

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN DELAWARE

1785 - 1954

CHARLES A. SILLIMAN



DIOCESE OF DELAWARE
2020 Tatnall Street
Wilmington, Delaware 19802

DELAWARE STATE ARCHIVES



COURTESY HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF DELAWARE

BISHOPSTEAD, 14th and Orange Streets, Wilmington, the residence of the Bishops of Delaware from 1842-1944.

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"For the honor of our Advocate
And Mediator, Jesus Christ."
Book of Common Prayer

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COURTESY THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF PENNSYLVANIA

Bishop Henry Ustick Onderdonk
 Assistant Bishop of Pennsylvania 1827-1836
 Bishop of Pennsylvania 1836-1844
 Provisional Bishop of Delaware 1828-1841

The Diocesan Standing Committee had written to Bishop White April 1, 1828, inviting him to make regular Episcopal visitations in the state and to perform other Episcopal offices.

Bishop White replied that he hoped he would not be considered disrespectful if he did not come himself, because he was busy with parochial duties in Pennsylvania. He would, however, assign the duties to his assistant, Bishop Onderdonk, who would be in the vicinity anyway to consecrate the new church building in Smyrna, which he did on June 9, and would "cheerfully" make other visits at that time. The building belonged to St. Peter's Church, Duck Creek, which had recently removed to Smyrna.

On May 10, in another communication, Bishop White authorized Bishop Onderdonk "to visit any or all of the Episcopal churches in the State of Delaware: and to perform any or all of the offices of the Episcopacy within its bounds."

Bishop Onderdonk then spent the latter part of May and most of June in Delaware visiting churches in New Castle, Middletown (Appoquinimink Hundred), Smyrna, Lewes, Dagsboro, Georgetown, Laurel, Milford, Cedar Creek, and Milton. He urged the Diocese to employ a missionary, "without delay," for the vacant churches in the lower part of the Diocese.

Consequently, from this time forward, there was usually a bishop to preside at the annual conventions in Delaware, though not always, since sometimes both of them were otherwise occupied at the time of the Diocesan meeting. Whether able to attend in person or not, however, they always sent a communication, and Bishop Onderdonk always made his annual visit. Starting in 1832, the Diocese paid his travel expenses, but that was all.⁵

A canon of parochial duty was passed at this important Convention of 1828:

It shall be the duty of every clergyman to visit each and every family of his parish or parishes, by calling at their houses respectively at least once in every year; unless prevented by sickness or other sufficient cause. It shall also be the duty of every clergyman to instruct the children of his parish, and of each of his parishes, in the catechism of the church, and if deemed expedient, in one of the catechisms now in use in the General Protestant Episcopal Sunday

of discipline and the college enrollment "shrank more than fifty per cent."

Bishop Onderdonk, nevertheless, thought him to be doing a splendid job and told the Convention of 1837: "I embrace this opportunity of commending Newark College to the confidence and patronage of Episcopalians. It already prospers under the administration of its able president, and will no doubt continue to do so more and more. The services of our church are performed there on Sundays.⁷

Dr. Mason brought to Delaware several other clergymen who became professors at the college, and occasionally helped with services at area churches.

One of them, the Reverend George Allen, came from Vermont in 1838 and served briefly on the Diocesan Standing Committee. Another, the Reverend William N. Pendleton, a recently ordained minister, and a graduate of West Point, should have been able to do something about discipline. He arrived in Delaware in 1838, and was advanced to the priesthood by Bishop Onderdonk May 31 at the Convention at St. Anne's, Appoquinimink. He officiated at St. James' Church, Stanton for a while in 1839. During the Civil War he became a general in the Confederate Army.⁸

The years 1838-39 were explosive years for the clergy in Delaware. It was a time of backbiting and friction; financial support for the Missionary Society was declining, and Diocesan conditions in general were not good.

The Dover and Black Swamp area, at the request of the Diocese of Delaware, had been constituted a Missionary Station by the Board of Domestic Missions of the General Missionary Society in 1837, and the Diocesan Standing Committee had directed that \$250 be appropriated by the Society for the support of a missionary in those places for a year.

The Reverend Archibald T. K. McCallum was dispatched from New York in 1838, but all the society could afford to pay him was \$50. It is not known how much time he spent in the Black Swamp, but on March 3, 1839 he was elected rector of the new Grace Church in Brandywine Hundred.⁹

Meanwhile, Mr. Chambers had been struggling to keep his five parishes in Milford, Cedar Creek, Seaford, Laurel, and Little Hill

going, and in addition, had reorganized St. John the Baptist Church, two and a half miles southwest of Milton. This church was said to have been first erected there in 1728 by the Reverend William Becket. Chambers had also visited the site of old St. Paul's Church, Mispillion Hundred, in the Black Swamp and found it to be in ruins. He had hoped to rebuild it, but his other duties prevented him and the church was never heard from again.

In his report on all his churches, Mr. Chambers said, in part:

Since last [1836] convention I had to use every possible exertion to redeem this [Milford] and Cedar Creek church out of debt, as well as procure subscriptions and raise money for the erection of a new church at Seaford; to do this with any hopes of success, I was compelled to go beyond the limits of the diocese, and as far as my feeble exertions would permit, lay the matter before the public generally; in many cases it was generously responded to, and I have been able, through God's assistance, to raise as much money as placed Milford and Cedar Creek churches out of debt, and within five or six hundred dollars of as much, as will finish St. Luke's Church, Seaford. While in search of pecuniary aid for the churches under my care, I did not forget their other wants, and procured from our liberal friends, such other donations as they were disposed to give. From the young Men's prayer book society of New York, 100 prayer books. From the Bishop White prayer book society of Philadelphia 100 prayer books. From the bible society of New York 50 bibles and 150 Testaments. From the congregation of St. John's Church Philadelphia three sets of communion service; one for Christ's church Milford; one for St. Matthew's church Cedar Creek; and one for St. Luke's church Seaford. . . .

While in search of aid for these churches, I have preached . . . six times in the city of Philadelphia . . . twelve times in the city of New York, . . . once in Jersey City, and once in Brooklyn. . . . I have distributed and sold within the last two years five hundred prayer books—this is an able auxiliary to the missionary among intelligent people. . . .

In 1838, while his churches in Milford and Cedar Creek continued to progress, St. Luke's in Seaford was running into discouraging difficulties:

Divine service is still held in a union meeting house: we are now building a new church, which would have been farther advanced, but for unavoidable difficulties that kept back the work; we, however, were able to commence the brick work on the 1st of May [1838] and

There were several schools conducted by clergymen in Delaware in the early forties which made the Bishop happy. Most of them were in the Wilmington area, but one was in Sussex County in 1844 when the Reverend John Linn McKim, rector of St. Paul's Church, Georgetown, became principal of the Georgetown Academy.

In Wilmington, the Reverend Mr. Chambers, rector of St. James' Church, Stanton, and the former missionary, started a Literary Institute in Wilmington sometime around 1842. In 1843 he resigned his rectorship to become principal of the school.

The Reverend Kensey J. Stewart, originally from the Diocese of Maryland, came to Delaware sometime around 1841-43 and started an English and Classical Institute in the city. Later, he was transferred to the Diocese of Delaware and became rector of Grace Church, Brandywine Hundred for a short time, as well as assisting the Bishop at St. Andrew's. We will be hearing more about Mr. (later Dr.) Stewart who caused quite a commotion in the Diocese in the 1880s.

The Reverend Zebadiah H. Mansfield from Connecticut was a teacher in a Wilmington Classical School from 1844-53. Occasionally, he helped out at some of the vacant churches, but was unable to preach due to having something wrong with his voice which made it impossible for him to speak in large rooms.

In another school down state the Reverend Enoch Bailey was a teacher. He taught in the Academy at Milton for a while and later in Lewes. While in Milton in 1847, St. John the Baptist Church, which the Reverend Mr. Chambers had organized in 1838, only to have it slip back into obscurity, was accepted into union with the Diocese. It was not indicated, however, whether Mr. Bailey had anything to do with its revival. Bishop Lee preached there during the year. This church did not have a rector for many years, though the Bishop and various missionaries visited it from time to time.

Bishop Lee finally decided to get into the teaching business himself and organized, in 1847, a Female Parochial School at St. Andrew's. It had a board of lady managers, composed of members of the congregation, who helped one day a week with the teaching. It was so successful that another school was organized the following year for a younger group of children.⁴

Bishop Onderdonk and the Convention of 1841 had declared St. John's Church, Little Hill, defunct. This was the church that had been started by the Reverend Hamilton Bell in 1808 as a mission of Christ Church, Broad Creek, near Laurel.

Bishop Lee, however, decided to see for himself, and visited the area during 1842-43, excitedly reporting to the 1843 Convention that it gave "decided evidence of life."

An effort was being made by the former communicants to repair the building, he said, and any financial assistance from the other churches in the Diocese would be appreciated. St. Paul's Church, Georgetown, was one of those to come to its aid, and on November 3, 1843, Bishop Lee consecrated the repaired building, declaring the event to be "among the most gratifying" in the Diocese that year. The Reverend Mr. Long of St. Luke's Seaford, was performing missionary duties in the vicinity.⁵

On September 1, 1843, the Reverend Stephen W. Presstman, senior presbyter in the Diocese, died, making him the first loss by death in the ranks of the clergy since Bishop Lee's arrival. There would be many more during the Bishop's long tenure in the episcopate.⁶

Agitation within the church over doctrinal points brought on by the Oxford Movement reached a peak in 1843-45. Bishop Lee, an Evangelical and Low Churchman, never one to sidestep an important issue, expressed his views openly, pointing out to his clergy and laity what he felt were the "falacies" in the teachings of those at the "University of Oxford." He felt that the views being put forth by "certain divines" of the University had matured into a theological system which was being "urged upon the members of the Church as the real meaning of its standards." He strongly felt that such views were actually the "erroneous and strange doctrines, contrary to God's word," which he as a Bishop was required by his consecration vows to "banish" from the Church.

However, some of his fellow bishops and other members of the clergy did not quite see it in that light and felt that some of the ideas which called for a more visible church with reverence for the symbols of Christianity and a greater devotion to the sacraments was good and proper. The difficulty was that the Evangelical churchmen

zeal." Mr. Childs was sorry to have to leave, too, but the territory was large and he was forced to be away from his family for long periods of time:

... my attachment to the stations was strong. But I entertained the hope that the places could be much better supplied, by a clergyman, without a family—where the members of the congregations and the Churches are so widely scattered.⁶

The Diocese was growing—perhaps not by leaps and bounds, but it was growing. At the end of the 1840s there were five new churches and chapels in the state, not including St. John's, Little Hill, which had been declared defunct and was now going strong.

Others besides those already mentioned were: Christ Church, Delaware City, in 1848, and St. John the Baptist, Milton, which was mentioned earlier. Services were being held in the Milton Academy in 1847 while efforts to erect a church were being made.

In Delaware City, the Reverend Andrew F. Freeman was looking after the new congregation. He was rector of St. Anne's, Appoquinimink, and St. Peter's, Smyrna, which were not too far away, so at a Convocation of the Clergy of New Castle County he was selected to collect subscriptions for a church building. Meanwhile the congregation was meeting in the local Methodist church which had been kindly offered for their use.

Mr. Freeman was the son of the former rector of Immanuel, New Castle, the Reverend George W. Freeman, who became Bishop of Arkansas and the Missionary District of Texas. The young rector had been ordained by Bishop Lee in 1845.

Active in the early days of this congregation in Delaware City were Ashbury S. Pennington, Dr. John A. Barr, the local physician, and William Thomas.⁷

Convocations of the Clergy in the various counties was a pet idea of Bishop Lee. He held his first one during the summer of 1842 in the different churches of Sussex County:

... The attendance upon these services has been generally encouraging, and I doubt not that they have been the means of much spiritual good. The remoteness of the churches, in the upper and lower part of the State, from each other, renders it difficult for their respective clergy to meet together upon these occasions, but I hope that the feeling of common interest, and a desire to promote the

general welfare of the church, will lead them to attend upon such services, when held within their own county, even at some little sacrifice of personal convenience.⁸

As an example of the slow but steady growth in just that part of the Diocese, there were only two clergymen in Sussex County in 1842, the Reverend Mr. Franklin in Georgetown and Dagsboro, and the Reverend John Reynolds at Lewes, Indian River Hundred, and Cedar Creek.

Four years later when the next Convocation was held for the Sussex clergy, November 5, 1846, in Georgetown, there were four clergymen: Mr. Childs, the Reverend John Linn McKim, the Reverend Jacob B. Smith in the Laurel, Seaford area, and the Reverend Mr. Bailey in Milton.

Bishop Lee said, "such associations are beneficial to the Church, and cheering to the hearts of the clergy, especially where, by position, they are cut off from much intercourse with their brethren."⁹

The New Castle County clergy held their first Convocation September 6, 1847 at St. Anne's Church, Appoquinimink Hundred, near Middletown, which had recently been repaired and remodeled. The church also had never been publicly consecrated; so at the request of the wardens and vestry, the Bishop performed the ceremony.

New Castle County then had about seven resident clergymen who decided to hold quarterly convocations in the various parishes from then on. Although there is no record of who was, or was not present at this first session, ministers in the county were: Mr. Chambers, Mr. Franklin, Mr. Freeman, the Reverend William H. Trapnell, who had returned to the state and was officiating at Grace Church, Brandywine Hundred, and St. James', Stanton; the Reverend Edwin M. Van Deusen of Trinity; Mr. Mansfield, the teacher; and the Reverend Thomas Billopp of Immanuel, New Castle.¹⁰

Kent County did not have any clergy of its own, but was being serviced by rectors in Sussex and New Castle counties. The only parishes considered active were Christ Church, Milford, being visited by Mr. McKim of Georgetown; and St. Peter's Church, Smyrna, in charge of the Reverend James H. Tyng, rector of St.

in 1876 and consecrated by Bishop Lee on June 6. It was named St. Stephen's.

Mr. McKim had apparently purchased the land and erected the chapel mostly with his own money, a fact which brought him into conflict with the Diocese, since he insisted on holding it in his name rather than turning the property over to the Trustees. How this policy affected St. Stephen's will be shown later.¹³

The town of Milton in Sussex County was another of the places Mr. McKim worked as a missionary. He said a few churchmen belonging to St. John the Baptist Church had asked him to officiate in the area in 1863, and since there was no church building, he had held services in a meeting house owned by the Methodist Protestants.

The congregation was large and attentive, however, so he increased his work there and in 1866 reported a lot was to be purchased in the town, and a small "plank" church erected. Then, in 1867, St. Mary's Church, Milton, was accepted into union with the Diocese, and James Ponder, who became Governor of Delaware in 1870, was one of the delegates. But why was this congregation suddenly being called St. Mary's instead of St. John the Baptist?¹⁴

Apparently, the Episcopal congregation in Milton felt the name of the church had been St. Mary's, instead of St. John the Baptist. Anyway, a lot was purchased, and plans went ahead to erect a building. Meanwhile, Mr. McKim did some extensive research on his own and reported in 1875:

It has lately been ascertained beyond question, that the name of the ancient parish of Broadkill was St. John the Baptist's, and not St. Mary's, as before supposed. And therefore, with the consent of the Convention, the Rector and Vestry have now resumed the original title.

Work was finally completed in 1877 and the new building was consecrated June 5. Bishop Lee believed that if a church had only been erected in Milton years earlier "many persons would have been retained within our fold who have sought other ministrations."¹⁵

St. John's Church, Little Hill, also had a name problem. At the 1869 Convention the following resolution was adopted:

WHEREAS, The original name of St. John's, Little Hill, as it appears in the County Record, was St. John's, Greenville: AND WHEREAS, The said original name seems to have been changed by accident, the congregation of the Parish desire its restoration, that henceforward all difficulty in regard to the Church's title to the property may be obviated. Therefore,

Resolved, That the original name of St. John's, Little Hill, viz: St. John's, Greenville, be restored, and that the name be so entered on subsequent Journals of the Convention.

It was changed back to Little Hill again about 1913 without explanation.¹⁶

Two other churches were started in Kent County in the late 1860s, both with great hopes for success but which were destined to fail.

Through the efforts of the Reverend Dr. Joshua Morsell of St. Peter's Church, Smyrna, congregations were gathered in the towns of Kenton and Leipsic and were admitted to the 1868 Convention as St. Paul's Church, Kenton and Immanuel Church, Leipsic.

Delegates J. Frank Wilds and Louis Graham were seated for St. Paul's, and Alonzo W. Spicer and Andrew J. Spear for Immanuel. It was hoped to erect churches in both places, but the hard times the people were undergoing with regard to farming conditions delayed all efforts.¹⁷

By 1871, St. Paul's had started a Sunday School with three teachers and twenty scholars, but the church only had one communicant. When Dr. Morsell preached, however, there were from five to fifty people in the congregation.

At Immanuel, it was the same, with a small but faithful few taking great interest in the services and anxious to erect a church if the money could only be found. There were six communicants there in 1871.

After Dr. Morsell was transferred to Massachusetts in 1874, "leaving many friends behind," the two parishes were not heard from again.¹⁸

The rector of Christ Church, Dover, in 1868-69, the Reverend Edward H. True, had similar conditions to contend with. On July 17, 1868, he organized St. Paul's Church in Camden, Delaware, which was accepted into union with the 1869 Diocesan Convention.

His son, William Jenks Fell, who had also been an active churchman since 1861, took over where his father left off and the new church was completed in the fall of 1875. Mr. Fell, who was also a lay reader, conducted the first service October 3, during the absence of Mr. Hanson. Bishop Lee consecrated it September 5, 1877.¹⁰

In two separate convention addresses, Bishop Lee gave some interesting history on the old church:

It is known to some members of the Convention that an attempt was made some twenty years since to revive the Church in Newport, services being held by the Rev. Samuel Hazlehurst in a small, stone building which was purchased by individual subscriptions. This effort not meeting with success, the building, which had never been the property of the Parish, was sold by the Trustees, and the money received on account of the sale placed in a Savings Bank. This sum, amounting with interest to \$802.80, was paid over on July 3, 1875, to the Treasurer of the building fund of the new church. . . .¹¹

This [new] edifice of simple beauty and convenience is situated on the old Church lot, where a sanctuary once stood, of which very little is now known. Tradition reports that during the war of the Revolution, when the British Army was encamped at and about Newport, the building was used as a stable for the horses of the Cavalry. . . . The [old] church is said to have been of brick, never wholly finished. . . . [It] gradually sank into ruins, and disappeared with the generation that once worshipped in it. Happily, the Church lot has been preserved, and a spacious and beautifully situated cemetery has been laid out, and a House of God now invites to prayer and hearing of the word. The present Church has additional interest as being a memorial of that noble-hearted layman, Franklin Fell, a man who was always devising liberal things for the Church which he loved, and to whose munificence and wisdom this Diocese owes no common debt of gratitude.¹²

It was said that Franklin Fell bought the Brandywine Springs property in 1869 with the idea of giving it to the Diocese for use as a site for a boarding school for young ladies. It was to be for girls between the ages of ten and twenty with special preference given to the daughters of Episcopal clergymen in Delaware and Pennsylvania. Bishop Lee and other members of the clergy, including the Reverend Mr. Littell of St. John's, Wilmington, and the Reverend William Suddards of Grace Church, Philadelphia, were

enthusiastic, though Bishop Lee appeared to have certain reservations. Nevertheless, plans went forward, a board of trustees was elected, and Mr. Fell spent \$7,000 putting the place in order.

The name finally selected for the school was, "The Protestant Episcopal Seminary for Young Ladies at Brandywine Springs." By December 1870 it looked as though they were about ready to choose a headmaster and faculty, enroll students, and get under way, when suddenly the whole scheme fell through. The newly named trustees wrote Mr. Fell saying they had decided against the project and were returning the agreement papers for reasons which they failed to explain.

Since this took place between 1869 and 1871, when the Church was embroiled in the controversy over Ritualism, the fact that both Bishops Lee, and Stevens of Pennsylvania, were evangelicals appeared to be a factor.

Bishop William Bacon Stevens was said to have had many "arguments" against such a school, and Bishop Lee appeared to be at a "loss" to know where to find "the right person" and the money to operate one. It is quite likely that when it occurred to both men that the school could fall into the hands of the wrong church party and the minds of the young ladies could be filled with "questionable doctrine," it was too great a chance to take. There was also the problem of money. Bishop Lee felt it would be more difficult to raise the required amount in the East than the West.

He said that there was no question in his mind of the desirability of having an Episcopal Church school in the state; but he indicated there was some question among "evangelical men" of the future status of the Diocese of Delaware. This probably meant that if Bishop Lee—who was sixty-four years old on September 9, 1871—were to die, some people feared Delaware might become predominantly High Church.¹³

Anyway, Mr. Fell's generous plan for the Diocese was dead and after his death his son rented the property to a number of different tenants, including a clergyman who operated a school for boys.

In the fall of 1881, the Reverend Frederick Thompson, who had been the Bishop's missionary at St. John the Baptist Church, Milton, Delaware, where he had also organized a boy's boarding

school, moved the school to Faulkland which, since 1871, had been the name of the station at Brandywine Springs on the Wilmington & Western Railroad.

Mr. Thompson called his school St. John's School for Boys, and in 1882 it was described as having boys from nine dioceses, including five from Delaware. After Mr. Thompson left in 1884, the Reverend Thomas H. Gordon became the principal until 1886, when he too departed and the school was apparently closed. They used the chapel that the Fell's had built for St. James' Church, Newport.

That was the last attempt for many years to establish a church boarding school in the Diocese. William Jenks Fell continued to lease the Springs property and maintain his interest in the Diocese until his death February 17, 1903. He was a member of the Diocesan Board of Trustees until 1888, and he left several bound volumes of convention journals for the archives.¹⁴

The Reverend T. Gardiner Littell came up with another one of his good ideas in 1870 when he proposed a canon for the appointment of a registrar of the convention.

His canon was adopted and he was later elected the first registrar. In his annual report for 1871 he stressed the need to preserve documents relating to the history of the Diocese:

It is suggested that, while facts are remembered and records accessible, they be given for preservation. . . . [He urged] members of the Convention [to] contribute copies of all books and pamphlets bearing in any way upon our history. . . . It is suggested, as a matter of interest to the present generation, and of great benefit to those following, that each Rector and Missionary furnish, within the coming year, a brief sketch of the organization and growth of his cure, accompanied, when possible, by appropriate engravings or other illustrations.

Unfortunately not enough members of the clergy and laity heeded his advice. As late as 1887, the then Dr. Littell reported that the Diocese had copies of only two conventions previous to 1840, and no parish histories had been received.¹⁵

The Diocese had an act passed in the State Legislature March 21, 1871, incorporating an Episcopal hospital.

The incorporators included Bishop Lee and members of the clergy; Judge Caleb S. Layton, William T. Read, Victor and Francis G. du Pont, Franklin Fell, and other laymen; Drs. John K. Kane, John T. M. Cardeza, and other members of the medical profession.

The act stated that the object of the corporation would be to receive donations and bequests and to apply the same, or the income thereof

toward the following purposes. 1st, the relief, shelter and maintenance of deserving, aged, indigent men and women. 2d, the relief, shelter, maintenance, education and welfare of orphan, half orphan, and friendless children. . . . 4th, the relief, shelter and care of the sick and disabled. . . . 6th, the ministering of Christian charity and the consolations of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all those who are any ways afflicted or distressed in mind, body or estate.

Sec. 3. And be it further enacted, That the religious instructions, services and ministrations . . . shall be in conformity with the doctrines, sacraments, worship and usages of the Protestant Episcopal Church.¹⁶

The name of Trinity Hospital was chosen and at a meeting of the board of managers in September 1871 "the suggestion was made that the board undertake, as an initial work, the establishing of a City Dispensary—ministering unto the afflicted." This was a different enterprise from the one undertaken by the Wilmington City Council for a city hospital at about that same time.

An appeal for funds was published in the local newspapers and by the spring of 1872 the group had enough money to rent the first floor of a house at 518 Orange Street which was arranged as a reception room and office. The services of Drs. Howard Ogle and A. B. Mitchell were obtained and the dispensary opened June 1. By November, sixty-nine cases involving both white and black people had been treated. E. Bringhurst & Company and Benjamin Shoemaker, Jr., druggists, put up prescriptions at cost.¹⁷

Aid for the sick and indigent was especially urgent at that time because of a smallpox epidemic in Wilmington which started in November 1871. There were 411 cases reported and Bishop Lee's congregation at St. Andrew's was particularly hard hit. Delaware Episcopalians also contributed about \$900 to refugees of the great Chicago fire of October 8-11, 1871, which caused damage and loss estimated at \$196 million.

The constitution was amended in 1910 to provide for this change and the new regulation became Section 2 of Article V:

Sec. 2. If at any time it shall appear to the Bishop that any one of the conditions essential by Constitution to the admission of parishes into union with this Convention shall fail in any parish, he may, with the advice and consent of the Standing Committee, warn such parish that its parochial status is in danger of forfeiture and, if the condition is not supplied, he shall present such parish to the next Annual Convention, which shall have power by majority vote to reduce the parish to the status of an organized mission station in union with the Convention.¹⁸

The change resulted in the alignment of the churches in the Diocese into three categories: parishes, organized missions, and unorganized missions.

Among the organized missions in 1909-10 (those that had elected a warden, registrar and treasurer, and a mission committee of anywhere from three to nine members, were allowed to send one delegate to the annual Diocesan convention, and could receive the regular services of a missionary), were: All Saints', Delmar, organized about 1905;¹⁹ St. Paul's, Camden, organized June 16, 1908;²⁰ St. Barnabas' Marshallton, organized June 16, 1908;²¹ and St., Martin's, Hartly, organized around May 6, 1910.²²

Unorganized missions (those that had established a name and were meeting together in some convenient place for worship, but had not yet organized; could receive the services of a missionary when available, but could not send a delegate to the annual convention), were: St. Matthew's, Wilmington; St. Stephen's, Harrington; St. Andrew's, Ellis Grove; St. Mary's, Bridgeville; St. George's, Indian River; All Saints', Rehoboth; Trinity Chapel, Long Neck and St. Mary's Chapel, Townsend. St. George's Mission in Edgemoor had been discontinued in 1909 with the consent of the Bishop.²³

During Bishop Kinsman's episcopate all but two of the unorganized missions became organized—St. John's, Little Hill or Greenville, and Trinity Chapel, Long Neck, did not make it. Also, seven former parishes forfeited their rights and became organized missions; six of them voluntarily. Action under the Diocesan Constitution had to be invoked in 1918 in the case of St. John the Baptist, Milton, which declined to request mission status so had to

be reduced to an organized mission by action of the Diocesan convention.

None of the former parishes regained their status during Bishop Kinsman's episcopate, and none of the missions became parishes, though several developed into efficient missions.²⁴

St. John's, Little Hill, one of the parishes that had not been reduced to mission status before 1914, found then that most of the Episcopalians had either moved away from the area or were finding it easier to attend St. Philip's Church, Laurel, and All Saints' Church, Delmar. Thus, faced with either becoming defunct once again, as they had been many years earlier, or joining the ranks of the unorganized missions, their fate was decided by Bishop Kinsman who put them in the historic site category of such places as Old St. Anne's, Middletown, Prince George's, Dagsboro and Christ Church, Broad Creek, to be open only two or three times a year—usually in the summer.²⁵

Shortly after he did this, however, Louisa Truitt of Broad Creek Hundred died and left \$200 to the Diocese of Delaware to establish a fund for the support of St. John's. Although this was hardly enough to provide any appreciable income, St. John's was also receiving aid from the Harriet H. Cannon Fund established about 1902, and later these two trusts were combined to afford some assistance.

In 1915, for unexplained reasons, the Little Hill church was taken out of the historic churches category and became an unorganized mission with the rector of St. Philip's Church, Laurel, looking after it when he had the time. It was listed as having seventeen communicants in 1917, and was maintained as an unorganized mission for many years.²⁶

St. Mark's Church, Little Creek Hundred, was another of the parishes which fell into trouble around 1914 due to the lack of attendance and people moving away; so rather than dropping into the unorganized mission class, the congregation petitioned the Bishop for permission to merge with St. Andrew's Mission, Ellis Grove, which they did May 5, 1914. The two congregations were then known as St. Mark's and St. Andrew's, Little Creek Hundred.²⁷

Bishop Kinsman moved cautiously his first year in the Diocese and leaned heavily for advice on the president of the Standing Committee, the Reverend Kensey J. Hammond, who had for over twenty years been rector of Immanuel Church, Wilmington.

I came to the Diocese with the desire to approach Delaware problems in the spirit and with the prepossessions of a genuine Delawarean. I wished to be open-minded to new impressions and to be careful not to let experience elsewhere constitute a criterion for judging things in Delaware. . . . I sought the help I needed from Mr. Hammond, and I have never felt the necessity of going further. I have spoken freely of various matters to men especially concerned; but to Mr. Hammond alone have I gone with many problems and perplexities. No man could have had a kinder and more patient friend, and no new Bishop of Delaware a more prudent counsellor or an adviser more in sympathy with the genius of the Diocese.³

The Bishop spent five weeks of the summer of 1909 at his vacation home in Maine and thirty-two of the remaining Sundays in the year in Kent and Sussex counties, fifteen with parishes and missions which had no clergy.

Rural parishes and missions were in various stages of repair and disrepair in 1909-10, and often difficult to get to in bad weather. Unlike Wilmington, many had no electricity or telephone service, and the rectors and missionaries still had to travel around by horse and carriage. The Delaware Railroad went to the principal towns, but to go from the railroad station to the church or mission had to be accomplished on foot, horseback, or in a carriage.

Most of the Wilmington churches were wired for electricity before the turn of the century, with Trinity being the first. St. Andrew's had it in 1891,⁴ and St. John's in 1895.⁵ Outside Wilmington in New Castle County, Christ Church Christiana Hundred was one of the first, in 1892.⁶ Christ Church, Delaware City, installed electricity in its rectory in 1911 and may have had it in the church earlier.⁷ St. Thomas, Newark, had both its parish house and church lighted in 1891.⁸

In Kent County, Christ Church, Milford, replaced the old oil lamps with electric lights during 1894-95,⁹ but Christ Church, Dover, did not wire its church until 1906.¹⁰

In Sussex, St. Luke's Church, Seaford, installed electric lights in 1904,¹¹ and St. Paul's, Georgetown, lighted the rectory in 1906, but still used gas in the church.¹²

Telephones, although introduced into the state in 1878, were apparently slow getting started. The first telephone book was issued in Wilmington in 1883, and some stores, doctor's offices and business firms had them, but not too many churches or individuals for some years. Christ Church Christiana Hundred did not install one in its parish house until 1910-11.¹³

The lines were extended between towns down state from about 1882 on, with Odessa connected with Middletown in May of that year, when St. Anne's Church in Middletown burned, and a telephone call for help was made to Odessa.¹⁴ Delaware City and St. Georges also could talk to each other that year; but the line from Wilmington to Middletown by way of St. Georges and Odessa was not constructed until 1887.¹⁵

From about 1895, when bicycle riding became popular in Delaware, the clergy made use of it as a mode of transportation. The bicycles could be taken in the baggage car of a train and put to use after the traveler got to where he wanted to go. The Reverend George W. Dame, Jr., of St. Peter's Church, Smyrna, and the Reverend Kensey J. Hammond of Immanuel, Wilmington, spent the latter part of August 1896 on a bicycle and train trip through parts of New York State.¹⁶

Also, the congregation of St. John's, Wilmington in 1896, gave its rector, the Reverend Dr. George C. Hall, a bicycle to help him to get around the city. And at the annual Diocesan convention at Immanuel Church, New Castle, that year, many ladies from parishes in Wilmington and nearby communities were seen to be riding their "wheels" to the event.¹⁷

The automobile did not catch on for some years, although its use in the Wilmington area started about 1900.¹⁸ The Reverend Mr. Kirkus of Trinity said he took his first ride in one in 1905 and it was one of the first dozen automobiles owned in Wilmington.¹⁹

But that same year down in Sussex County, the Reverend Charles A. Behringer, rector of St. John the Baptist Church, Milton, and in charge at St. George's Chapel, Indian River, was

... It is a Parish Church used as a Cathedral by the Bishop, and the proper nomenclature would seem to be the Cathedral Church.

As such, the Rector becomes Dean, which properly denotes his ecclesiastical standing; also he is Rector of the Parish. By advice of the Chancellor of this Diocese and other eminent authorities, the choice of such a Church is the prerogative of the Bishop and a formal announcement will be made at the service planned for this afternoon at which the Dean will be installed.⁵

The Very Reverend (a title he now assumed) Mr. Bennett was installed that afternoon at five o'clock with lay members of the Standing Committee, the Vestry of St. John's, the clergy of the Diocese, and others taking part. A pronouncement was read for the Bishop from the pulpit while he was seated in the choir:

By virtue of power inherent in my office as Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Delaware, I, Philip Cook, by God's grace Bishop of the Church of God, do hereby constitute St. John's Church of the City of Wilmington in the Diocese of the State of Delaware to be the Diocesan or Cathedral Parish, due and official consent and approval thereto having been given by the Rector, Wardens, and Vestry of said Church at a meeting held Friday, the third day of May in the year of our Lord one thousand, nine hundred and thirty-five, this same being the fifteenth of my Consecration. Given under my hand and seal this fourteenth Day of May in the same year. May God bless our work and use us for His purposes. Amen.

The Dean was officially inducted by the Reverend Dr. Clash, president of the Standing Committee, acting by the appointment of Bishop Cook and he (the Dean) received the blessing of the Bishop.⁶

That evening, the Woman's Auxiliary's Fiftieth Anniversary was observed by the daughters and relatives of the first officers of the Auxiliary. Among them were Miss Mary Littell, daughter of the first president; Mrs. F. deH. Janvier, niece of Miss Emily Rodney, the first vice president; Mrs. Murray Stewart, daughter of Mrs. C. L. McIlvaine, the first secretary; Miss Anna Woods Bird, niece of Mrs. John Burnham, the first directress of missions; and Mrs. Thomas Parrish, daughter of Mrs. Emma Lodge, the first treasurer.

The oldest living past president of the Junior Auxiliary, Mrs. P. B. Lightner, was also present, and the 1935 president of the Diocesan Branch, Margaret W. Baker (Mrs. Frederic W.) of the

Church of the Ascension, Claymont, had the distinction of being the youngest person to join the Auxiliary in 1885, when she was eleven years old.⁷

To commemorate the Diocesan 150th Anniversary, a gavel was made of the wood from the three oldest churches in the Diocese (Old Swedes, Old St. Anne's and Immanuel, New Castle) and from Winchester Cathedral in England. The Bishop used it for the first time at the 1936 Convention.⁸

Diocesan headquarters were moved to the new location at St. John's about May 1, 1935, for which it was agreed the Diocese would pay a rent of \$50 per month. The Rumford house was sold about 1936.⁹

The Reverend Mr. Ford, in his early seventies and more or less fully retired now, became honorary canon at the Cathedral in 1935, resigned as assistant at Calvary, Hillcrest, and by the year's end was wintering in Florida. Consequently, the Reverend Joseph Chandler Wood, formerly in charge of St. John the Baptist, Milton, was transferred to Wilmington in February 1936 to become the Dean's vicar at the Cathedral Church where he was given the supervision of the work at Calvary, which had been placed in charge of Dean Bennett.

These moves left the Reverend Charles A. Rantz, rector of the Church of the Ascension, Claymont, and formerly in charge of the Hillcrest mission, free to devote more time to other activities such as replacing Mr. Ford as the Bishop's secretary.

Since Mr. Rantz still had his parish in Claymont to look after, it is not certain just when he began his duties with the Bishop or just how much time he gave to the work until at least September 1935 when Mr. Ford went to Florida. It is presumed the Bishop compensated him for his loss of income from the Hillcrest mission. Mr. Ford, when he was in town, still was available for any assignment the Bishop wished to give him, and actually did help out from time to time.¹⁰

Bishop Cook said above, that in due time further organization of the Cathedral would be necessary, such as the formation of a Cathedral Chapter under the authority of the Diocesan convention; but this was not done until several years after his death, when his

Dr. Covell had urged the Diocese to get a full time clergyman for St. John the Baptist Church, Milton, who would also be in charge at St. George's Chapel, Indian River. Bishop McKinstry called the Reverend Allen Day from West Texas, and made him priest-in-charge of St. John the Baptist, hoping that the congregation could get a start on building a parish house. The Reverend Nelson W. Rightmyer of St. Peter's, Lewes, however, was left in charge of the mission at Indian River.

Mr. Day had his parishioners working on the building program by June 1941; but he was called to another diocese before its completion and dedication on October 6 of that year. The Bishop immediately began looking for another man but with the start of the War, clergy became extremely difficult to find.

Fortunately, George Buhl, a vestryman of St. Mark's Church, Millsboro, and an active lay reader, came to the rescue and kept this mission alive all through World War II until the arrival of the Reverend L. Wade Hampton in 1949.¹⁴

The Newport, Stanton, Marshallton area had been under one rector for years, and since 1932 under the Reverend Milward W. Riker, who retired in 1940 but retained his residence in Marshallton. He was replaced in November 1940 by the Reverend E. Kenneth Albaugh who was still supposed to be in charge of all three churches, but the area was growing and it was felt two rectors would have more time to concentrate on the needs of each individual parish.

In February 1943 the Bishop ordained a native of Elsmere, Delaware—the Reverend Alexander W. Boyer—and rushed him down to Newport to be Mr. Albaugh's assistant until he (Boyer) could be advanced to the priesthood and take complete charge of the Newport church (then classed as a mission), which he did in February 1944.¹⁵

The success of this step was soon evident. The mission had 221 families and 147 communicants by 1947 and a church school of 244 teachers and pupils. It was admitted to the Annual Diocesan Convention that year as a parish and in 1949 construction was started on the first unit (to cost \$135,000) of a building program which would give them a new church and parish house.¹⁶

In Newark, Dr. Covell recommended that the present site of St. Thomas Church—near the railroad for almost a hundred years—be moved to the corner of Amstel and Orchard Avenues next door to a lot which had been purchased for the erection of a rectory. It was felt this would place it closer to the University of Delaware where efforts were being made to attract Episcopal students. The rectory was built between 1939 and 1940, but the adjacent property could not be purchased.¹⁷

Following the arrival of the Reverend Theodore L. Ludlow in 1948, efforts were renewed to purchase land elsewhere, and in 1950 three lots, each seventy-five feet wide and 200 feet deep, were purchased on the west side of South College Avenue for \$12,000. Delaware architects Victorine and Samuel Homsey were engaged and plans drawn for a new church and parish house. The parish house was completed first at a cost of \$130,000, and dedicated May 8, 1955. The church was not erected until 1960.¹⁸

The Survey indicated that Bethany Beach, Delaware was a fast growing resort just below Rehoboth Beach and that there were many people there from the District of Columbia area. Bishop McKinstry also felt there would be some Episcopal families among the residents who would benefit by the establishment of a mission. It was suggested, therefore, that an inexpensive chapel could be erected for use during the summer months of July and August only, and thus not need the installation of heating or expensive plumbing units.

Four lots were purchased for \$1,470.15 and the building was completed at a cost of about \$6,500 and opened August 1, 1940. It was named St. Martin's Church, renamed St. Martha's in 1963.¹⁹

There had not been a Diocesan newspaper since *Now and Then* ceased publication in 1932, although several people had suggested the need for one from time to time, with no action being taken. The Survey strongly recommended that one be started "as soon as possible" and urged that copies be sent to every family in the Diocese each month except July and August.²⁰

The national Episcopal Church magazine at the time was *Forth*, and the National Council advised Bishop McKinstry of a

order to conduct the first real summer conference since before the War.

The general purposes of this conference were to develop leadership in the ranks of Diocesan young people and to offer them an opportunity to become better informed on the great truths of their religion, and to give them a clearer understanding of how to relate religious teachings to life's situations. It also would be an opportunity for them to develop a Diocesan fellowship—a sense of oneness with others of their age from around the state and to take part in a little wholesome recreation at the same time.²³

This then was how Diocesan youth programs were reorganized after the War and began to flourish. Individual parishes, meanwhile, were further developing programs for their own youngsters, some of which had been started during the War.

A project which began in 1943 at Old Swedes to combat delinquency among youths in the area developed into the Christina Community Center. Under the direction of Charles I. Davis, Jr., an experienced musician and song leader, it involved 500 youths by 1945, when a campaign for funds was launched for its expansion.

The program included finding part-time jobs for teenagers, the establishment of a night club called the "Flag Room" which served milk, soda, and other refreshments to young people, and in the summer Mr. Davis took the boys to Camp Appoquinimink, near Middletown, for a few weeks for such outdoor activities as camping, boating and swimming. The girls were unable to go because of a shortage of leadership, but Middletown facilities were used as an indoor camp for them every morning for four weeks. The center was non-denominational.²⁴

Similarly, at St. Matthew's Church, Wilmington, a Junior Canteen was opened in January 1946 on Saturday nights. It provided dancing and a snack bar.²⁵

St. Andrew's Church, Wilmington, opened a Youth Center in the basement of the parish house in 1946 called the "Shuffle Shack." Later a Sunday Evening Supper Club was organized. Wilmington Mayor Thomas Herlihy, Jr., attended the opening night of the "Shuffle Shack" and praised St. Andrew's "for offering their parish house for a citywide recreational program for young people of all faiths."²⁶

Downstate a young people's committee at St. John the Baptist Church, Milton, commenced a series of entertainments in the parish house on May 2, 1947, which included dancing to the music of a five-piece orchestra. And in Georgetown, St. Paul's Church still had its teenage canteen which was started during the War.²⁷

A series of annual festivals for acolytes was also conducted starting in 1947 in Dover when about seventy-five attended from all over the state. In 1948 about 100 took part in a similar festival at Immanuel Church, New Castle.

The use of YMCA Camp Tockwogh was greatly appreciated by the Diocese but it was sixty or seventy miles away, which was not that bad except it was on Maryland soil. The Bishop had nothing against Maryland, but he would have dearly loved to have a camp in Delaware which belonged only to the Diocese; so he thought—why not Camp Appoquinimink?

Camp Appoquinimink, it will be remembered, was started by Bishop Cook in 1931, but was closed following the summer of 1943 because of the War. The Reverend J. Randolph Field, rector of Calvary Church, Wilmington, had been the director that year, replacing the Reverend Mr. White who had gone into the army as a chaplain.

After 1943 it was used for recreational purposes by a number of organizations; but during the off seasons proper care was not taken and the buildings gradually fell into disrepair, with vandals causing great damage.²⁸

At the 1947 Diocesan Convention, therefore, the Bishop asked the delegates,

to consider whether Camp Appoquinimink should be dismantled or put into good condition again. This Camp is an ideal place for weekend conferences, for youth and adults; for lay conferences, and for camping sessions for young people of several parishes under the direction of the clergy. Many a diocese would give a lot to have such a beautiful place.

A committee was appointed to "study the need for and cost of establishing a permanent camp site for general Diocesan use."²⁹ The report, given in 1948, estimated that it would require \$20,000 to put the camp in good order and "provide quarters for a caretaker