A. M. a black cloud arose above the horizon to the north-west. The first mate called the captain on deck. Suddenly the wind hauled round to the north-west, blowing violently and took the ship all aback, driving her stern foremost at about five knots. The hands were immediately called to bring the ship about and shorten sail. While the sailors were performing this duty, a ball of fire or a flash of lightning struck the ship and passed down the rigging, exploding with a noise equal to the report of a cannon, and with such force that it knocked down almost all the men on the deck. The sparks of fire fell in every direction, and for some moments seemed to cover the deck. The sailors exclaimed that the ship was going down, while some of them ran to the fore-castle. * * * In a few minutes another flash struck the ship and passed down the rigging, exploding the same as the first, and again knocking down several of the men. * * * The sail was shortened immediately, and a little after three o'clock the wind died away, and there was a dead calm. A few minutes before this phenomenon took place, I had been observing the progress of the vessel; but, perceiving no danger, I had turned into my berth again, when the ship received the first shock. As I had heard all hands called on deck, and knew that they had been taking in sail, my first thoughts were that some of the passengers on board had a quantity of powder which had exploded; or that some of the hands had fallen from aloft and were killed. And as the shock jarred the skylight over the cabin, I thought whoever had fallen must have struck upon it, and that the large lamp which usually hung under it, being shaken, had caused the waving light which I had observed when the first flash took place. When I went to the lobby there was a smell of sulphur, as strong as if several guns had been discharged in it. I dressed as soon as possible, intending to go and render any assistance in my power to those who might be hurt, as I knew the hands were all employed. When the second explosion took place I was satisfied that it was lightning, and supposed that the vessel and all on board would be at the bottom in fifteen minutes.

While I feel grateful to God for his goodness in preserving me amid the perils of the sea, I feel the highest satisfaction in being permitted to meet my numerous friends on this side of the Atlantic. My travels through Europe

have only increased my attachment to our country and institutions, and I am fully satisfied there is really nothing (even in these embarrassed times) to prevent our being the happiest people under the sun.³

In his fortieth year, on New-Year's-day, 1839, he was married to MISS SARAH L. TIEMAN, an estimable lady, who still survives, (1884,) in the thirty-fifth year of her widowhood.

As appears from the list of his appointments, he was colleague of John C. Green, in Brooklyn, in 1832. Seventeen years later the testimony of Mr. Tackaberry, in the case of Green *versus* Pierce, revealed the fact that there was a lack of harmony between the two preachers while they were associate pastors in this charge. He says:

I was removed at the end of one year. I did believe that Mr. Green and Judge Dikeman obtained my removal. * * * There was a difficulty between Mr. Green and myself. I told Mr. Merwin he was trying to keep people away from my congregations. * * * I stated the circumstances to prove it.⁴

Farther on in the testimony it is faintly intimated that Green found fault with his playing on the violin. These slight infelicities were unquestionably more frequent formerly than now.

In his best estate, before his health declined, his preaching was fervent, pungent, and often pathetic. He particularly excelled in "doctrinal discourses." W. H. Dikeman, who knew him intimately from 1833, said to the author:

Mr. Tackaberry wrote his sermons with great care, but preached without notes. It was his habit always to cite authorities, sacred or secular, and he was often called "Book, Chapter, and Verse," from his method of quoting Scripture in his sermons.

In social intercourse he was bright. Few excelled him in wit and repartee, but his language was always chaste. I tested his friendship for nearly twenty years, and I never knew a man to show more unswerving fidelity to his friends in storm and in sunshine.

Many others have spoken of him as "a walking concordance," and it has been affirmed that he knew the New Testament by heart.

He was a man of slender build, taller than the average, of light complexion, and pleasant countenance. The likeness accompanying this sketch, is copied from an oil portrait in the possession of the family.

³ The Christian Advocate and Journal, August 18, 1837.

⁴ "The trial of the Rev. John C. Green against John Pierce for slander," p. 13.

In his later years he preached only occasionally. He longed for a return to the active ministry, but the derangement of his nervous system, and a tendency to congestion of the brain, made the labors of the pulpit impracticable. He died in the fifty-third year of his age, in New York city, May 9, 1852, of Southern fever, contracted while he was chaplain and physician upon a New York and Nicaragua steamer. In one of his intervals of consciousness he said: "In the word of God is my trust; its promises are my support."

His remains were first deposited in the vault of the 125th-street church, afterward they were removed to Greenwood.

Of his six children all except *Albert*, who died in youth, are now living, (1884,) and continue to revere God and the church of their father. They are *John A.*, *William G. H.*, *Jane C.*, *Emily G.*, and *A. Antoinette*.