

Adam Rankin of Kentucky

Rev. Adam Rankin, author of the first book ever printed in Kentucky, was born in Pennsylvania, March 24, 1755. He was graduated from Liberty Hall, now Washington and Lee University, Lexington, Virginia, when about twenty-five years of age; and two years later he was licensed to preach by the Virginia Presbytery. Rev. Rankin came to Lexington, Kentucky, in 1784, to accept the pastorate of the Presbyterian church.

The brethen of the church of Rev. Rankin made life unbearable for him, and he went to London, where he remained for two years. When he did return to Kentucky it was to face a number of accusations and a church trial, wherein he was finally suspended.

Rev. Rankin was a strange, eccentric man, a dreamer of dreams, a Kentucky Luther, and, perhaps, a bit crazed with the bitter opposition his views received. His latest, boldest dream was that Jerusalem was about to be rebuilt and that he must hurry there in order to assist in the rebuilding.

He bade his Lexington flock farewell, and started to the Holy City, but, on November 25, 1827, death overtook him at Philadelphia. Rev. Rankin was the author of several theological works, but his *A Process in the Transylvania Presbytery, &c.* (Maxwell and Gooch, At the Sign of the Buffalo, Main Street, Lexington, 1793), is the first book ever printed in Kentucky, if the Kentucky Acts which John Bradford published in the same year be excepted. Many days were required to print this little book of Rankin upon the hand-press of the publishers, though it contained but ninety-six pages, divided into five parts.

Source: Bibliography. History of the Presbyterian Church in Kentucky, by R. H. Davidson (New York, 1847); The Centenary of Kentucky, by R. T. Durrett (Louisville, Kentucky, 1892).