



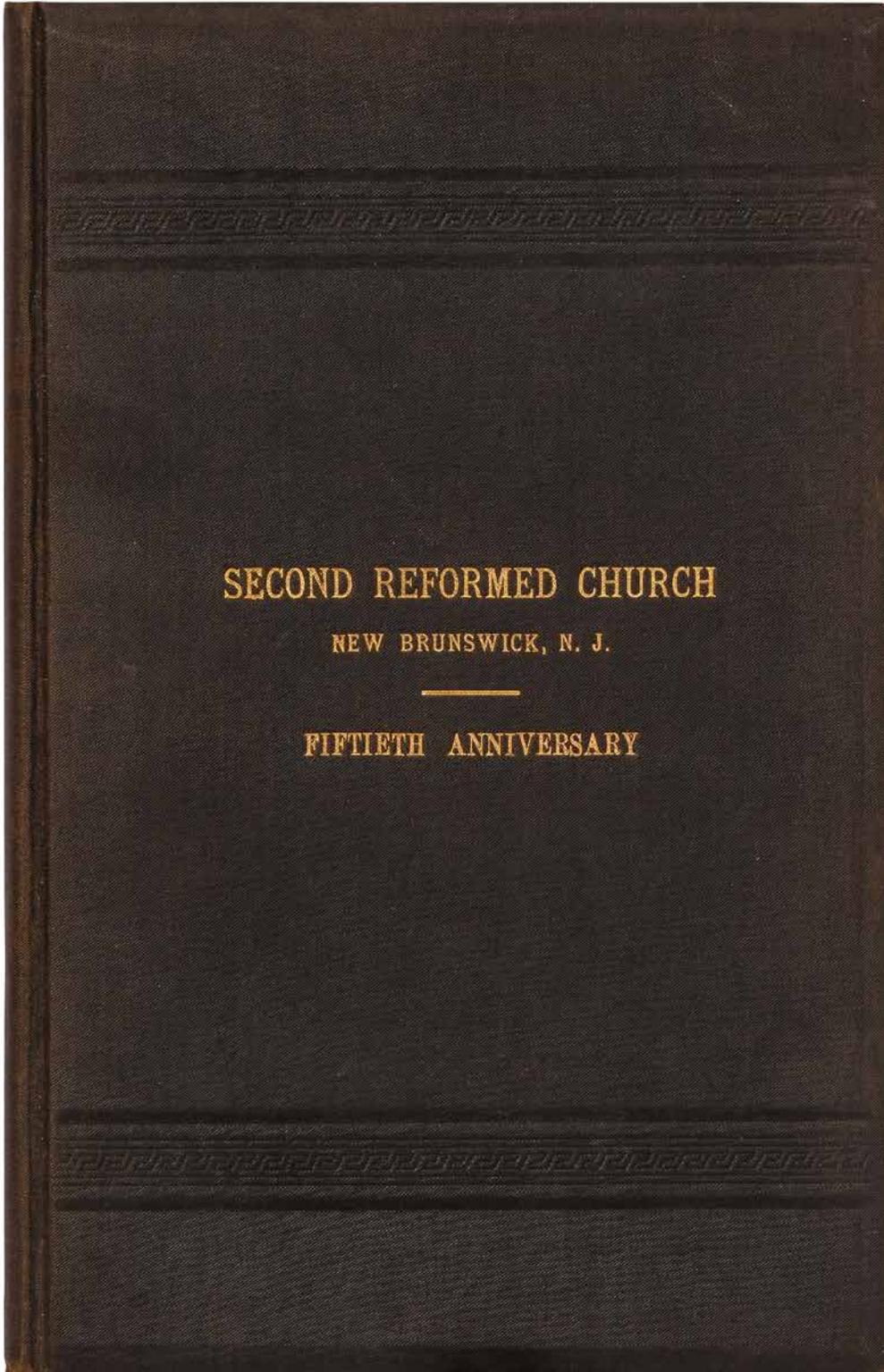
The Father of American College Football?

(Chester D. Hartranft, and others)

Celebration on the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Founding of the Second Reformed (Dutch) Church of New Brunswick, New Jersey

(Trenton, N.J.): Published by The Consistory / (The J.L. Murphy Publishing Co.) 1893

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First and only edition. Octavo. 71pp. Inserted portrait plates (including one of Hartranft). Black cloth titled in gilt and stamped in blind. One passage marketed in pencil in the text, else about fine. Inscribed by H. Albert Seiffert, the Church Historian, in 1969 to the director of the Rutgers' Public Relations Department.



CHESTER D. HARTRANFT, D.D.

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Laid in to the book is a letter from Seiffert to the Director of Sports Information responding to a query: This is in reference to your question... about the Reverend Chester D. Hartranft, pastor of this church 1866-1875, and the possibility of his being 'the father of American football... I particularly refer you to... page forty-eight. This is part of his, Mr. Hartranft's, address... when he returned here... in 1893. He said... How patiently you bore with my athletic proclivities, for I confess that... A KICK AT THE FOOT-BALL ON YONDER SEMINARY HILL, has sometimes a greater fascination for me than to enter the pulpit...'".

Hartranft did indeed form the Rutgers' College football team and arranged for them to play against Princeton in an attempt to exact revenge for a 40-2 drubbing that Rutgers had suffered from Princeton in baseball. The game, played on November 6, 1869, was the first college football game. According to *Rutgers Football: A Gridiron Tradition in Scarlet* "The closest thing the Rutgers Queensman had to a gridiron mentor was the Reverend Chester D. Hartranft... a self-confessed sportsman who enjoyed playing football. He convinced a group of young Rutgers athletes to pool their money to buy a communal football to use for practice sessions... Hartranft spent many hours working out with his energetic squad of young footballers... " Rutgers, despite having a team that was smaller in physical stature, won the first college football game six goals to four.

a youth, to do its weighty work. How patiently you bore with my athletic proclivities, for I must confess that a row in a boat on the tide high or low of the Raritan, or a kick at the foot-ball on yonder Seminary hill, had sometimes a greater fascination for me than to enter the pulpit, or to conduct an ecclesiastical ceremony, or to pay pastoral calls. How resignedly you suffered me to elaborate my musical schemes, which were so exceeding a comfort and

Very uncommon. OCLC locates nine copies over two records, all on the East Coast. [BTC#424576]

ADDRESS

BY

CHESTER D. HARTRANFT, D.D.

I return to you, my beloved people, with the weight of fifteen years' additional experience in life. My affection for you is undiminished, my interest in your prosperity and remarkable history undimmed and fresh. I bring you the warm salutations of that institution which called me from you, to undertake a labor for the churches of New England. Let me bear witness to the magnanimity and hospitality of the communion to which I now belong; their remembrance of Dutch generosity and brotherliness has not ceased to express itself in deeds of kindly reception and recognition. Nor has there ever been absent from me in the interval of our separation the longing for my mother church, and for this her noble daughter. Their glory and beauty are still my watch and joy.

No more eventful half-century has passed than the fifty years