

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES
OF
GRADUATES
OF
HARVARD UNIVERSITY,
IN CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS.

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NEHEMIAH HOBART.

Born 1648, died 1712, aged 63.

REV. NEHEMIAH HOBART, M. A., brother of the Hobarts who graduated in 1650 and 1667, and son of the Reverend Peter Hobart, of Hingham, was born 21 November, 1648. He began to preach at Cambridge Village, now Newton, Massachusetts, on the first of June, 1672. Before his ordination, 23 December, 1674, he succeeded in healing the divisions which followed the death, 13 October, 1668, of the minister, John Eliot, H. U. 1656. "In Mr. Hobart, the Repairer of Breaches," says Homer, "gave this bereaved flock a rich blessing."

In November, 1685, his salary was raised from sixty-five to seventy pounds, one third part of the whole to "be paid in money, without abatement." In 1689 he gave an acquittance from all "dues, debts, and demands," from the beginning of his ministry. February 23, 1690, he sent in an account of twenty-three pounds, eighteen shillings, three pence, saying, "if the Town would pay him £10, he would give in the residue to help bear the public charges, which were great and heavy, and which was accepted by the Town." In 1703, ten pounds were added to his salary, making it eighty pounds.

Hobart is not mentioned in the proposed charter of the College in 1672. He was chosen a Fellow of the College at a meeting of the Corporation in Boston, 13 December, 1681. He declined the appointment as Fellow in the charter proposed in 1692, and the Reverend Charles Morton, of Charlestown, was chosen; but his name appears in those proposed in 1696, 1697, 1699, and 1700. When, by a Legislative Resolve, in 1707, the charter of 1650 was restored, and Governor Dudley accordingly reduced the number of the Corporation to seven, he was retained.

When Vice-President Samuel Willard was found, 14 August, 1707, to be incapable "of doing the College work another year," the House of Deputies nominated Hobart "to officiate in y^e mean time till Octr next. This y^e Gov^r and Council did not accept; and so nothing was done."

Leverett's Diary states that "He was a great blessing and an Ornam^t to the Society. Upwards of 40 years God blessed Newton with his Ministry. A few days before his death, in his Last Sickness he observed to M^r Brattle & the Presid^t who made him a visit [21 Aug.], that upon his Return from the Last Comēncem^t he Remark'd that he had bin at 49 Comēncem^ts never having miss'd one from the very first time he had waited on that Solemnity, and that God onely knew whether he sh^d attain to the 50th."

S. Sewall wrote, 1712: "Aug^t 26. I went with my Son and Mr. Nichols in a Calash to y^e Funeral of Mr. Hobart. Mr. Comissary carried Mr. Pemberton in his Charret. The Gov^r went with four Horses. Bearers President, mr. Thacher of Milton; Mr. Danforth of Dorchester, mr. Brattle of Cambridge; Mr. Belcher of Dedham, Mr. Pemberton. Mr. Flint, mr. Barnard, and mr. Stephens led the three Daughters. Gov^r, & Sewall; Mr. Comissary & Bromfield followd next after the Mourners. A great many people there—Supose there were more than Forty Graduates. Was interd a little more than an Hour before Sun-set. Mr. Danforth went to Prayer; mentioned his having been there more than Forty years. Got home well about Eight."

In a letter dated January 10, 1712-13, he wrote: "A very worthy Minister . . . a very good old Friend. Aug^t 17, he preach'd Forenoon & Afternoon; and at the Close of the day Bless'd the Congregation in the form prescribed Num. 6. 24, 25, 26. which made an impression upon many; they reckon'd he had taken leave of them, they

should never hear him again! I think he had used that form but once before."

Hobart's successor in the Corporation was Benjamin Wadsworth, H. U. 1690, afterwards President. His successor in the ministry at Newton was John Cotton, H. U. 1710.

The Boston News-Letter, in announcing his death, states that he "was Senior Fellow of Harvard College, an excellent scholar, divine, and Christian; very much lamented throughout the whole Province."

John Barnard, H. U. 1700, speaks of him as "an excellent scholar, in the *Latin, Greek, and Hebrew*, sometime a vice-president of the college, a most pious, humble, prudent, and benevolent man."

Jonathan Homer, H. U. 1777, one of his successors, writing in 1798, says: "In him shone the scholar, the gentleman, and the Christian. . . . An unshaken harmony subsisted between him and his people through life." He had a "serious and winning manner of address, which caused his congregation to hang upon his lips. His character may, perhaps, best be collected from the inscription on his tomb-stone, written in pure, elegant Latin, which time had long crusted over, and nearly effaced, but which . . . I have been able to trace":—

"Hoc tumulo depositæ sunt reliquiæ reverendi et perdocti D. D. *NEHEMIÆ HOBART*, Collegii Harvardini socij lectissimi, ecclesiæ Neotoniensis per annos quadraginta pastoris fidelissimi et vigilantissimi, singulari gravitate, humilitate æque ac pietate et doctrina—a doctis et pijs eximia veneratione et amore recolendi. Natus erat Nov, 21. 1648. Denatus Aug. 25. 1712, anno ætatis 64."

The Epitaph is also printed by Alden, and a translation by Homer and Jackson.

March 21, 1677–8, Hobart was married to Sarah, born "5. 11. 1649," daughter of Edward Jackson, of Newton,

by his second wife, Elizabeth, daughter of John Newgate, or Newdigate, widow of John Oliver, H. U. 1645. They had six daughters. His wife died about six months before him.

WORKS.

1. Was he author of the Almanack for 1673, "By N. H. Cambridge: Printed by Samuel Green" ?

2. The | Absence | of the | Comforter | Described and | Lamented, | In a Discourse on Lam. I. 16. || New-London: Printed & Sold by Timothy Green, 1717. 8vo. Pp. 1-10 To the Reader. New-London Feb 19th. 1716, 7. Eliphalet Adams. Text pp. 1-316. P.

Eliphalet Adams, H. U. 1694, the editor, says: "Such was" the author's "singular backwardness to appear Publickly upon the Stage, so punctually did he practise the Apostle's direction of *Esteeming others better than himself*, that we have nothing of his from the Press while he was yet alive, But now when there is no longer any danger of offending that Excessive modesty, which was so peculiar unto him, it is no more fit that we should be deprived of his Labours but rather that the Earnest desire of his Friends should be gratified by imparting some of these to the World."

"And having been particularly Acquainted with the Reverend Author, in whose family I met with a most friendly reception in my tender Years and under whom I received a great part of my Education, where I had the Opportunity for a long time of beholding his most Exemplary Conversation & Exact Walking with God, I could no longer forbear to *rise up and call him blessed*."

AUTHORITIES. — T. Alden, Collection of American Epitaphs, i. 141. J. Barnard, in Massachusetts Historical Society's Collections, x. 168. Boston News-Letter, 1712, September 1. J. Edwards, Life of David Brainerd, 2. J. Farmer, Genealogical Register, 146. Harvard College Corporation Records, i. 51; iv. 5. J. Homer, Century Sermon, 19; and in Mass. Hist. Soc., Collec., v. 267. F. Jackson, Hist. of Newton, 122, 124-126, 146, 308. J. Leverett, Manuscript Diary, 51, 52. S. Lincoln, History of Hingham, 115. Massachusetts Hist. Society, Collections, v. 267; ix. 196; x. 168; xxxi. 21. J. Quincy, History of Harvard University, i. 69, 101, 201, 206, 280, 493, 595, 599, 600, 603, 606, 608. J. Savage, Genealogical Dictionary, ii. 435. S. Sewall, in American Quarterly Register, xi. 250, 262; xiv. 403. B. B. Wisner, Old South, 88.