



REV. I. F. PETTIBONE, D.D.

Rev. Ira Fayette Pettibone, Chaplain, F&S, 74 IL Infantry, US

- 1824 March 24: Pettibone was born in Lawrence County, NY to Doras and Eliza Pettibone.
- 1850 September 17: The U.S. Federal Census enumerated in Stockholm, Saint Lawrence, NY showed an adult Fayette, a teacher, living with his parents. His father, Doras, was a farmer.
- 1854 Graduated from Andover Theological Seminary.
- 1855 Began missionary work in Turkey.
- 1864 July 1: Rev. Pettibone, newly back in the United States from Turkey, enlisted in the U.S. Army as chaplain. He mustered into service to the F&S of 74 IL Infantry near Atlanta, GA.
 - November 30: Rev. Pettibone's regiment was present and fighting at the Battle of Franklin.
- 1865 June 10: Mustered out of the U.S. Army in Nashville, TN.

After the war Rev. Pettibone returned to Turkey and spent the rest of his life doing missionary work.

1893 December 13: Filed for and received a military pension for his service during the Civil War.

1897 March 8: Reverend Ira Fayette Pettibone died in Winnebago County, IL.

Biographical Sketch

Rev. Ira Fayette Pettibone, D.D., 1824-1897

By Rev. W.A. Farnsworth, D.D.

Dr. Pettibone was an all-around man. With great modesty he combined great efficiency. He did a good work and a great variety of it, and made no noise about it. One who knew him longest and most intimately writes of two special characteristics, namely, "absolute freedom from care" and "absolute freedom from self-seeking."

His boyhood home was a somewhat humble one. A cousin of his is reported as saying, "I have often seen him lying prostrate on the floor studying by the light of a pine knot." Of course he progressed well in his studies. Born at Stockholm, N.Y., March 24, 1824, he was graduated from Union College in 1849, from Andover Theological Seminary in 1854, and in 1855 he entered upon his life work in Turkey.

He never married, and for this reason it was easy for him to do pioneer work. Early in his missionary life he was sent into the wilds of northwest Asia Minor. One of his experiences at that time showed the self-determination of the man. He suffered from severe toothache, and resolved to have the tooth extracted. There was no dentist, and no dental instruments except an old fashioned bullet mold, not altogether unlike the old turnkey, and this, in his own hand, served for his relief.

The demands of the work did not allow him to remain long in the interior, and he was called back to Constantinople. After a little he was sent again into the interior, but this time it was as a teacher in the Theological Seminary at Marsovan. The larger part of his life, however, was spent in Constantinople. Perhaps no missionary has engaged in quite such a variety of strictly missionary services as did Dr. Pettibone. Indeed, I do not think of any branch of the work in which he was not employed at one time or another. For many years he was a treasurer of the mission. For this position he had received no special training, but he met the heavy demands of the office in a way that was entirely satisfactory. One peculiarity was that he could not only adapt himself to so many different kinds of work, but that he could do each so well. Whether treasurer of the mission, or recording secretary, or teacher in the Theological Seminary, or translator, or editor, or tourist, in each he was a success. In Turkey, when a building is to be erected or any extensive repairs made, the work of supervision is of the first importance. In this

work, especially in building the American College for girls, Dr. Pettibone did important service. One of his good gifts was music. He was a sweet singer.

While working in so many departments and, as was often said, doing the full work of two men, Dr. Pettibone was at the same time a peculiarly companionable man. He was well read and had an exhaustible fund of illustration and of anecdote well in hand, which made him a good talker. He was exceedingly fond of a play. My earliest recollection of him is as I saw him on the playground in Andover in 1851. That love of play never left him. Indeed, about the only criticism that I remember to have heard of him was that he ought not to spend so much time in games: but he never allowed play to interfere with work.

In 1864, he came to America, and, as would most naturally be expected from his intense patriotism, he at once enlisted in defense of his country. He was chaplain of the 74th Illinois Regiment of infantry. It has been said of him that he was an ideal chaplain. He was very affectionate and loved by everybody, and was a most acceptable guest. How all the children loved "Uncle Pettibone!" This love appeared among his soldiers. A few months ago one member of his regiment wrote him, "If you will come down here, the boys will carry you on their shoulders." His sister, who has cared for him most tenderly, when speaking of the funeral, writes: "One officer was present from an adjoining town, and had in his pocket a Testament which 'the chaplain' had given him, and which he had carried these thirty-two years in his pocket."

After all his wanderings this brother rests in the place in which we think, of all others, he would have preferred to rest. Two weeks before the summons came he returned to the little village of Rockton, Ill. He was then in about the same state of health in which he had been for many months. After a week he was attacked by the *grippe* and could not rally. In another week the end came (March 31, 1897).

At the last service his fellow-workers in Turkey could not be with him. Some of his fellow-soldiers were present. The sister writes: "The old soldiers of the town, in view of the fact that he was for one year a chaplain, begged to wrap the flag about him and act as bearers."

The one thing of which I remember to have heard him speak with something akin to pride was his godly ancestry. He rests beside his father and mother, a noble warfare ended.¹

¹ The Missionary Herald, v. 93, pg. 221 (googlebooks.com/accessed online 1/15/20)