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St. Peter's Church

CHARLOTTE, N. C.



Historical Addresses

From Colonial Days
to 1893

JOS. BLOUNT CHESHIRE

Bishop of the Diocese of North Carolina

1921



OLD ST. PETER'S CHURCH
1862 - 1892



St. Peter's Church

Charlotte, N. C.



A Short History of the Parish

from Its Origin to the Consecration
of the Church in 1862

The within Address was delivered, in part, in the old St. Peter's Church, Charlotte, Tuesday, September 27, 1892, being the last occasion of my officiating in it, just before it was pulled down to give place to the present structure.—JOS. BLOUNT CHESHIRE.



OPH

Charlotte, N. C.

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1921

St. Peter's Church

Charlotte, N. C.

THE history of the Church in this community goes back but a few years. There are, however, some facts of an earlier date, which have a bearing upon the subject, and which may be briefly mentioned, before we take up the story of St. Peter's Church, Charlotte.

In our Provincial ecclesiastical system, Mecklenburg County constituted a parish by the name of St. Martin's (Act of 1768 : c. x). In 1766, the Rev. Andrew Morton was sent over from England by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel as Minister for Mecklenburg County. Upon his arrival at Wilmington, he learned that the inhabitants of this county were all "Covenanters and Seceders," who, he was informed, elected Presbyterian elders upon the vestry in order that no provision might be made for the support of an Episcopal clergyman. Upon this Mr. Morton very prudently changed his destination for a more favorable field, and, with the consent of Governor Tryon, became the minister of St. George's Parish, Northampton County.

Mr. Morton's information as to the election of vestrymen in Mecklenburg must have been erroneous, for at the time of his arrival in 1766 Mecklenburg had not been constituted a parish, though it had been made a county in 1762.

One thing may be mentioned here which shows that there was not in colonial days that bitterness of feeling against the religious establishment of this Province which our later writers have alleged. Our laws were so adjusted, and I believe intentionally, that, as the above incident shows, it was impossible to impose the services or ministry of the Episcopal Church upon any parish where the people did not desire them. There was no part of the Province therefore in which the establishment of the Church was ever effected except by the action of the people themselves, through their elected representatives, just as there were no laws for the establishment of the Church except those passed by the people themselves through the General Assembly of the Province.

When the first serious outbreak of the Regulation took place, in 1768, all the Presbyterian ministers in North Carolina united in a Pastoral Letter to their people, and in an Address to Governor Tryon, the most zealous in ecclesiastical affairs of any of our governors; and both in the Pastoral Letter and in the Address they declare, in effect,

that under his administration they enjoyed all the blessings of civil and religious freedom. And to show that this was not merely the language of flattery, it is only necessary to turn to the "Instructions for the Delegates of Mecklenburg County," to the Provincial Congress of 1775, preserved among the papers of Jno. McKnitt Alexander, and in his handwriting. It has always seemed doubtful to my mind whether these "Instructions" were actually given to the delegates. In fact, I incline to think that they were not. But they may at any rate be taken to express the general sentiment of the Mecklenburg Presbyterians, and they were drawn up by a man who was as fair a representative of the best elements of the population of this county as any who could be named.

The thirteenth paragraph or section of this document is in these words: "You are instructed to assent and consent to the establishment of the Christian religion as contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, and more briefly comprised in the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England, excluding the Thirty-Seventh Article, together with all the Articles excepted and not to be imposed on Dissenters by the Act of Toleration, and clearly held forth in the Confession of Faith compiled by the assembly of divines at Westminster, to be the religion of the State," etc. If at this time of excitement and of resentment against England there had been any strong and general feeling that our Colonial Church establishment had been an injustice and an oppression of the people, a representative Mecklenburg Presbyterian, even supposing these instructions to have expressed only Mr. Alexander's own opinions, would not thus have laid down as the basis of a religious establishment for the independent State of North Carolina, that very statement of doctrine which he looked upon as the special characteristic of the English and Colonial Church, putting it even before his own Westminster Confession.

Another curious fact illustrates this absence of any popular feeling of resentment against the Episcopal Church, in the period immediately following the Revolution, on account of its previous legal establishment in the Province. In the Hillsboro Convention of 1788, Mr. Henry Abbott, an eminent Kehukee Baptist preacher, who was a member of that Convention from Camden County, referring to the suggestion that it would be possible for the proposed Federal Government, through its treaty-making power, to impose an established religion upon the people of the United States, one of the many absurd objections made in that Convention against the Federal Constitution, said that if there were to be an established Church in this State he would prefer the Episcopal Church, though he was opposed to any Church establishment by law.

To come somewhat nearer our subject, we find a curious and interesting local memory which connects the name of the late Bishop Green, of Mississippi, with Charlotte. During the first years of his ministry, while rector of St. Matthew's Church, Hillsboro, he was called to the pastorate of the congregation just formed in this place. Perhaps it would be more correct to say that he was called to be the preacher for the congregation worshipping in what afterwards became "The First Presbyterian Church of Charlotte." As in so many other towns in North Carolina during the early past of this country, so in Charlotte, the people had erected a Church (upon the site of the present First Presbyterian Church), for the common worship of the community, with no distinct ecclesiastical principles, and unconnected with any denominational organization. Mr. Green, then a popular young man and an attractive preacher, was among the first, if not the first minister, invited to take charge of this Church, probably by the influence of some person in the congregation who had a preference for the form of service of the Episcopal Church. He declined, and I believe a Universalist preacher was then called, and perhaps officiated for a short while, before the congregation became by a natural and perhaps necessary transition, or evolution, an organic part of the Concord Presbytery.*

The first recorded service by a minister of our Church in Charlotte was held in that old Church, during the time it was the place of common worship for the community. Bishop Ravenscroft, in his Convention Address, 1825, mentions having spent the first Sunday in November, 1824, in Charlotte, and adds that he "preached in the Church there." In a private letter to the Rev. Robert Johnston Miller, written from Charlotte the next day, Monday, November 8, he refers to the same service more fully. "I preached here yesterday on the invitation of Dr. McCrie, but with rather a costive consent, as I thought, from Mr. Caldwell, who after I had closed came up into the pulpit, and requested the patience of the people for a short discourse. This I sat and heard, but refrained from all mixture with them. They are very jealous, but they appear to have it all their own way."

Bishop Ravenscroft does not seem to have visited Charlotte again. Whether there were any members of the Church here at that time, I do not know.

The first attempt to establish the services of the Church here, and to gather a congregation, was made by the Rev. John Morgan, who became rector of St. Luke's Church, Salisbury, and of Christ Church, Rowan, about the end of the year 1832, and extended his services occasionally as far as Charlotte. The first Episcopal visitation was made Tuesday, June 25, 1834, when Bishop Ives accompanied Mr. Morgan

*Mr. John Wilkes is under the impression that Bishop Green told him that he preached once in Charlotte about this time. There are circumstances which make me doubt this.

from Salisbury, held his first service here, and confirmed four persons. In his report at the Convention of 1834, Mr. Morgan mentioned three "new communicants" at Charlotte. As in 1835 he reports the number of communicants as reduced to two, it is probable that the three new ones in 1834 constituted the whole number. Unfortunately we have no contemporary records, except the brief mention of the Bishop's address and these references in Mr. Morgan's report. Some record of baptisms and of communicants may have been made by Mr. Morgan, for our oldest parish register contains entries of both, written in a later hand, and possibly copies from an earlier record made by Mr. Morgan.

The first names associated with the Church in Charlotte, as I find them in the register, are the notable ones of Wilson, Alexander, Polk, and Caldwell. To these were soon added Lowrie, Abernethy, Gibbon, and Davidson. The Wilsons were from a more eastern section of the State, and were of English descent, and brought up in the Church. From their connection with the Hendersons, Wilsons, and Martins, the Alexanders were also associated with the Churchmen further east. The Abernethys represent a strain of stubborn Scotch Episcopalians, who for several generations adhered to the Church, after being deprived of its ministry and ordinances. The Gibbons were Churchmen from Philadelphia, who had lately removed to Charlotte. It is unnecessary to inquire how the others had come into the Church—Davidsons, Polks, Caddwells, etc. They may be taken to represent the fact that among the Anglo-Saxon inhabitants of Ireland (and the Scotch-Irish were pure Anglo-Saxon) Churchmen and Presbyterians stood together for many years in heroic defense of their common race and liberties, and were more or less mingled together in their natural and ecclesiastical descendants.

Mr. Morgan continued to officiate in Charlotte a few Sundays in each year, until 1835, when he was succeeded by the Rev. Moses Ashley Curtis, sent by Bishop Ives to act as missionary in Mecklenburg and Lincoln Counties. Bishop Atkinson, in his address to the Convention of 1863, referring to the presence of Dr. Curtis at the consecration of this Church, September 23, 1862, says that to his "early labors our Church in Charlotte owed its origin." Our journals seem to show that in this Bishop Atkinson was mistaken. Mr. Morgan had labored here from 1832 to 1835, had baptized children and adults, presented candidates for Confirmation, and gotten together a handful of people, few in number but of notable character and of commanding influence, who were for many years the strength and dependence of the parish afterwards formed. Mr. Curtis remained in this field less than two years, and though he reports that a Church had been organized in Charlotte, we do not find any trace of that organization after his departure.

The parish when admitted into the Convention in 1845 was a new organization, dating only from the preceding Christmas. But Dr. Curtis certainly consolidated the work begun by Mr. Morgan, and gave it some forward movement. His ability and personal piety, his sweetness of character, and his attainments in music and in natural science, made an impression upon the community, and left a memory behind him. When I came into this parish, in 1881, the oldest of my parishioners, Miss Sarah Davidson, loved to speak to me of Dr. Curtis, and still recalled the pleasure afforded her and other members of the little congregation by his periodical visits. She was herself a musician, and often has she spoken to me of his taste and skill as a performer upon the flute, and of the delightful hours they spent making sweet concord with the blended strains of piano and flute. And it may not be amiss to call your attention in passing to the place which Dr. Curtis occupies in the history of our Diocese and of our State. Not only did his life illustrate the best qualities of the parish priest and the pastor of Christ's flock, but his influence extended beyond the bounds of his own parish, in the development of a higher and more correct taste in Church music, and in the diffusion of the knowledge and enjoyment of God's works in the beauties and wonders of the vegetable world around us. His original musical compositions are of a high order, and are still heard in our churches occasionally upon some notable festival, while his choir in St. Matthew's Church, Hillsboro, sang the best music from the oratorios and masses of the old masters of the heavenly art long before the days of our music festivals and philharmonics. It was his hand which unrolled and recorded the botanical riches of our State, not only for the scientist, but for the farmer and the woodman, for you and me. His name is everywhere known, where the science of Botany is studied, as one of America's most diligent and accurate botanists; and in some departments, as of the *Fungi*, he is a high original authority. The State of North Carolina has shown, though very inadequately, its appreciation of his labors, by publishing at the public expense both his general catalogue of our *Flora*, and also his popular and familiar "Woody Plants," the latter, I believe, more than once. It is gratifying to us to be able to enroll his name in the honored list of our ministers in Charlotte.

I find no account of any other minister officiating for this feeble flock until the Rev. Edward M. Forbes took up his residence in Lincolnton, soon after the Convention of 1841, and extended his labors into Mecklenburg County and Charlotte. The first record of a baptism by him in this place is not until October, 1842, though he must have been coming here for a year before that time. He was a very different man from Dr. Curtis, but was well able to do good work for the Church. Untiring zeal and enthusiasm, coupled with a singular power of arous-

ing the interest of the young and the ignorant, and an equal facility in imparting instructions, made him a most active and efficient missionary. He was able to give but little of his time to this part of his field, and therefore he could make but little impression here; but in Lincoln County, and even beyond, in Burke, he laid the foundation of great success, if he could have followed it up; and it seems to have been a misfortune to the Church, and a great mistake on his part, when he was induced to abandon this most promising field, and remove to the State of Alabama. But though his work did not have any very great visible results in Mecklenburg, yet he left a vivid impression upon the memory of those brought in contact with him. Preaching out at Long Creek several years ago, I was approached by a county Justice of the Peace, who lived in the neighborhood, who told me that he had long been favorably inclined toward the Episcopal Church, by reason of having been acquainted from his boyhood with the Prayer Book, a copy of which had been given to his father nearly fifty years before, by "a little man who used to preach near the old Capps Mine." Upon inquiry this little man proved to have been the Rev. Mr. Forbes, who was quite small in stature, though ever a valiant champion of the truth. Mr. Forbes and Bishop Ives both mention this appointment at Capps Hill, and Bishop Ives once visited the place with Mr. Forbes, and preached there (1843 : 25).

August 4, 1841, Bishop Ives visited Charlotte, and confirmed one person. On this visitation he mentions that he was accompanied by his "young friend and presbyter, the Rev. Mr. Cheshire." It has gratified me personally to meet now and then, in this or an adjoining county, those who had a pleasant recollection of the Bishop's companion; and one lady whose first Prayer Book was given to her, before she was a member of the Church, by this young presbyter. I need hardly add that this Mr. Cheshire was *not* myself, though upon my first visit to Charlotte, before I was myself in Holy Orders, I met an old lady, who insisted that she remembered me distinctly as Bishop Ives' companion upon his visitation through this section in the summer of 1841!

When Mr. Forbes removed to Alabama, in the beginning of 1844, his work in Lincoln and the adjoining counties was taken up by the Rev. Aaron F. Olmstead, who was ordained to the priesthood by Bishop Ives in St. Luke's Church, Lincolnton, on the Seventh Sunday after Trinity—July 20, 1844. Mr. Olmstead had been a year in the diaconate, and had during that time been assisting Mr. Forbes in the work which was now put under his charge. He was a most faithful and devoted priest, but after two years of labor he was compelled to remove from this part of the country for want of support. His services in Charlotte were, as had always been the case, very infrequent, and it was impossible that in so extended a field of work he could do much at any one

point. But during his term of service here the register shows that he baptized a number of persons; and the parish of St. Peter's Church, Charlotte, was organized and admitted into union with the Diocesan Convention. (See the Journal of 1845 : 9.) A subscription was at once started for the purpose of raising funds to build a Church, and with such success that a small brick structure was erected during the years 1845-46, which was consecrated by Bishop Ives the Third Sunday after Trinity—June 28, 1846. In his address to the Convention of 1847, after mentioning this consecration, the Bishop adds: "The Church here is a neat and sufficiently commodious brick building, for which the congregation are mainly indebted to the indefatigable exertion of Mr. Jeremiah Murphy, the classical teacher of the place, and warden of the Church."*

The parish organization dated from December 20, 1844. On that day a meeting was held at the house of William Julius Alexander, Esq., by the Churchmen of Charlotte, and a congregation was formed under the canons of the Diocese. Mr. Jeremiah W. Murphy seems to have been the leader in this movement, and he, with Wm. J. Alexander, Wm. R. Myers, and Miles B. Abernethy, were elected the first vestry. Mr. Murphy was warden, and was chairman of the meeting, and the vestry completed its organization immediately after its election by appointing Wm. R. Myers, secretary. The next year the first delegates were appointed to the Convention of the Diocese—Wm. J. Alexander, Jeremiah W. Murphy, Wm. F. Davidson, and Dr. E. Dallas Williamson. Mr. Murphy seems to have made the entries in the Parish Register, and to have kept the record of the meetings, both of the congregation and of the vestry, as long as he remained in the parish. All the entries in the Register are in his handwriting down to May, 1847. The earlier entries of Baptisms and of Communicants, in the time of Mr. Morgan and Mr. Olmstead, may have been copied by him from *memoranda* made by those clergymen at the time; but it is quite possible that he made the entries from verbal information obtained from persons in the congregation. This, however, is merely conjectural.

It appears from the entries in the Vestry Book that the contract for the Church, or Chapel, as it is called, was made by the Hon. Green W. Caldwell, a member of the building committee, acting for the vestry,

*Mr. Murphy had three sons who took Holy Orders—Joseph W., William, and Reginald Heber. I think that Mr. Jeremiah Murphy lived in Lincolnton before coming to Charlotte, and that he was actively concerned in building the church there. After he left Charlotte he lived for awhile in Lexington, and there also he was instrumental in building a church. My father sent him a contribution towards the church in Lexington, and a letter highly commending his zeal and activity in building up the Church wherever he went. Mr. Murphy was so much pleased with this letter that, as long as it lasted, he made his scholars copy it for their writing exercise. He said he did so because of the excellence of the chirography!

and that Mr. Murphy, who was most active in raising the money, was directed to pay it over to the contractor upon Mr. Caldwell's order.

This church, the first St. Peter's, stood upon the lot on the north side of West Trade Street, opposite the Mint, occupied during my time in Charlotte by the residence of Mr. David W. Oates. It was a small structure, about twenty by forty feet in size, and had a cross on the gable end to mark its sacred character, though it made little other pretence to anything specially ecclesiastical in its construction. It was sufficient for the accommodation of the little congregation when it was built, but its diminutive size, and the enthusiastic devotion with which it was regarded by its builders, and especially by the good old Irishman, Mr. Murphy, gave occasion to some humorous sallies at its expense. (After the property was sold, and its use entirely changed, the gable end and wall could still be distinguished upon one side of the residence erected on the lot. And I am under the impression that some part of the foundation and walls are still standing, having been incorporated with the larger and handsomer dwelling-house afterwards erected upon the site by Mr. Oates. This church is said, by a very generous estimate, to have seated one hundred fifty persons, and it answered the purposes of the congregation for about ten years.

Up to this time, and for a good many years afterwards, it was with great difficulty that even the infrequent ministrations of the clergy of the Church had been maintained in Charlotte, and the faithful members of the Church in the parish were obliged to keep the light shining upon the altar by the help of lay readers, and the diligent instruction of their households. In his address to the Convention, 1840, Bishop Ives speaks of having examined the children of one family (probably that of Wm. J. Alexander, Esq.) in the Church Catechism during his visit to Charlotte, and adds: "In this examination a striking illustration was furnished of how much may be done by the Christian mothers for the salvation of their children, even when deprived of the stated ministrations of the Gospel." This spirit of faithfulness to the Church, under the many discouragements of their situation, characterized all this period of our parish history. For several years there was no minister at all in charge of the struggling parish. The services were kept up by lay-readers—first Mr. Murphy, then by Mr. John H. Bryan, Jr., son of the eminent lawyer and Churchman of the same name, so long connected with Christ Church, Raleigh. Mr. Bryan represented the parish in the Convention of 1847, the first convention attended by a delegate from Charlotte. We now find new names appearing upon the parish records—Lucas, Williams, and Jones—whose representatives are still with us. Mr. Wm. A. Lucas soon followed Mr. Bryan in the office of lay-reader, and kept the Church open and the congregation together when no minister could be had.

One thing should not be forgotten in speaking of these early days of the parish, namely: the attention paid to the religious instruction of the slaves, indicated by the frequency with which their names appear among those receiving the ministrations of the Church. A large proportion of the baptisms recorded in the parish register is of slaves; and as a rule their masters and mistresses seem to have acted as their God-fathers and God-mothers. Doubtless they enjoyed also their full share of the care and interest of the ministers, and had their place and part in his instructions, as well as in the worship of the household and of the sanctuary.

In 1847, the Rev. John Haywood Parker, rector of St. Luke's Church, Salisbury, visited Charlotte at the request of the Bishop; and for several years continued his ministrations at infrequent intervals, having upon his hands part of the time, besides the parish in Salisbury, the Churches in Rowan County and at Lexington. The reputation which he left in his community was not different from that won for him elsewhere, by his purity of character, and by his generous, gentle, and loving spirit. During this same period the Rev. Oliver S. Prescott and the Rev. R. E. Parham are mentioned as having favored the parish with occasional services.

The Rev. Thos. S. W. Mott assumed charge of St. Luke's, Lincoln, and St. Peter's, Charlotte, in March, 1852; and though the arrangement was supposed at the time to be only temporary, he continued several years to officiate, having his residence in Lincoln County, and coming to Charlotte, as I am informed, only once a month. Up to this time the growth of the Church in Charlotte had been exceedingly slow. There had never been a resident minister here, and it was seldom, if ever, that the congregations enjoyed the services of a minister for more than four or five times during the year. "The fifth Sunday" seems to have been their usual portion. It seemed to be thought that Lincoln County, with its larger number of inhabitants of English descent, and with the remnants of Parson Miller's old congregations—White Haven, St. Peter's, and Smyrna—scattered about through the country, offered a more promising field than the Scotch-Irish settlements of Mecklenburg. So there was usually a minister resident in Lincoln County, and the Church there seemed to be more prosperous than upon this side of the river. The number of communicants in Charlotte, which had been four in 1834, three in 1835, seven in 1842, ten in 1844, fourteen in 1845, and sixteen in 1851, was only fifteen when Mr. Hewitt made his first report in 1855, Mr. Mott having left this Diocese and gone to Mississippi in 1854.

The first resident minister in Charlotte was the Rev. Horatio H. Hewitt, who removed from Wadesboro to this field in 1854, taking charge of St. Peter's Church, Charlotte, and St. Luke's, Lincoln.

When he came to Charlotte, a new era for the town was just beginning. The South Carolina Railroad from Columbia to Charlotte had been built but a few years, and the North Carolina Railroad from Goldsboro to Charlotte was nearly completed. Up to this time Salisbury had been the chief town in the State west of Raleigh. It was becoming quite apparent, in 1855, that Charlotte must take that position, and Mr. Hewitt saw the importance of the crisis for the Church. He felt that the parish could not grow without increased accommodation for the congregation. In his first parochial report (1855 : 33), he says: "This large and growing town demands the especial sympathies of every liberal hearted Churchman in the Diocese. Its population, according to the best and latest estimate, has increased to nearly three thousand souls; and yet we have not church accommodation in it for more than one hundred fifty souls. From the interest which is manifested in our services, we have every reason to believe that the growth of the Church is greatly retarded for want of a larger building. There are so few members, however, that it would be impossible for them to undertake, alone, the responsibility of erecting one equal to the importance of [or ?] the wants of the parish. Those who desire the prosperity of our Zion, and have it in their power to aid us, will confer a lasting benefit by forwarding their contributions either to me or to W. F. Davidson, Esq., Charlotte."

The project, thus suggested by Mr. Hewitt in 1855, was taken up with spirit by members of the congregation at the time of Bishop Atkinson's visitation, Easter, 1856. Mr. Hewitt, during the year 1856, visited several parishes both in this Diocese and in South Carolina, soliciting funds for the proposed Church. No record has been preserved of the sums raised here or elsewhere, but the subject is referred to more than once in the parochial reports of the rectors of the parish, and some facts of interest have in this way been preserved. In his report in 1857, Mr. Hewitt says that \$1500.00 had been raised by the congregation, and that he had received \$377.70 from the parishes at Salisbury, Fayetteville, and Wadesboro, in this Diocese, and Cheraw and Yorkville, in South Carolina. The old church lot, extending through from Trade to Fifth Streets, had risen very much in value with the increasing population and prosperity of the town, and it, with the chapel upon it, was disposed of to the contractor for the new building at the price of \$1200.00. The new Church was, therefore, begun with something over \$3000.00 as a building fund.

There was some difference of opinion among the members of the vestry in regard to the location of the new church. There was a natural regret felt by many at leaving the old place, and disposing of the consecrated building, and of so convenient and ample a property, which would have afforded abundant room for all future parish needs.

On the other hand, it was urged, that the former location was inconvenient for the great majority of the congregation, and moreover that it would be impossible to build the new Church, without making use of the money which could be realized from the sale of the lot on Trade Street, which was much larger than the parish could have need of for many years to come. A smaller lot, it was thought, would serve present purposes; and it could be left for the future larger and stronger congregation to provide for the necessities of future work. The outcome was that the old lot was sold, as has been stated, and a new one purchased on the corner of Tryon and Seventh Streets. The new site was only ninety-nine feet square, being half of a regular city lot. This may have been the wisest thing at the time, but we have since found the inconvenience of so small a lot.

May 20, 1857, there was a grand celebration in Charlotte of the anniversary of the "Mecklenburg Declaration," and the special feature of the occasion was an address of great power and eloquence by Dr. Hawks. The next day, May 21, Bishop Atkinson laid the cornerstone of the new Church, "and a beautiful and appropriate address [was] delivered by Dr. Hawks." There were present of the clergy, besides Bishop Atkinson, Mr. Hewitt, Dr. Hawks, and the Rev. Messrs. McCullough and Gibson, of South Carolina.

To sum up briefly what I have been able to learn in regard to the building of this church, I may say that, in 1858, Mr. Hewitt gave up the work, and removed to Maryland, and Mr. Mott, having returned from Mississippi, resumed charge of the parish. In his parochial report of 1858, he says that the Church was nearly completed, and would probably be ready for use the second or third Sunday of June in that year; that it had so far cost \$6,000.00, and that there was a debt upon it of \$1500.00. It appears, therefore, that in addition to the \$3000.00 with which the work was begun, the congregation must have raised among themselves, or by contributions from outside, the sum of \$1500.00 between the Conventions of 1857 and 1858. Bishop Atkinson made his first visitation, and held his first service in the new church, October 10, 1858. In 1859, Mr. Mott reports that by the exertions of the members of the Church, and through the generous aid of the citizens of Charlotte not of our communion, "and especially in consequence of the generous response of our Christian brethren in South Carolina and Georgia to his personal appeals, the debt had been so reduced that he is not without hopes of clearing it entirely off during the Conventional year next ensuing." In 1860, Mr. John Wilkes, Senior Warden (Mr. Mott having resigned the rectorship and left the parish) reports that Mr. Mott had raised in Maryland and New York the sum of \$563.50 towards paying off the debt, by which it had been so much reduced that they hoped soon to extinguish it altogether, and to complete the outside walls. Finally, in his Address to the Convention of 1863, Bishop Atkinson has the following passage:

"On the twenty-third of September [1862], I consecrated St. Peter's Church, Charlotte. This was a subject of congratulation. The former Church had been so small that it was scarcely possible that a self-supporting congregation could be gathered together in it. The new building, much more spacious and appropriate to the worship of God, had brought a heavy burden of debt on a feeble congregation, which they were gradually paying off, but which seemed likely to encumber them for some years longer; when the liberality of John Wilkes, Esq., induced him to discharge what remained due, and thus enable me to consecrate the church. On that occasion Messrs. T. G. Houghton and Staudemayer read Prayers, and Dr. Curtis, to whose early labors our congregation in Charlotte owed its origin, read the sentence of consecration of the new building, which attested its progress, and I preached the sermon. The Rector, Mr. Everhart, and Messrs. George B. and William R. Wetmore, and Mr. Roberts, also took part in the services."

I must here say a few words about this Church built in 1857-58, which we are now about to abandon for a new structure. And in the first place we must all remember that such removals, with whatever of regret and sadness they may be accompanied, are necessary and right. The welfare of the congregation demands a more commodious and expensive place of worship. As in 1855 it was found that the growth and work of the Church demanded a larger and more attractive edifice, so we have come to feel that we cannot exert the influence we should exert in the community, nor do the work providentially laid upon us, within the narrow walls of the Church built more than thirty years ago. Doubtless it was a sad day for many of our brethren and fathers, our predecessors in this parish, when they beheld the little Chapel, which had first received and sheltered their feeble flock, sold, and its consecrated walls converted to secular uses. And it is certain that the falling bricks from these walls will knock sadly against many hearts in this congregation. Many infants and adults have here been washed in the cleansing waters of God's regenerating sacrament, and many of them have in due course knelt at this rail to renew and ratify their Baptismal vows, and to seek the gracious gifts of the Spirit. Here have men and women been blessed in the holy estate of Matrimony; and into these doors we have brought our dead, and struggled to realize, in the midst of the agony of our bereavement, the blessedness of the Christian's triumph over death. The bread of life has for a third of a century been broken at this altar, and here has the word of God been spoken—with however much of ignorance and weakness—by God's appointed servants, and has not been here spoken altogether in vain. Our hearts must feel a touch of sadness at the thought of standing no more within these walls, though we may at the same time realize the necessity and the advantage of the change, by which

this building is to pass away, in order to be succeeded by another more suited to our present wants. I do not envy that person who is without such a sentiment for places associated with so many holy emotions and heavenly hopes.

And I will go a step further, and say that I have never entertained any desire to see this building overturned, merely because I hoped for a more beautiful and attractive structure to replace it. Whatever faults this building may exhibit, it is a great mistake for anyone to suppose that it is without architectural merit. There have been times when I feared that it was quite possible that we might in place of this erect a building much less correct and appropriate as an example of Church architecture. Indeed, this building possesses some points of no inconsiderable interest from a historical and architectural point of view. The design and plans, from which this Church was built, were not prepared by an architect, but by one of the vestry of the parish at the time, Col. William A. Williams. It may, therefore, be lacking in many technical points of construction. But at the same time it presents an interesting illustration and example of the development of Church architecture in America. Suffer me to enlarge a little upon this point.

Church architecture in America, as a distinct branch of the art, is the development of the last fifty or sixty years. It took its rise in the study of the Gothic architecture of our mother Church of England. However far it may have departed from the original, and however much within the past few years it may have wandered off in the direction of Italian and Byzantine models, it is still a fact that its first origin and development was in the forms of the so-called Gothic architecture of the English Church. The pointed arch, the long nave, the sharp roof, with its open-timber construction, or with real or imitation vaulting—these and other characteristics of the Gothic style have come to be commonly understood as denoting a building intended for ecclesiastical purposes; and almost all denominations, making any attempts at churchly effect in their buildings, have followed our lead in this direction. And I am inclined to think that just so far as churches, of whatever denomination, shall continue to be places set apart for the worship of Almighty God, the preference for the essential features of this style of building will continue. When, instead of being places of divine worship by the people, churches become merely audience chambers for listening to eloquent or sensational speakers, or for entertainments of so-called sacred music; or develop into social parlors, or religious club-houses, with kitchens, and pantries, and dining-rooms, there is no telling what startling developments we may see in their architecture. The Grecian, the Italian, the Byzantine, being essentially secular in their origin and purpose, lend themselves much more readily to such uses. The English Gothic, on the contrary, though exhibiting many varieties

during its long course of development, prosperity, and decay, was from first to last essentially religious in its whole spirit. It was the faith and love and hope of our ancestors, and their sense of the divine glory and beauty and dignity of worship, expressed in wood and stone. It was meant for worship, and it caught the spirit of the men who worked it out; and it is, and always shall be for us, the architecture of the Church, because, as a matter of fact, it is religious through and through. Like all true art it makes the beholder feel the spirit and meaning of the artist, whether he have skill in the mystery himself or not.

Now it is a very remarkable fact, that this English Gothic architecture was introduced into America, not by an architect, but by an amateur, and he a clergyman. When Bishop Hopkins, in the early days of his ministry, was rector of Trinity Church, Pittsburgh, Pa., it became necessary for the congregation to build a new church. A little while before this time, he had borrowed from a traveling Englishman a large work on Gothic architecture, illustrated with many plates of plans, elevations, sections, and other details of construction and ornamentation in this style. Being himself an artist and draughtsman of no ordinary skill, and becoming much interested in the subject so graphically displayed in this work, Mr. Hopkins made careful and accurate copies of many of these plates while the books remained in his possession, and mastered, as far as time permitted, the principles, methods, and rules of construction, as laid down therein. When confronted with the problem of building a new church, he desired to have it constructed in this ancient style, after the example of the temples of our Mother Church; but being unable to find any architect competent to prepare the plans, he was forced to undertake to be the architect himself; and the church was built from plans drawn by himself, down to the minutest details of construction and ornament, even the painting of the ceiling being designed and executed by him, so far as to show the painters how it must be done.

This church, built by Mr. Hopkins in 1825, was the first church in the United States designed to be purely Gothic throughout, so far as the knowledge and means of the builders would permit.

As defective as this work was, judged by later standards, it attracted most favorable attention at the time; and the architect was frequently called upon to furnish suggestions, plans, or other assistance, by parishes in all parts of the country, when a new church was to be built. So numerous were these applications, and so favorable the impression made upon Churchmen by his attempt to revive this ancient style of church building, that he was induced to think that a short manual upon the subject might prove interesting and valuable, especially to his brethren of the clergy. He began, therefore, to prepare a short treatise of an elementary character; and, in order to provide

it with the necessary plates of plans and illustrations, he learned the art of drawing upon the lithographic stone. In 1836, several years after he had become Bishop of Vermont, he brought out his "Essay on Gothic Architecture," "designed chiefly for the use of the Clergy." To this essay he added lithographs, all drawn upon the stone by himself, of Trinity Church, Pittsburgh, with some of the plans and details, together with several designs for churches in the same general style, but of different sizes and of varying cost, in order to meet the necessities of larger or smaller parishes. He also gave pictures of a notable old English Church, and of several ecclesiastical monuments in that country, by way of illustrating the subject of his essay.

I was so fortunate as to pick up a copy of this first American publication upon Gothic architecture, at a second-hand bookstore in Baltimore a few years ago; and I was at once struck with the resemblance between Bishop Hopkins' designs and the older Gothic churches which I had seen in various parts of the country. Without having any special knowledge of the subject, I was yet familiar in a general way with the course of development of Gothic architecture, from the simple and severer forms of the Early English, to the more elaborate and beautiful buildings of the Decorated Gothic in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries; and then through the stately Perpendicular to the Debased Gothic, or the Tudor styles. In looking at Bishop Hopkins' designs, and observing the point at which the art had been taken up in America, I was surprised and interested to find, that he had begun with the late, debased style; and that the subsequent progress of Gothic architecture in our country has been but a tracing backward of the lines of its original development to the earlier and more beautiful and purer forms of the Decorated and the Early English. The depressed arch, struck from two centers, the perpendicular tracery in the windows, the low roof, the battlemented side walls, are all characteristic of the later stages of the art, and all these are found in Bishop Hopkins' book. It was as if the highest and purest art could not be understood or appreciated at first, until the taste and judgment had been cultivated and developed; and so the debased style was first accepted by the untrained mind, and then, as time and study and practice revealed the true principles of the art, taste and the true critical judgment revived, and gradually led us back to the earlier and better work of the medieval builders.

Now if this be so, the very defects of our earlier American churches have an interest and value, as illustrating the steps by which we have attained to better things; and these defects reflect honor and not discredit upon the designers and builders of these older churches, because they are the evidence of a taste and skill beyond their day, which, with whatever of defect and error, was still steadily aspiring and mounting upward. These battlemented walls, and false ceilings, and long mul-

lioned windows (of the old St. Peter's Church) are marks of progress, and evidence of the attainments of the generation preceding us.

This church, in which we shall probably meet but a little while longer, is one of those built under the influence of Bishop Hopkins' essay. A better type of that style is the Chapel of the Cross, Chapel Hill, my first parish Church, which is almost an exact reproduction of one of Bishop Hopkins' designs. St. James' Church, Wilmington, was another in much the same style, though recent changes and additions have greatly altered its appearance. It must be said, however, that our St. Peter's represents an advance upon Bishop Hopkins' designs. We have here the lancet windows of the earlier style, and the pure Gothic arch in doorways and chancel. And although the battlemented walls and pinnacled buttresses were retained, yet the roof is raised to a steeper pitch, and the pinnacles, except upon the corner buttresses, were either given up, or else have been demolished. Colonel Williams does not remember what models he followed in preparing the plans, but, whatever they may have been, and whether he had seen Bishop Hopkins' essay or not, his plans represented that first stage of American Gothic architecture, when it had begun to be modified by advancing knowledge and the increasing appreciation of the earlier English forms.

I say, therefore, that this Church has in my eyes a distinct interest and value, as marking a certain stage in the progress of our Church architecture, and I have always felt that, where the eye can see in this building nothing of beauty or significance, it is because the mind is not furnished with the knowledge necessary to supplement the vision. In order that we may see, there must be the eye to mark and the mind to receive and apprehend, as well as the object to be seen. And I should rejoice were it possible, while building our larger and more beautiful church, to preserve this older one, that it might be for some subordinate parish use, and might stand as an evidence of the piety and devotion of the years and of the brethren passed away.

For the present I have done. I only proposed to myself in the first instance to tell briefly the story of the old church edifice, and to speak a word in its honor before it is leveled with the dust. In setting about it, earlier incidents presented themselves, and I have thought it might be as well to gather them up for your attention.

Let us remember, in closing, that change and decay are incident to our present existence, and because a thing is old and passing away is no reason why it should not be honored. If it has done its work in its day, it has won a title to our respect and grateful memory. Well would it be for priest and for people, for me and for you, if we could feel that we have done our duty in God's service as well as this house which we now dismantle.



St. Peter's Church

Charlotte, N. C.



Thirty Years of Its Life and Work

1863-1893

As in the case of hospitals, so in the case of orphanages, the Church has set the example and led the way in this beautiful charity, both in the city of Charlotte and in the State of North Carolina.

—JOS. BLOUNT CHESHIRE



St. Peter's Church

Charlotte, N. C.

1863-1893

My Dear Brethren:

Last fall, at the request of your rector, I promised to consecrate St. Peter's Church on Whitsunday of this year. At that time neither of us was aware of the date of Whitsunday, 1921. I was surprised and interested to find, only a few weeks ago, that it is the fortieth anniversary of my acceptance of the call to this parish, and my first service, on the Fourth Sunday after Trinity—May 15, 1881. That service was, of course, in the building which was pulled down in the fall of 1892, to be replaced by your present parish church.

In that old St. Peter's Church, I held my last service in the evening of Tuesday, September 27, 1892, just thirty years and four days after its consecration—September 23, 1862. At that last service I delivered an address upon the history of the Church in Charlotte and St. Peter's Parish, from the beginning of our church work in Charlotte down to the consecration of that old church. Having been requested by your rector, the Rev. Edwin A. Penick, Jr., to give this evening a further account of the work of this parish, I propose to take up the story at that date, 1863, and to give as best I may, the story, or some part of the story, of its later life.

—JOS BLOUNT CHESHIRE

St. Peter's Church, Charlotte

Thirty Years of Its Life and Work

AT the consecration, September 23, 1862, of the church preceding our present building, the Rev. George M. Everhart was rector of the parish. He resigned in February, 1866, on account of ill health, though he lived to do good work for many years longer. It was in February, 1867, that the Rev. Benj. S. Bronson became rector, the services of the church during the interval having been regularly maintained, as far as possible, by that ever-faithful layman, Mr. John Wilkes. Mr. Bronson continued rector until November 1, 1878. From March 25 to October 1, 1879, the Rev. Zina Doty was rector. The Rev. John K. Mason succeeded him January 9, 1880, and resigned February, 1881.

As already stated, I accepted the rectorship May 15, 1881, and continued in charge until my consecration as Assistant Bishop of the Diocese, October 15, 1893. The Rev. Charles C. Quin was my assistant, though without official connection with the parish, from the first of March, 1882, to the end of the year 1883; and the Rev. Chas. N. F. Jeffery was regular assistant in the parish during 1892.

It is impossible in the time at my command to do more than consider briefly some special aspect of the life of the parish. I cannot write the history of thirty years with any fullness. I purpose, therefore, to consider St. Peter's Church in its relation to the development and extension of the work and influence of the Church in this part of the Diocese.

The true measure of the real life and power of any local church is not what it does in the development of its own congregational interests, but the power that goes out from it into the life of the world around it. This diffusive power may result in drawing into the sphere of its own life and organization, the material upon which its influence is exerted, and thus cause it to develop into a larger and more powerful parish, extending its bounds and increasing its beneficent activities. And this is ordinarily one important result of vigorous parochial life; and it is a result of very great value and importance. St. Peter's Parish has shown much vitality of this kind. The small congregation of 137 communicants, whom I found here in 1881, worshipping in the old church, has now grown to a body of 627 communicants, occupying and employing for its worship and its internal activities these extensive and beautiful buildings. This growth of itself is highly creditable to

rector and people. But there are even more important results of the vigorous life of a parish, seen in the development and extension of church life beyond parochial limits, so that the parish becomes a center, from which seeds of other organizations are scattered abroad; and other parishes, churches, and institutions develop, and extend the life in wider fields of activity and influence. In this latter kind of work St. Peter's Parish has, in my judgment, shown a vitality, power, and fecundity, more remarkable and more valuable than in its own parochial growth. "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister"; and His Church best shows itself to be His when it follows His example. The true honor of this parish does not lie in its own handsome church and large, well-equipped parish home and numerous congregation, but in the extension of the life and service of the Church in other churches and congregations and institutions, which have, in whole or in part, sprung from it, and been planted and watered, tended and augmented by the love and service of its people. This part of the parish history I desire to present, and however inadequately I shall do so, I believe I can do something of value in recalling and recording this aspect of your parochial life.

The period over which our survey will extend begins in the trying time of war. The Confederate war so totally absorbed all the energies of our people that there was little opportunity for anything else. But it is very greatly to the honor of our Church and Diocese, that all available resources were employed in meeting the special spiritual needs of the time. Bishop Atkinson mentions in his address to the Convention of 1863, that the liberality of Mr. John Wilke had paid off the debt still resting upon St. Peter's Church, Charlotte, so that he had been able to consecrate it the preceding September. The same generous layman, early in 1864, so far as I can make out the date, started one of the most noble enterprises ever undertaken in this community. He formed the Protestant Episcopal Church Publishing Association, for the purpose of publishing religious literature for the soldiers of the Confederate Army. When in 1892 we pulled down the old church that we might erect our present structure, I found in the old tower a mass of printed matter entirely composed of religious treatises of a popular character, sermons, tracts, and short articles, rather poorly printed on dingy paper, with the imprint of the Protestant Episcopal Church Publishing Association on the title page of each. I had never heard of such an association, and in the hurry of those busy times, when rector, vestry, and people were greatly pressed with the burden of our own work in endeavoring to push on the building of the church, I did not think enough about those dingy old pamphlets to make any inquiry about them. And a very few months afterwards I was chosen Bishop, and the many matters thus crowded upon me put the whole thing out

of my mind. Fortunately, however, with a sort of instinct for preserving whatever seemed to have any bearing on the history and work of the Church or Diocese, I selected one copy of each of the publications found in the old tower, tied them up securely, and put them among my books and papers. When in 1910 I came almost accidentally, and certainly quite without ever having entertained any such purpose, to write the history of the Church in the Confederate States, I learned for the first time of this noble enterprise, and the very great work of this Protestant Episcopal Church Publishing Association in providing religious literature for our Southern soldiers; and then, calling to mind the bundle of old tracts, etc, found in the church tower, I hunted it up; and was gratified to find that I had nearly a complete set of the publications of the Association.

So far as I have been able to discover, the Association consisted on its business side of Mr. John Wilkes alone; and with him was associated his rector, the Rev. George M. Everhart, as editor of the various publications. I cannot sufficiently lament the fact that I knew nothing of this until after the death of both Mr. Wilkes and Mr. Everhart. Mrs. Wilkes, when I talked with her on this matter, could remember nothing of anyone being associated with Mr. Wilkes in the work, and had herself been accustomed to read and correct the proofs of the *Church Intelligencer*, which after the summer of 1864 was published by the Association. This paper had failed, and was discontinued early in 1864. Up to that date it had been published in Raleigh by the Rev. Thos. S. W. Mott. After being discontinued for about six months, Bishop Atkinson earnestly pressed Mr. Wilkes to revive it. He did so, first with the Rev. Mr. Everhart as editor; and then under the very able conduct of the Rev. Fordyce M. Hubbard, D. D., professor of Latin in the University of North Carolina, but no less distinguished in the literature and learning of his native language.

It is impossible at this day to ascertain the extent of the work of this Publishing Association. It must have been very considerable. Orders came for their publications from all the States, from Virginia to Mississippi, and one issue of the *Church Intelligencer* contains acknowledgements of over ten thousand dollars received on orders for tracts to be sent to the soldiers. Even allowing for the depreciation in the Confederate currency, this indicates quite an extensive sale, and certainly there was no more useful work than this of supplying the men in camp with interesting and edifying reading.

Another most interesting incident of the same period, is that through the instrumentality of Mr. Wilkes, St. Peter's Parish participated in the importation of Bibles and Prayer Books from England for use in the South, and specially for the soldiers. About the middle of the year 1864 six parishes united in supplying funds for the purchase

of five bales of cotton at Wilmington. These were shipped on the S. S. Cornubia, ran the Blockade, were sold in England, and the proceeds were used to have an edition of the Prayer Book of the Church in the Confederate States, printed by Eyre & Spottiswood, in London, and also to buy Bibles. These were successfully run through the Blockade to Wilmington, and were distributed throughout the Diocese, and to our North Carolina soldiers in the Army. Eyre & Spottiswood printed two other editions of the Confederate Prayer Book for a Richmond publisher, but all these seem to have been aboard a steamer which was captured or destroyed in attempting to pass through the blockading fleet. So far as is known, the only Confederate Prayer Books used in the South during the War, were those brought in by this combination of North Carolina Parishes.

These items of church work during the period of the Confederate War, make a most interesting and creditable record, and reflect honor upon the parish. The Rev. Mr. Everhart, who was rector during this period, was a man of striking personality and ability. He seems to have given a distinct impulse to the growth of the parish, and to the influence and reputation of the Church in this rather difficult field. He was faithfully supported in his work by a small but notable group, chiefly the following men and their families: John Wilkes, William R. Myers, William F. Davidson, John G. Bryce, William A. Williams, William A. Lucas, Dr. Moses M. Orr, and others.

A new era in our secular history begins with the years following the Confederate War, and a new era in our parish life seems associated with the same years, and the new conditions. In February, 1867, the Rev. Benjamin S. Bronson became rector of the Parish, and the course of development of our church work and church life was, it seems to me, more influenced by him than by any other man who has held the position, certainly up to the year 1893, when I left this parish. I am all the more careful to say this because his administration was *not* eminently successful. He was not a good administrator. I think I must say that he failed in many, if not most of the enterprises which he undertook. But he had *vision*. He looked at things largely. He aspired and he attempted and he struggled, and when he did not succeed, he at least put ideas into other men's minds. He opened up vistas of achievement and of progress, and he laid some good and solid foundations upon which those who followed him might build. He was not satisfied with merely parochial activity and the gathering of a congregation within the walls of his parish church. He looked upon the parish as an instrument of useful service in the community and for the community. He felt that the Church must lift up its eyes and view the needs of the world and the opportunities for ministering to those needs.

One of the great needs in the South after the war was good schools. Mr. Bronson's first and most ambitious enterprise was a school, projected on a large and generous scale, to be built and sustained as a permanent church institution. I am not prepared to give a history of this enterprise, but something must be said about it. Mr. Bronson was a native of the State of Maine and a graduate of Yale College. He came to North Carolina as a teacher, and was ordained by Bishop Atkinson in May, 1854. His early ministry had been passed in Bertie and the adjoining counties. Wherever he lived he made many warm friends and admirers. He was the best classical scholar I have known among the clergy of the Diocese, and a man of warm and generous nature. While struggling to establish the school in this parish, the family of a deceased friend and parishioner, Mr. Lewis Thompson, of Bertie, gave him a considerable sum of money, several thousand dollars, toward his work. The school had been begun as a parochial enterprise, and was called St. Peter's School. Immediately upon coming into the parish he had interested the vestry in his plans. The vestry had authorized and been responsible for his first purchase of land, and had taken title to property, borrowed money, given mortgages, and generally borne a very considerable part in the enterprise. After this gift from the Thompsons, a development in Mr. Bronson's purposes appears. He had visited distant parts of the State and country, seeking support in his enterprise, and he proceeded to expand his plans. The name was changed from St. Peter's School to The Thompson Institute, and preparations were made for giving it a Diocesan character, and for conveying all the property, whether in the hands of the vestry or of Mr. Bronson, to a board of trustees of the Thompson Institute.

This was in 1872, and seems to have been the culmination of the effort. Possibly the financial troubles of 1873 helped to check the progress of the school. The vestry seem to have taken no part in it after this, and the Thompson Institute failed. Mr. Bronson taught for some years himself, and employed other teachers. He burned brick, and put up the building now known as "Thompson Hall," of the Thompson Orphanage. He gave it much time and thought and labor. Doubtless it was a disadvantage to him in his parochial and pastoral work, and caused restlessness and dissatisfaction both to him and his people. But it had its value in helping to create in the parish a sense of responsibility for things beyond merely congregational interests.

Another enterprise, small at first, but now one of our great local institutions, had its beginning under Mr. Bronson. Several ladies of St. Peter's Church had become interested in an old woman, whose destitute and feeble condition made her entirely dependent upon their charity. At first they merely supplied her with necessary food and

clothing. But finally, being turned out of her lodging for non-payment of rent, these good ladies were obliged to rent a small house, and to provide for her entire support. This put into their minds the idea of providing a place for the care of the poor and helpless. Whether Mr. Bronson suggested this I do not know, but it was quite in line with his ideas of Church work, and he took it up with enthusiasm and urged it on, and offered to give the brick for such a building. He had been burning brick for his school building, and in a small way had been selling brick to help on his work. At this time Miss Hattie Moore lived in a house which stood on the spot now occupied by the chancel of St. Peter's Church. For a good many years she carried on a school for small children. She had organized a society among her scholars for such good work as they could do, and called it the "Busy Bees." She proposed that these Busy Bees should raise the money to buy a lot for "*St. Peter's Home and Hospital.*" The vestry and Ladies' Aid Society also took up the matter, and a beginning was made. A lot was bought, and was paid for by Miss Hattie Moore's "Busy Bees"; and in 1877, in connection with his presence in Charlotte for the Diocesan Convention of that year, Bishop Atkinson laid the cornerstone of "St. Peter's Home and Hospital."

While Mr. Bronson's chief thought was for developing church work in permanent institutions, he was not wholly neglectful of parochial expansion. For a while he had carried on a Mission Sunday School in the brick schoolhouse, which used to stand near the corner of Tenth and D Streets, in that part of Charlotte then called Mechanicsville.

Like many other good men, Mr. Bronson failed in his efforts to establish his school. While a fine scholar, and not without talent and inspirational power as a teacher, he was very greatly lacking in constructive and administrative ability. He could see and design, and lay out great and admirable plans, but he lacked method, attention to detail, and the patient, persistent, plodding quality necessary to carry out design into accomplishment. And all his thought and effort and time being absorbed in his school, or much the greater part of it, his parochial and pastoral work suffered. And so there came about a want of sympathetic co-operation between rector and people, or at any rate between rector and vestry. There was mutual unrest, and about the end of 1878 Mr. Bronson resigned.

One of the most interesting and notable events connected with his rectorship was the Confirmation, and then some years later, the Ordination to the Ministry, of the Rev. Edwin A. Osborne, whose beloved presence with us makes it impossible for me to say what his life and work have meant to the Church in Charlotte, and to the whole Diocese during the forty-four years which have passed since his Ordination in May, 1877.

I do not think it is unjust to the Rev. Zina Doty and the Rev. John K. Mason, who in succession followed the Rev. Mr. Bronson, to say that, so far as I can learn, nothing of special importance marked their brief rectorships. Neither of them remained more than about a year. Mr. Doty, I believe, remained less than twelve months. He did not impress the people as a man of ability. The only thing I remember to have heard about him is that, having spoken of St. Mark as an apostle, and someone saying to him that St. Mark was not an apostle, he maintained that he was, and proposed to prove it by reference to *Appleton's Encyclopedia!*

Mr. Mason was an able man, admired and beloved, and became one of the distinguished men of the Church in the United States. But while in Charlotte he was in bad health, and he felt obliged to resign after a short service.

Some time in the spring of 1881, Mr. Mason having left Charlotte, I was called to be his successor. Bishop Lyman, only a few weeks before, had expressed to me his desire that I should not leave Chapel Hill. I therefore replied by return mail, declining the call to this parish. I had been put in charge of the Chapel of the Cross, Chapel Hill, by Bishop Atkinson, when he had ordained me on Easter Day, 1878; and I had my first service there on the Third Sunday in May of that year. I had told the Bishop that it was my desire to serve wherever he might put me. In declining the call to Charlotte, I only acted upon the principle which I had adopted. Such calls as I had received—only two or three, as far as I remember—I had declined without really giving them any serious consideration. A few days after receiving and declining this call to Charlotte, I had a letter from Bishop Lyman saying that he desired me to accept this call to Charlotte. I wrote him that only a few weeks before he had told me that he wished me to remain in Chapel Hill, and so I had declined. He replied at once, saying that a call to Hillsboro and a call to Charlotte were two very different things, and that he had written the vestry at Charlotte to repeat their call, and he would see that I should go to them. In the meantime, however, the vestry of St. Peter's had extended an invitation to the Rev. Nathaniel Harding, of Washington; but in a very short time, Mr. Harding also declined. Whereupon the invitation to me was renewed. I wrote that I would be with them for Sunday, May 15, and give them my decision. Late Saturday night I reached Charlotte, and was cordially received by Mr. John Wilkes, who entertained me during my brief visit. The next day, May 15, being the Fourth Sunday after Easter, I had service and preached in St. Peter's Church, and announced to the congregation that I had accepted the call of the vestry, not because I had any desire to come, but in deference to the judgment and wishes of those whom I felt I ought to regard. I may say here that

I never accepted of my own volition a call to a parish. Bishop Atkinson placed me in Chapel Hill at my ordination. Bishop Lyman sent me to Charlotte. Here I remained until made Bishop. Such calls as I received while at Chapel Hill or in Charlotte, I declined. I preferred to do the work assigned to me.

While preparing to remove to Charlotte, I was told by some persons that St. Peter's was a hard parish to get on with, the most difficult in the Diocese. I say this only that I may add that I found it altogether otherwise. I was received with the utmost kindness, courtesy, and consideration, and during my twelve and a half years as rector, had as little trouble or discomfort of any kind, in my relations with vestry and people, as is to be expected in this imperfect state of existence.

I am not sure that I remember accurately the names of all the vestrymen at the time of my coming. But, during the early period of my incumbency it seems to me as I look back on those days, that they were a rather remarkable body of men. Mr. John Wilkes was my Senior Warden as long as I remained Rector. Col. Hamilton C. Jones was Junior Warden for most of that time. Then there were Gen. Thos. F. Drayton, Col. John P. Thomas, Judge Wm. M. Shipp, Mr. Baxter H. Moore, Dr. M. A. Bland, Mr. John S. Myers, and a little later on, Mr. Thos. H. Haughton, Mr. Joseph G. Shannonhouse, and Mr. Platt D. Walker, now Judge in the Supreme Court, with others. Of course I cannot name all. Of those who were members of the vestry in 1881—only Mr. John S. Myers and Dr. M. A. Bland remain.

From this time I must necessarily speak in the first person. The rector represents and leads the parish, if in any degree he does his work. I beg, however, that you will not think what I shall have to say of the work of the parish, however often the personal pronoun may appear, I consider as *my own*, except as I was representing the people of the parish and acting as their leader and representative, doing the work with and by their co-operation, sympathy, and support.

I found in the parish 137 communicants. The parish church stood upon a lot ninety-nine feet square. The Church owned St. Peter's Home and Hospital, a one-story, four-room building, and the lot upon which it stood. That was the whole of our parochial possessions. Across Sugar Creek stood the old brick school building erected by Mr. Bronson, with some eighty acres of land. The title was in Mr. Bronson, and a debt—I do not now remember how much—encumbered the property. Shortly after coming to Charlotte, Mr. Bronson wrote me that I could have the property for any church work, if I would assume the indebtedness resting upon it. I felt too seriously the importance of my parochial and pastoral work to be willing to burden myself a:

that time with additional responsibilities, and I declined Mr. Bronson's offer.

The first matter which I recall as attracting my attention in connection with the interests of the parish after I assumed charge, had to do with St. Peter's Home, as it was then called. The building had been erected a few years earlier, as has been mentioned, just before Mr. Bronson's departure. A good woman was in charge, under the direction of a committee of the ladies of the parish. It was used for the temporary care of such destitute and sick persons as could not be otherwise provided for. It was supported by voluntary contributions, obtained upon no general system or method, and in the early summer of 1881, it seemed perilously near absolute failure for want of funds to meet its current expenses. The good ladies who had it in charge were in great distress and perplexity. Some of their Presbyterian friends suggested that one of their Presbyterian societies was prepared to relieve them of the burden and to take over this work. I am inclined to think that this offer proved a very healthy and effective *stimulus* to the struggling enterprise. Renewed efforts were made to raise funds for its support, and at this time upon a more systematic plan.

There was a retired clergyman then residing in Charlotte, the Rev. Lucian Holmes, who I believe, had come in the closing period of Mr. Bronson's school, as a teacher, and had afterwards supported himself for some years by teaching a small private school for boys. He was a kind and amiable man, and was very good about visiting the inmates of St. Peter's Home and Hospital, and felt much concerned for its maintenance and success. While the ladies were endeavoring to secure contributions for its support, Mr. Holmes, during this summer of 1881, with a degree of energy and persistence which I never knew him to manifest in any other matter, went about through the community, not only among our own church people, but generally to all whom he was able to interest, representing the good work done by having this refuge for the sick and suffering, and soliciting not contributions at that time, but subscriptions for regular monthly contributions for its support. He was quite successful in this effort, and secured many subscriptions, mostly for small sums, but in the aggregate enough to put the work upon a much securer basis than before. This was the first regular income ever provided, and for many years this monthly subscription was the chief dependence for meeting the current expenses. It is an interesting and pathetic circumstance that this good friend and benefactor, the Rev. Lucian Holmes, eight or ten years later, died in St. Peter's Hospital, and owed the comfort and attendance of his last days to the institution which he had helped according to his ability. From these small beginnings grew the present St. Peter's Hospital, the

first in this State, so far as I know, founded and sustained entirely by individual benevolence. I can only indicate thus briefly the good works which have sprung out of the life of this parish.

In entering upon the work of the parish, I could not fail to observe the large negro population of Charlotte. In the old Parish Register are many entries of Baptisms of negroes, and there had been a number of negroes confirmed and communicants before the abolition of slavery, as was the case in most of our Southern parishes. It is gratifying to me to know that the vestry of the parish were deeply interested in this matter. A number of entries in the record of the proceedings of the vestry, show them as co-operating zealously with the Rev. Mr. Bronson in efforts to provide services and a clergyman for the colored people of the city, and later on endeavoring to secure a place for such services. At one time, in 1876, the Bishop sent a colored clergyman to Charlotte, in an effort to gather up the few who remained, and to organize some systematic Christian work among the negroes. This effort had failed. When I became rector the only colored communicant whom I found, was a woman named Annie Wilson, who was employed to act as sexton of the Church, and who communed regularly with the rest of the congregation.

I proposed to the Bishop that he should send me an unmarried young clergyman, who could live in my house, that by his help I might do church work among the negroes, as the demands of my parochial work were too great to allow me to undertake it alone. Bishop Lyman then sent me the Rev. Chas. C. Quin, who was ordained February 22, 1882, and reached Charlotte, March 2. He was a member of my family while he remained in Charlotte. The Bishop gave \$200.00 a year from the missionary funds, and I gave him \$50.00 and his board and lodging. This was all the remuneration he received. He was of a singularly cheerful, amiable, and modest demeanor, unselfish and docile, always willing to do what was assigned to him; and I believe he was as generally acceptable in the parish as he was in my family circle, where we all became much attached to him. As he had not been called to supply any want in the parish, but only to do extra-parochial work under my direction, and by his ministrations in the parish to compensate for such time and energy as I might bestow upon outside work, I did not feel it right to burden the parish with any part of his support. But having in Mr. Quin one who could supply my place during any brief absence, I felt more free to undertake such work outside the parish as might seem desirable and urgent.

Our first effort to reach the colored people was by having a service in, I think, the Police Court, on East Trade Street, near the old "Carolina Central Railroad" crossing. This one experiment satisfied me that we could do nothing without a place of our own. Some time

during 1882 I was able to purchase the lot on Mint Street, just beyond the railroad tracks, on which the Church of St. Michael and All Angels now stands. On that part of the lot now occupied by the chancel of the church, was a very shabby and dilapidated frame dwelling-house of three or four rooms. By knocking out most of the partitions, and with some very moderate repairs, we secured space for the accommodation of a small congregation, and we made some very simple and rude arrangements for altar, lectern, etc. We began our services in May. We were never able to find any remnants of the old colored members who had been communicants in St. Peter's Church. We had to work with and upon wholly new material. The Rev. Mr. Quin was absolutely faithful, zealous, and diligent, but he really had no aptitude whatever for work among the negroes. He was a native of New York, born and educated there, though of Irish parentage. He never, I think, was able to enter into any sympathetic relations with his little negro congregation. Fortunately, however, shortly before this time a young colored man, James E. King, who was an intelligent and very faithful Churchman, had removed with his wife from Wilmington to Charlotte, and opened a barber's shop in the city. He became at once our chief assistant and support in the work. At this time I had my second Sunday service in the afternoon, and I usually took part in the evening service at our colored mission, which we called the "Church of St. Michael and All Angels." We raised some money in Charlotte, a little perhaps from individuals in other parts of the Diocese. We succeeded in paying for our lot, and then I gave Mr. Quin letters to a number of clergymen and friends of mine in New York and Connecticut, and he undertook the very ungrateful task of soliciting money for the church which we proposed to build. His efforts were so far successful that in 1883 we were able to build so much of the proposed church as was needed at that stage of the work, namely, the nave up to the crossing of the transepts. This afforded ample space for the work at that stage. About the time this was accomplished, towards the end of 1883, the Bishop sent the Rev. Primus P. Alston, a young colored deacon, just ordained the preceding spring, to take charge of the work, as the Rev. Mr. Quin had been called to Calvary Church, Wadesboro. The work had now been fairly started, and ceased to be part of St. Peter's Parish, though the Rev. Mr. Alston carried on the work under my direction.

At this time, however, while Mr. Quin was with me, I had been using him in another direction. Some time during 1881 I had visited Monroe, having learned that there were a number of members of the Church there. According to my best recollection I found on my first visit seven communicants living in that town, though I think there must have been two or three others. They had some years before that

time attempted to form a congregation, and had rented a room over a store, and had it furnished with benches and with one or two old articles of chancel furniture, given them, I believe, by St. Peter's Church, Charlotte. The Rev. Mr. Boyle had held monthly services there while rector of Calvary Church, Wadesboro; and even earlier. Bishop Atkinson had visited the place and administered confirmation to several persons. In 1881, however, the little congregation had become discouraged; no services had been held there for some time, and they felt that it was useless to continue their efforts. I proposed to them that they should continue to rent the room or hall over the store, and I promised, if they would do so, to give them at least a monthly service on a weekday, and that I would try to arrange for a regular monthly Sunday service, as soon as possible. This proposition they very gladly accepted. The principal members of the little congregation were the two brothers, Samuel S. and Chas. M. T. McAulay, formerly from Chapel Hill, and their families, and Mr. Jas. F. Payne and Mrs. Payne, from Virginia. Before the arrival of the Rev. Mr. Quin, I had been giving this little flock a monthly visit and service on a weekday and night. After he came we kept up a monthly Sunday service during his stay in Charlotte. When he left for Wadesboro, at the end of 1883, I resumed my monthly visits and services on weekdays. This continued until January, 1885, when I was able to turn the little congregation over to the Rev. Edwin A. Osborne, as will appear later on. The services thus maintained for two years or more by the clergy of St. Peter's Church, had prevented the abandonment of this work, and had organized the beginning of a small but promising mission.

While these matters of parochial enterprise, outside the ordinary routine, claimed my attention, the internal work of the parish was proceeding uneventfully, but, on the whole, well. It has been said that the country is happy which has no history, and the best parochial work has perhaps the least of the extraordinary to record. As I recall those days, my most distinct impressions seem to be of a few aged parishioners, too feeble to attend the public worship of the Church, to whom it was my privilege to minister in private. Three of them were indeed notable women. Mrs. William R. Myers was a true mother in Israel. I always felt that in my visits and services with her I gained much more than I could bestow. For many years, helpless and suffering, she not only manifested the sweet and gentle character of the Christian matron and was an example to all, but she had also a great deal of patriarchal quality: "She commanded her children after her." It was good to see how her prevailing influence over a large family circle seemed to lose nothing of its power for good, though she was herself dependent upon their care. One of the very few funeral sermons I have ever written was prepared and preached when she was laid to rest. And

with her I remember another name inseparably associated with the early history of the parish as I knew it, Mrs. Mary Jourde Lucas, who died February 22, Ash Wednesday, 1882, in her eighty-eighth year. Fifty years before this she had been organist in Christ Church, Raleigh, and it was she who harmonized and wrote out the music of our State song, "The Old North State," from the melody which Miss Lou Taylor, a young lady of Raleigh, had caught from a strolling band of Swiss bell ringers, and played by ear, and for which Judge Gaston had written the words, ever since so inseparably associated with it. She and her family, children and grandchildren, have for the greater part of the life of this parish, been among its most faithful and useful members. And a third, Miss Sarah Frew Davidson, also a cultivated and talented woman, of strong mind and character, stands out in my memory as one intimately associated with the parish from its very beginning, in the days of the Rev. John Morgan and the Rev. Moses A. Curtis—but time and space forbid that I further indulge these, to me, most interesting memories. Many others would claim like tribute of praise for what they had been to the Church, and for what they were to me, did time and space permit.

I must mention the little four-room "Home and Hospital"—how deeply are its memories engraved upon my mind! Its inmates were as a rule, the "*waifs, and strays*" of life, drifting in from the railroads, or from the lower, often from the very lowest, *strata* of the community. Here many a helpless and hopeless life found a few days or a few weeks of peace and rest, and unaccustomed comfort and tenderness. And some, I believe, found the supreme help and lasting peace and hope, before they went hence and were no more seen. Others beside myself, good women and men of St. Peter's, know what a blessing even that little unfurnished, unpretentious house was in those days; and what an honor it was and is to the people and the parish, who thus were the pioneers in Charlotte in providing for the sick, the needy, and the destitute.

What I had soon learned in the parish concerning Mr. Bronson's work, or rather of his spirit and ideas of church work, had a good deal of influence in the development of my own plans and purposes; for though not immature in years and in character, I felt that I had much to learn, if I would meet the demands of the parish. In looking about for some aggressive work in the city, I learned of his attempt to establish a Sunday School in the brick schoolhouse at the corner of D and Tenth Streets. Obtaining permission to use this building, I secured the co-operation of several members of the congregation, and in December, 1881, began a Sunday School here. This was carried on with some success for several years, and then the building was destroyed by fire,

which caused a temporary cessation of the work, but its reorganization after a few months, upon a larger scale, as will be told in due time.

In May, 1883, the Diocesan Convention was held in St. Peter's Church. It was one of the most notable Conventions in the history of the Diocese. For many years earnest endeavors had been made to erect a new Diocese within the State of North Carolina. In 1877, at a Convention, also held in this Church, a resolution for the creation of such a Diocese had been carried by a good majority, but those opposed to it had, at an adjourned session of the Convention held in Raleigh, induced Bishop Atkinson to withhold his consent. Now, however, in 1883, all opposition proved unavailing, and final action was taken for the erection of the Diocese now known as the Diocese of East Carolina.

Another important Diocesan event marked this Convention of 1883. This was the organization of the Diocesan Branch of the Woman's Auxiliary. On the twenty-second of March, 1882, a meeting of the women of the parish was held in the church, and a parish branch of the Auxiliary was formed with twenty-four members. The leader in this movement was Mrs. John Wilkes. As the Diocesan Convention of 1883 drew on, Mr. Wilkes corresponded with the Bishop, with a view of organizing a Diocesan branch. The Bishop thereupon authorized Mrs. Wilkes to endeavor to effect such an organization. By Mrs. Wilkes's efforts a number of women from other parishes, some, I believe, representing parochial branches already formed, attended the Diocesan Convention, and after the conclusion of one of the daily sessions of the Convention, these women met, the Bishop made an address to them upon the Woman's Auxiliary and the important work it was designed to do, I added such information and advice as I could, and the Diocesan branch of the Woman's Auxiliary was formed, with Mrs. Wilkes as Diocesan Secretary, and head of the organization, by the Bishop's appointment. This not only took place in this parish, but it was distinctly the work of Mrs. Wilkes, a member of St. Peter's Church, who for a number of years continued to be the inspiring and guiding force in the work of the Auxiliary in this Parish, and throughout this Diocese.

Up to this time there had been no effort made to extend the Church into the surrounding country. St. Peter's and the colored congregation of St. Michael's, numbering in all about 175 communicants, represented the whole work of our communion in this large and prosperous county. Col. Hamilton C. Jones had spoken to me several times of a friend of his, living in the country, in Long Creek Township, who had a Prayer Book, given him by the Rev. Edwin A. Osborne, and who had been much impressed by reading it, and had frequently expressed a desire to see and talk with me. Colonel Jones had offered to take

him to see me, but he seemed to be a little shy about coming, and always put it off until his next visit. How long this might have continued to be his attitude, there is no knowing, but happening to enter Colonel Jones's office one day, in the early part of the year 1883, so far as I can remember the date, I found this man, Columbus W. McCoy, talking with the Colonel about going to see me, but still putting it off. I had some conference with him, and he told me that he and several of his neighbors, some of them Presbyterians and some of no religious profession, would be pleased to have me come out and preach in their neighborhood. Afterwards I visited him in his home, and I suggested to him that he might come into Charlotte on Sundays and attend the Church service. He did so once or twice, each time accompanied by one or another of his country friends. He still, however, insisted that there were a number of good men near him, who, for one reason or another, were not in real connection with the congregations about them, and who had expressed to him a desire that I should come and preach in their neighborhood. I therefore made an appointment with him for Sunday afternoon, November 18, 1883. He came in to the 11.00 a. m. service at St. Peter's, took dinner with me, and then drove me out to "Beech Cliff School House," about a mile beyond Whitley's Mill on Long Creek. I found quite a large congregation awaiting me, mostly men. I explained to them that our usual method of public worship was with the use of a printed form, so that the congregation as well as the minister might join audibly and unitedly in the worship of God; and I said that I hoped in time to lead them in that form of worship. But I added, that the essential thing was not the form but the spirit; and I desired them to join with me in the hymns and in the Lord's Prayer, and also in the Apostles' Creed, with their voices, if possible, but at least in heart and mind. A few did join with me, and one incident I never forgot, and it often recurred to my mind in after days, and encouraged me in moments of depression. Near me stood a tall fine looking man of about fifty years of age, Mr. Robt. D. Whitley, who had never made any religious profession, though a man of really noble character. He came in after days to be my dear and valued friend, one of the finest natures I have ever known. He was then unknown to me. When I asked the people to kneel down and join me in saying the Lord's Prayer, he was one of those who did so. He kneeled down upon his knees and with an earnest sincerity deeply affecting, repeated it with me, petition by petition. I remained with Mr. McCoy until Tuesday, preaching again Monday evening. December 16 I repeated my visit, preaching as before on Sunday afternoon and Monday evening, and visiting the people during Monday. After this visit on the third Sunday in December, I discontinued my services, on account of the roads and the weather, until the following May, when monthly services, Sunday afternoon and

Monday evening, were resumed. August 12, Tuesday, assisted by the Rev. Edwin A. Osborne and the Rev. Geo. B. Whetmore, D. D., I began a series of services, morning and evening, concluding Sunday afternoon, August 17. During this time we baptized sixteen people, mostly children, and at the end fourteen adults gave in their names as candidates for Confirmation, and eleven persons, with one exception fathers and mothers of families, signed a petition to be organized as a congregation by the name of St. Mark's Chapel, under the Canons of the Diocese. The Bishop visited the mission October 24 following, confirmed sixteen adults, of whom thirteen were heads of families, and October 25 organized St. Mark's Mission, in accordance with the petition presented to him. Members of St. Peter's Church attended, both at the visitation of the Bishop and at the mission services in August, and were much gratified at seeing this good work among the good people of the county. Though Mr. Columbus McCoy had formerly been a Presbyterian, as well as some others then confirmed, yet Mr. Robt. D. Whitley and Mr. Albert McCoy had never before made any Christian profession, and Captain Gluyas, though he had attached himself to Hopewell Church, had always been a Churchman at heart, having been born and brought up as such in Cornwall, England.

I have thus given very briefly and inadequately the story of how St. Mark's Church, Mecklenburg, came into being. It was really the most interesting experience of all my ministry, and the people of that congregation soon became, and I am thankful to say they remain, among the best of my friends in all the Diocese. It would be unjust to conclude this account without saying that the preaching of the Rev. Mr. Osborne during our services August 12 to 17, was the greatest element, humanly speaking, in the interest and success of those meetings.

By the organization of St. Mark's Mission, Mecklenburg County, a point was reached at which I had aimed for some time past. I had now for two years or more been in charge of St. Paul's, Monroe, for the greater part of that time without any help in keeping up the services. Now, by joining St. Paul's, Monroe, with St. Mark's, Mecklenburg, it seemed practicable to bring another man into the field. That man I wished to be the Rev. Edwin A. Osborne, and I was fortunately able to arrange for a stipend sufficient to give him a very meager support. But he was of that rare kind who look not for reward, but for opportunity, and he came to the call of the work. In January, 1885, I turned over to him these two missions, and sought new ways of extending the work of the Parish. In him I found a friend and a co-laborer who has meant more to me from that day to this, than I can hope to express in words. He was frequently with me in our services, and priest and people enjoyed and profited by his ministrations, in the church and in the Parish. He was, in effect, a faithful, valued, and

unpaid assistant in many ways to me, always prompt to help on the work of the Church. St. Peter's, Charlotte, and St. Mark's, Mecklenburg County, hardly seemed to us separate fields, so great was our common interest in both, and so entire the sympathy and harmony with which we worked together. I do not remember that one single experience of dissension or unpleasant difference ever occurred during all the years we thus lived and worked together. This is a happy memory, and I think worth recording in the history of the parish.

Mention has been made of a Sunday School begun in December, 1881, in a disused public school building at the corner of Tenth and D Streets. This was carried on for some years, chiefly by the Misses Lucas, Miss Bessie Myers, Miss Laura Orr, and Miss Kate Shipp. Some interest was created, and a number of children attended from that part of Charlotte, then commonly spoken of as *Mechanicsville*. After two or three years, I forget the exact date, the schoolhouse, in some way, took fire and was totally destroyed. This, of course, put an end to our Sunday School, as we could find no other suitable place for it. But it seemed to me there was need of some place of religious worship and instruction in that section of the City. I, therefore, thought I would purchase the lot where the schoolhouse had stood, and build a small Chapel. The property belonged to the City School Board. It consisted of six of the eight lots which made up the entire square, each lot 99 feet by 198 feet. The two lots on Ninth Street, one fronting 99 feet on D Street, and the other 99 feet on C Street, were both built upon and occupied, the other six lots occupying the whole Tenth Street side of the square and 297 feet on C and D Streets. The whole was covered with a growth of small scrub oaks, forming a very pretty grove. I applied to the proper authorities, and asked their price for the lot at the corner of Tenth and D Streets. They declined to sell a single lot, but said they would sell the whole six lots for \$1500.00. All the property I possessed, except the house in which I lived, was a lot in the town of Tarboro, worth I supposed about \$500.00. I calculated that I could, therefore, make the one-third cash payment required; and I applied to Col. Hamilton C. Jones and Mr. Platt D. Walker, and asked them if they would agree to help me, if necessary, by making the deferred payments of \$500.00 each, at one and two years. They agreed to do this. I thereupon sold my lot in Tarboro for \$500.00, and paid that amount to the City Treasurer, taking his receipt, with a statement that it was a payment on account of those six lots, and that I was to receive a deed, when the remaining \$1,000.00 had been paid. To finish this part of my story I may say that I did not have to call upon Colonel Jones and Judge Walker. A lost deed in the chain of title made it impossible at the time for the proper city authorities to make me a title, so that I was not called on for the deferred payments for two

or three years. In the meantime I sold off a lot, or two half lots, at an advanced price, and was able to pay the balance myself; and eventually I disposed of the rest of the property at a profit of \$1500.00. So while I thought I was giving away \$500.00, the only piece of property which I owned except my residence, in the end I made a profit of \$1500.00. I may add that the lot which I then conveyed to the Trustees of the Diocese for the site of St. Martin's Chapel, was a few years ago, with my consent, sold for \$3000.00, and that \$3000.00 paid for the land on which the present St. Martin's Church stands.

As soon as I had made the first payment and taken the receipt, with *memorandum* of the contract of sale, I began the building. It was a simple rectangular chapel, twenty by forty feet, built of brick, with an open roof, and very pretty timber trusses. The roof was after a design I had had prepared for the Church I built in Durham in 1880-81. The plans were drawn by the assistant professor of architecture in Cornell University, but I found myself unable to use them in Durham. They were on a larger scale than suited my little St. Martin's Chapel, but Mr. John Wilkes had the roof built by his men; and Dick Grimes, his veteran boss carpenter, scaled the plans down, and made a beautiful job of it. I understand that these beautiful timber roof-trusses still support the roof of St. Martin's Church, but are boxed in, so that the fine work does not show. They had to be pieced out so as to be used in the present larger building, and therefore it was necessary that they should be boxed. Mr. Wilkes had this part of the work done, and then made a gift of it to my new enterprise. I called the new Chapel St. Martin's, because under our Colonial Church Laws Mecklenburg County was St. Martin's Parish. How I raised the money to build the Chapel I do not remember. An old college friend of mine gave me one hundred dollars, my father gave me the same, and others gave me smaller sums. After finishing the walls, floor, and roof, it remained for some time unfinished in other respects, with oiled paper for window-glass. It was finished gradually as the money could be raised.

The Chapel being sufficiently furnished to be occupied, was at once used for Sunday School and for Sunday night service. To have someone with special responsibility for this work, St. Martin's Guild was organized, March 16, 1887. The first members were John K. P. Neathery, David A. Henning, Miss Laura Orr, Miss Bloss Lucas, and Miss Kate Shipp, Miss Lucas being appointed secretary of the Guild, and Mr. Henning, treasurer. August 21 following, the Chapel was used for the first time. A Sunday School was organized, with Mr. Neathery as superintendent, and I said Evening Prayer. From this time the Sunday School and services were kept up until after my departure from the Parish. Under the Rev. Francis M. Osborne, the work developed into an independent parish. When the removal was

made to the present site, and the cornerstone of the Church was laid, it was called at my suggestion—which met general approval—*The Wilkes Memorial*, in memory of Mr. John Wilkes, who had during his long residence in Charlotte done so much for the interests of the Church and for every good work as far as it lay in his power.

While St. Martin's Chapel was thus making its beginning, and I had other missionary attempts also on hand, demanding a good deal of time and thought, one of the most considerable enterprises which this Diocese has ever attempted, took its rise here in Charlotte, having its roots in the work of St. Peter's Parish. The property of the old "Thompson Institute" was still held by the Rev. Mr. Bronson ready to be used in some Church work. He had offered it to me upon my becoming rector of the parish, as has been mentioned. He now made the like offer of the property to the Rev. Mr. Osborne. Mr. Osborne resided in Charlotte, and gave two Sundays each month to St. Mark's and two to Monroe. These congregations being small did not require more than a day or two each week for all ordinary pastoral work, so that the greater part of his time was spent in Charlotte. He had, therefore, leisure for some important work here. He came to me with Mr. Bronson's letter, and proposed that we should accept Mr. Bronson's offer, and establish an Orphanage to be maintained as a Diocesan institution. I replied that I had too much parochial and missionary work on hand to think of assuming additional responsibilities, but I assured him of my hearty sympathy with him, and promised my cordial co-operation if he would assume the leadership and responsibility in the work. Thereupon he wrote to Mr. Bronson unfolding his plans, and Mr. Bronson at once entered enthusiastically upon the project of using the school property for the establishment of the "Thompson Orphanage and Training Institution." During the Convention at Tarboro, in May, 1886, Mr. Bronson, with his legal adviser, the late Hugh F. Murray, Esq., of Wilson, in conference with Mr. Osborne and myself, went carefully over the questions involved, and agreed upon the terms and conditions of the Deed, by which Mr. Bronson conveyed the property to the Trustees of the Diocese, to be used in the establishment of the proposed institution. This deed was accepted by the Convention, and of the six Managers called for by the deed, three were from Charlotte—the Rev. Mr. Osborne, the Rector of St. Peter's Parish, and Mr. Baxter H. Moore. Of the subsequent history of this institution I need not speak. You know well Mr. Osborne's faithful labors in founding and carrying it on, and the large and generous part taken by this parish in all stages of that work. At that time the Masonic Orphanage at Oxford was the only orphanage in North Carolina. That had been founded by the Masonic Order, but was largely supported by a public grant of money from the State. The Thompson Orphanage

was the first in this State established by a religious organization, and supported wholly by voluntary contributions. As in the case of hospitals, so in the case of orphanages, the Church has set the example and led the way in this beautiful charity, both in the city of Charlotte and in the State of North Carolina.

This brings us back to the subject of our Church hospitals. The ladies of St. Peter's had gradually been enlarging and improving St. Peter's Home and Hospital, until it became more truly worthy of the name of hospital, and in the course of time the other name "Home" was omitted. Perhaps that had never been properly a part of the name, though it was for some time its popular designation. The board of managers were earnest and faithful women, and all did their work well. I think no one will deny, however, to Mrs. John Wilkes the credit of being chiefly responsible for the great improvements made in its enlargements and more adequate equipment. She was for many years treasurer of the Board, and she not only managed the finances with prudence and ability, but she raised very considerable sums of money for it among her friends and acquaintances in New York. Having been so successful in her efforts for St. Peter's Hospital, she began to form plans for a similar institution for our numerous and needy negro population. For several years she gathered funds for this purpose, and early in 1887 she unfolded her plans to me, and enlisted my co-operation in carrying them out.

On the lot diagonally opposite the Church of St. Michael and All Angels, stood a chapel formerly used as a school by members of the First Presbyterian Church, who still owned the property. St. Michael's Church stood indebted to Mrs. Wilkes' Good Samaritan Hospital Fund for \$400.00, borrowed for the purpose of finishing the work on the part of the Church which had been built in 1883. The Rev. Primus P. Alston was much interested in his parish school, carried on in the dilapidated old building which had been on the Church property when we purchased it; and he was very desirous of obtaining the disused Presbyterian chapel above referred to. I, therefore purchased the lot and chapel from the Board of Deacons of the First Presbyterian Church, paying, I think, \$700.00 for the whole. Bishop Lyman gave me \$300.00, and I obtained \$310.00 from the sale of a lot given me for the purpose by the Rev. Jas. Saul, of Philadelphia, who had purchased it some years before as a site for a Church for our negro work. The rest I raised, mostly from personal friends. The chapel was moved over to the lot behind St. Michael's Church, and was converted into a school-house. The lot, by agreement with Mr. and Mrs. Wilkes, I conveyed to the Trustees of the Diocese, in trust for the establishment of a hospital for negroes, to be called, "The Good Samaritan Hospital," under certain regulations as to control and management specified in

the deed. And under this deed the Good Samaritan Hospital was established and has been carried on. In consideration of this conveyance, Mrs. Wilkes credited St. Michael's Church with \$400.00 on the debt due The Good Samaritan Hospital Fund. September 23, 1891, assisted by the Rev. Edwin A. Osborne and the Rev. Primus P. Alston, I formally opened the Good Samaritan Hospital in a short service drawn up for the occasion; and thus was begun the first work of this kind for our colored people in North Carolina, as far as I am informed.

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I have now completed my account of the several Church enterprises which in greater or less measure took their rise from the life of St. Peter's Parish, and represent, at least in some degree, the contribution of the parish to the good work of God beyond its own parochial borders. And that external influence, the developing of life going out into new forces and institutions, has not ceased. I have told the story only so far as I bore a part in it. Since that time this form of vitality, this copious fecundity, has not diminished, but rather increased. St. Martin's Chapel is now a vigorous, self-supporting parish; another such, The Church of the Holy Comforter, represents the Church in another section of the city; St. Andrew's Chapel and the Chapel of Hope are centers from which other parishes may develop. Others in time to come will write the story of these new developments. I have confined my purpose to the thirty years from 1863 to 1893, and especially to the last half of that period. And I venture to think that it is rather a remarkable example of development. I do not know anything just like it in our Diocese. St. Martin's Chapel; St. Mark's, Mecklenburg; St. Paul's, Monroe; St. Michael's, Charlotte; St. Peter's Hospital, and the Good Samaritan Hospital, and then some good part in the establishment and maintenance of the Thompson Orphanage (for St. Peter's directly and indirectly had some part in that good work), that is a gratifying page in our Diocesan history. I wish I had been able to tell the story better and more fully. But well or ill done, it is, I think, worth the doing. I have been glad to point out, and to follow for a little way the beginnings of these various diverging streams of Church life, because I believe in time to come it is just these small beginnings which will be interesting and valuable to the student of our history. I especially regret that I have been able to dwell so little upon the personal side of my work in Charlotte. Many noble men and women I have known as my friends, some in high places of honor, others of humble status and obscure lives, but whose lowly spirits were sweet to know, and who unconsciously helped and blessed those who tried to help them, more than they realized.

Another thing ought to be said. I have dwelt upon our successes, i. e., upon those undertakings which prospered, and whose fruits are now visible. But it must not be supposed that we always saw our efforts thus blessed. Were I to tell you the story of my own failures while rector of this parish, it would perhaps double the length of this address. As I look over the imperfect record of my work in this parish and in this part of the Diocese, I am amazed to see how many things I attempted, and how many times I failed, and all my pains and labor seemed wasted. Against each success I think I could put two failures. Early in my rectorship I made a visit to the Church people, very few in number, then to be found in the town of Rockingham, and I endeavored to establish regular services there. For a year or two, perhaps longer, I made a monthly visit to Mooresville, for service and for ministering to a few church people in that vicinity. For a good many years I maintained regular monthly services on a week night at a schoolhouse near Mount Mourne, and upon one occasion enjoyed there a visitation from the Bishop, and presented seven candidates for Confirmation, and gathered a small band of communicants. For two or three years I had services and preached regularly at Davidson College, and had the Bishop there to confirm a class of ten persons, several of whom, four I think, were students in the College. I took steps to organize a congregation at that place, and was prepared to build a church, though eventually I concluded not to do so. This stirred up a good deal of excitement among some of our Presbyterian brethren; and a professor in the college, who by some chance happened to be a Churchman, had to resign, it being discovered that the statutes of the College required all members of the Faculty to subscribe the Westminster Confession; though it seems that the requirement had not been very rigidly enforced. I mention these matters, as they are a part of the record of my experience as rector of the parish, and to show that whether in success or in failure, St. Peter's was endeavoring to let its light shine. The Rev. Mr. Osborne and I had great ideas of Church extension, and from Charlotte up to Mooresville we worked and preached pretty diligently, each encouraging and helping the other. As I ride over that railroad now, I look out and see here and there a country schoolhouse, or a big oak, or a shady grove, where we gathered a little company and endeavored to do what we could to lead them in worship, and to preach the truth, as this Church hath received the same. And these were most interesting and happy days. I believe few clergymen have more thoroughly enjoyed their work, in spite of all our failures and disappointments, than we did in those days. One old countrywoman out near St. Mark's, speaking of my work in the country, said to me, "You don't *ramble* enough." I did not feel that the criticism was just. I thought that I *rambled* a good deal. And I am rambling now, and must stop.

Now I must draw to an end. My people of St. Peter's were very good and indulgent to me, and so far as I was aware did not often complain. The work of the parish was, I believe, on the whole not greatly neglected. I had on principle adopted the plan of stimulating internal growth by external effort. Only two summers, those of 1882 and 1883, did I take a month's vacation, and then the services were fully kept up by the Rev. Mr. Quin, without any cost to the parish. I did, however, make a practice during most of my time in Charlotte, to take two or three, possibly four Sundays during the summer, besides week days, for missionary work, mostly in Mecklenburg and Iredell Counties. During these absences sometimes Mr. Osborne kindly supplied my place, sometimes lay readers read the service. For one year the Rev. Mr. Jeffery was my assistant in the parish, and we jointly had the cure of both St. Peter's, Charlotte, and St. Mark's, Mecklenburg County, and supplied the services in both. I do not think the parish greatly suffered. In 1893 I reported 263 communicants, not a very great numerical increase over the 137 of 1881. But we must be credited with some part of the growth in the Church of St. Michael and All Angels, Charlotte, in St. Mark's, Mecklenburg, and in St. Paul's, Monroe. We had also St. Martin's Chapel, and St. Peter's Hospital, and the Good Samaritan Hospital, and much work of the parish had gone into the Thompson Orphanage. The efforts of the parish had been directed outwardly, not inwardly. Reckoning by the communicant list, a gain of 92 *per cent.* in twelve years seems no great growth; but when all other elements of life and influence and usefulness are taken into the account, and the position of the Church in the community, and its equipment for service, are considered, it will appear that there had been solid and healthful growth from 1881 to 1893. And it may be added that, with the exception of Trinity Church, Asheville, no other Church of the Diocese, of an equal communicant list in 1881, showed so great an increase during the same twelve years.

And how gratifying has been the growth since that time! In 1881 I found only the old St. Peter's Church and the little four-room "Home and Hospital"; also the defunct "Thompson Institute." Now we have St. Peter's Church and Parish House, St. Martin's Church and Rectory, The Church of the Holy Comforter, the Church of St. Michael and All Angels, with its schoolhouse and its rectory, St. Andrew's Chapel, and the Chapel of Hope, St. Peter's Hospital, the Good Samaritan Hospital, and our great Diocesan institution, The Thompson Orphanage, to say nothing of the good work done by St. Peter's Parish beyond the limits of our parochial boundary. We have six resident clergymen, including our good Brother Osborne, now retired from active service, but whose influence is still potent for good. And I have ordained to the Holy Ministry from Charlotte since I became Bishop, five white

candidates and five colored. White: The Revs. Royal G. Shannonhouse, William E. Callender, Francis M. Osborne, Cyprian P. Willcox, and Henry C. Smith. Colored: The Revs. Jas. E. King, Eugene Henderson, Robert N. Perry, John E. G. Small, and Arthur Myron Cochran.

And now I have done. This shall be the last page. It has been interesting to me to write down these memories, and very pleasant to go over them with you. Very few remain of those who welcomed me forty years ago, but there are some, even of my early vestrymen: Mr. John Myers, Dr. M. A. Bland, Mr. Jos. G. Shannonhouse, and Judge Platt D. Walker. And there are more of the younger people, among these my friend, Mr. Heriot Clarkson, who then a boy of thirteen, was the first person whom I presented to the Bishop for Confirmation, as Rector of St. Peter's Church, Charlotte.



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