

OBITUARY

Rev. Dr. George H. Whitney

Source: New Jersey Newspaper (Special Service of the News)

Date: June 7, 1913

Plainfield, June 7- Rev. Dr. George H. Whitney aged eighty-three years, for nearly twenty-six years president of Centenary Collegiate Institute, Hackettstown, and since 1895 president emeritus of that institution, died last night at his home 828 First place, this city. Last Friday Dr. Whitney fell and sustained a fractured hip. After that accident he failed rapidly. He leaves a widow, a son and three daughters.

Dr. Whitney was born in 1830. The early part of his life was spent in Washington D.C. where when seventeen years old he became a reporter for the Daily National Whig. He not only collected news but read copy and arranged for its location in the paper. He was supplied with a horse which he road all over the District of Columbia in order to get information. Beside his duties on the Whig he acted as common council reporter for the Saturday Evening News, writing his copy on the windowsill of the city hall, which was later the scene of the trial of Charles Guiteau, for the murder of President Garfield.

Among the noted men whom he saw in those days were Daniel Webster and John C. Calhoun. The capital was then lighted by candles, each congressman having a candle on his desk. One of his most important assignments as a reporter was the covering of the court martial of General John C. Fremont for disobedience of orders in connection with his exploration for overland route to California.

After filling his position on the Whig for a time he came North in order to prepare for college. He taught in Newark and in the Wesleyan Institute before entering Wesleyan University. He was graduated from the latter in 1858. While an undergraduate he was one of the founders of the Alpha Delta Phi fraternity and was also a member of the Phi Beta Kappa.

In 1861 Dr. Whitney joined the Methodist conference and from that time forward devoted his energies to teaching and preaching. He filled three pastorates: those of Trinity Church, Jersey City; the First Methodist Church, of Newark and the First Methodist Church of Patterson. He was instrumental in building the latter edifice at a cost of \$75,000. He received the honorary degree of D.D. from Mt Union College, Ohio.

The greater part of his active life was devoted to teaching. He filled the presidency of three institutions of learning; one seminary at Macedon near Rochester. N.Y.; that at Oneida N.Y.; and the Centenary Collegiate Institute at Hackettstown. Where he was made president emeritus an honor he held until his death.

Upon leaving Hackettstown, which was his residence from 1874 to 1895, he moved to Plainfield, where he established a home at 838 First Place. In 1908 Dr. Whitney visited the institute and was given a warm reception. Headed by the Hackettstown Band, nearly 1,000 citizens of the town marched to the institute, where Dr. and Mrs. Whitney were the guests of Rev. Dr. and Mrs. Jonathan M. Meeker and serenaded him.

After the conference of the Methodist Church of Newark in the spring of 1911 one of the features was an anniversary service in honor of Rev. Dr. Whitney and two other clergymen who had given Methodism an unbroken service of half a century.

Dr. Whitney was the author of a number of books on religious topic, the best now of which is the "Handbook of Bible Geography." This has been issued in many editions and was reproduced in England by special request of many ministers.