

REV. DAVID K. DUFF was a well-known efficient minister of the United Presbyterian church, and labored for thirty-two years as a settled pastor in Westmoreland county, Pennsylvania.

He was well and favorably known, not only in his own county, but also in the surrounding counties of Indiana, Clarion and Jefferson, where his ministerial duties called him to labor. He was a man of strong convictions and fearless in proclaiming the truths of the Gospel and maintaining the principles of the church of his choice. Wise in council, of good judgment, unassuming in manner and possessed of a kindly, congenial disposition and a forbearing temper, he was naturally qualified to make friends, and was held in high esteem both as a minister and a friend. Rev. D. K. Duff was the fourth son of James and Mary (Kennedy) Duff and was born near Enon Valley, in Beaver county, May 8, 1825, where his parents continued to reside until death. His father died in 1870 in his eighty-fourth year. His mother lived some eight years longer and was also in her eighty-fourth year at the time of her death. His parents were members of the Associate Presbyterian (now United Presbyterian) churches. His father was a farmer by occupation and a whig in politics.

David K. was reared on his father's farm until seventeen years of age. He then entered Darlington academy, remaining two years, and from thence went to New Athens college, Ohio, where he finished his collegiate course in 1849. he then taught school about one year at Mount Jackson, Pa., after which, having decided upon the ministry as his life-work, he entered the theological seminary at Cannonsburgh, Pa. (now located at Zenia, Ohio), in 1850. After a careful theological course of three years he was licensed to preach the Gospel in November, 1853. For two years he labored as a missionary in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa and eastern New York, and also in the cities of Philadelphia and Baltimore. His travels in the western states were performed on horse-back and were consequently very laborious.

In May, 1856, he received a call to become pastor of the U. P. Congregation of Dayton and Lower Piney (now Mount Zion), which he accepted, and immediately entered upon its duties. Soon after settlement he also accepted the position of principal of Dayton Union academy, where, by his faithfulness as a teacher, and his firm yet gentle discipline, he made hosts of friends and was held in high esteem by the many students who were under his care. He labored faithfully as pastor and teacher until September, 1862, when believing it to be his duty to serve his Master by defending the unity of the government, he gave himself to the cause.

He enlisted as a private, but was immediately offered the command of a company, which was soon recruited from the homes of those among whom he labored, a number of them being students of the academy. He served as captain from that time until he was honorably discharged in June, 1865, by reason of wounds received which unfitted him for further military duty.

He was respected by his men and recognized throughout the regiment as a brave soldier and a courteous, Christian gentleman, and justly earned the reputation of being one of the bravest officers of the celebrated 14<sup>th</sup> Pennsylvania Cavalry. Even at this remote date such tributes as these often come to his family from men who were with him on the tented field, on the march and on the battle-ground:" "There was not one drop of cowardly blood in his veins," "He was always in the thickest of the fight." "Always leading his men where he thought they could do the best work," "It was always *come*

boys. He never asked his men to do what he was unwilling to do himself.” He was one whom to know was to love for his gentleness of disposition, his love of virtue, his meekness, gentleness and truth, and for his bravery and devotion to the cause of his country.” He participated with his regiment in its many hard, weary marches through the mountains of West Virginia, and was actively engaged in twenty-two battles and skirmishes. His last engagement was at Ashby’s Gap, Va., in February, 1865. Here he received three wounds—a ball passed through the fingers of the left hand, another inflicted a scalp wound, leaving a scar of two and a half to three inches in length, and a third passed through the right arm near the shoulder, partially disabling him through life and causing him untold suffering.

Of his bravery on the battle-field, let a magnanimous foe add his testimony. Years after the close of the war, one of Col. Mosby’s officers, C. R. Dear, of Little Washington, Va., related the following incident to Captain W. D. Preston, of the *Philadelphia Times*:

He says: “I think the bravest man I ever met on your side was Captain D. K. Duff, of the 14<sup>th</sup> P.V.C. I had a hand-to-hand fight with him in which we used pistols and sabers until I brought him down. I tell you he was a plucky fellow and worthy any man’s steel. After the fight I found him covered with blood composedly sitting in the barn where we put our prisoners. His courageous and gentlemanly conduct challenged my admiration. I sought our captain and asked as a personal favor that he be allowed to go, as he was in such a physical condition that it was not likely that he would do us more harm. ‘Just as you please said he.’ I then went to Duff and told him to follow me, and leading him out of camp told him to find his way to his friends as soon as possible. If ever you meet Captain Duff tell him I hold him in remembrance as the bravest fellow I ever met.” After being discharged, captain Duff returned home and resumed the pastorate of Dayton and Pine Creek, also the principal-ship of the academy, which he retained until 1877. June 1<sup>st</sup>, 1866 he took charge of Concord (now Atwood) congregation, in connection with the others, giving to each one-third time. As these congregations were each separated from the other by twelve miles, “o’er hill and vale,” we need not tell you that his life was not one of flowery ease, yet he performed his duties cheerfully and faithfully. He was also an efficient helper in the establishing and maintenance of the Soldier’s Orphan school carried on for many years successfully at the village of Dayton. In 1870 he resigned the pastorate of Lower Pines, giving one-half time to each of the others until Sept. 1, 1886, when, by reason of increasing infirmities caused by wounds received and hardships endured, he was compelled to retire from the pastorate of Dayton after thirty years’ service. Residing at Atwood, he was still able to continue his care of it, and preached every Sabbath except one preceeding the one on which he was released by his Mater and called up higher to receive the reward of a well-spent life.

He died on Sunday, April 15, 1888, after an illness of only nine days, and although his sufferings were intense, yet he bore them with the same Christian courage and fortitude which he ever displayed through life. “His was a heroic life both in peace and war.” Rev. Duff was a large, portly man of fine personal appearance, six feet in height and weighing two hundred and fifty pounds at time of his death. Politically he was a republican and later a stanch prohibitionist. He took a deep interest in all matters pertaining to the welfare of his fellow-men and of his country. His usefulness was not

confined to those of his own congregations, but extended throughout the sections of country where he dwelt. He was well-known as the friend of education and progress, and always ready to lend a helping hand to the needy.

On October 27, 1868, he married Nannie Henry, daughter of James and Sarah (Richmond) Henry, who were natives of Ireland, but came to America about 1834 and settled in Franklin township, Armstrong county. Mr. Henry was a stone-mason by trade; also was the owner of a farm; politically a republican. Mrs. Henry died in 1878 and Mr. Henry in 1883, one eighty-four years of age, and the other about eighty-six. They were members of the Associate (now U.P.) church, in which he was an elder for many years. They were the parents of nine children, two sons and seven daughters. Both sons served in the civil war. David, the eldest, enlisted in 1862, in the 100<sup>th</sup> Pa. Vols. And was killed by guerrillas June 2, 1864, near Cold Harbor, Va. James served in the 14<sup>th</sup> P.V.C from 1862 to the close of the war, and was killed in July, 1882, on his own farm by being thrown under his mowing machine.

To Captain and Mrs. Duff were born seven children, six sons and one daughter. Two sons died in infancy, their dust resting beside that of their father in the Atwood cemetery. The oldest son is pursuing a course of medicine at a medical college. The others remain at home with their mother, being yet too young to choose their life-work. May they emulate the virtues of their father.