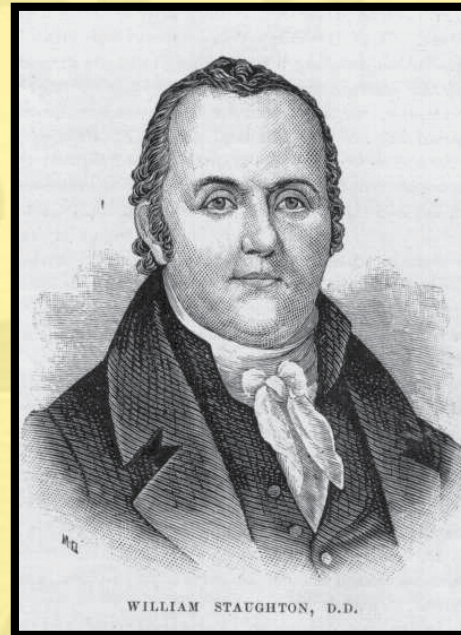


William and Maria Staughton's Story

Dr. William Staughton was born on January 4, 1770, in Coventry, England. In 1792, he graduated from Bristol Baptist College and then became a preacher in Northampton. William was present with William Carey at the formation of the Baptist Missionary Society (Particular Baptist Society for the Propagation of the Gospel Amongst the Heathen) at Kettering, England, in 1792, which sent William Carey to India. His zeal for foreign missions was transplanted to America when he emigrated in 1793. William married Maria Hanson, whom he knew from England, shortly after his arrival in America. Their loving marriage produced four children. Maria had been a school teacher and was a great help to her husband in his later educational work. He preached in Georgetown, South Carolina from 1793-95. In 1795, they moved to York City and then to Bordentown, New Jersey, where he preached at a Baptist church, headed an academy, and was ordained a Baptist minister on June 17, 1797. He continued his educational studies at Princeton University and received a Doctor of Divinity in 1801.

He was pastor of the First Baptist Church in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (1805-1811) and the founding pastor of the Sansom Street Church (1811-1822). Both churches grew dramatically, the latter to several thousand in weekly worship attendance. Concurrently, William also acted as the designated tutor of the Baptist Education Society of America of the Middle States, and was one of the founding members of the Bible Society at Philadelphia (now known as the Pennsylvania Bible Society). Among his students in Philadelphia was John Mason Peck, missionary to the Missouri Territory and founder of the American Baptist Home Mission Society. William and Maria also ran a school for young women and organized a women's society to supply Bibles to poor families during these years.

William wrote "The Baptist Mission in India" in 1811. At First Baptist Church, Philadelphia, on May 18, 1814, the first General Missionary Convention of the Baptist Denomination in the United States of America elected Staughton as its first corresponding



secretary for the newly formed Baptist Board of Foreign Missions, the first U.S. Baptist world missions organization (now American Baptist International Ministries). The purpose was to support Adoniram and Ann Judson's mission in Burmah. Maria was the founding Director of the Sansom Street Baptist Female Society formed later in 1814 to support the Missionary Convention.

In 1822 William became the first President of the Columbian College in Washington, D.C. The Columbian College is the original college of the present George Washington University. President Staughton taught both theological and classical courses at the College and formed a law school and medical school. During these years he simultaneously served as Chaplain of the United States Senate for two sessions. He delivered the memorial address to the U.S. Senate following the deaths of John Adams and Thomas Jefferson in 1826.

Staughton's beloved wife Maria died of typhus fever in 1823. On August 27th, 1829, Staughton married Miss Anna C. Peale. He died in Washington on December 12th, 1829, just shy of 60 years old.