

*The
Priestley Family
Collection*



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DICKINSON COLLEGE
Carlisle, Pennsylvania
1965

The Priestley Family Collection

The Gift of Mrs. Temple Fay

Dickinson College

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Dr Priestley, having written the History and present state of Electricity, would willingly undertake to write the history of all the other branches of experimental philosophy upon the same plan. He apprehends that a work of this kind, exhibiting a view of all that has been done already, would, on several accounts, greatly facilitate future discoveries in science, but he has hitherto been discouraged from undertaking it by the expences in which it would necessarily involve him, and which he is not able to supply; particularly in procuring the books to which he cannot have access in his present situation. In order to execute this work with advantage, he will also be under an immediate necessity of considerably enlarging his philosophical apparatus both to ascertain many disputed facts, and to pursue his hearts for further discoveries, which the consideration of those that have been made by others will unavoidably suggest. His history of electricity was very expensive to him on this account, but he thinks himself well repaid by the many original experiments he was thereby enabled to make, and of which he was thereby enabled to give the Duke of Northumberland should think this work worthy of his patronage.

Joseph Priestley to the Duke of Northumberland, c. 1767, stating his need for books and apparatus.



Model of the Birmingham statue by Francis John Williamson.

ONE HUNDRED and seventy-one years have passed since Joseph Priestley found his haven of refuge in the United States. His descendants in this country are living in East and West, North and South. They are in England, Australia, and elsewhere. It is the family of a man whose heart and mind embraced all peoples, all nations, all knowledge. Wherever one finds his descendants through the generations, there one will find also reflections of the enlightenment, the learning, the breadth of view, the obstinate strong opinion and the gentle, tolerant humor of the founder of their line. There has been among them, too, with few exceptions, a sense of filial piety, holding their once-controversial ancestor in the high honor he deserves. Relics of his life and work have been carefully preserved, gradually finding their way into the collections of libraries and museums, and so becoming parts of the cultural heritage of all people and all times.

IN AMERICA, one branch of the family not only preserved its records, but added objects and documentation, building up an authoritative body of source material on Priestley's life, his portraits, and on the lives of his descendants. It is a family collection, which has been consulted by scholars over many years and is cited in such learned works as Henry Carrington Bolton's *Scientific Correspondence of Joseph Priestley* of 1892, or John F. Fulton's *Works of Joseph Priestley*, of 1937. It has been exhibited at Yale, at the University of Pennsylvania, and at other institutions. It has come to Dickinson College as the gift of Mrs. Temple Fay, a direct descendant, in the fifth generation, from Joseph Priestley. Here it joins the scientific apparatus from Priestley's laboratory, acquired by the College in 1811 and in active use in our educational program for a century thereafter. It also, in the broad area of Priestley's whole career and of the Priestley Family, becomes a part of our educational responsibility. With it the College accepts an obligation not only carefully to preserve, but continually to augment and strengthen the collection so well begun.

There is in it a bronze medal of early date proclaiming Joseph Priestley "CITIZEN OF THE WORLD." It is a title he would have been proud to own, proclaiming his universality of thought, his allegiance to all humanity. Those who follow after can comprehend him only on the same terms of limitless horizon and constant advance.

The Priestley Collection given to Dickinson College by Mrs. Temple Fay includes 84 books and pamphlets by Joseph Priestley, 92 works about him, including many of the rare controversial pieces of the eighteenth century and 148 family letters and documents extending from Priestley's forebears into his own career, and on through the lives of his children, grandchildren and the later generations. With these have come 54 engraved portraits and caricatures, and an archive of newspaper clippings, photographs and ephemera extending from early dates to the present.

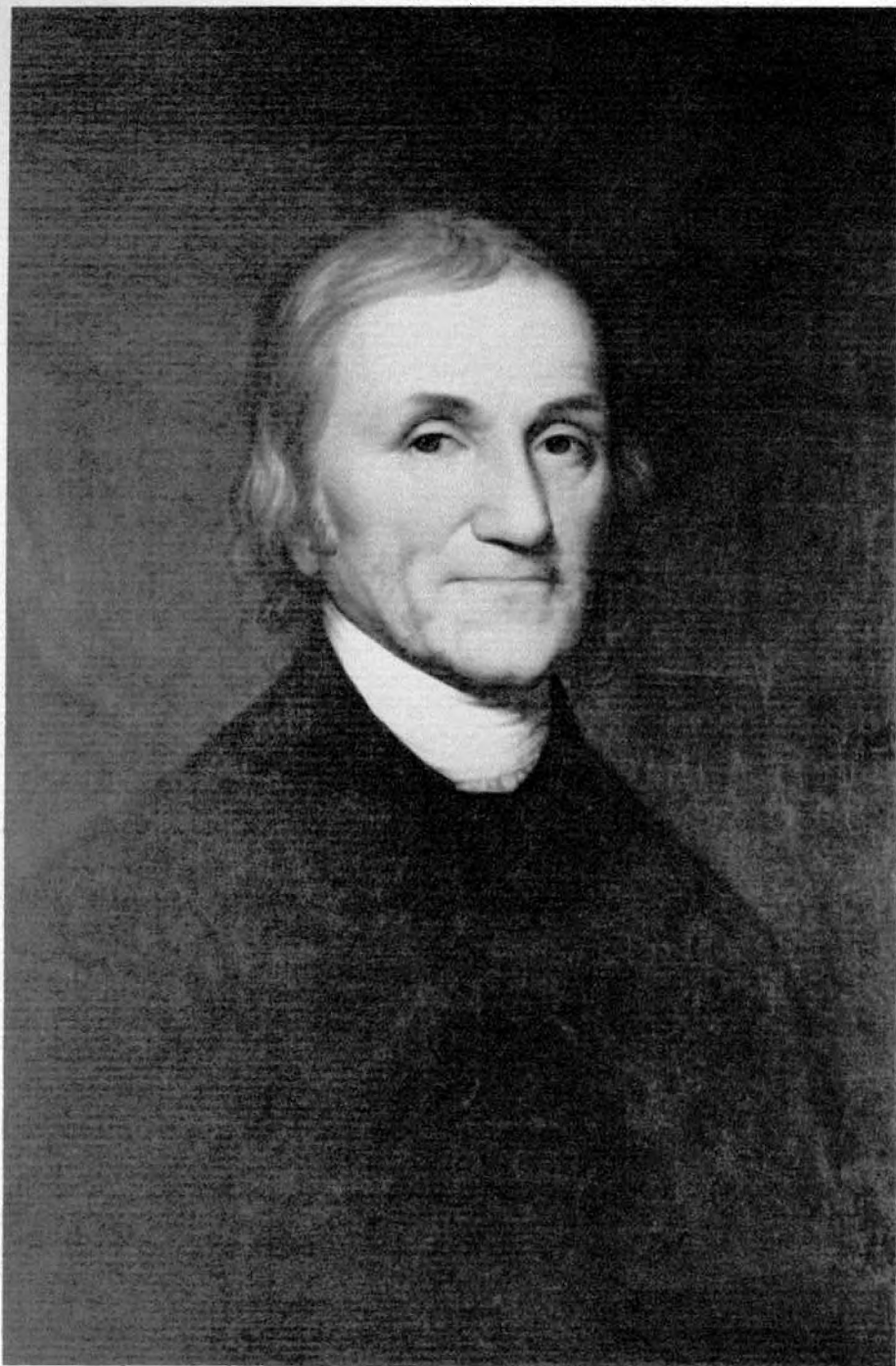
These elements form, together, a resource of primary importance to scholars. They are accompanied by portraits and relics which hold not only places of first importance to scholarship, but will always, for the general public, bring to life again something of the actual presence, and the warm humanity, of a very great man. These are described individually on the following pages.

THE REMBRANDT PEALE PORTRAIT

In 1801, Rembrandt Peale (1778-1860) painted a life portrait of Joseph Priestley for the Philadelphia Museum's gallery of distinguished persons, a painting now at the New-York Historical Society. Later, the artist made two replicas of this work, one for Dr. Caspar Wistar (1761-1818), and the other for John Vaughan (1756-1841). Wistar was successively Curator, Vice President and, after the retirement of Thomas Jefferson, President of the American Philosophical Society. Vaughan was Librarian of the Society over a long period of years, had been Priestley's friend in England and America, and remained the friend and business agent of Priestley children and grandchildren on both sides of the Atlantic.

Wistar's portrait has been owned by The Philosophical Society since 1818. Vaughan's, some years after his death, was acquired by Conyers Button, Philadelphia manufacturer, the grandfather of Mrs. Fay. It was then in poor condition, and he had it carefully restored and given a frame (since replaced) of an elaborate laurel-leaf design, following the traditional decoration surrounding the portrait of Priestley at the old house in Northumberland.

The Vaughan portrait is on a canvas $26\frac{1}{4} \times 20\frac{3}{8}$ inches in size. It has one noteworthy difference from all others. He had the artist add a background of books, with titles from Priestley's own vast *oeuvre*. It is, in short, a librarian's portrait of a man who had been himself a librarian, and as such a work singularly appropriate to the dominant place it will occupy in the treasure room of the Dickinson College Library.



Joseph Priestley: The portrait painted by Rembrandt Peale for Priestley's friend, John Vaughan.

THE BERNI BUST

A plaster bust, 11½ inches in height and signed on the back "P. Berni/Birmingham," must have been made during Priestley's residence there, 1780-1791. Only one other example, in England in the last century, is recorded. The sculptor is unknown. He is not listed among the artists employed by Wedgwood, but may have been at one of the Staffordshire potteries, or at the Birmingham works of Matthew Boulton and James Watt.



By Berni



By Wedgwood; see following page.

THE WEDGWOOD PROFILE

The most famous of all Priestley likenesses, and that which has been most often repeated in varying forms, is the ceramic plaque first published in Josiah Wedgwood's series of "Illustrious Moderns." In Mrs. Fay's gift we have a plaster cast of the original model, made in London probably in 1777, and certainly before 1780. It is an oval, $10\frac{5}{8}$ x $9\frac{1}{8}$ inches in size, and bears under the shoulder the signature, "Ceracchi fecit," thus linking Priestley to a sculptor of great brilliance and even more radical views in politics and religion. Giuseppi Ceracchi (1751-1802), the stormy-tempered and implacable Roman artist, was then an exile in England from persecution by the tyrants he abhorred, had a tempestuous career in America also, and died on the guillotine in the aftermath of a conspiracy to destroy Napoleon Bonaparte by infernal machine.

Mrs. Fay's gift contains also examples of the Wedgwood medallion in the more familiar small size, the early type entirely in black jasper, another in white on black, a casting in brass, and in still smaller size four intaglio jewels and two seals, symbols of the personal allegiance of Priestley's followers in the early days. Many of the Wedgwood portraits were updated in Nineteenth Century issues, by a change to informal costume, and the wig replaced by natural hair. The collection's example of this is in the famous white on blue, and again in a rare large-size oval, $12\frac{15}{16}$ x $9\frac{9}{16}$ inches. A numerous group of contemporary engravings show other variations and echoes of the famous likeness.

THE ORGAN

The little organ brought to America with the Priestley family in 1794 evokes, as few other relics could do, the simple, warm humanity of the head of the house. The instrument is one of Longman and Broderip's barrel organs. It must have been made in London sometime after 1783, and acquired by Joseph Priestley following the destruction of his furniture in 1791. The firm was headed first by James, then John Longman, with Francis Broderip of a famous family of organists as partner. They were at 26 Cheapside and 13 Hay Market, the addresses given on the maker's label, from 1783 to 1798.

A barrel organ is played by simply turning a crank. This operates a small bellows and rotates a cylinder, or "barrel," on which protruding pins open the valves to play the tune. The barrel can be removed and another substituted, and Priestley's organ is equipped with three, bringing him a total repertoire of 24 tunes. Their titles are on a hand-written label inside, as follows:

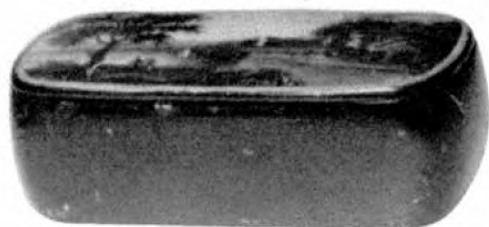
BARREL NO. 1		9 Foundling Hymn
1-4	The Coronation Anthem	10 Abingdon
5-7	Handells Water Piece	
8-9	Down the Burn and thro the Wood	BARREL NO. 3
10	Dear Image of ye Maid	1 And are You sure ye News is true
BARREL NO. 2		2 My Lodging is on ye cold ground
1	Evening Hymn. Magd [ale] n.	3 Malbrook
2	The Angells Hymn	4 Ah sure a Pair
3	The Easter Hymn	5 Gramachree
4	The Lord my Pasture	6 Birks of Endermay
5	The 104 Psalm	7 Lochaber
6	The 100th Psalm	8 Jamie
7	Hotham	9 The Soldiers Joy
8	Islington	10 The top sails shiver &c



The Barrel Organ



The "Etruscan Profile"



The Snuff Box

OTHER MEMORABILIA

A relic of very immediate personal interest is Joseph Priestley's snuff box, made, as most of them were in the eighteenth century, of papier maché. Its size is somewhat unusual, $3\frac{3}{4} \times 1\frac{1}{8}$ and $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches in height—large but not too large for the wide pocket of that day. It is probably of Austrian manufacture, is lined with lead foil, and decorated on the lid with a painting of a landscape and river scene.

Another association item of great interest is a small profile portrait, $4\frac{1}{4} \times 3\frac{1}{4}$ inches, painted in red, on a convex glass, with a black background. It is signed at the base, "M. SPORNBERG, invenit, Bath 1792." It was in that year that Jacob Spornberg of Sweden ("Mr. Spornberg" in all his announcements), first advertised his "Newly Invented Etruscan Profiles." The subject of Joseph Priestley's "Etruscan Profile" resembles Josiah Wedgwood but may be some other friend and collaborator.

Priestley's fame has been commemorated in medals of various sorts, from his own day to ours, and a number of these are in the Dickinson College collection. One of the best known, by John Gregory Hancock of Birmingham is here in silver, copper and white metal. The "Citizen of the World" medal is present also, and that issued by the Unitarian Chapel at Birmingham, while others are represented by plaster casts. Priestley seals are here also in various forms, including an electrotype of that used by him in dispatching his letters.

Other memorabilia in the collection covers too wide a range for individual listing, extending from fragments of original scientific apparatus, the Priestley bookplate (made for Joseph Priestley, Jr. by James Baylis Allen of Birmingham, one of the great landscape engravers of his day), and on down to such more distant echoes of his fame as the bronze model of Frances Darlington's seated statue, with the artist's original study in crayon.



F. J. Williamson, 1874



Wedgwood, later version



Ceracci model of Wedgwood, c. 1777

The Priestley Family

No genealogy of the Priestley Family has been published, though such a work could be one of unusual interest and value. The brief summary offered here, in which lacunae abound and error may be lurking, is intended partly as a guide to the papers in Mrs. Fay's gift, and partly as an initial contribution to scholarship in this area. The Priestley Family Bible (lent to us by Mrs. Fay) has been its principal source. It is a Birmingham imprint, Pearson and Rollason, 1790, and its five closely-written pages of entries are the compilation of the Northumberland family. From letters, documents, books, pamphlets and clippings in our own collection and elsewhere other data have been drawn. Dr. Robert E. Schofield, author of the recent *Lunar Society of Birmingham*, and now embarked on the monumental task of a definitive Priestley biography, has made important additions. Others have come from members of the family, particularly from Mrs. Temple Fay, and Mrs. Harrison Townsend (Marian Priestley Toulmin).

ANCESTRY

Bessie Rayner Belloc, one of the few writers concerned with Joseph Priestley's home life apart from philosophy and science, described the family background in an article in *The Contemporary Review*, October, 1894, as Yorkshire folk of "old Presbyterian stock." One branch, at Whiteways, had become wealthy, but Joseph's "own immediate ancestors were farmers and clothiers, people of substance in the yeoman class. We can trace them accurately as far back as the middle of the seventeenth century, when one Phoebe Priestley, after wrestling with fever in her household, was herself stricken and 'lay like a lamb before the Lord' on her death-bed. Her husband wrote a long and touching account of all she said and did, that her children might know what manner of mother they had lost. These people were presumably of the same stock as the Priestleys of Soylands, who run back into the Middle Ages."

1. JOSEPH PRIESTLEY, b. 1660; m. SARAH HEALEY; d. Aug. 2, 1745.
Children, 5 sons and 3 daughters, including:
 - i. SARAH, b. 1692; m. JOHN KEIGHLY; d. 1764.
JOHN KEIGHLY, d. 1745.
 - ii. JOHN, b. c. 1694; d. Feb. 28, 1786.
2. iii. JONAS, b. c. 1700.
2. JONAS PRIESTLEY, b. c. 1700; m. MARY SWIFT.
MARY SWIFT, dau. of Joseph Swift, d. 1739.
Children, 4 sons and 2 daughters, including:
 3. i. JOSEPH, b. March 13, 1733.
 - ii. TIMOTHY, b. June 19, 1734; d. April 23, 1814. This was the theologically orthodox and personally eccentric brother who opposed Joseph's views so often with a jocose exuberance. His son, the REV. WILLIAM PRIESTLEY, was b. 1768; d. 1827.
 - iii. JOSHUA.
 - iv. MARTHA, m. JOHN CROUCH; d. 1812.
JOHN CROUCH, d. 1786.

DESCENDANTS

1. JOSEPH PRIESTLEY, b. March 13, 1733; m. June 23, 1762, MARY WILKINSON; d. Feb. 6, 1804.
MARY WILKINSON, dau. of Isaac Wilkinson, b. May 14, 1742; d. Sept. 17, 1796.
Children:
 2. i. SARAH, b. April 27, 1763.
 3. ii. JOSEPH, b. July 24, 1768.
 4. iii. WILLIAM, b. May 7, 1771.
 - iv. HENRY, b. May 24, 1777; d. Dec. 11, 1795.
2. SARAH PRIESTLEY, b. April 17, 1763; m. Jan. 17, 1786, WILLIAM FINCH; d. 1831.
Children (surname Finch):
 - i. JOHN. John Finch and his sisters are seen only in glimpses in the Priestley family letters. Yet John was the author of a work which shows the inquiring, speculative mind active also in this branch, *Travels in the United States and Canada, containing Some Account of their Scientific Institutions, and a few notices of the Geology and Mineralogy of those Countries. To which is added, an Essay on the Natural Boundaries of Empires*, London, 1833.
 - ii. WILLIAM, d. 1804.
 - iii. CATHARINE, living, 1825.
 - iv. LUCY, m. BROWN.
3. JOSEPH PRIESTLEY, JR., b. July 24, 1768; m. (1) April 13, 1792, ELIZABETH RYLAND; m. (2) April 2, 1825, LUCINDA BARTON; d. Sept. 2, 1833.
ELIZABETH RYLAND, b. Oct. 25, 1769; d. May 8, 1816.
LUCINDA BARTON, dau. of Dr. Joshua Toulmin (1740-1815), b. Dec. 28, 1769; d. May 8, 1844.
Children:
 5. i. JOSEPH RAYNER, b. March 23, 1793.
 6. ii. ELIZABETH RAYNER, b. Aug. 28, 1797.
 - iii. LINDSEY, b. July 21, 1801; d. June 22, 1822.
 7. iv. MARIANNE, b. July 26, 1803.
 8. v. SARAH, b. April 28, 1807.

4. WILLIAM PRIESTLEY, b. May 7, 1771; m. MARGARET FOULKE.

William Priestley became a successful sugar planter of St. James Parish, La. A letter from Margaret Priestley, Jan. 15, 1840, tells of her journey southward after a visit to the Pennsylvania family, accompanied by her daughter, Catherine Caroline, her son-in-law, Henry Dickenson Richardson, and their baby. The baby was Henry Hobson Richardson (1838-1886), who was to become one of the towering figures in the history of American architecture.

5. JOSEPH RAYNER PRIESTLEY, b. March 23, 1793; m. April 22, 1817, FRANCES DUNDAS BIDDLE; d. Nov. 10, 1863.

FRANCES DUNDAS BIDDLE, dau. of Marks John and Jane (Dundas) Biddle, b. July 10, 1798; d. Dec. 18, 1878.

Children:

- i. JANE BIDDLE, b. Jan. 15, 1818; d. Sept. 20, 1831.
9. ii. JOSEPH, b. Sept. 23, 1819.
- iii. ELIZABETH RYLAND, b. Aug. 3, 1821; m. 1842, THOMAS LYON; d. Jan. 9, 1897.
10. iv. MARKS JOHN BIDDLE, b. Nov. 17, 1823.
 - v. A child, d. soon after birth.
 - vi. LINDSEY, b. Feb. 9, 1827; d. June, 1848.
11. vii. FRANCES BIDDLE, b. May 2, 1829.
 - viii. MARIANNE, b. Sept. 22, 1831; d. 1832.
12. ix. JANE DUNDAS, b. Oct. 3, 1833.
 - x. SARAH ANNE, b. May 10, 1836; d. Oct., 1852.

6. ELIZABETH RAYNER PRIESTLEY, b. Aug. 28, 1797; m. June 29, 1824, JOSEPH PARKES; d. after 1874.

JOSEPH PARKES, b. Jan. 22, 1796; d. Aug. 11, 1865.

Children (surname Parkes):

- i. JOSEPH PRIESTLEY, b. July 20, 1825; d. June 26, 1850.
13. ii. ELIZABETH RAYNER, b. June 16, 1829.

7. MARIANNE PRIESTLEY, b. July 26, 1803; m. Jan. 1833, REV. WILLIAM BOWEN; d. Melbourne, Australia, Sept. 20, 1873.

WILLIAM BOWEN, d. 1872.

Children (surname Bowen):

i. WILLIAM, b. June 17, 1834.

ii. LINDSEY PRIESTLEY, b. July 1, 1835.

iii. THOMAS AUBREY, b. Dec. 21, 1837; m. 1870, Melbourne, Australia, JANE MILLER.

iv.

8. SARAH PRIESTLEY, b. April 28, 1807; m. July 13, 1844, ROBERT ARNOLD WAINEWRIGHT; d. March 6, 1891.

Child (surname Wainewright):

i. SARAH PRIESTLEY, b. Nov. 28, 1848.

9. JOSEPH PRIESTLEY, b. Sept. 23, 1819; M.D., U. of Penna., 1844; m. March 4, 1847, HANNAH H. TAGGART; d. March 10, 1883.

HANNAH H. TAGGART, b. Sept. 10, 1825; d. Sept. 28, 1894.

Children:

i. HANNAH TAGGART, m. REV. HASKET DERBY CATLIN.

A son, Joseph Priestley Catlin, is recorded in 1933 as the owner of a Gilbert Stuart portrait of his famous ancestor.

ii. JOSEPH RAYNER, d. young.

iii. FRANCES, D., b. 1852; m. WILLIAM FORSYTH; d. Aug. 21, 1929.

iv. ANNIE S.

v. JEAN BIDDLE.

10. MARKS JOHN BIDDLE PRIESTLEY, b. Nov. 17, 1823; m. 1849, MARY MCCALLA TAGGART.

Children:

i. LINDSEY, b. Sept. 13, 1850; d. 1875. Among his descendants are a daughter, Margaret, wife of Dr. James H. Russell, and a granddaughter, Frances Priestley Russell, wife of Charles W. Peckworth.

ii. JAMES TAGGART, b. July 19, 1852. Beginning the study of medicine with his uncle, Dr. Joseph Priestley, he graduated, M.D., U. of Penna., 1872, and settled in Des Moines, Ia., 1874. His son, Dr. Crayke Simpson Priestley (1875-1904), and his grandsons, Drs. Joseph Biddle Priestley (b. 1901) and James Taggart Priestley (b. April 7, 1903), have carried on the family tradition of medical service.

11. FRANCES BIDDLE PRIESTLEY, b. May 2, 1829; m. Sept. 13, 1859, HARRY THEOPHILUS TOULMIN; d. Birmingham, Ala., Feb. 8, 1916.

HARRY THEOPHILUS TOULMIN, b. 1813; Capt., U.S.A., 1846-48; Col., C.S.A., 1861-65; d. July 1, 1870. Harry T. Toulmin's grandfather, the learned Dr. Joshua Toulmin (1740-1815) had been Joseph Priestley's close friend and ally. His father, the Rev. Harry Toulmin, b. April 7, 1766, and d. Nov. 11, 1823, had accompanied Priestley into American exile, settling in the South, where he served as President of Transylvania College, Secretary of the State of Kentucky, and a judge of the Mississippi Territory.

Children (surname Toulmin):

- i. FRANCES PRIESTLEY, b. Jan. 4, 1861; d. April 25, 1928.
- ii. PRIESTLEY, b. April 4, 1863.
- iii. HARRY, b. Nov. 4, 1865; m. (1) BERTHA L. TOWNSEND; m. (2) RUTH D. SPRAGUE.

Two daughters were born to each marriage, Marian Priestley Toulmin (Mrs. Harrison Townsend), Frances Biddle Toulmin (Mrs. Hoyt S. Griffith), Elizabeth Davis Toulmin, and Harrie Toulmin.

12. JANE DUNDAS PRIESTLEY, b. Dec. 3, 1833; m. Dec. 25, 1862, CONYERS BUTTON; d. Jan. 9, 1908.

CONYERS BUTTON, son of John and Ann (Wass) Button, b. July 2, 1836; d. June 26, 1924.

Child (surname Button):

14. i. JOSEPH PRIESTLEY, b. Jan. 1, 1864.

13. ELIZABETH (BESSIE) RAYNER PARKES, b. June 16, 1829; m. Sept. 19, 1867, LOUIS SWANTON BELLOC; d. March 23, 1925.

LOUIS SWANTON BELLOC, d. Aug. 19, 1872.

Children (surname Belloc):

- i. MARIE ADELAIDE, b. Aug. 5, 1868; m. FREDERIC SAWREY (ARCHIBALD) LOWNDES; d. Nov. 14, 1947.
FREDERICK SAWREY LOWNDES, d. March 26, 1840.
- ii. (JOSEPH) HILAIRE, b. July 27, 1870; m. 1896, ELODIE AGNES HOGAN; d. July 16, 1953.

14. JOSEPH PRIESTLEY BUTTON, b. Jan. 1, 1864; m. June 20, 1894, AMELIA WHITE HUTCHINSON; d. Dec. 22, 1931.

AMELIA WHITE HUTCHINSON, dau. of Marion and Mary Johnson (Gale) Hutchinson, b. July 29, 1874; d. Jan. 20, 1951.
Children (surname Button):

15. i. MARION HUTCHINSON, b. Oct. 18, 1896.
- ii. CONYERS, b. Dec. 8, 1898; m. Sept. 28, 1918, MARIE LOUISE DUNHAM.

15. MARION HUTCHINSON BUTTON, b. Oct. 18, 1896; m. June 8, 1923, DR. TEMPLE (SEDGWICK) FAY.

TEMPLE (SEDGWICK) FAY, b. Jan. 9, 1895; d. March 7, 1963.

Children (surname Fay):

- i. JANE DUNDAS, b. Feb. 27, 1925; m. Aug. 11, 1951, QUINLEY R. SHULZ.
- ii. ALICE AMELIA, b. June 10, 1926; m. May 18, 1951, ROBERT C. HUTTON.
- iii. MARION BIDDLE, b. Feb. 6, 1931; m. April 19, 1965, DAVID CHRISTIAN HENNY, III.
- iv. MARIE LOUISE, b. June 6, 1937; m. Sept. 17, 1959, REV. SAMUEL R. HAZLETT.

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MRS. TEMPLE FAY is a native of Philadelphia, where she has long been active in community affairs, and where her husband attained international eminence as a pioneer in neurology and neurosurgery. She has cooperated with the Medical Sciences Division of the Smithsonian Institution in contributing memorabilia of Dr. Fay, both to the scientific collections and a bibliographical work now in preparation. In presenting the papers and relics of her ancestor, Dr. Priestley, to Dickinson College, she acted to preserve on a permanent foundation, and open to scholarship, a collection representing a lifelong interest of her father, Joseph Priestley Button, Philadelphia manufacturer and artist.

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