Saint Peters Parish

Washington

:. North Carolina .:

A Record of the Century—1822-1922

SAINT PETERS PARISH

WASHINGTON, NORTH CAROLINA

A RECORD OF THE CENTURY

1822 - 1922

1922
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CHARLOTTE, N. C.

FOREWORD

In connection with the celebration of the One Hundredth Anniversary of the founding of St. Peters Parish, it is fitting that a sketch be written and all available data be recorded so that the present and future generations may know something of the work and struggle required to make St. Peters Parish what it is today.

I beg to acknowledge aid given me by the Rt. Rev. Joseph Blount Chesire, D.D., the late Miss E. M. B. Hoyt, my Mother, Mrs. Nathaniel Harding, and John G. Bragaw, Esq.

EDMUND HOYT HARDING.

February 15, 1922.

EARLY CHURCH HISTORY OF WASHINGTON AND THE FOUNDING OF ST. PETERS PARISH

WHEN the town of Washington was laid off by Col. James Bonner about the year 1776, he set aside lot No. 50 on the plot of the town "for the public use of the said Township for building a church on." This lot No. 50 was located at the corner of Bonner and Main Streets, running 105 feet on Main Street by 210 feet on Bonner Street.

On this lot the first church building in Washington was erected, but no record can be found of the date. This church was used by all denominations until the year 1800, when a Methodist church was built, known as Pott's Chapel, on the east side of Market Street, between Second and Third Streets, just north of the present Federal Building.

The Episcopalians, Presbyterians and Baptists continued to use the "Free Church" until 1822, when the Episcopalians built Old St. Peters, and about 1823 the Presbyterians built their church.

In 1835 by some arrangement made the Baptists were given the "Free Church" building and they moved it to their lot on Market Street, the present site of the Washington Motor Car Company's building, and lot number 50 was left to be used as a graveyard known as St. Peters Churchyard.

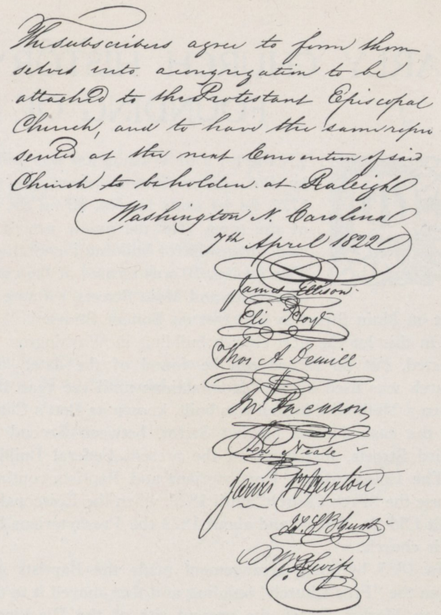
There is little or no record of any activities of the Episcopal Church in and around Washington prior to the founding of St. Peters Parish, but this may be due to the fact that there were two well known Colonial Parishes near Washington, St. Thomas, Bath, and Trinity or Blount's Chapel at Chocowinity.

It is well known, however, that the spiritual care of Washington was well looked after by the Rev. Nathaniel Blount, a native of Beaufort County, who built Trinity Chapel in 1773, and who served the people of Beaufort and Pitt Counties until his death in September, 1816. He died in Pitt County and his mortal remains were conveyed down Tar River in a canoe and laid to rest in the Blount burying ground at Chocowinity. With the passing of Parson Blount there was not a single minister of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the whole State of North Carolina. In 1819, the Rt. Rev. Richard Channing Moore, Bishop of Virginia, visited Washington.

The first mention the writer can find of any Episcopal activity in Washington is contained in the Journal of the Diocese of North Carolina for the year 1819, and is in the form of a letter from Thos. H. Blount, Esq., to the Rev. John Phillips, concerning the erecting of a church building in Washington. The Convention ordered a letter written to Mr. Blount expressing the wish that he would use his exertions towards building a church in Washington. That same year the Rev. John Phillips reports a visit to Washington and that he found six Communicants.

At a meeting of the Convention of the Diocese of North Carolina in 1820 a letter was read from Thos. H. Blount, Esq., stating "the subscription for the building the church at Washington is in a state of forwardness and the building can commence the ensuing summer." Early in 1822 the Rev. Mr. Sitgraves of Pennsylvania, representing the Diocesean Missionary Society, visited Washington and reported "the favorable prospects for a church in Washington."

From all available data it appears that when St. Peters Parish was organized it was planned to use the new church building for both Episcopal and Presbyterian services, but owing to some dissension or difference in doctrine it is known that the Presbyterian service was never held in old St. Peters and they founded their own church in August, 1823. In this connection I copy from a paper written by Mr. W. E. DeMille: "One of the peculiar features of the parish was a certain constitution endorsed by the founders


The subscribers agree to form themselves into a congregation to be attached to the Protestant Episcopal Church, and to have the same represented at the next Convention of said Church to be holden at Raleigh

Washington N. Carolina
7th April 1822

James Ellison
Eli Hoyt
Thos H Demill
W Pearson
B Neale
James Hampton
Geo J Blount
W Hoyt

DOCUMENT FORMING THE PARISH

FIRST CHURCH BUILDING OF ST. PETERS PARISH
Built 1822. Burned 1864.

which recognized the right of the Vestry to call whenever the services of an Episcopal minister could not be obtained, that any minister of good sound doctrine might be asked to officiate. It is well to say that after consideration none other but a minister of the Episcopal Church ever held service within its walls. It is supposed that this article was introduced to suit the proclivities of certain persons of the Presbyterian faith who gave some assistance in the erection of the church and it may be stated in this connection that at the subsequent erection of a Presbyterian church in this town, whatever sums were contributed by these friends were more than returned by the ample subscription to their edifice by those who adhered to the Church."

It seems peculiar that Mr. Thos. H. Blount was not one of the signers of the first document organizing the parish when he had seemed to be more interested in the church than anyone else, but this is partly explained by the name of Wm. R. Swift, of Washington, D. C., as one of the founders. He was a great friend of Mr. Blount's and visited him for long periods, and being a man of letters it is supposed that he was preparing the necessary papers for Mr. Blount. It is well known that Mr. Swift was a Presbyterian and one of the founders of the First Presbyterian Church of this city.

I copy from a paper in my possession written by Mr. W. E. DeMille. Mr. DeMille's father was one of the founders of St. Peters Parish and was living at the time the paper was written: "A paper drawn up in the handwriting of one W. R. Swift, who, report has it, came from Washington City, aided in the forming the congregation of St. Peters. He was more inclined to the Presbyterian faith than otherwise. The object in mentioning anything about his religion is from the fact that the Parish is indebted to him for its name."

The original paper forming the congregation is as follows, and the names thereto constituted the first Vestry:

"The subscribers agree to form themselves into a congregation to be attached to the Protestant Episcopal Church and to have the same represented at the next convention of said church to be holden at Raleigh.

"Washington, N. C., April 7, 1822."

(Signed) James Ellison.
Eli Hoyt.
Thos. A. DeMille.
J. W. Jackson.
Abner P. Neale.
Jarvis B. Buxton.
Jas. S. Blount.
Wm. R. Swift.

OLD SAINT PETERS

The first church building of St. Peter's Parish was erected on Main Street nearly opposite the present home of T. Harvey Myers, and the spot is marked by the mounted tablet which reads:

"To commemorate the founding of St. Peters Parish
April 7, 1822
This tablet marks the site and the stones
beneath it were a part of the first church
building. Built 1822. Burned 1864."

The lot on which old St. Peter's stood was bought from Mr. Joseph Bonner and was lot No. 56 on the map of the town of Washington. It was not built on the lot given by Col. James Bonner for a free church as has been often written. I have in my possession an order from Joseph Bonner to Eli Hoyt which reads: "Mr. Eli Hoyt you will please pay to Mr. Abner P. Neale the balance that may be due me on the lot I sold you for St. Peters Church." This order is marked paid.

The corner stone was laid on the 29th day of May, 1822, by the Rev. Richard S. Mason, of New Bern, and the account written by Mr. DeMille of the ceremony is as follows: "When the Reverend Minister asked for the name of the Parish in order that the church might be dedicated, Mr. W. R. Swift with a readiness of speech for which he was remarkable, stepped forward and announced that the Holy Apostle Saint Peter was to be its name. Whether in Mr. Swift's mind there dwelt a comparison of the denial of his Lord by St. Peter and his own status with regard to the Chuch is not known, but from his ordinary course of life rather inclined to frivolity and keen sense of his own religious imperfections would suggest the idea that this was the controlling motive of the occasion."

The Rt. Rev. John Stark Ravenscroft was consecrated First Bishop of North Carolina in Philadelphia, on April 22, 1823, and made his first visit to Washington on Tuesday, January 27, 1824. He reports the visitation in these words: "Accompanied by the Rev. Mr. Mason I arrived at Washington that evening where divine service was performed by Mr. Mason and a sermon preached by myself in the New Episcopal Church. On Friday, January 30, 1824, the new church being in a sufficient state of forwardness and every necessary step being taken to confirm the property and possession of it to the Protestant Episcopal Church, the building was solemnly consecrated and set apart to the worship of Almighty God according to the Liturgy of the Protestant Episcopal Church, and to the administration of the ordained sacraments according to the use of that communion forever by the name and title of St. Peters Church in Washington."

The church building was a plain but very substantial edifice. It had but little pretension to church architecture and could only be recognized as such by the simple tower

in front in which hung a bell, to remind one of its sacred character. The picture of Old St. Peters which is here reproduced was drawn by Henry C. Hoyt, the father of the late Miss E. M. B. Hoyt, but does not show the church as it was when destroyed by fire. Some years after the church was built a tall spire was added to the tower as shown in the picture.

In the interior arrangement there was a gallery extending around three sides of the church supported by pillars that also sustained the roof. The ground floor consisted of a double row of pews, and pews on each side thereof. When first erected, the old fashioned pulpit with reading desk beneath and a neat mahogany table for an altar inside the chancel rail, were the furniture. During the administration of the Rev. John Singeltary as Rector, these were removed and a lectern and altar of incense were introduced, which were afterwards removed and a sacrificial altar placed instead.

The choir was in the gallery over the front door, and it has been said that the choir was always a good one. In his report to the Convention of 1827, the Rev. Geo. W. Freeman, Rector, reported to the Convention that the Female Industrial Society of the Parish had bought a handsome well toned organ at a cost of $800.00.

In 1834, a vestry room was added to the church, but other than this there were no changes ever made from the original plan. Some of the pews were sold, while others were rented. I have three of these deeds, one from Eli Hoyt to James E. Hoyt for Pew No. 13 as a gift dated 1828, one from Thos. A. DeMille to James E. Hoyt, the consideration being $60.00, and the third is a commissioner's deed for a pew sold at the court house door on October 6, 1842, belonging to a bankrupt. There is also a deed on record in the court house in Book 17, page 402, for one pew and all books and furnishings belonging thereto for the consideration of $46.40.

Part of the furnishings of the old church are in the present church building and consist of the two chancel chairs, the font, and the crystal chandelier given by Mr. Stephen Cambreleng and the Hon. C. C. Cambreleng, who was Minister to Russia under the Van Buren administration.

This church was used until May 9, 1864, when a fire broke out on the Wiswall property at the rear of what is now Dr. E. M. Brown's drug store, and destroyed all the east end of the town, taking the church as part of its toll. While this fire occurred during the war, it was not an act of war or started by any Northern soldiers. Mrs. Eli Hoyt, whose home was burned the same day, with the aid of several Confederate soldiers who were in town, and a faithful old colored man named Abram Allen, a member of the church, saved much of the chancel furnishings and a Mr. McRae, of Jackson, N. C., told me some years ago how he, almost unassisted, carried the font from the church. The crystal chandelier was put out on the street by the side of the "Episcopal Pump," which stood in front of the house now occupied

by Mrs. W. B. Morton, and after staying there about two weeks, was removed to the Myers brick warehouse down on the river, where it was stored until the new church was built.

The bell melted in the fire and old Abram Allen picked the metal out of the ashes, carried it home and saved it. When the new church was being built he sold the metal and gave the money to the building fund. When the tower of the church was burning, the heat caused the bell to toll until it fell from its hanging place. Thus the tolling of the bell marked the passing of Old St. Peters and all the tender associations therewith.

THE NEW CHURCH

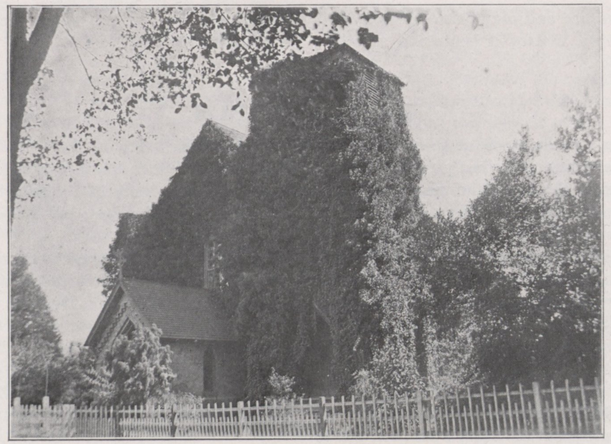
After the war was over and the people of Washington had returned to their desolate homes, and when plans were being made for the rebuilding of the town, the members of the church began at once to plan the rebuilding of St Peters. To raise funds the ladies held many fairs and entertainments and in 1866 the Rev. Edwin Geer, the Rector, made a trip through the Northern States asking for help. A memorandum of Mr. Geer's shows that many parishes gave substantial aid. Late in 1867 the church building was begun. The building committee was composed of Thos. H. Blount, T. H. B. Myers and Wm. E. DeMille. The plans were drawn by Baltimore architects.

In building the new church the Vestry wished the church to be on Bonner Street instead of the Main Street lot, which had been bought from Joseph Bonner for the old church, Bonner Street being considered the better location and also that the church might be built due east and west, "For Moses when he had safely conducted the children of Israel through the Red Sea, he there by divine command erected a tabernacle due east and west to perpetuate the remembrance of that mighty east wind whereby their miraculous deliverance was wrought and also to receive the rays of the rising sun."

At this time the progress being made was halted by the resignation of the Rector, the Rev. Edwin Geer, but the untiring efforts of Wm. E. DeMille, the senior warden, soon had the work going on again and the corner stone of the new church was laid on April 20, 1868, by the Rt. Rev. Thos. Atkinson, D.D. The master of ceremonies was Col. D. M. Carter, the father of the late D. M. Carter of this city.

The contents of the corner stone are as follows:

A copy of the original organization of the congregation.
A copy of the Prayer Book deposited by Margaret Mutter Blount DeMille, the great-grandchild of Mrs. Mary Ann Hoyt, the oldest member of the church, from whom it was received, both being present.



EXTERIOR ST. PETERS CHURCH, 1885

A copy of the Church Journal by Mrs. J. K. Hatton.

A copy of the deed for the land on which the church was erected, dated February, 1776.

A copy of the almanac of the present year.

Copies of the State papers.

A declaration of belief signed by the wardens and vestrymen, setting forth that the object of this temple was for the worship of God, according to the Episcopal usages and none other.

Coins were deposited by the following children of the church:

Frank Hoyt (now of Brooklyn, N. Y.).
Marina Hoyt (Mrs. Nathaniel Harding).
Allen Hoyt (Deceased).
Jno. K. Hoyt.
Henry Nutt Blount.
Annie Cambreleng DeMille (now Mrs. John Pitman of New Jersey).
Eliza Grist (now Mrs. W. S. Clark of Tarboro).
Mary A. Latham (Mrs. W. L. Laughinghouse).
Portia Smallwood (Mrs. Geo. Whitley of Williamston).
Mary Smallwood (Deceased).
Sally Smallwood (Mrs. S. R. Biggs of Williamston).
Sally Carter (now Mrs. Theodore Davidson of Asheville, N. C.).
Thos. W. Latham (Deceased).

It was a tremendous undertaking for people who had been made so poor by war to build a church, but these faithful workers deprived themselves of almost everything that the House of God might be erected. The Rev. N. Collin Hughes, D.D., who became Rector of the Parish late in 1868 made a trip through the North begging for funds, and largely due to his aid was the church finished. It is interesting to note that a part of the brick used in the church were made by J. G. Bragaw, the present senior warden, who was manager of a brick yard at Chocowinity at that time.

After six years of hard struggle, the church was finished and the first service was held on September 14, 1873, at which time a public baptism was held and the following children were the first to be baptised in the new church: Elizabeth Hoyt DeMille (now Mrs. J. Richmond Pitman, of New Jersey), Margaret Mutter Blount, Henry Churchill Bragaw and Joseph Flanner Tayloe.

On the following Sunday, September 21, 1873, the Rev. N. C. Hughes having resigned, the Rev. Nathaniel Harding accepted a call to become Rector of the Parish.

The Parish just at this time suffered a great loss in the death of its senior warden, Wm. E. DeMille, who died September 28, 1873. Mr. DeMille was more active in the work of building the church than any other member of the Parish. It has been said that he actually brought on his death working on the church. He could always be seen when there was work going on and but for his efforts it would have taken many more years to complete the building.

It took several years to pay for the church and little was done to improve the interior, but on December 18, 1875, the debt was paid off, and the church consecrated by the Rt.

INTERIOR VIEW OF THE CHURCH, 1892

Rev. Thomas Atkinson, D.D., and Rt. Rev. Theodore B. Lyman, Assistant Bishop.

The church when finished was quite a little different from what it is today. The vestry room was a small room on the southeast corner of the church where the organ chamber now stands. There was no vestibule and the front steps led directly up to the door, which opened into the church. The roof was shingled and the tower was a low flat hipped roof affair that was called by some members of the church, "the chicken coop." In the interior of the church there has been less change, the ceiling however, was of plaster with wooden beams as a decoration. In 1878, Mrs. Phoebe Randolph raised the funds to buy a bell for the church. She raised the money by subscription and the largest contributors were J. F. Randolph and T. H. B. Myers, who gave $50.00 each. The bell was from McShane and is made of India tin and Lake Superior copper. The cost was $800.00.

The first addition to the church was the vestibule, which was constructed in the year 1884, just before the meeting of the first council of the diocese of East Carolina, which met in Washington on May 14, 1884.

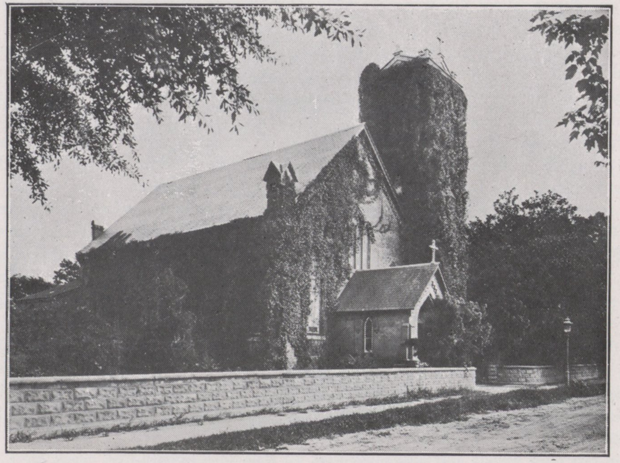
For twelve years the only seating arrangement in the church was rough chairs, but in the summer of 1885 the present pews were installed. The pine lumber of which they are made was cut in our own woods and was planed in a local mill by our townsman Frank H. Jordan. The pews were made by William Walling, father of the late W. B. Walling of this city, and who is buried in the churchyard.

The next improvement was the new lamps, which were bought by the ladies of the Parish. They were tall metal standards containing three lamps and were fastened to every fourth pew. These replaced the old lamps which hung from the ceiling.

In 1890, the present vestry room was added and the old vestry room was used as the organ chamber in which was placed the new pipe organ bought in 1891. Prior to this the choir and reed organ were in the gallery over the front door. The pipe organ was a one manual built by Jardine & Son of New York, and cost $1,600.00 installed. It is now in use in the colored Zion Church of this city. The first collection for this organ was taken on Easter Day, April, 2, 1888, and for the next three years the Easter offering was for that purpose. Besides this, many entertainments were held and there were many gifts to the fund, the largest single contribution being $100.00, given by the late Henry C. DeMille.

In 1893, the church was remodelled by adding the tower, the wooden ceiling and the slate roof. This work was done by C. E. Hartge, an architect living here at the time. During this work the services of the church were held in the town hall.

The last twenty-five years have brought little change to the building itself, but the furnishings have been greatly improved and many beautiful memorials added. Through



EXTERIOR OF CHURCH AS IT NOW APPEARS

funds raised by Miss Lida T. Rodman and Mrs. J. B. Moore, the present lighting fixtures were installed to replace the old kerosene lamps. They were made by R. Geissler and cost $600.00.

In 1919 the Nathaniel Harding Memorial organ was installed, and dedicated on March 7, 1920. This organ, a three manual electric, was built by the Hall Organ Co., of West Haven, Conn., and cost $10,000.00 installed.

Besides the many beautiful memorials in the church there are three bequests that have been made to the Parish. Mrs. Laura Blackwell left the parish $250.00; Mrs. Mary T. McDonald, who during her life gave much to the church, left the vestry three houses and lots with the request that her envelope No. 21 be put in the collection every Sunday morning. She also left $500.00 to the Daughters of the King, stipulating that they were to use the interest therefrom to keep up her lot in the cemetery and churchyard and to put flowers in the Ellison Memorial window on festival days. The third bequest is the Annie Blackwell Lewis Memorial left to the Parish by the late Ivey Foreman in memory of his mother. The amount of this is $1,000.00 and income therefrom is to be used to relieve the suffering among the poor of the Parish.

Thus in the St. Peters of today we have a church, beautiful, well appointed, and with a congregation of loyal working people.

THE VESTRY OF 1822 AND OF 1922

There are found none of the old minute books or records of the Vestry meetings of the early church and it is supposed that they were burned with the old church in 1864; but for us and the information of those who may come after us, it will be interesting to record the names, occupations and a few facts in regard to the Vestries of 1822 and 1922.

Eli Hoyt was the first senior warden of the Parish and held this position until his death. He was born in Norwalk, Conn., April 30, 1787, and came to this town early in life. He was a merchant and known for his strict integrity. His wife, Mary Ann Cambreleng, was a devoted member of the Parish. They did much toward the building up of the Parish and held the Sunday school of the church in their own home prior to 1822. He died February 22, 1864, and is buried in St. Peters Churchyard.

James Ellison, or as he was better known, "Squire Ellison" was born in Bath, N. C., and moved to Washington when seventeen years of age. He was connected with the Bank of Cape Fear for a number of years. He died January 6, 1864, and was buried in St. Peters Churchyard. While strictly a moral man and an upright citizen, he never received the rite of baptism or confirmation.

INTERIOR OF THE CHURCH TODAY

Thos. A. DeMille was born in the City of New York and came to Washington when a boy. He grew up with the town and was a successful merchant here. He built the brick house now owned and occupied by J. K. Hoyt. He was a lay reader in the Parish and the first junior warden, which position he held until he left Washington. Although living away from town, it was through his advice and instruction that the new church was begun soon after the war and he acted as banker for the building fund. Whatever amounts were collected by Rev. Edwin Geer or the Rev. Dr. Hughes were put in the keeping of DeMille & Co. He died and was buried in the City of Brooklyn.

Abner P. Neal was born in New Bern, N. C., and moved early in life to this town. He was a liberal friend and member of the Church, and a vestryman from the foundation of the Parish until his death. He was also prominent in the affairs of Beaufort County. He died December 19, 1849, and was buried in St. Peters Churchyard.

J. W. Jackson came to this town from Washington, D. C., and was a member of the Church only by baptism. He lived here but a few years and returned to Washington City. He lost his life by drowning in the Mississippi River, having taken passage on a steamer that burned to the water's edge.

The memory of Jarvis B. Buxton belongs not alone to St. Peters Parish, but to the whole diocese and State. He was a man of bright, earnest, Godly sincerity and was a devout and holy man of God. He was born in New Bern, N. C., and was early in life a teacher. He was one of the first lay readers in the Parish and also served in Bath, Zion and Trinity Parishes. He entered the ministry and was Rector of several Parishes in the State. He died at Fayetteville, N. C., in the year 1851, during the sitting of the Diocesan Convention, having charge of the Parish at that time.

James S. Blount was a vestryman for only a few years. He was originally a saddler by trade, but at the time of his death was engaged in farming. He owned a pew in the church and was a fair attendant at the services.

William R. Swift, the last subscriber to the document forming the Parish, was born in Washington City and was in the town on a visit at the time of his death. He was of a genial disposition and inclined more to the sports of life than to any practical turn of mind. It has been said of him that he would do anything for a friend and it was this trait that cost him his life. While here on a visit to Thos. H. Blount on the latter's farm at "Sans Souci," Mr. Blount was taken sick and wished for some oysters. None were obtainable in town and Mr. Swift wishing to gratify his friend, chartered a boat and went down the sound oystering. During a storm on the trip he caught cold, which developed pneumonia and he died a few days afterwards. He was buried in the old Blount burying ground at Sans Souci.

The Vestry of 1922 is composed of twelve of the city's most prominent business and professional men.

Eli Hoyt
1822-1864

Wm. E. DeMille
1864-1873

John G. Bragaw
1911—

Wm. A. Blount, M.D.
1897-1911

Edmund S. Hoyt
1873-1897

THE FIVE SENIOR WARDENS

J. G. Bragaw is the present and fifth senior warden of the Parish and has held this position since the death of Dr. Wm. A. Blount in 1911. Mr. Bragaw was born on Long Island, N. Y., in 1838, and came to Washington in the year 1858, to clerk in the store of W. E. DeMille. He travelled to Washington from Plymouth by stage coach and when he put his foot on Washington soil for the first time, it was at the same place where he now lives, being at that time the site of the Lafayette Hotel. Although he had three brothers in the Union army, he served as a Confederate soldier until the end of the war. He is the second oldest member of the Parish and among the most active. He has been a member of the vestry for fifty years.

T. Harvey Myers, the junior warden, was born in Washington, N. C., 1870. He is a son of the late T. H. B. Myers, who was one of the church's most liberal sons. Mr. Myers has always been active in the work of the church and has been a vestryman for twenty-six years and junior warden since 1911. He is the agent of the Norfolk Southern Railroad Co. and comes from a family that has been connected with the transportation business of Washington since 1815.

The present treasurer and financial secretary of the Parish is Guy C. Harding, who was born in Chocowinity in 1880, and moved to Washington in the year 1895. He is engaged in the rental and real estate business in the firm of H. E. Harding & Son.

C. E. Leens was born in DeKalb, Ill., October 24, 1858, and moved to Washington in June, 1892, with the coming of the Atlantic Coast Line R. R. Co. He was engineer on the run from Washington to Parmele from that time until he retired from active service about a year ago. He has been a member of the vestry since 1914.

S. F. Alligood was born in 1863, in Beaufort County, a few miles from Washington. He was a member of Zion Parish before coming to this city. He moved to Washington in 1901, and is connected with the Crystal Ice Co. He has been on the vestry for several years and has also served as treasurer.

N. Henry Moore was born in Norfolk, Va., May 10, 1886, and moved here when a small boy. He was one of the founders of the first junior Brotherhood of St. Andrew in the Parish, and in later years has served as director of the chapter. In the business world he has been connected with the wholesale grocery business of the town and is at present the postmaster, having been appointed by President Woodrow Wilson eight years ago.

E. K. Willis has been a vestryman since 1915, when he succeeded his father, the late E. K. Willis of blessed memory, one of the most earnest workers the Parish ever had. In the work of the Brotherhood of St. Andrew he has been very active and has been superintendent of the Sunday school for fifteen years. He is always ready to do any work for the Church and has built up a splendid Sunday school. He is thirty-three years old and engaged in the wholesale grocery

business. He is a direct descendant of Parson Stewart, who came to St. Thomas Church, Bath, from England in 1753.

J. F. Randolph was born in Washington, March 25, 1871, and has been a member of the vestry since 1897. He is a son of the late J. F. Randolph, a prominent layman of the Parish. For many years he served as treasurer of the Parish. He married Miss Eliza Haughton, the daughter of the late Rev. Thos. B. Haughton, a revered clergyman of this diocese. He is a prominent business man of Washington and is president of E. Peterson Co., wholesale grocers.

The present secretary of the vestry is William B. Harding, a son of the late Rev. Nathaniel Harding and grandson of Rev. N. Collin Hughes, D.D., both former rectors of the Parish. He was born January 24, 1884, and has been brought up literally a child of the Church. He is a lay reader of the Parish and has served many years as a member of the choir. He is assistant cashier of the Bank of Washington.

John K. Hoyt was born January 21, 1862, and is a son of Edmund S. Hoyt, who was senior warden of the Parish for twenty-four years. Mr. Hoyt is one of Washington's most successful merchants and has been in business here since 1890.

Junius D. Grimes, a lawyer of the city, is a son of General Bryan Grimes and was born in Chocowinity 1878, and moved to Washington in 1902. He is a member of the firm of Ward & Grimes.

Harry McMullan moved to Washington in 1907, from Edenton, N. C., where he was born July 23, 1884. He is a lawyer and has been a vestryman since the last election.

In the Vestry of 1822 we found men who were pioneers in the business life of Washington, and in the Vestry of 1922 we find those who are identified with the leading interests of the city. May the Vestry of 2022 contain the same type of progressive, unselfish men as the Vestry of a hundred years ago and today.

PARISH LIFE

Ever since the organization of the Parish, St. Peters has maintained a high level which has entitled her to be known as one of the leading churches of the diocese and her rectors vested with many positions of trust.

There have been only five senior wardens in the hundred years of parish life. They are: Eli Hoyt, who served for forty-two years; W. E. DeMille, for nine years; Edmund S. Hoyt, who served for twenty-four years; Dr. Wm. A. Blount, for fourteen years; and J. G. Bragaw, who has served since the death of Dr. Blount in 1911.

The first Diocesan Convention held in the Parish was April 21, 1825, and since that time many important meetings

ST. PETERS RECTORY

have occurred here. After the organization of the new diocese of East Carolina, the first council met here and one of the valued possessions of the Parish is a silver mounted gavel which bears the inscription: "With this gavel the first annual council of East Carolina was called to order in St. Peters Church, Washington, N. C., May 14, 1884." Another momentous meeting in the church was the special council of October 7, 1914, called for the election of a Bishop, at which time the Rt. Rev. Thomas Campbell Darst was elected.

In the life of the Parish by far the greatest factor in its growth is the work of the women. They have from the beginning been zealous and untiring and in countless ways have done much toward making the church what it is today. The first women's organization was the Female Industrial Society, formed shortly after old St. Peters was built. The first thing they bought was the Communion service, which was presented December 1, 1826, and is the same one which we use today. They also bought the first organ, and in a report to the Convention of 1833, there is an item stating that "The Female Industrial Society had sent $50.00 to New York to purchase a stove for the church." Other women's organizations that have done much work in the Parish are the Ladies Benevolent Society, St. Peters Floral Society, and the Rectors Aid Society. The Ladies Benevolent Society raised the money with which to pay for the first Rectory. St. Peters Floral Society has had the care of the churchyard since 1870 and the Rectors Aid Society, which was started by the late Miss Kate Carroway, built the wall around the church, erected the marker on the site of the old church and has paid for many other improvements. Besides the Woman's Auxiliary, St. Peters Parochial Society, the Daughters of the King and the Altar Guild have all done their work well in the several branches of service allotted.

The first organist of the Parish was Mrs. J. W. Jackson, the wife of one of the first vestrymen. It is interesting to note in connection with Mrs. Jackson, who came from Washington, D. C., that she was the first lady in Washington ever to use flowers on her dining table. As organist she was followed by Mrs. Eli Hoyt, wife of the first senior warden. Next came Mrs. Thos. H. Blount, then her two daughters, Miss Bettie Blount and Miss Bonner Blount. They were followed by Mrs. Theodore Parker, who taught school at Chocowinity. Miss E. M. B. Hoyt, the next organist, served in both the old church and the new church for a period of over thirty years. She was also the first to play on the organ now in the church. During the Civil War, although she was the strongest kind of a rebel, she was forced by Union soldiers to play at the funeral of a Yankee captain.

Among the more recent organists are Miss Eliza Haughton (now Mrs. J. F. Randolph), Miss Carrie Cobb (now Mrs. Geo. V. Denny of Chapel Hill) Miss Annie Townsend Bragaw (now Mrs. Cam. Melick of Elizabeth City), Miss Lillian Bonner (Mrs. W. H. Williams) and Edmund H. Harding, who has been organist since March, 1911.

The Parish has had two rectories, the first located on Harvey Street, now owned and occupied by Dr. H. W. Carter. The present rectory was built in 1906, and is on the lot left to the Church by Thos. A. McNair.

This sketch of the Parish would be incomplete without mention of some of those blessed souls, members of the Parish who have passed to the great beyond. Besides those heretofore mentioned, among the most active in the church work have been Miss Patsy Blount, James E. Hoyt, Miss Clara Hoyt, Mrs. J. G. Bragaw, Mr. and Mrs. Macon Bonner, Mrs. Mary McDonald, David D. Dupree and Isaac Harrison, who for many years was the faithful sexton.

Two laymen whose names stand foremost in the work of the church are J. F. Randolph, who died in 1877 and John G. Bragaw, Jr.

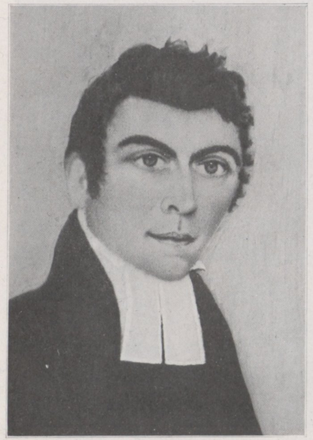
Mr. Randolph was for many years superintendent of the Sunday school, a lay reader in the church, the treasurer of the Parish and one of the hardest workers and most liberal contributors the Parish has ever had.

John G. Bragaw, Jr., the son of the present senior warden and the great-grandson of the first senior warden, has been identified with the life of the Parish ever since he was large enough to pump the pipe organ. He is without exception one of the best lay workers in the whole American church and has served in every capacity in the Parish. In East Carolina he is lovingly called the "Bishop of the Laity," and has served on the most important committees of the diocese. He is a lay reader and when Zion Parish was without a Rector, he gave them regular services. While not called on to read the service here for the past three or four years, prior to that time in the declining years of the Rev. Nathaniel Harding, he served him lovingly and tenderly in every service of the church. Without his help Mr. Harding would have had to give up the work many years before his death. Nothing better describes his service and devotion to his old Rector than the text from which Mr. Harding preached his first sermon here: "And Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun."

RT. REV. THOS. C. DARST, D.D.
Bishop of East Carolina

THE RECTORS

The first Rector of the Parish was the Rev. Joseph Pierson. He was a native of Massachusetts, and came to Washington as a deacon in February, 1825. He was ordained priest by Bishop Ravenscroft on April 24, 1825, in St. Peters Church and the Bishop's text on that occasion was: "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." Mr. Pierson was a missionary in Beaufort County and served Zion, Trinity and St. Thomas Bath. He was also instrumental in founding St. Johns Parish, Durham's Creek, and was with Bishop Ravenscroft when that church was consecrated April 16, 1826. In the summer of 1826, while away on a vacation he died suddenly in Washington City. In his death the Parish lost a young man full of vigor, who in the short seventeen months in which he was permitted to serve the Parish, had baptised fifty-five and presented in two classes fifty-one for confirmation. In other Parishes of Beaufort County of which he was Rector, he baptised one hundred and one and presented eighty-three for confirmation. A tablet was erected to his memory in old St. Peters and was lost in the fire.



REV. JOSEPH PIERSON
First Rector

The Parish was without a Rector for a year, but in June, 1827, the Rev. George Washington Freeman became Rector. Like his predecessor, he was only a deacon when he came to Washington, but was ordained priest in the year 1828. While Rector here Mr. Freeman also taught school. He resigned in September, 1829, to take charge of Christ Church, Raleigh, and on October 26, 1844, was made Bishop of Arkansas. He died in 1858 at the age of sixty-nine.

The next Rector, the Rev. Philip Bruce Wiley, took charge of the Parish March 20, 1830. I am unable to find the date and place of his birth, but he was presented for confirmation in the church here by the Rev. Joseph Pierson on April 20, 1825, and ordained in St. Lukes Church, Salisbury, N. C., on May 24, 1829. He remained Rector for only eight months and was succeeded by the Rev. Mr. Hawks.

Again for seven months the Parish had no Rector, but on the 4th of June, 1831, the Rev. William N. Hawks took charge. Mr. Hawks was born in New Bern, N. C., and was

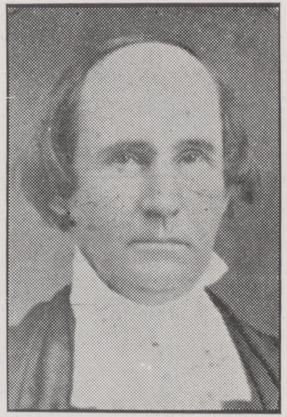
a brother of the Rt. Rev. Cicero S. Hawks, Bishop of Missouri, and the Rev. Francis L. Hawks, D.D., LL.D., a famous orator and historian. In May, 1832, he organized a congregation of free negroes here and twelve years later when they built themselves a chapel he continued to come here from New Bern to minister to them. He was Rector until July, 1833, when he went to New Bern to become head of the "Griffin School" for poor orphan girls. He held this position until 1847, when he became Rector of Christ Church, New Bern. In his later days he was Rector of Trinity Church, Columbus, Ga., where he died just after the Civil War. Mr. Hawks was the great uncle of Mrs. W. L. Laughinghouse of this city.

The next Rector was the Rev. Robt. Shaw, who remained here only two months. He came here in March, 1834, and left in May of the same year.

The Rev. Wm. Shaw became Rector in May, 1834, and was Rector until June, 1835, when he resigned and moved to New York.

The Parish was again without a Rector for nineteen months and from the Diocesan Journal I copy the following: "During the whole of this period the congregation continued duly organized, a vestry was duly elected in 1836 and the church regularly opened for lay reading and respectably attended."

The Rev. John Singeltary took charge of the Parish on the first day of January, 1837. Mr. Singeltary was born in this town and when he was quite young his father died, leaving beside this son, two other children, Mary and Samuel. My only reason for mentioning this is that Mary, who was afterwards Mrs. P. T. Chapeau, was the founder of the "Mary E. Chapeau Scholarship" at St. Marys School, Raleigh, N. C., which has afforded several Washington girls the means of attending that school. Mrs. Singeltary married the second time, one Nathan Gibbs, and they are buried in the churchyard just west of the Main Street gate. Mr. Singeltary received much property from the Gibbs Estate and the records of the county show that he was quite a business man and trader. I have been told in his young days Mr. Singeltary was inclined to be reckless, but when he became of age he settled down and married Eliza Williams



REV. GEO. W. FREEMAN
Second Rector

of Pitt County, a sister of Mrs. Dr. Hughes. She was a member of the church and had much to do with Mr. Singeltary's future life. They had several children, all of whom were baptised and received into the Church, and on November 16, 1828, Mr. Singeltary was baptised in St. Peters Church by the Rev. Geo. W. Freeman and was confirmed April 11, 1829. Mr. and Mrs. Singeltary left Washington some time about 1832, and moved to Raleigh, where he studied for the ministry and on January 8, 1837, he returned to Washington as Rector of St. Peters. He resigned June 8, 1843, and left Washington. Miss Polly Ellison has a large gilt framed mirror which belonged to Mr. Singeltary and which he sold to Squire Ellison when he left here. His next charge was Hendersonville, N. C., where he was Rector of St. Johns in the Wilderness. There he died in 1845, and is buried near the church at that place.

REV. JOHN SINGELTARY
Rector Six Years

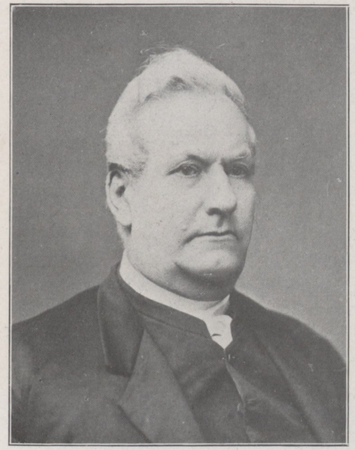
In speaking of Mr. Singeltary's death Bishop Ives in his address to the Convention of 1846 said: "In the death of our gifted brother the Rev. John Singeltary, a wiser counsellor and abler priest, a better man, could not have been taken from the church."

His will, which was probated in February, 1846, is recorded in this county and one item reads: "I give the Missionary Fund in the Diocese of North Carolina $500.00 to be paid in five annual installments computing from the probate of my will." It is interesting to note that Mr. Singeltary's three sons, who were raised by the father of General Bryan Grimes, were all colonels in the Confederate army.

Rev. W. E. Snowden was Rector from February, 1844, to March, 1848. From Washington he went to Hertford and did missionary work in Gates County. He afterwards moved to Bel Air, Md., where he spent his remaining years.

The ninth Rector of the Parish was the Rev. Ferdinand White, who came to Washington on April 23, 1848, from New York City. He was a very learned man and was capable of much good but just at this time Bishop Ives was tearing the diocese asunder with his doctrines and practices which he had adopted from the Roman Church and Mr. White was one of those drawn into the net. He left Washington in July, 1849, and a few months later went to Rome and was received into the Roman Catholic Church.

After such a calamity the Parish was without a Rector for over a year and a half, but in March, 1851, the Rev. Edwin Geer accepted the Rectorship of the Parish. Mr. Geer was born in the State of Virginia in 1815 and in 1840 he was a teacher in the Boys' School at Raleigh (now St. Marys). After this he was in charge of the church at Williamsboro, Oxford and Greenville. On October 22, 1851, he married Elizabeth Margaret Blount, daughter of Thomas H. Blount, Esq., who was organist in the church. When the Civil War broke out Mr. Geer continued to serve the people of Washington and as they had nothing with which to pay him he went to Wilmington and taught school. While there he also served as Post Chaplain. After the war, as has been already stated, he did much work in raising funds for the present church building and continued to serve the Parish until January, 1868, when he moved to Norfolk and opened a school. Some years later he moved to Baltimore and at the time of his death held a position in the Custom House in that city. He died July 29, 1880, and his remains were brought here and interred in Oakdale Cemetery.

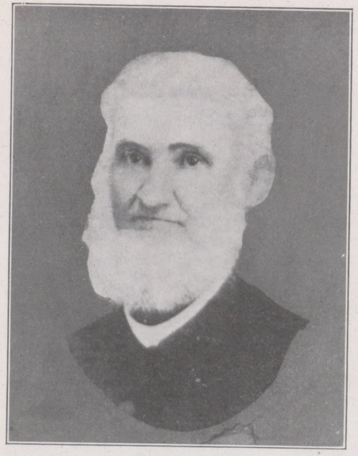


REV. EDWIN GEER
Rector Eighteen Years

Again for about a year the Parish was without a Rector, but during this time was served by those three Saints of God that have probably done more missionary work in Eastern North Carolina than any other three clergymen that could be named. The Rev. Luther Eborn, Rev. Israel Harding and Rev. N. C. Hughes, D.D.

The last named accepted the Rectorship late in 1868. Dr. Hughes was born in Merion, Pa., March 24, 1822, and at the age of fourteen entered the University of Pennsylvania, graduating in four years, third in his class. After he had completed his course at the General Theological Seminary in New York, being advised to go south for his health, he came to New Bern, N. C., where his brother, Dr. Isaac Hughes, had settled. In 1847, he married Miss Adeline E. Williams, who was a sister of the wife of Rev. John Singeltary.

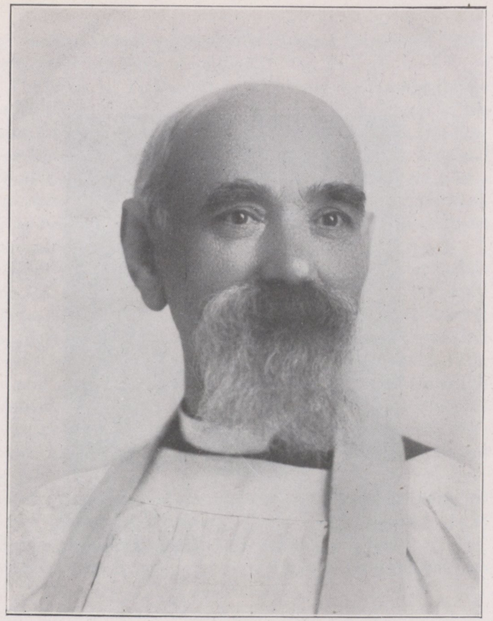
The Rev. Dr. Hughes did missionary work in Craven, Pitt, Lenoir, Beaufort and Wayne Counties and about the year 1850, he went to Chocowinity, where he founded Trinity School. Just before the Civil War Dr. Hughes took charge of the church at Pittsboro and during the war was Rector at Hendersonville. In the fall of 1865 he came back to Chocowinity and resumed his work in the school and took charge of St. Peters Parish and it was during his Rectorship that the present church was built. He resigned in 1873 and accepted the election as headmaster of the Grammar School at Sewanee. This position he held only a short time, after which he was in charge of missions around Greensboro. In 1878 he returned to Chocowinity and with his son, the Rev. N. C. Hughes, D.D., now of Raleigh, revived Trinity school. Too much cannot be said in praise of this institution that did untold good for the Church in East Carolina. Dr. Hughes, also, during this time was Rector of St. Pauls, Greenville. He died May 20, 1893, and is buried in Trinity Cemetery.



REV. N. C. HUGHES, D.D.
Rector 1868-73

The twelfth Rector was the Rev. Nathaniel Harding. He was born in Chocowinity, N. C., March 6, 1847, and received his education at Trinity School, Chocowinity and Trinity College, Hartford, Conn. The Rectorship of Mr. Harding was unique in that he came to Washington soon after he finished college and it was the only charge he had during his entire ministry of forty-four years. He was ordained deacon in St. James Church, Wilmington, on July 13, 1873, and preached his first sermon in Washington at the invitation of Dr. Hughes on July 27, 1873, in the court house. He took part in the opening service of the new church on September 14, 1873, and the next Sunday was called to the Rectorship of the Parish. Coming here at the age of twenty-six, he grew up with the Parish and loved and was loved by all his people. There were many trying times during his Rectorship and many things to upset the peace of the congregation. On account of a former Rector's defection to Rome, special care had to be exercised to overcome existing prejudice. There were some of the congregation who objected to flowers on the altar, and in April, 1886, at the marriage of Mrs. W. A. B. Branch of this city, candles were to be used on the altar for the first time, but several members objecting, the

?1875



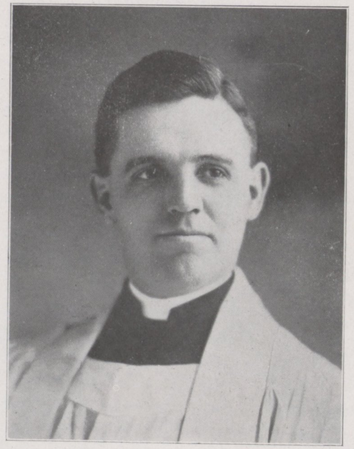
REV. NATHANIEL HARDING
Rector Forty-four Years

Rector had them removed, while the bridal party waited in the vestibule. There were others who never became reconciled to the surpliced choir. Out of all this there came an understanding between priest and people which is seldom found. Mr. Harding was a "Prayer Book Churchman" and the service was always the same. His people were ever loyal and during the years that followed the church grew in numbers and the Parish became one of the leaders of the diocese.

At the age of seventeen Mr. Harding had entered the Confederate army, and served until the end of the war. He then taught school in Beaufort County, at Wilmington, N. C., and was commandant at Cheshire Military Academy in Connecticut. After coming to Washington he took an active part in educational work and for twenty-five years was superintendent of public instruction. For nearly thirty years he was chaplain of the second regiment, North Carolina national guard. He was the first secretary of the Diocese of East Carolina and was for a number of years president of the standing committee. He was twice married, the first wife being the daughter of the Rev. N. C. Hughes, D.D., a former Rector, and his last wife Mrs. H. O. Handy, the daughter of Edmund S. Hoyt.

In the last days of his life he was very lame and although suffering much from this infirmity, he continued to serve the Parish and would sometimes conduct the service and preach from his rolling chair. He died on June 27, 1917, at the

REV. M. C. DAUGHTREY
Rector 1917-20



REV. STEPHEN GARDNER
Present Rector

age of seventy and was buried in Oakdale Cemetery. "May light perpetual shine upon him."

The Rev. M. C. Daughtrey who came to Washington as assistant rector in November, 1916, was made Rector at the death of Mr. Harding. Mr. Daughtrey before coming here was Rector at Newport News, Va., Cape Charles, Va., and Church of the Good Shepherd, Richmond, Va. He was a graduate of the University of Virginia and received his M.A. from Princeton University. There was never a more earnest man and a better preacher is seldom heard.

Here I would express my personal gratitude and thanks for Mr. Daughtrey's kindness to my father in his last days. He was ever ready to do any part or all of the Parish work, yet never once forgetting to consider the old Rector and treat him with every courtesy and kindness. In July, 1919, he was advised by physicians that the condition of his health demanded a long vacation. The Vestry gave him six months leave and he went West. He remained away for more than a year and as his health was not fully restored, he resigned on July 26, 1920.

Since that time he has improved and is now in charge of Grace Church, Newport News, Va. At this date he is in Europe on a visit to the Holy Land.

The present Rector is the Rev. Stephen Gardner, who was born in Washington, D. C. He was educated at St. Stephens College, Annandale, N. Y., and the General Theological Seminary. Before coming here he was curate of the Church of the Redeemer, Chicago, and Rector of St. Johns Church, Chicago. At the outbreak of the world war he resigned and went overseas in Y. M. C. A. work. In September, 1919, he was passing through this city on his way back to Chicago and learning there was no Rector here, he stopped over to give us Sunday service. He was then asked by the Vestry to serve the Parish, during the vacation of the Rector, and when Mr. Daughtrey resigned July 26, 1920, Mr. Gardner was elected Rector.

In the hundred years we find the Parish has been without a Rector for eight years, two Rectorships have covered a period of sixty-two years, leaving thirty years in which twelve Rectors have served here on an average of two and a half years.

I close this sketch of St. Peters Parish with the prayer that those who are permitted to live today as members of the Parish and those who may come after us, will serve God and his church as faithfully and earnestly as those who have finished their work and gone to their reward, so that the Church may continue to go forward in the extension of the Master's Kingdom.

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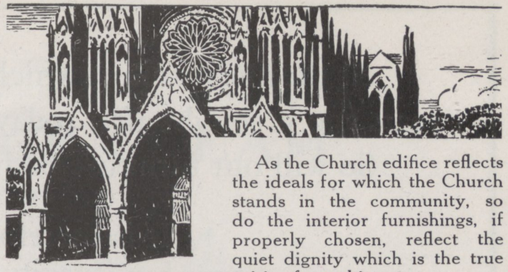

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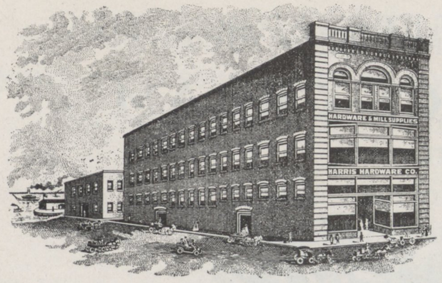

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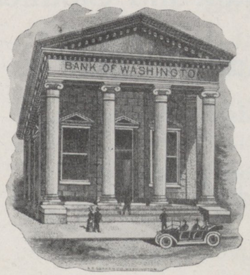
JOBBERS OF HARDWARE IN ALL ITS BRANCHES, CARRYING THE MOST COMPLETE STOCK IN EASTERN NORTH CAROLINA

MODERN FARMING MACHINERY FROM STANDARD MANUFACTURERS

ROOFING METALS, WIRE FENCING, PLUMBING

HARRIS HARDWARE COMPANY

After Accumulation What Then?



¶ You who have worked hard for what you have, are you making proper disposition of your business or your property which you may some day leave behind?

¶ This bank maintains a fully authorized Trust Department for the handling of all fiduciary matters.

¶ The experience, prudence and judgment of the officers of this bank are at your service for the handling of matters of Trust in addition to your regular banking needs.

BANK OF WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON, N. C. **Washington's Oldest Bank**

J. K. HOYT

Washington's Leading Dry Goods Merchant and Clothier

Ready-to-Wear Clothes, Shoes, Hats and Millinery

¶ Carrying a complete stock of merchandise of standard makes in wearing apparel, hats and shoes.

¶ Our constant and large purchases in the Northern Markets place us in a position to offer values that cannot be duplicated—Both as to QUALITY and PRICE.

¶ We buy only from the best manufacturers, thereby protecting and satisfying our many customers.

VISIT OUR STORE TO YOUR SATISFACTION AND OUR PLEASURE

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Buy a buggy that will travel over a bad road without telling you about it after a few score miles have been covered. Buy a buggy that has proven its worth — One that has been successful wherever tried—*buy a John Flanagan buggy.*

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