

THE HISTORIOGRAPHER



OF THE NATIONAL EPISCOPAL HISTORIANS AND ARCHIVISTS
AND THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH
AND THE EPISCOPAL WOMEN'S HISTORY PROJECT

Published to promote the preserving of church records
and the writing of parochial and diocesan history

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Mississippi's provocative second bishop

Hugh Thompson's missionary vision is tarnished by arrogance and ambition

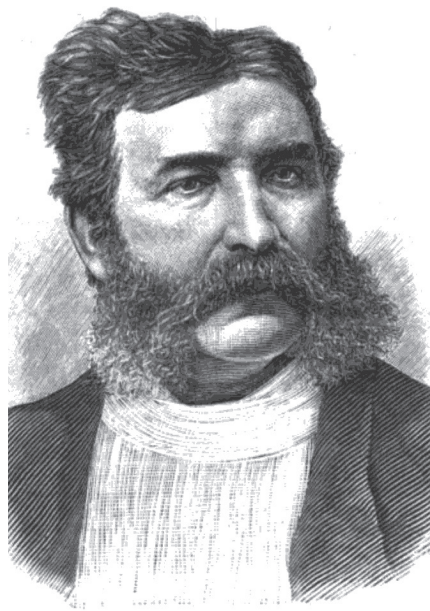
by Ben Block Jones II

The cathedra, or bishop's chair, would seem to be among the more durable and visible symbols of episcopal office, but in Mississippi the cathedra of the diocese's second bishop spent most of the past century in Masonic lodges and eventually in a corn crib.

It wasn't until 2014 that the chair finally found its way home when the past grand master of Mississippi Freemasons donated the chair to the historic Episcopal church, Chapel of the Cross, in the Mannsdale area of Madison County.

In March 2014, Alva Hill "Red" Rutledge, Past Grand Master of Mississippi, donated the cathedra of the Rt. Rev. Hugh Miller Thompson, the second bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Mississippi, to Chapel of the Cross. This grand oriental style chair was brought from England for Thompson's use at St. Columb's chapel then-adjacent to his episcopal residence at Battle Hill in Jackson. The death of Thompson in 1902 sealed the fate of the chapel and with the completion of a new larger building for St. Andrew's Church, Jackson in 1903 (now St. Andrew's Cathedral), interest in St. Columb faded. By 1924, the chapel was in total disrepair and dismantled for salvage.

For a time, the chair may have been used as the Worshipful Master's chair



source: s

A rendering of the Rt. Rev. Hugh Miller Thompson as he appeared in March 1883 when serving as assistant bishop of Mississippi. Drawing was published in the June 1883 issue of Frank Leslie's Sunday Magazine.

at Circle Lodge No. 590 in the town of Madison Station. Hugh Graeme Thompson, the bishop's son, affiliated with the newly-chartered lodge in 1925 and served as its Tyler (junior officer of Masons) until his death in early 1928. When Circle Lodge No. 590 dissolved in 1938, the chair returned to the Thompson family. Though it stood in the hallway of the family's Madison home for several years,

the chair was eventually relegated to a ten-by-ten corn crib in a barn in the Thompson family's pasture.

In the early 1990s, Hugh Miller Thompson II, the bishop's grandson, gave the chair to Rutledge. Both men were civil engineers and members of North Jackson Lodge No. 620. Ever the collector and local historian, Rutledge had the chair restored at his own expense and lowered the height of chair two feet. Once restored, the cathedra was displayed first at Museum-Watt Carter Lodge No. 636 at the Mississippi Agricultural Museum and then relocated to the newly-built Circle Lodge No. 638, adjacent to Bruce Campbell Field Airport in Madison, where it was displayed for almost ten years.

Since the donation, the Chapel of the Cross has overseen further restoration on the cathedra consistent with the chapel's other furnishings, namely a darker stain and red upholstery. Unveiled to its congregants on Sunday, January 11, 2015, today the cathedra sits against the north chancel wall of that historic chapel.

The life and work of Bishop Hugh Miller Thompson made him one of the more prominent Freemasons of his day. His cathedra is an impressive memorable artifact of the man and one of the few tangible remnants of his tenure in office.

CONTINUED PAGE 7

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The National Episcopal Historians and Archivists were founded in 1961 to encourage every diocese, congregation, and organization in the Episcopal Church to collect, preserve, and organize its records and to share its history.

episcopalhistorians.org

The Historical Society of the Episcopal Church was founded in 1910 to promote the preservation of the particular heritage of the Episcopal Church and its antecedents, publish and distribute a scholarly historical journal and to cooperate with other societies concerned with the history of the Episcopal Church and the other churches of the Anglican Communion.

hsec.us

Begun on faith and the proverbial shoestring, The Episcopal Women's History Project was organized in 1980 by a handful of dedicated Episcopal Churchwomen in New York City. Formed to raise the consciousness and conscience of the Episcopal Church to the historic contributions of its women, EWHP began, and has continued to gather the life stories of Episcopal Churchwomen who have served God faithfully and selflessly.

ewhp.org

The *Historiographical Newsletter* was established in 1961 shortly after the founding of the National Episcopal Historians and Archivists (NEHA). It was later renamed *The Historiographer*, and in 1999 it became a joint publication of NEHA and the Historical Society of the Episcopal Church (HSEC). In 2018 the Episcopal Women's History Project (EWHP) became a joint publisher. Back issues are posted online two years after the original publication at <https://issuu.com/thehistoriographer>

IN THIS ISSUE

Cover, 7-14 Mississippi's Provocative Bishop

4 Commentary

5 Prichard Prize, elections, AAEHC news

6 NEHA/EWHP 2020 conference

13 Amateur Archivist

13 Deciphering an alms basin

15 Church puzzler

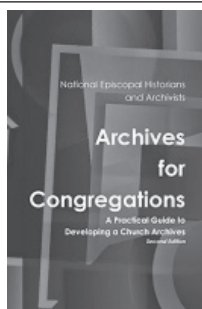
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Joint NEHA/EWCP Conference

*Women Transforming the Church:
Past, Present and Future*

July 13-16 2020 Maritime Institute, Baltimore
Call for Papers will be issued January 1, 2020



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Historiographer deadlines

Winter 2020: December 15

Spring 2020: April 15

Summer 2020: July 15

Autumn 2020: September 15

IN BRIEF

Davis Award presented to Phillip Ayers

The Davis Award for 2019 has been given to the Rev. Phillip Ayers, assistant at Trinity Cathedral, Portland, Oregon and book review editor for *The Historiographer*. Ayers received the award at the Tri-History Conference in Toronto this past June. The award recognizes Ayers "for his outstanding leadership in the National Episcopal Historians and Archivists." Ayers served as vice president of NEHA, conceived of the annual Fish Award, and hosted the annual NEHA conference in Portland in 2011. The Davis Award is named for the Rev. Canon John W. Davis who served as NEHA president for over a decade. At the 1993 NEHA Annual Meeting, incoming officers announced the creation of an award in his name to pay tribute to outstanding contributions a NEHA member has made to the organization and/or the field of Episcopal Church history and archives.

South Dakota church's bell will ring again

The theft of a century-old church bell has been a disheartening blow to the congregation at St. Paul's Episcopal Church just north of Norris, South Dakota. The bell, a beloved fixture of the local community, was discovered missing in early January 2018, and it has never been found or returned. Another South Dakota congregation, about 100 miles to the east, has been struggling with a different kind of loss: the closure of its church. The Episcopal Church of the Incarnation in Gregory, South Dakota, shut its doors for good on Christmas Day 2018, and church leaders began offering furnishings from the Church of the Incarnation to other churches in the region. Among those furnishings: a bell, hanging more than 25 feet up in the church's steeple.

The two churches are both part of the Rosebud Episcopal Mission, which ministers to a region that includes the Rosebud Indian Reservation. Now, church leaders and worshippers from across the Rosebud Episcopal Mission are celebrating the gift of Incarnation's old bell to the congregation in Norris, where it will become a next-best-case replacement for St. Paul's stolen bell.

reported by Episcopal News Service

AAEHC travel grants deadline January 17

Travel reimbursement grants are available to individuals who would like to use the African American Episcopal Historical Collection (AAEHC) for research. Faculty, graduate students, undergraduates, independent researchers, and Episcopal clergy and laypersons are encouraged to apply. Funds may be used for transportation, meals, lodging, photocopying, and other research costs.

The AAEHC is a joint project of the Historical Society of the Episcopal Church and the Virginia Theological Seminary. The Application Deadline is January 17, 2020. Travel must occur between May 1, 2020 and June 30, 2021.

For more information, visit vts.edu/aaehc.

Do we forgive or simply let go?

commentary — David Skidmore



Nearing the three-year anniversary of the nation's descent into the moral and ethical quagmire of the Trump administration, it may be time to weigh the choices facing liberal-minded and faithful Christians. Whatever comes from the impeachment hearings and deliberations (underway at the time of my writing), any riddance of Trump and

his enablers, given the deference to the president by GOP senators, may have to wait until the general election a year from now. And that outcome will likely turn on the chaos and confusion churned by Russian trolls and bots, and the obstinate loyalty of Trump's core supporters.

This is not the summer of 1974 when Republican senators told Nixon he had two unpleasant options: resign or remain in office and face certain conviction in a Senate trial. It is more like the late 1850s when Congress and the people were bitterly split north and south over slavery, its expansion to new territories, and the nature of the republic. Invective and intolerance ruled. The Supreme Court was stacked with Southerners, most notably Chief Justice Roger Taney, architect of the Dred Scott decision rendering African Americans non-citizens. On the floor of the senate South Carolina Representative Preston Brooks caned Massachusetts Senator Charles Sumner unconscious after Sumner defended keeping Kansas a slave-free state in a speech that was riddled with defamatory statements toward his Southern colleagues.

Then as now, statesmanship was drowned out by factionalism. But at least Abraham Lincoln was in the wings, ready to take the stage as president, and fulfill his solemn duty "to preserve, protect, and defend" the Constitution. Here and now we have the baser equivalent of populist Andrew Jackson disparaging career foreign service and intelligence staff, bribing a foreign power to interfere in U.S. elections, and intimidating witnesses in a Constitutional process he labels "a coup."

The mounting—and damning—evidence emerging since the release of the redacted Mueller Report and now the impeachment hearings in the House should leave no doubt that Trump met the Constitutional test of "high crimes and misdemeanors" as conditions for impeachment, and arguably the specific offenses in Article II of treason and bribery. His abuse of power includes obstructing Congressional and Special Counsel investigations, reaping financial profit from his position as president, misdirecting Congressional appropriations, and extorting the president of Ukraine for political gain. Any one of these by his two predecessors would have resulted in a trial in the Senate. But that will not happen given the hypocrisy and moral bankruptcy on display on the GOP side of the House and Senate.

Impeachment is a high bar to reach: Since the ratification of the Constitution in 1789 the House has conducted 62 impeachment proceedings of which 19 led to impeachment and of those just eight resulted in conviction in the Senate. All eight were

judges. Regarding the other 11, seven were federal judges, one was a senator, one a Cabinet secretary, and the other two presidents (Andrew Johnson and Bill Clinton). Failed impeachments, at the presidential level, can have grave consequences. Johnson's acquittal in 1868 gave him a free hand in warping Lincoln's Reconstruction plans of empowering freed slaves toward a restitution of Southern white power. As Jill Lepore points out in a recent issue of *The New Yorker*, Johnson's failed impeachment set the stage for a century of racial segregation and Jim Crow laws, not to be undone until another President Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act and Voting Rights Act into law in the mid-1960s.

Whichever route—impeachment or election—proves productive in vacating the White House, progressives will still face the challenge of detoxifying the political and cultural discourse, and restoring civil society. That's a tall order given the mutual distrust of left and right. This unrelenting division of identity and belief did not begin with Trump, but it certainly accelerated and hardened. Things started falling apart and the center started crumbling during the Reagan years and the chasm continued to widen when the Tea Party took the stage during Obama's first term. Trump's ascent in 2016 was not fueled by his vision as much as by the fears and prejudice of the white, conservative voters he targeted, the Moral Majority. Attitudes on issues amplified by Trump—immigration, nationalism, minority rights—were the motivating issues for Trump voters not economic worry according to a recent University of Kansas study.

To this stew of white anxiety the rise of conservative evangelicalism through the 1980s and 90s added a fiery backlash to liberalizing attitudes towards LGBTQ rights, women's rights, gun control, environmental protection and immigration. Branded by the likes of Pat Robertson, Jerry Falwell, Franklin Graham and now prosperity gospel preachers like Paula White, Trump's new spiritual advisor, Christianity is now regarded as much as the problem as the solution by young progressives.

So what are we to do with this mess? I for one would like to scream at all of them in a people's court, Mitch McConnell, Jim Jordan, Kevin McCarthy, Lindsay Graham, Mike Pompeo and all the way down to many of my northern Wisconsin neighbors: What were you thinking? Have you no shame?

But where does that get us other than to perpetuate the cycle of recrimination we have been locked into for going on two decades?

As Christians we can show the nation the way toward restoration of our social compact through reconciliation and forgiveness, following the lead of South Africa and Rwanda which were more profoundly rent by bigotry and hatred than our society. In Rwanda it was handled in community courts—*gacaca*—where the perpetrators of the killings, having been convicted and served time in prison, met the survivors of their victims, testimony was given and confessions made and verified by other members of the community. Survivors then forgave the perpetrators. That was the process for Laurencia Muklamera, a Tutsi whose husband was macheteed to death by a neighbor.

SEE FORGIVE PAGE 6

Prichard Prize awarded to Peter Walker

The Historical Society of the Episcopal Church (HSEC) is pleased to announce the awarding of the Robert W. Prichard Prize to Peter W. Walker for his dissertation entitled, "The Church Militant: The American Loyalist Clergy and the Making of the British Counter-revolution, 1701-92." The dissertation was submitted in 2016 for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Columbia University. The project was awarded an ACLS-Mellon Dissertation Completion Fellowship for 2015-16 and was supported by the Massachusetts Historical Society, the American Philosophical Society, the Lewis Walpole Library, and the Historical Society of the Episcopal Church. Dr. Walker is visiting assistant professor in history at the University of Wyoming and is currently converting the dissertation into book form.

The Prichard Prize recognizes the best Ph.D., Th.D., or D.Phil. dissertation which considers the history of the Episcopal Church (including the British colonies that became the United States) as well as the Anglican church in the worldwide Anglican Communion. It is named to honor the Rev. Dr. Robert W. Prichard, longtime board member and president of the HSEC, noted historian and author in the discipline. The dissertation need not focus solely or even principally on the history of the Episcopal Church or Anglicanism.

The selection committee welcomes dissertations which place that history in conjunction with other strands of church history, or even place it in dialogue with non-ecclesial themes of American history. The Episcopal or Anglican element of the work should be a constitutive, not peripheral, part of the dissertation.

Applications received were reviewed by a selection committee, with recipients determined by the board of directors at their meeting in June at Trinity College, Toronto. The Rev. Dr. Lauren Winner, convener of the prize, announced the recipient.

For over a century HSEC has been an association dedicated to preserving and disseminating information about the history of the Episcopal Church. Founded in Philadelphia in 1910 as the Church Historical Society, its members include scholars, writers, teachers, ministers (lay and ordained) and many others who have an interest in the objectives and activities of the Historical Society.

Additional details may be found at hsec.us/grants.

NEHA officers and board members elected

At the annual meeting June 19 in Toronto, the National Episcopal Historians and Archivists (NEHA) elected three new board members to fill the seats of President Susan Stonesifer, Treasurer Matthew Payne, and board member Gloria Lund, all of whose terms were expiring. Elected treasurer was the Rev. Jim Biegler of the Diocese of Fond du Lac. Elected board members were the Rev. Rowena Kemp of the Diocese of Connecticut, and Newland Smith of the Diocese of Chicago.

Biegler is a retired priest living in Ellison Bay in Door County Wisconsin. He currently serves as the finance officer for the network of Episcopal Diocesan Ecumenical and Interreligious Officers, and as the treasurer of the National Association of Ecumenical Officers. His parish

ministry was served in the Dioceses of New Jersey, Western Louisiana, Central Florida and Dallas. After leaving stipendiary ministry he worked as a tax professional in Chicago.

Kemp, a native of Nassau, Bahamas, was recently appointed priest-in-charge of Grace Church in Hartford, Conn. She previously served as assistant rector at Trinity-on-the-Green in Hartford, and prior to that serving the Middlesex Area Cluster Ministry south of Hartford. While serving the Middlesex Area Cluster she worked as biorepository manager for the Applied Translational Research program at the Yale School of Medicine. She earned a Masters degree in public health from the New York Medical College School of Health Sciences and Practice; and a Master of Divinity from Berkeley Divinity School at Yale.

Smith retired in 2007 after 43 years as librarian for the former Seabury Western Theological Seminary in Evanston, IL. He is currently serving his second term as registrar and historiographer for the Diocese of Chicago, succeeding the late Richard Seidel for whom the diocesan archives were named following his death in 2013. Smith is a founding member of the diocesan Archives and Records Management Committee, and past member of the Board of the Archives of the Episcopal Church. He served as president of the *Anglican Theological Review* from 2011 to 2014.

At its September meeting, the NEHA board elected the Rev. Sean Wallace as president who had been serving as president pro tem on the retirement of Stonesifer. Wallace has appointed board member Jeannie Terepka as vice president.

AAEHC launches Twitter campaign to promote holdings

Over the past year the African American Episcopal Historical Collection has expanded its holdings and conducted a social media campaign in partnership with its hosting institution, Virginia Theological Seminary, to promote its holdings and encourage use of its collections. The #AAEHctbt campaign on Twitter posts a photo from AAEHC collections every third Thursday with a caption directing viewers to the AAEHC website. So far over 6,000 new visitors have gone to the website.

Three travel grants were awarded for research to Patti McGee-Colston, for her project "Conversations on Race;" Ronald Johnson for his study of the Haitian diaspora and African American Episcopalians in early America; and Rosemary Gooden for "Walter Decoster Dennis: Naming the Gospel, Living the Gospel."

A permanent Allan R. Crite art exhibit has been installed on the second level of Bishop Payne Library. The exhibit was unveiled in conjunction with the 2018 VTS Convocation.

Women Transforming the Church: Past, Present, Future

Joint Conference of the Episcopal Women's History Project
and the National Episcopal Historians and Archivists

July 13 - 16 2020
Maritime Institute
Baltimore, Maryland

The National Episcopal Historians and Archivists and the Episcopal Women's History Project will hold a joint conference July 13 through 16 at the Maritime Institute in Baltimore. "Women Transforming the Church: Past, Present, Future" is the title and theme for this 2020 conference which will feature the Rev. Gay Jennings, president of the House of Deputies, as the keynote speaker. Planners have invited two newly consecrated women bishops to speak at the conference. Registration is being handled by the EWHP. Information on registration, lodging and schedule will be posted by April 15, 2020 on the EWHP and NEHA websites.

Call for Papers will be issued **January 1, 2020**; papers and proposals deadline is **April 1, 2020**.

For further information contact Jeannie Terepka, NEHA vice president, at jbt75nyc@gmail.com or the Rev. Dr. Jo Ann Barker, EWHP president, at joann.barker@gmail.com



The Maritime Institute conference center is located 5 miles from Baltimore-Washington International (BWI) Thurgood Marshall Airport and the BWI Amtrak Train Station.

Highlights:

Opening worship with Dr. Fredrica Harris Thompsett, Mary Wolf Professor Emerita of historical theology at Episcopal Divinity School

Keynote address by the Reverend Gay Clark Jennings, President of the House of Deputies

Preview and discussion of *The Philadelphia Eleven*, "a documentary film about the women who defied the leadership of the Episcopal Church in 1974, and became the first women priests," by film-maker Margo Guernsey

Tour of the Archives of the Diocese of Maryland and Cathedral of the Incarnation.

commentary

Forgive

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

After eight years in prison the neighbor returned to the village of Mybo, one of the reconciliation villages set up by the government, and confessed and apologized to Muklalemera who forgave him. "I found I could not live with anger forever," she told Associated Press reporter Ignatius Ssuuna.

Few of us are willing to make that concession at this point in our dance with division. At best we could commission Fox and CNN for a series of town hall meetings in lieu of the gacaca model. But as individuals we can choose conversation over confrontation, listening over lecturing. For persons of faith, the

choice goes deeper: Do we forgive, or simply let go and thereby avoid the perilous path taken by conservative evangelicals over the past decade. It could be both, forgive and let go. As William Countryman notes in his book *Forgiven and Forgiving*, reconciliation requires two people but forgiveness is a unilateral exercise, by which we release both the offense and the offender.

"When the wrongdoer will not cooperate in a process of reconciliation, let the person go," says Countryman. "Let others find the path, with God's help, that will lead them to new life. Your own path is peace."

We need an accounting, but we also need healing. We can forgive those who betrayed our trust and our nation's principles even though they know not what they did, or do not care. And then we can let them go, and get on with restoring the republic.

A provocative and prideful bishop

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

Early Years

Hugh Miller Thompson was born in the civil parish of Tamlaught O’Crilly, County Derry, also known as Londonderry, Northern Ireland on Saturday, June 5, 1830 to John T. Thompson and Anne Miller (Millar) Thompson. While his parents were both Irish, the Thompson family was of English origin and belonged to the Church of England while the Millars were Scotch Presbyterians. He was named for his maternal grandfather, Hugh Millar. Six-year-old Hugh immigrated with his parents and infant brother to America in 1836. According to several sources, the family was shipwrecked in the Bay of St. Lawrence in Nova Scotia, losing all of their possessions. Settling first in Caldwell in Essex County, New Jersey, Hugh’s father worked as a carpenter and contractor-builder. In Camden, Hugh was a childhood classmate of Glover Cleveland. The Thompsons moved in 1844 to Cleveland, Ohio, where his father would live and work until his death, the elder Thompson supporting a wife and a growing family of seven children.

Although young Hugh received public schooling with some private tutoring in Cleveland, his brother Jarvis called him “a self-educated man—one who started out in life dependent upon his own resources.” Thompson would receive his theological training at Nashotah House Seminary, some thirty miles west of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He made the trip from Cleveland to Nashotah walking some five hundred miles only to find a tiny collection of shacks. Nashotah House was a relatively new institution cofounded by the first missionary of the Protestant Episcopal Church, the Rev. David Jackson Kemper of New York and three of his deacons in what were then considered the “frontier” areas of Wisconsin. Kemper was the church’s first missionary to the Native American peoples. He was steeped in the Oxford movement and the catholic revival in Anglicanism—what would today be termed an orthodox Anglo-Catholic tradition.

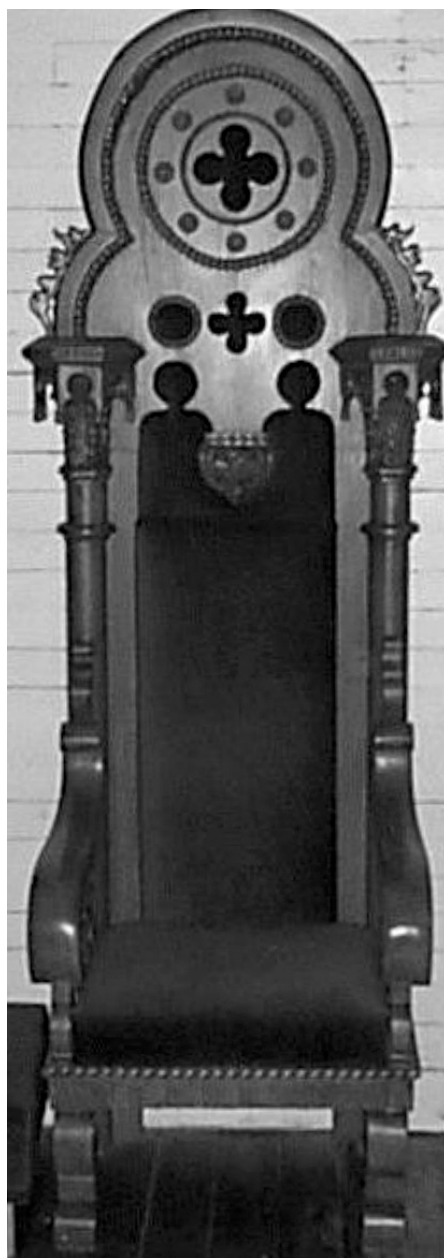


photo by Guy Bowering

Thompson’s restored cathedra in the chancel of the Chapel of the Cross, Madison County

After one year of study, Thompson was ordained a deacon at Nashotah on Sunday, June 6, 1852, by Bishop Kemper, who was now the first bishop of the newly-formed Diocese of Wisconsin. As deacon he occasionally accompanied Kemper on parish visits. He later recalled one harrowing visit in the depths of winter: “On Monday I was to take the Bishop to Baraboo. The river had frozen again, and he was expected at night. The thermometer was fifteen degrees below zero. The ride was seventeen miles, most of it along the banks of a frozen river and over a bare prairie, with the wind blowing bitterly the wrong way, right in our teeth. We could only get an open buggy; but the bishop was ready at eight a.m. to face the prairie. He preached twice, confirmed twice, and administered the communion; and having been on his feet till nine or ten at night, might be called pretty good for a sexagenarian. We bundled ‘the buffaloes’ as best we might, and started and after a ‘spicy’ ride, with the icicles hanging round our faces, arrived in Baraboo. The Bishop has an appointment for tonight at Madison, and after seeing him in the ‘express’ to ride again forty miles in this bitter weather, over the ‘bluffs’ and preach in another vacant parish when he has performed the journey, I rode home alone, feeling that not one of his clergy should dare complain.”

While at Nashotah, twenty-three year old Hugh married his first wife, Caroline Berry in February 1853. She was the sixteen year old daughter of Simeon Berry, a prominent figure in early Wisconsin who, like Kemper, came from New York State. Hugh’s diaconate was large and included the growing Apostolic Church, now called Grace Episcopal Church, some fifty miles to the west in Madison.

In the fall of 1853, Hugh and Caroline were transferred to Maysville, Kentucky. This small port town on the Ohio River was closer to Cincinnati and Lexington than his adopted hometown of Cleveland. Thompson served his diaconate in Maysville at the Church of the Nativity. The couple stayed in Maysville for only one year, but their

SEE **PROVOCATIVE BISHOP** PAGE 8

Provocative bishop

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

daughter Annie was born there in March 1854.

Wisconsin ministry

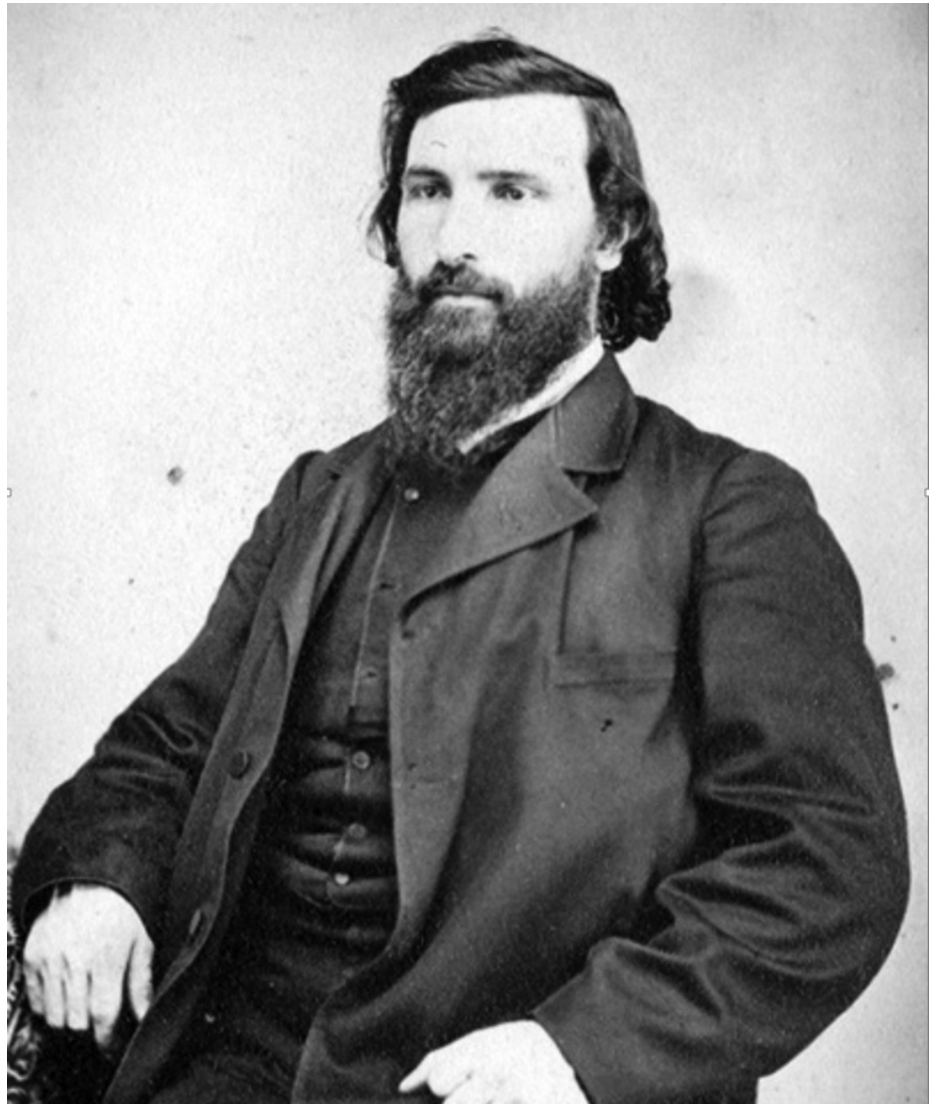
In August 1854, Thompson returned to Wisconsin taking charge of mission work in Portage, Baraboo and Kilbourn City, essentially all of St. Paul's Parish. Two years later, Hugh and Caroline welcomed a son, Frank, in July 1856. Four weeks later, following completion of the nave, he was ordained a priest in St. John's Church in Portage by Kemper. Thompson had been installed as the first resident rector in Portage during the construction. Easter of 1857 found him engaged in mission work in the inner city of Milwaukee as the effects of the Panic of 1857 began to be acutely felt. In that same year, he organized the Free Church of the Atonement in Milwaukee. The year 1857 ended with the death of his twenty-one year old wife Caroline in Portage on December 30. Thompson was left a widower with two children, ages one and three years.

In 1858, he was elected rector of St. Matthew's Church in Kenosha, a town that is more of a suburb of Chicago than a part of Wisconsin. Thompson was also elected secretary of the church's annual state convention and served on several conference committees. He also received an honorary Master of Arts degree from Racine College, another institution recently founded by Kemper.

On October 25, 1859, Thompson married his second wife, Anna Weatherburn Hinsdale, the nineteen-year-old daughter of Henry Butler Hinsdale of Kenosha. Anna's father was a partner of F. B. Garner & Company, a timber-lumber firm with an office in Chicago. By the end of the year, the newlyweds would return to Galena, Illinois, where he was now serving as rector of Grace Church.

Civil War Years

For Hugh and Anna, the year 1860 was a bittersweet year for the family. Anna's eighty-year-old grandfather died in Sacramento from exhaustion while on missionary



source: Project Canterbury anglicanhistory.org

The Rev. Hugh Thompson photographed around the time he became chair of ecclesiastical history at Nashotah House seminary.

work there. Thompson would publish his first short book: *Unity and Its Restoration: Addressed to All Christians who Desire to Hold the Faith in Unity of the Spirit, and in the Bond of Peace*. Attributed to "a Presbyterian of the Diocese of Illinois," the 100-page book received favorable reviews and quickly found publishers in both Chicago and New York. Hugh also received his Doctor of Sacred Theology degree from Hobart College. Hugh's father John died suddenly in June at the age of 55 leaving Hugh's mother a widow in Cleveland with minor siblings, one as young as eight. Later that year, Hugh returned to Nashotah House Seminary and was elected to chair of ecclesiastical history, a position he would hold

for the next ten years along with his rectorship in Kenosha and associate status with St. Paul's in Madison, Wisconsin.

Like other families throughout the nation, the Civil War years were years of fortune and loss for the Thompsons. Anna bore her first child, Mary Weatherburn Thompson on May 17, 1861. Thompson's brother, Thomas, became a private in the 69th Ohio Volunteer Infantry Regiment in November, while his brother William would enlist as a private in the 103rd Ohio Volunteer Infantry Regiment. With the rush of men going to war, Anna's father became vice-president of the Kenosha County Bank.

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE

His brother Thomas would survive the battles of Chickamauga, Stones River, Chattanooga, Atlanta, and Peachtree Creek, but succumb to disease in Milledgeville, Georgia, while the regiment was engaged in Sherman's March to the Sea. By the end of the war, his mother would move to Joliet, Illinois with his thirteen year old brother Jarvis. Anna's father would become corporate secretary for the Northwest Telegraph Company, a regional company headquartered in Kenosha which dominated the telegraph lines in Wisconsin and Minnesota. On May 13, 1867, newborn Hugh Greame Thompson was welcomed into the Thompson household.

During the 1860s, Thompson's literary talents continued to develop. In 1862, he wrote a bound essay *Sin and its Penalty*, discussing the reasonableness and parameters of the doctrine of eternal penalty. He became editor-in-chief for *The American Churchman*, a general circulation Episcopal weekly published in Chicago. In 1865, a compilation of essays from the "Northwestern Church" were published. A published item from that year provides the first glimpse into Thompson's masonic career. His assumption of editorial duties for *The Northwestern Church*, an Episcopalian weekly published in Chicago, was reported in *The National Freemason*, a monthly newspaper circulated in the Middle Atlantic States.

Chicago and New York City

Though he was recommended to President Ulysses Grant as a candidate for chaplain of West Point, Thompson chose instead to become rector of St. James's Church of Chicago in 1871. Anna's brother, Horace Graham Hinsdale, joined Thompson at St. James's Parish as a newly-ordained twenty-one-year-old deacon. While there, Thompson published *Sin and Penalty: or, Future Punishment Examined on Grounds of Reason and Analogy*, a 240-page collection of esoteric essays responding to criticisms of the doctrine of eternal penalty reconciled with atonement, a popular topic of the day. In October, he attended the "Fifteenth Annual and Fifth Triennial Meeting of the Society for the Increase of

the Ministry" at Grace Church in Baltimore, Maryland. His address at that meeting was well-received and published alongside those of Henry Benjamin Whipple, Bishop of Minnesota, and George Augustus Selwyn, Lord Bishop of Lichfield, England, notable scholars within the church.

While Thompson was at the conference, the Great Chicago Fire erupted. The fire raged for two days and consumed much of Chicago, including St. James's Church, his and Anna's home and, once again, some of the Hinsdale's real estate holdings. After being exposed to the fire while saving lives, Anna's brother Horace was brought to the Hinsdale family home in Kenosha where he died three weeks later on October 29, 1871.

Continued demand for his previously published works resulted in second and third printings and translations into several languages.

When he returned to Chicago in October 1871, Thompson began to organize public relief efforts, seemingly dedicated to staying the course with his congregants. But on a trip to New York City in January 1872, Thompson met with diocese leaders and quickly became rector of the wealthy Christ Church congregation and editor of *The Church Journal and Gospel Messenger*. In New York, he published four more works: *Absolution, Examined in the Light of Primitive Practice* (1872); *Concerning the Kingdom of God* (1872); *"Copy" Essays from an Editor's Drawer, on Religion, Literature, and Life* (1872); and *The Offertory: A Lost Act of Worship* (1873).

His New York trip was ostensibly a fundraising trip seeking wealthy donors to support those relief effort. When he accepted the position at Christ Church, Thompson hatched a firestorm of criticism from Chicagoans who felt that Thompson had abandoned them. These critics would always reappear with scathing commentary on Thompson's character for the rest of Thompson's life.

New Orleans and Beyond

Thompson's stay in New York was short. Thompson received the call to New Orleans' Trinity Church in October 1875. He accepted the appointment

and resigned Christ Church at the end of November. In January 1876, he left New York City. With the rectorship, he also became editor of *The Church Journal*.

Shortly after his arrival, Thompson became embroiled in the 1876 presidential election turmoil. Louisiana was one of three states where the election results were disputed by both Republicans and Democrats. When Congress convened in December, there were rival electoral reports and such general hostility that there were genuine fears that a second Civil War might erupt. Thompson angered New York Republicans by joining other Louisiana leaders in a published public defense of presidential election results in Louisiana.

Thompson became involved in civil affairs of the "Crescent City" and would periodically appeal to his former New York parishioners for funds for relief and public projects. Thompson conducted Festival of St. John ceremonies at Trinity Church for the Louisiana Commandery of Knights Templar, an order of the York Rite and an appendant body of Freemasonry.

Bishop William Mercer Green of Mississippi had requested an assistant or coadjutor bishop as early as 1880. Green was over 80 years in age and had served Diocese of Mississippi for thirty-three years. In November 1882, Thompson was elected unanimously at a special meeting of the Diocesan Council at St. Andrews in Jackson. However, as noted earlier, his confirmation brought opposition from the Dioceses of Chicago and Springfield. Thompson received the consent of twenty-eight dioceses, a necessary majority of the forty-eighty total dioceses. In contrast to his less-than-enthusiastic confirmation vote, his former New York City parishioners gave him a purse of money to buy a horse and carriage for his diocesan work.

Thompson remained in New Orleans where he was consecrated assistant bishop-elect of Mississippi on February 24, 1883 (St. Matthias' Day) at Trinity Church. One year later, Bishop Green retired to Sewanee, Tennessee and his beloved University of the South which he had co-founded, while Thompson

SEE **PROVOCATIVE BISHOP** PAGE 10

Provocative bishop

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

assumed the ordinary administrative duties of the diocese. Three years later in 1887, on the death of Bishop Green, Thompson became the second bishop of Mississippi.

The Mississippi Years

Thompson was anxious to establish an English-style cathedral system in the state. At the time, there were only a few American cathedrals in the Episcopal Church, and only two of these were planned and organized as actual cathedrals. At the time, there were no settled opinions on the definition of a cathedral or what would be the duties of a Cathedral Dean. The Diocese of Tennessee had successfully adopted the trend and Thompson wanted to bring that model to Mississippi. He established St. Peter's Church in Oxford as the Mississippi Diocese's first cathedral and appointed the rector as the new Cathedral Dean. Thompson moved into the bishop's residence at Battle Hill and set upon the course of building a permanent cathedral in Jackson.

In 1887, Thompson's controversial remarks on the murder of Roderick Dhu Gambrell and the innocence of the accused propelled him into the national spotlight and excited the Temperance movement nationwide. Gambrell was the twenty-year-old son of Dr. Rev. Joel Gambrell, a prominent Baptist minister and editor of Clinton Baptist Record. State Senator Col. Jones Hamilton of Hinds County was the wealthy leader of Jackson saloonists, chairman of the Saloon-Men's Committee, during the 1886 Hinds County Local Option contest. Following a brutal vicious campaign, the 1886 vote closed saloons in the capitol city. This tension provided the backdrop to the Hamilton-Gambrell tragedy.

The state's Prohibitionists protested not only liquor and gambling but the brutal practices of convict leasing. Gambrell claimed that Hamilton and the "Penitentiary Gang" ran the capital city and state government. In the April

23, 1887 edition of his father's Prohibition newspaper *Clinton Sword and Shield*, Gambrell accused Hamilton inter alia of attempting to defraud the state of his \$80,000 lessee debt through craft in a loophole in his bond:

...[T]his is not the kind of a man to represent the high-toned manhood of Hinds County in the Senate...Other reasons might be given, such as Col. Hamilton's former political association, his fellowship with the most corrupt element in this county, his support of the corrupt radical rule of Jackson, but we have said enough now.

Ten days later on a moonlit Saturday evening at ten o'clock on his way home from visiting family in Clinton, Gambrell met a carriage with Hamilton and four associates on the iron bridge crossing the town creek on Capitol Street. Gambrell was shot three times and Hamilton was seen bashing the boy's face with his pistol butt. Hamilton was also wounded in the supposed "duel." Three days later, the County Coroner's jury of inquest determined the cause of death as murder after two long days of testimony and evidence. Arrests were made, habeas corpus hearings were held, and stories were published nationwide about the sensational events of that night and the actors involved.

About a month later, according Capt. P. K. Mayers, editor of the *Pascagoula Democrat-Star*, Bishop Thompson offered some harsh personal comments about the Hamilton-Gambrell tragedy:

There is but one opinion in Jackson regarding the Hamilton-Gambrell tragedy, and that is in favor of Hamilton. I believe every word Hamilton says about it; and as for that fellow Gambrell, it is a good thing he was killed. He was nothing but a blackguard going about with his pockets full of pistols ready to kill somebody. He had to be killed, and it was well Hamilton did it--the scoundrel. He had no interest on earth, nor in heaven.

Thompson declared publicly that he had been done a great injustice and never said those words. "Though he

thought Hamilton incapable of such a crime: ...[T]he death of Gambrell was the usual outcome of all such men who loaded themselves down with weapons, and deprecated the fact that not only Gambrell, but too many Mississippians made walking arsenals of themselves and that the natural result of such a thing was fights and death..."

In response, Thompson's comments were reported in newspapers across the nation with much added editorial commentary. Mayers swore an affidavit regarding the story which made headlines as well. Within months of Gambrell's death, one of Hamilton's partners, General Wirt Adams, killed John Martin, editor of the Prohibitionist Jackson New Mississippian, in another violent public "duel" which also claimed Adam's life. In what became the most sensational trial in the state's history, Hamilton was eventually acquitted in April 1888 after fifteen minutes deliberation. Though the controversy of the verdict lasted for decades, Thompson made no further comments on the matter—publicly. Ironically, on Hamilton's death in 1907, alcohol would be prohibited statewide until 1966.

In Mississippi, Thompson continued to write and remain active in church and Masonic affairs. Continuing his vision of a diocesan cathedral, Thompson planned a chapel near the episcopal residence on the property at Battle Hill in Jackson. In 1852, the diocese purchased 140 acres of land "about a mile from Jackson, on which was a handsome house" which became the episcopal residence. Battle Hill was the headquarters of the Diocese of Mississippi and home of St. Andrew's College, which operated for a short time prior to the Civil War. Both St. Andrews Church and Bishop Green's residence were burned during the occupation of Jackson along with virtually every other church in the diocese during the war. Bishop Green's new residence was built on Battle Hill in Jackson in 1877. Thompson intended the new chapel as a memorial to Bishop Green, the chancel of a larger cathedral he envisioned being built on the property.

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The Fuller Affair

In 1896, Thompson faced the possibility and peril of ecclesiastical charges, as well as another dose of national attention by entering the Diocese of Boston and performing an unsanctioned marriage for the Rev. Samuel Fuller. Fuller's wife did not follow him from Buffalo to his new assignment in Boston. Their New York civil divorce for desertion was not recognized since the church only allowed divorce on adultery. Episcopalian canon law then explicitly prohibited remarriage except where an innocent party suffered adultery.

Fuller consulted with his superior, Bishop William Lawrence of Boston, who refused to perform the ceremony. Fuller corresponded with his friend Thompson who satisfied with the situation, he agreed to perform the marriage of Fuller to his prospective second wife. Thompson asked the permission of Bishop Lawrence who replied that it wouldn't offend him, but Thompson would be responsible for the consequences. Thompson traveled to Boston performed the ceremony assisted by a local priest who attended as the local authority. Feeling extremely aggrieved, Fuller's first wife complained and a group of clergy from Buffalo asked Thompson to make account. Thompson apologized for his canonical interpretation and replied that he meant no harm to the wife's reputation.

Fuller was charged and a church tribunal was convened. The trial commission recommended Fuller's expulsion from the ministry. Fuller refuted the allegations by stating that: (1) he sought divorce on the advice of Lawrence and a second bishop; (2) Thompson advised the second marriage; (3) Thompson had Lawrence's permission, and; (4) the rector offered Thompson the use of Trinity Church in Boston. Fuller received a two-year suspension from Lawrence but was required to prove adultery before he could officiate again. Moreover, Lawrence found that Thompson had some "strange ideas about adultery" but asked even further how could he judge that issue and then marry Fuller. Ultimately, Fuller resigned and became a powerful preacher at the Independent Church in Boston, a Unitarian congregation, while his second wife Lucy

advocated for women's suffrage alongside Helen Keller and Anne Sullivan Macy.

In retrospect, Fuller shouldn't have contracted for second marriage unless he had a legitimate divorce. He tried to have a "whisper trial" on evidence which he never submitted to any civil court. Finally, Lawrence and Thompson only made matters worse. As one editorial stated:

"Of what value is a Church canon when Bishops are unable to decide what it means, and advise a clergyman to do that which it says he shall not do? These are some of the questions that Episcopalians will ask when they read the remarkable record of this case. And they will find no answer to them that will tend to increase their belief in Episcopal inerrancy."

By comparison, when the 1902 divorce-remarriage scandal of the Rev. Charles Morris of Mississippi was brought to his attention by the national press, this time Thompson's public response was a salty dose of "mind your business:"

I do not believe
marriage a sacrament,
nor the only indis-
soluble contract made
between man and man
or God and man.

Bishop Hugh Miller Thompson

Responding to reporters, Thompson said "I do not believe marriage a sacrament, nor the only indissoluble contract made between man and man or God and man. I believe adultery dissolves it, and the Biblical penalty is death, agreeable to the conscience of the vast majority of the human race."

Although many in the church wanted a liberal interpretation of canon law with regard to remarriage, the church preferred the antiquas vias, the ancient ways. Thompson certainly avoided the issue for a year with the knowledge of all in the diocese.

Lynching

While in New York, Thompson offered "the opinion of Mississippi" on lynching:

The people lynch for one thing, and one thing only. When it comes to such a pass that a girl six years old cannot go from one neighbor's house to another without danger of being carried away and torn to piece by some Negro brute, what else can we do? There have been so many terrible cases. I must say too, that in all the years I have living in the South, I have never known a doubtful lynching. The Negroes when caught always confess or are absolutely identified.

The laws are slow, the jails are full and the lawyers are banded together to defeat justice, as they always are. The offense is a capital one all over the South, so the people save delay by simply resuming their natural sovereignty delegated to them by the courts and hang the criminal. The women to whom such a thing happens is ruined for life. She is always an object of curiosity and usually has to move to some other locality in order to live at all comfortably again.

His comments were reported nationally under such headlines as "Lynching Justified by a Bishop" and "Woe to the Bloody People: From the Evangel." Editors addressed the bishop's comments and directly redressed them with several instances of mob justice or snide comment. Within a few weeks, the controversy subsided.

St. Columb's Chapel

St. Columb's Chapel was completed in 1892 and consecrated on April 26, 1894, prior to a diocesan council meeting. A young William Mercer Green II, orphaned son of the Rev. Duncan Green and grandson of Mississippi's first bishop, spent a number of his childhood years with the Thompsons at Battle Hill, as well as Greenville. After graduation, William Mercer Green II became a member of the Bishop's household, Deacon at St. Columb's Chapel in 1899 and later ordained as a priest in 1900. Greene also performed double duty by holding services for the "Northern colony" in

SEE PROVOCATIVE BISHOP PAGE 12

Provocative bishop

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

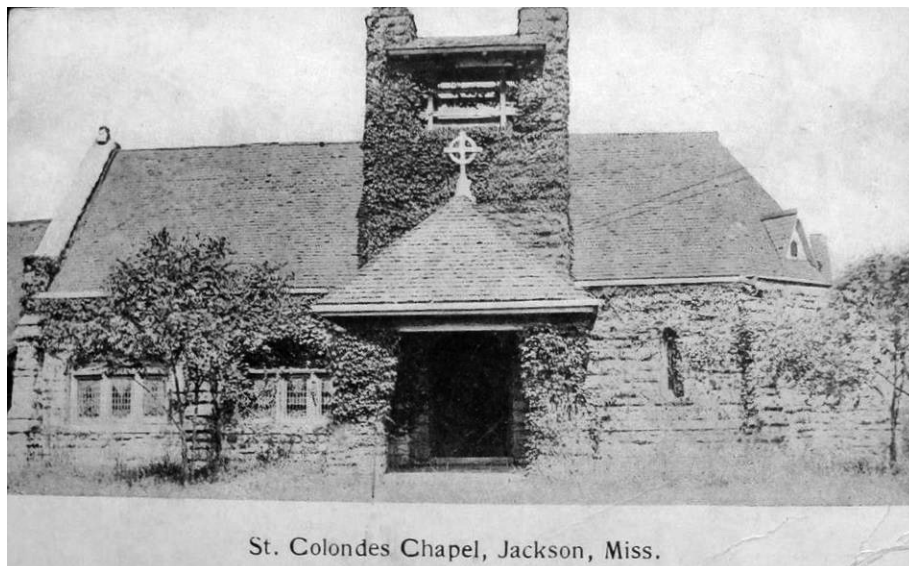
Ridgeland. Thompson built a significant library collection at Battle Hill and asked for funding of a fireproof vault for the Episcopal archives at his residence. Thompson charged the new Rector of St Andrew's Church, Walter Whitaker from Alabama, with making St. Columb a \$100,000 cathedral.

On his death, Bishop Thompson left everything to his wife in a holographic will, except his library which he left to his son. When the congregation disbanded in 1905, the structure fell into disrepair due to foundation problems. Bishop Theodore Bratton held the last service there in 1917. The bishop's residence burned on January 17, 1919, and the chapel was eventually condemned. At his request, Thompson was buried beneath the altar of St. Columb's Chapel. On the death of his wife in 1924, it was decided to have the Bishop's body removed from the deteriorated St. Columb and reinterred in a common grave with his wife at the Chapel of the Cross in Madison County. The northeastern part of property where the chapel stood was deeded to the City of Jackson while southern half facing West Capitol Street was commercially developed.

Final Days and Funeral

In 1900, Thompson began having problems with his throat. A foreign growth was discovered and, in October, Dr. Robert Abbe, a famous New York surgeon and radiation specialist at St. Luke's Hospital, performed what appeared to be a successful operation. Thompson returned home and resumed his duties. In late 1901, the Bishop's general health declined and he seemed more delicate. The growth reappeared the following spring.

In late June 1902, celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of his holy orders, the family left Jackson for the Thompson family's country summer house in Victoria, North Carolina. Instead, Thompson traveled to his sister's home in Yonkers, New York, for an examination and treatment. The cancer had reappeared but in



source: the author

Postcard shows how St. Columb's Chapel looked in 1905, one year after the death of Bishop Thompson. The last service was held in 1917 and in 1924 the bishop's remains were removed and reinterred at Chapel of the Cross. The condemned building was demolished shortly thereafter and a portion of the property sold to the city of Jackson.

his weakened state he could not withstand surgery so the doctors began Roentgen radiation treatment on the cancer. The growth was deep and the radiation could not reach it. In October, Thompson's condition worsened and the medical consensus was that he would not last more than one month. The Rev. George Harries of Vicksburg, president of the Standing Committee of the Diocesan Council, called a meeting for November 11 in Jackson with Bishop Gailor of Tennessee to coincide with cornerstone ceremony for the new St. Andrew's Church. On November 3, Thompson's condition was deemed incurable publicly. On November 6, he was transferred from his room at the Aldine Hotel to a specially-prepared hospital car attached to the Cleveland & Cincinnati Express for the trip home to Jackson. Riding in the car with him were his wife, daughter, son, grandson and Dr. Davis Fellows, MD, an attending physician from Kent, England. Thompson arrived in Jackson weak, in great pain, and unable to speak above a whisper.

Thompson's condition continued to decline. His last official act was to call a meeting of Diocesan Council to convene on January 20, 1903, to elect a coadjutor bishop. He died less than a week later

in the early morning hours of November 18, 1902. At the end, he no longer recognized family or friends and fell unconscious. The January 20 call to meeting was amended. By the afternoon, Thompson lay in state at the Battle Hill reception hall where hundreds began paying their respects.

Thompson's funeral was the largest and most elaborate event ever seen in Jackson, and possibly the largest funeral witnessed in the state. All courthouses and public offices were closed—city, county, state, federal. Dignitaries and floral arrangements arrived from across the South. Nationwide, newspapers printed death notices and offered memorials. It was decided that there would be no funeral oration, deferring instead to a memorial service at a later date. The services would be led by Bishop Thomas Gailor of Tennessee, a Jackson native. All Masons were called to assemble at Pearl Lodge at 2:00 p.m. for the funeral procession.

On November 21, the day at Battle Hill began with Holy Communion in the chapel for the family and some twenty visiting clergy, conducted by joint clergy. The chapel altar was covered with numerous floral offerings and wreaths. *The*

SEE PROVOCATIVE BISHOP PAGE 13

Provocative bishop

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

Times Democrat of New Orleans reported that “The Bishop’s empty chair was decorated in purple and white, and in it stood a crosier, symbol of his authority, made of American beauty roses, the dead Bishop’s favorite flower.”

Parting Considerations

Considering the greater part of his life and philosophy, Thompson will also be remembered as a reformer. He was seen by many as broad and liberal in his views, but conservative regarding church canon. Early in his career he stated that a minister shouldn’t literally conform to the prayer book. During his twenty-two years as bishop, Thompson encouraged the establishment of many schools, which he considered part of the gateway to more indigenous church leadership. Under his administration, St. Mary’s Collegiate Institute in Vicksburg, a school for African-Americans, was established in 1890 and affiliated with St. Mary’s Church. The school grew from four to one hundred and fifty in two years. He also reopened Trinity School for Girls in Pass Christian, which had been closed during the war.

As was widely reported nationwide, when asked if women were equally capable with men in receiving what is called the higher education, Thompson answered, “There is no sex in intellect.” St. Thomas Hall in Holly Springs and Waveland Academy were opened during his administration. Within the church, Thompson oversaw the reformation of stewardship over the Diocesan Fund and helped organize the first diocesan-wide Women’s Auxiliary.

Socially, the Thompsons were active in the Scotch-Irish Society of America. Their daughter Mary Thompson Howe was an active member of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), the first Mississippi member of the United States Daughters of 1812 and organizing member of the state society, and the first elected regent of Mississippi from Ralph Humphreys Chapter in Jackson. Her

mother, Anna, remained an active DAR member for many years.

In 1897, the Madison Land Company encouraged northerners to “Go south, and grow up with the country.” With the assistance of Madison “resident” Bishop Thompson, the company boasted that Mississippi had the lowest debt ratio in the nation at \$19.00 per capita and that Mississippians were declared one-third healthier by “official figures” than people in New York and Massachusetts. However, Thompson was also quick with a snarky comment about the state. When asked why there were so many old men (eighty and ninety) in Mississippi, he replied “there is no chance to become rich in Mississippi. Everyone knows it and does not worry himself into an early grave trying to.”

Thompson became one of the most widely known clergymen in America. His life illustrates not only the risks and opportunities, but the hopes and hazards of the mission life. From his humble start, Thompson dedicated everything to the Protestant Episcopal Church and performed the most extraordinary and dignified form of Christian scholarly work. Mississippi became his mission but missionaries often operate with a blurred permission to exercise a degree of arrogant moral correctness without understanding the true impact. In practical matters, he sought to rebuild and grow

the state’s congregations through several programs. He was a fundamentalist who acted unilaterally with a provocative progressive outreach.

However “pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.” A man of grace could never condone assassination and lynching. Claiming to speak on behalf of others is an unpredictable enterprise at best and disastrous at worst. Instead of burnishing his reputation, Thompson’s unscripted concessions undermined his authenticity and authority, the man-writ-large in conflict with the cause-writ-locally. Thompson tried to adopt a Southern perspective having never experienced a Southern prejudice against the “solid wall” of the North. To many, Thompson’s favor of New York culture was surely more than a mere irritation. Thompson’s replacement, Theodore Bratton, possessed genuine “Southern” sensibilities and probably explains the slow consensual substitution of Thompson’s visions and endowment of Bratton’s legacy, All-Saints Episcopal College in Vicksburg. Certainly flawed, presumptuous and haughty—nonetheless Thompson’s zeal benefited both the church and Mississippi for a time.

Ben Block Jones II is special assistant to the chief counsel, Mississippi Department of Transportation, and a member of NEHA. This article is a portion of a larger unpublished journal article that was submitted in support of the donation of the cathedra to Chapel of the Cross in 2014.

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CONTINUED ON PAGE 15

Deciphering the genesis of an alms basin

The Rev. John A. Runkle

While attending the Episcopal Diocese of Tennessee's annual convention in January 2017, I spotted the most curious thing. In the exhibit hall was an enormous silver alms basin on display at the Episcopal Church Women's (ECW) table. I had never seen a basin of such girth and when I picked it up, I was surprised by its weight. I was told it weighs six pounds and made from silver donated by the women of the Diocese in 1955, when the Diocese of Tennessee consisted of the entire state.

The surface of basin is lavishly decorated with raised script and various Christian symbols. When I asked some specific questions, such as, "Who designed it, who fabricated it, and why were these symbols chosen," no one knew the answers. But the impressive beauty of this piece compelled me to do a little research.

I began by digging into the ECW files located in the University Archives at Sewanee, where I found the chronological record of the basin, from concept to dedication, but no specific answers to my questions. I learned that Mrs. Allen (Julia) Hughes of Memphis managed the project and was named as the custodian of the alms basin, but still, no specific answers could be found.

I then contacted the Diocese of West Tennessee and asked if there were any



source: author

The embossed script on the Tennessee diocesan alms basin required some sleuthing to decipher. The basin was crafted from 100 ounces of old silver donated by ECW members.

files in their archives pertaining to Mrs. Hughes and the alms basin. Unfortunately, there were none. However, I did learn that Mrs. Hughes moved to East Tennessee late in life and perhaps the archives at the diocesan house in Knoxville might provide some answers.

When I contacted the Diocese of East Tennessee, I was told there was nothing in their files about Mrs. Hughes or the alms basin, but there was a framed document on the wall of the diocesan house that mentions the alms basin. They scanned the document, emailed it to me and, low and behold, I received a description, written in beautiful calligraphy, which answered all my questions!

SEE **ALMS BASIN** PAGE 15

✦ The Diocesan Alms Basin ✦

This handsome sterling alms basin, made from the silver gifts of Episcopal Churchwomen at the 1955 diocesan Auxiliary Corporate Communion was presented by the Auxiliary to the Diocese of Tennessee, for use by the entire Church.

A symbol of devotion and thanksgiving, the alms basin bears on its rim the inscription: "Be thankful unto Him and bless His name forever." The inscription is broken by four bosses containing a cross, a replica of the seal of the Diocese, a fleur-de-lis symbolizing the Annunciation of our Lord, and the winged ox of St. Luke. (These are the feast days on which the United Thank Offering is ingathered.) The center of the basin is marked with the familiar monogram IHS, the first three letters of the name of Jesus in Greek.

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✦ Basin ✦

The women of the Diocese brought in their old pieces of silver for the purpose of making a basin to be used in all the churches. The total amounted to 300 ounces of Sterling Silver, of which 100 ounces were actually used to make this basin. The remainder was used to pay the cost of making the basin by The Gorham Company amounting to \$1250.00. This work of art demonstrates the silversmith's skilled artistry and craftsmanship in spinning (shaping the basin), etching (making the raised letters on the flange stand out), hand-chasing (finishing the raised lettering and the decorative border and matting on inside), casting (the medallion in the center), engraving (the inscription).

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Calligraphy from Diocese of West Tennessee explaining the origin and symbols of the diocesan alms basin.

Amateur Archivist Organizing an archives

John Rawlinson

In many communities the local library contains an "archives room." Such rooms commonly hold local history materials. So, people commonly assume that an archives is just like a library, and the organization of materials is the same. In fact, a true archives is organized in a totally different way.

Libraries gather the material about one topic in one place, and another topic in another place. So, all the cookbooks are in one place, and the information about carpentry in a different place.

Archives keep together all of the material created by a single person, or group. For example, the minutes,

conference work, and publications of a committee are together. That group might participate in a capital campaign, a teaching series, and a community-wide barbecue. Still, all of its materials are together, and not separated into the different topics and activities in which it has been involved.

A church might have an anniversary celebration. There might be a planning committee with its records. As a part of that, an altar guild might have a role, but its records relating to the anniversary stay with the altar guild records. Perhaps a men's group has a particular role in the anniversary. Its records about the anniversary stay with other ongoing records of the men's group. A priest is likely to

have a role in the anniversary— including pastoral records about the event. Those records stay with the pastor's records. So, somebody who wants to know about the anniversary would have to look in many groups of records— the planning committee, the altar guild, the men's group, and the pastor's records. Archival records are grouped on the basis of who (or what group) created those records. There is a clarity about that— once that concept is in one's mind.

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13

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Alms basin

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14

Since the State of Tennessee now consists of three dioceses, the ECW alms basin* is shared between each diocese on an annual rotation basis. Any parish in each diocese can borrow the basin by contacting the ECW President in their respective diocese while the basin is in residence there.

* In the document, the word, basin, is spelled "bason," which is the archaic spelling of the word used by the Church of England.

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This Mid-Atlantic country parish originally worshipped in a dry goods store but in 1913 the families of railroad workers, shopkeepers and farmers raised the funds to build a church. The mission style church, known as "the little chapel on the hill" has remained essentially unchanged, even retaining the original church bell salvaged from a North Central Railroad locomotive. A parish hall was built in the 1950s, and expanded in the past ten years. The local town is near several vineyards and a state park, and served as a location for a 1990s film.

Email your best guess to
thehistoriographer@gmail.com

Answer to last issue's puzzler:

Mike Krasulski was our first reader to correctly identify our mystery church: St. Luke's in the Germantown neighborhood of Philadelphia. Also providing the right answer was the Rev. Andrew T. O'Connor, rector of Good Shepherd in Wichita, Ks.

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INSIDE:

- 4** Commentary: *Forgive or simply let go*
- 5** Prichard Prize goes to Peter Walker
- 6** Joint NEHA/EWHP Conference to explore *Women Transforming the Church*
- 13** Deciphering an alms basin

NEXT ISSUE:

Seeking congruence
in repurposing sacred
places

