

OBITUARY

Martha Patton Adams

“E’en down to old age all my people shall prove My sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love, And when hoary hairs shall their temples adorn, Like lambs they shall still in my bosom be borne.”

Died in Nashville, Tennessee, at the residence of her son-in-law, Robert Gibson, Esq., on January 15, 1854, Mrs. Martha Adams, Consort of Mr. Nathan Adams, long since deceased, in the eighty-sixth year of her age.

This excellent mother in Israel was born near Strabane, Ireland, April 24, 1768. Her maiden name was Patton, a name very dear to her in remembrance of her pious and venerated parentage. The year 1784, the year of her marriage with Mr. Adams, with whom at once she set out for America, was one of most vivid remembrance to her throughout her long life. She was then but sixteen years of age, still in the freshness of youth and, at the same time, a blooming young bride. It was surely no common trial, as she was wont to express it, to leave her native country for so long a voyage and for so distant a land. But she gave up all - parents, kindred, and that dear native home - to share with one more dear than them all not only the dangers of the deep, but also the privations attendant on reaching that far distant land. After remaining in America some three years, she returned to Ireland with her husband, where she resided until 1811, the year of her second voyage to America, having in the meantime, become the mother of a large family of children.

Five years after her return, the husband of her youth was removed by death, and she was left a widow in Philadelphia when he died. He belonged to the flock of the late Dr. James P. Wilson of that city and was esteemed as a man of singular excellence, both for his intelligence and piety. Soon after his departure, his widow with her young children moved to Nashville, some of the elder ones having preceded her some years before. This was in the year 1817, and from that period till her death, Nashville has been the city of her abode. During all her long residence here, her life was one of rare beauty and excellence in all the relations which, as a widow, a mother, and a Christian, she was called to fill.

Considerably upwards of thirty years she survived the husband of her youth, and during the whole of her long bereavement, she not only wore outward badges of her widowhood, but gave proof by her whole life that she was proud to be a widow indeed. As a mother, her general intelligence, her practical wisdom, her prudence, her cheerful spirit, her purity of sentiment, her truthfulness, her uniform kindness, her beautiful example, all conspired to give her unbounded influence, both with her own children and her numerous grandchildren. But as a Christian, in all that is implied in a title so expressive and endearing, she was still more an object of regard and veneration to all that were capable of appreciating her deep and unaffected piety. From her fifteenth year, she had been a professed follower of Christ, and by a long life of constant devotion to his service, had exemplified the reality of her faith and ordinance. The Bible at all times had been the

man of her counsel. With all its doctrines, precepts and promises, she had been familiar from her childhood. The ordinances of God's house never failed to comfort and support her when permitted to attend upon them, and this privilege she enjoyed until within a few days of her departure. With all the members of her communion (the Presbyterian) she was known as the aged saint, full of years, and at the same time an example of all that is lovely and of good report in a grim old age.

The removal of our so loving and beloved is no ordinary loss to her numerous relatives and friends, but to the church of God, it is an event still more to be felt and lamented. The friend (her pastor) by whom this mere outline of her character has been sketched can never cease to remember her as one of his dearest and best friends. Her placid brow at church, her happy smile at home, her gentle manners, and her affectionate tones of endearing kindness, can only be forgotten when the frozen hand of death shall close his own eyes and deafen his own ears.

“Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing; to show that the Lord is upright.”

(Dr. James Edgar - Pastor of First Presbyterian Church, Nashville, Tennessee)