Abstract

CAUGHT BY AN ‘EVIL INFECTION’: POSTBELLUM CONFLICT IN THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF SOUTH CAROLINA OVER THE ROLE OF AFRICAN AMERICANS IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

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Thesis under the direction of Professor Benjamin J. King

This thesis, which is divided into five chapters, chronicles attempts within the Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina to provide ministry to African Americans over the course of the nineteenth century, with particular focus on the post-Civil War challenges and controversies faced by Bishop William Bell White Howe as he sought to advance the recognition of black parishes and clergy. The first chapter provides background on outreach by, first, the Church of England and, subsequently, the Episcopal Church to both free and enslaved African Americans in South Carolina from its inception as a colony through the end of the Civil War. The second chapter offers an overview of how those efforts developed in the immediate aftermath of the Civil War through the 1871 diocesan convention election that resulted in Howe’s elevation to the episcopacy. The third chapter provides biographical background on Howe and reviews his early efforts relating to race. The fourth chapter looks at the controversies that arose when St. Mark’s Episcopal Church’s applied to become the first predominantly black parish admitted to diocesan convention and how, despite Bishop Howe’s support, that application was rejected. The fifth and final chapter chronicles the subsequent controversies over the ordination of African Americans in the diocese and how Bishop Howe’s efforts to allow
for the full participation of black clergymen at diocesan conventions were ultimately thwarted.

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Introduction

In 1876, The Right Reverend William B. W. Howe, the Sixth Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of South Carolina, stood before the delegates and clergy gathered at the 86th Annual Diocesan Convention as they prepared to vote on the question of whether St. Mark’s Episcopal Church, a Charleston parish made up predominantly of African Americans, could be seated at that convention. As he pleaded the case for seating St. Mark’s, Bishop Howe asked whether the Diocese of South Carolina would “catch the evil infection” of racial exclusion and segregation or “be a lighthouse upon a rock” by rejecting the pressures of the outside world to impose segregation within the governance of the church.\(^1\) If it were not already clear before the vote that followed was taken, the Diocese of South Carolina ultimately proved itself to be caught by that “evil infection,” and, despite the continued efforts of Bishop Howe and many like-minded clergy in the years that followed, the Diocese of South Carolina was not interested in seeking a cure.

Throughout the episcopacy of Bishop William B. W. Howe, which lasted from 1871 through his death in 1894, thereby covering more than two decades immediately following the Civil War and constituting the longest episcopacy of any Episcopal bishop serving in South Carolina, the Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina dealt with numerous controversies – and, for several years, schism – over the extent to which African

\(^1\) Journal of the Eighty-Sixth Annual Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of South Carolina (Charleston, SC: Walker, Evans, & Cogswell, 1876) [hereinafter 1876 Journal], 63. These quotes come from the transcript of the Convention Journal setting forth a special address that Bishop Howe made to the Convention on the question of whether St. Mark’s would be admitted to the Conventions. 1876 Journal, 56-63.
Americans would be permitted to participate in the life of the Episcopal Church. Despite concerted efforts by Bishop Howe, who generally had the support of a majority of the clergy, determined opposition by lay leaders and certain members of the clergy thwarted efforts to provide for fuller inclusion for African Americans.

From the start of his episcopacy in 1871, and, to some extent, following in the footsteps of his immediate predecessors, Bishop Howe sought to expand the Diocese’s outreach to African Americans. Such efforts were in large part a response to the fact that in the years following the Civil War, many African Americans who had attended Episcopal churches throughout the South exercised their newly gained freedom by finding new churches in which to worship. The African American Episcopalians who had attended parishes within the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of South Carolina were no different. In fact, the Diocese of South Carolina may have experienced one of the most precipitous declines—reporting at the General Convention of 1868 that over ninety percent of the African Americans who had worshipped in their midst were no longer seeking spiritual sustenance in their Episcopal churches.²

This paper will provide a comprehensive overview of the history of attempts made within the Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina to address the issue of ministry to African Americans over the course of the nineteenth century, with particular focus on the post-Civil War challenges and controversies faced by Bishop Howe as he sought to advance the recognition of black parishes and clergy.

Due to the extraordinary thinning of the ranks among African American Episcopalians throughout the South in the aftermath of the Civil War, a number of Southern Episcopalians sought to formulate a response that would stanch the flow of departures. As a result, throughout the late nineteenth and into the early twentieth century, there were numerous proposals and plans put forward to try to prevent the potential extinction of African American Episcopalians in the American South. Though the specific details of these proposals varied in important ways, each proposal was based on some form of separation—either in structure or episcopal oversight. The debates that raged within General Conventions and diocesan conventions, therefore, largely centered on the form and extent of such separation.

Often this interest in retaining African Americans was motivated by a racist paternalism that to the ears of a twenty-first century Episcopalian is extremely offensive. In addition, there was concern that African Americans leaving the Episcopal Church—and other mainstream Protestant denominations—would come under the alarming influence of “black ministers, ‘who instead of preaching the blessed Gospel of love and peace’ had substituted ‘the teaching of enmity and strife between the races.’”\(^3\) Nonetheless, given the racial political currents of the late nineteenth century South, such racial paternalism was often the more progressive racial perspective.

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Therefore, in considering the racial perspectives of the various late nineteenth century voices that will be presented in the midst of this paper, it may be helpful to remember Southern historian C. Vann Woodward’s consideration of the “forgotten” alternatives to extreme racism that existed during this time period in Southern history.\textsuperscript{4} According to Woodward, “[b]efore the South capitulated to the doctrines of the extreme racists, three alternative philosophies of race relations were put forward to compete for the region’s adherence and support.”\textsuperscript{5}

First, the “conservative philosophy,” which might be described as a less violent form of white supremacy, held that “the Negroes belonged in a subordinate role, but denied that subordinates had to be ostracized.”\textsuperscript{6} Thus, the conservative position held that “the Negro was inferior, but denied that it followed that inferiors must be segregated or publicly humiliated.” This conservative philosophy, which Woodward describes as “an aristocratic philosophy of paternalism and noblesse oblige,”\textsuperscript{7} held that whites had a responsibility to extend rights to blacks for the betterment of both white and black society. Woodward provides the following quote from a white Southern politician as an example of this philosophy: “The Negro race is under us. He is in our power. We are his custodians … we should extend to him, as far as possible, all civil rights that will fit him


\textsuperscript{5} Woodward, \textit{Jim Crow}, 44-45.


\textsuperscript{7} Woodward, \textit{Jim Crow}, 49.
to be a decent and self respecting, law-abiding and intelligent citizen ... If we do not lift
them up, they will drag us down.”

Second, Woodward identifies the approach of “the Southern radicals” or
Populists, which sought to make common cause between poor whites and blacks.
According to Woodward, “Populists fancied themselves as exponents of a new realism on
race, free from delusions of doctrinaire and sentimental liberalism on the one hand and
the illusions of romantic paternalism on the other.” Thus, the Populist offered “an
equalitarianism of want and poverty, the kinship of a common grievance and a common
oppressor.”

Third, the “liberal philosophy of race relations,” that “there could be neither free
nor honest government without equal rights and protection for all citizens—black as well
as white,” was upheld by a tiny minority and unfortunately “promptly and almost totally
rejected and never put into practice in the field.”

Ultimately, throughout the Deep South, these three alternative philosophies were
rejected for a fourth – extreme racism based on institutionalized white supremacy and
enforced segregation. The various controversies within the South Carolina Episcopal
Church, however, primarily provide us with insight into two of the respective positions
outlined above – the “conservative philosophy” grounded in white supremacy but seeking

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8 Woodward, *Jim Crow*, 49 (quoting Thomas G. Jones, who served as Governor of
Alabama in the 1890s).


to afford certain rights to blacks and the philosophy of ‘‘extreme racism,’’ which held that supremacy must be enforced through strict separation.
Chapter One

Race in the Diocese of South Carolina through the Civil War

When considering the role of race in the Episcopal Church in the period after the Civil War, some historical context is needed, both with respect to the role of the Episcopal Church (and its pre-Revolutionary War predecessor, the Church of England) and the role of race – and, in particular, slavery and white supremacy – in the story of South Carolina that preceded the Civil War.

From the beginning of its history, the Church of England played a critical role in the social, cultural and political life of South Carolina. Though the Fundamental Constitutions of Carolina, which were adopted in 1669 by the original Lords Proprietors of the Province of Carolina,\textsuperscript{12} provided for the free exercise of religion (with the significant exception of Roman Catholicism), the Church of England was to be the tax-supported church of the colony.\textsuperscript{13} In the decade that followed the establishment of the first permanent settlement in South Carolina at Charles Town in 1670, the first Church of

\textsuperscript{12} Though the Fundamental Constitutions were never actually “constitutionally in force,” they remained foundational documents for the colonial region that would become South Carolina. Albert Sidney Thomas, \textit{A Historical Account of the Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina: 1820-1957} (Columbia, SC: R.L. Bryan Co., 1957), 4.

\textsuperscript{13} Walter B. Edgar, \textit{South Carolina: A History} (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1998) 43. At the time of the Fundamental Constitutions, the Province of Carolina would have included all of that land to the south of Virginia through northern Florida—and would have stretched west from the coast at least as far as the Mississippi River. In the first half of the eighteenth century, portions of the Province were divided into North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia—and northern Florida was no longer claimed.
England clergy began arriving, and St. Philip’s Church became the first permanent outpost of the Church of England in the colony.\textsuperscript{14}

Later, with the passage of the Church Act of 1706, the Church of England became the official church of South Carolina—and would remain so until 1778.\textsuperscript{15} Pursuant to that Act, the colony was divided into ten parishes – all of which were in or around Charleston.\textsuperscript{16}

The very same document that had established the groundwork for the Church of England to be a tax-supported church also recognized and supported the existence of slavery as a fundamental fact of the province’s economic and legal structure. Thus, the Fundamental Constitutions provided that “Every freeman of Carolina shall have absolute power and authority over his negro slaves.”\textsuperscript{17}

As the colony developed, slavery – and the division of the population into those who were recognized as free and those who were enslaved – became a central facet of life in the colony. In 1696, South Carolina enacted its first comprehensive slave code, which “defined slaves as chattel and permitted a master to discipline his property in any way he saw fit.”\textsuperscript{18} By 1708, South Carolina had a slight black majority within its colonial

\textsuperscript{14} Thomas, Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina, 5; Frederick Dalcho, An Historical Account of the Protestant Episcopal Church in South-Carolina: 1670-1820 (1820; Tricentennial ed., New York: Arno Press, 1970), 26.

\textsuperscript{15} Edgar, South Carolina, 96.

\textsuperscript{16} Thomas, Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina, 8.

\textsuperscript{17} Fundamental Constitutions of Carolina, 21 July 1669 (quoted in Edgar, South Carolina, 35).

\textsuperscript{18} Edgar, South Carolina, 68.
population, and, by 1720, blacks outnumbered whites by two to one – a ratio that would continue to exist through the beginning of the Revolutionary War.¹⁹

Although the Church of England was the official church of the colony and many of its wealthiest landowners – especially those in the Lowcountry – were Anglicans, members of other Christian denominations outnumbered Anglicans in the eighteenth century – though, by the 1770s, Anglicans constituted a majority of Lowcountry residents.²⁰ As one historian of religion in the American South has written, the Episcopal Church in South Carolina was, during the colonial era, “the low country planter aristocracy at prayer.”²¹

I. Earliest Efforts to Convert Enslaved Persons of Color (Pre-19th Century)

The Church of England’s Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (“SPG”) was created in 1701 and, by 1702, it had sent its first missionary clergyman to the Carolinas. Approximately two-fifths of the Church of England clergy who served in South Carolina during the colonial period were sent by the SPG.²² Included within the SPG’s instructions to missionaries were “Directions … for Instructing Indians, Negroes, &c.”²³ These instructions show a clear intent on the part of the SPG to provide for the Christian instruction of individuals of African descent in the

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²⁰ Edgar, *South Carolina*, 182.


various lands to which the SPG sent missionaries. According to those instructions, individuals of African descent should be taught that God “takes care of all the Beings which He hath made, particularly of the children of men, and more especially of them that fear and serve him.”24 Moreover, they were to be taught “how God formed one Man and one Woman at first; and how all mankind are descended from them.”25 Instruction was also to be given as to “how they are to enter into the Church of Christ by Baptism” and then, after having entered the church by baptism, how they are “heartily to love their Fellow-Christians, and frequently to join them in the Public Worship of God, in Prayers and Praises, and partaking of the Lord’s Supper.”26

Despite these instructions, there was debate within the colonies about whether it was appropriate to share the Good News with enslaved persons. In particular, there was concern about whether the baptism of an enslaved person – and the liberty thereby gained in Christ – could be seen as a basis for declaring an individual legally free.27 In 1712, due to these concerns, the colonial legislature passed “an Act for the better ordering and governing of Negroes and slaves,” which, after acknowledging that “charity and the Christian religion ... obliges us to wish well to the souls of all men” but that “religion may not be made a pretence, to alter any man’s property and right,” went on to address the concern that some “may neglect to baptise their negroes or slaves ... for fear that

24 Dalcho, Protestant Episcopal Church in South-Carolina, 48 (quoting from the SPG’s “Directions to the Catechists for Instructing Indians, Negroes, &c.”).

25 Dalcho, Protestant Episcopal Church in South-Carolina, 48.

26 Dalcho, Protestant Episcopal Church in South-Carolina, 49.

27 Dalcho, Protestant Episcopal Church in South-Carolina, 94.
thereby they should be manumitted and set free.”28 As a result, the Act makes clear that it was lawful for “any negro or Indian slave, or any other slave or slaves whatsoever, to receive and profess the Christian faith, and be thereunto baptised.”29 However, such profession of the Christian faith and baptism would have no effect upon the slave owner’s “civil right, property and authority over such slave or slaves.”30

One example of this philosophy in practice could be found in the ministry of the Rev. Francis Le Jau, a missionary to South Carolina from the Church of England’s Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, who, prior to baptizing enslaved persons, required them to swear “that you do not ask for the holy baptism out of any design to free your self from the Duty and Obedience you owe to your Master while you live.”31

In the 1720s, the ongoing debates about the responsibilities and challenges of offering Christian instruction to enslaved persons in the colonies led the Bishop of London, the Rt. Rev. Edmund Gibson, who was charged with oversight of the Church of England in the colonies, to issue two pastoral letters – one addressed to the colonists and the other addressed to missionaries – encouraging members of the church to accept their Christian responsibility to offer Christian instruction to all. In 1727, Bishop Gibson identified and responded to two particular objections to such instruction – first, that it was too difficult, and, second, that it would negatively impact the owner-slave relationship.

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28 Dalcho, Protestant Episcopal Church in South-Carolina, 94.

29 Dalcho, Protestant Episcopal Church in South-Carolina, 94.

30 Dalcho, Protestant Episcopal Church in South-Carolina, 95.

31 Holmes, Brief History of the Episcopal Church, 79.
With respect to the objection regarding the ease of conversion, the Bishop discounted such objections and noted that the difficulties noted with respect to converting adult slaves could not be extended to their children, whose entire life experience was in the plantation context. Furthermore, he noted that, at the very least, slave owners must set aside the Lord’s Day for rest on the plantation — such that enslaved persons should not be permitted to labor on Sundays. Bishop Gibson was not sympathetic to economic objections to respecting the Sabbath:

If it be said, That no Time can spared from the daily Labour and Employment of the Negroes, to instruct them in the Christian Religion; this is in Effect to say, that no Consideration of propagating the Gospel of God, or Saving the Souls of Men, is to make the least Abatement from the temporal Profit of the Masters ....

Bishop Gibson further noted that “considering the greatness of the Profit that is received from their Labours,” it should be no burden upon the plantation owners to incur some expense in offering Christian instructions to the enslaved persons who make that profit possible.34

In responding to the objection that conversion might negatively impact the slave-owner relationship, Bishop Gibson began first by addressing the legal aspect of this objection, making it clear that “Christianity, and the embracing of the Gospel, does not make the least Alteration in Civil Property, or in any of the Duties which belong to Civil Relations; but in all these Respects, it continues Persons just in the same State as it found them.”35 Thus, according to Bishop Gibson, the freedom that Christ offers is limited to

33 Dalcho, Protestant Episcopal Church in South-Carolina, 107-08.
34 Dalcho, Protestant Episcopal Church in South-Carolina, 108.
35 Dalcho, Protestant Episcopal Church in South-Carolina, 109.
“Freedom from the Bondage of Sin and Satan” but has no impact whatsoever on “their outward Condition.” Moreover, in response to the argument that baptized slaves would be more difficult to manage, Bishop Gibson asserted that an enslaved person’s new life in Christ should place “under stronger Obligations to perform those Duties with greatest Diligence and Fidelity, not only from the Fear of Men, but from a Sense of Duty to God.”

In conclusion, Bishop Gibson encouraged church members who own slaves to “consider [themselves] not only as Masters, but as Christian Masters, who stand obliged by your Profession to do all that your Station and Condition enable you to do, towards breaking the Power of Satan, and enlarging the Kingdom of Christ.” Thus, he encouraged slave owners to recognize the humanity of those whom they continue to enslave – “to consider Them, not barely as Slaves, and upon the same Level with labouring Beasts, but as Men-Slaves and Women-Slaves, who have the same Frame and Faculties with yourselves, and have Souls capable of being made eternally happy, and Reason and Understanding to receive Instruction in order to it.”

In 1742, the Rev. Alexander Garden, who served as commissary, the Bishop of London’s representative from 1726 to 1754, established a school for black males in

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36 Dalcho, Protestant Episcopal Church in South-Carolina, 109.

37 Dalcho, Protestant Episcopal Church in South-Carolina, 109.

38 Dalcho, Protestant Episcopal Church in South-Carolina, 111.

39 Dalcho, Protestant Episcopal Church in South-Carolina, 111.

40 In the context of the Church of England, a commissary is “appointed by a Bishop, to exercise ecclesiastical Jurisdiction, in a particular part of his Diocese, where, from
Charleston with the support of the SPG. Commissary Garden regularly reported on the growth of the school with hopes that others would be established in the diocese. Within two years, he reported that approximately sixty children were receiving daily instruction there, and, within four years, he would also report that fifteen adults were also being instructed there in the evenings. Though the school continued on after Commissary Garden’s death in 1756, his desire for replication throughout the colony was not realized, and, ultimately, the school closed in 1764.

Although white South Carolinians may have evinced some concern for the eternal salvation of enslaved persons of color, they were, as a general rule, not interested in offering religious insight or instruction that might in any way lead to a challenge to the status quo. The following is a helpful summary of the role of religion in the colony:

The men and women who lived in colonial South Carolina were religious people, but this may have been another area in which English mores influenced the behavior of many. They had a concern for the poor and were generous in their charitable giving, but they did not go to church to get stirred up. The tolerant middle way of the Church of England was well suited to the harmony of the prosperous colony. … Neither the clergy of the established church nor the majority of the lowcountry’s whites to whom they ministered wanted anything to disrupt the harmony of the community.

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41 Edgar, South Carolina, 184; Thomas, Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina, 9.

42 Dalcho, Protestant Episcopal Church in South-Carolina, 157-58.

43 Dalcho, Protestant Episcopal Church in South-Carolina, 178, 199-93.

44 Edgar, South Carolina, 184
Moreover, one thing that clergy of all denominations in South Carolina overwhelmingly agreed upon was that slavery was not in conflict with their Christian faith. Thus, the editors of the *Southern Episcopalian*, a Charleston-based publication, in 1859 described slavery as “a necessary element toward the composition of a high and stable civilization—as a thing good in itself.”

Although the Church of England was disestablished with the passage of a new constitution in 1778 during the Revolutionary War, Anglicans continued to wield much power and wealth in the newly established state of South Carolina. After the Revolutionary War, with the establishment of the United States of America, the remnant of the Church of England became the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, and, within the State of South Carolina, the Episcopal Church became organized under the Diocese of South Carolina with representatives of the Diocese electing Robert Smith as the first Bishop of South Carolina in 1795. Throughout the colonial period and into the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, parish records of various Episcopal churches in South Carolina, which regularly broke down parish numbers and sacramental tallies by black and white, demonstrate that there were significant numbers of individuals of African descent participating, in some manner or another, in South Carolina’s Episcopal Churches.

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45 As quoted in Edgar, *South Carolina*, 295.

46 Thomas, *Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina*, 12.

47 See generally Dalcho, *Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina*, 244-397, 463 (Appendix II, Journals of the Convention of the Protestant Episcopal church in the Diocese of South Carolina, 1785-1818).
II. Pre-Civil War Efforts in the Nineteenth Century.

In the 1820s and 1830s, perhaps inspired by a general spirit of revivalism, many more white South Carolinians began to display an interest in converting black South Carolinians.\textsuperscript{48} The motivations behind this effort were, as with most things religious, mixed. Some white South Carolinians referenced higher aspirations relating to one’s Christian duties—while others focused on the practical benefits of offering otherworldly freedom to those who were enslaved in this world\textsuperscript{49}—and still others emphasized both the spiritual and the practical benefits of the work. As described by Donald Mathews, the mission to the enslaved population during this time period actually consisted of three missions: first, the “mission to society,” which promised that the work would “make the South a safer place in which to live”; second, the “mission to masters,” which sought to convert slave masters to their Christian obligations toward their slaves as persons; and, third, the “mission to slaves,” which sought to convince justifiably skeptical enslaved populations that the religion of their masters and of white society would benefit them and their families.\textsuperscript{50}

In his Diocesan Convention address of 1830, Nathaniel Bowen, who served as Bishop of the Diocese of South Carolina from 1818 to 1839, commented on his concerns.


\textsuperscript{49} For example, it was argued that “plantations under religious instruction are more easily governed than those that are not,” for religious slaves had “a greater disposition to do what is right.” Durden, “Establishment of Calvary,” 64 (quoting \textit{Proceedings of the Meeting in Charleston, S.C., May 13-15, 1845, on the Religious Instructions of the Negroses}, Charleston, 1845, 26).

\textsuperscript{50} Mathews, \textit{Religion in the Old South}, 140-143.
over the need for greater attention to the Christian instruction of enslaved persons and encouraged clergy of the Diocese to coordinate with plantation owners to provide for Episcopal Church instruction and worship among slave communities.\textsuperscript{51} Furthermore, within the Episcopal Church, numerous chapels were built primarily for the use of enslaved persons during this time period.\textsuperscript{52}

After the episcopacy of Bishop Bowen, the Diocese of South Carolina continued its efforts among both free and enslaved blacks under the leadership of Christopher Gadsden, who served as Bishop of the Diocese from 1840 to 1852. In 1841, in his first Diocesan Convention address as Bishop, Gadsden urged increased efforts to convert both free and enslaved blacks in South Carolina.\textsuperscript{53} To the extent that enslaved persons were not coming to church, Bishop Gadsden encouraged his clergy to get the permission of plantation owners so that the clergy could go to their slave cabins or wherever might be most suitable to share the faith with them.\textsuperscript{54} Over the course of his episcopacy, Bishop Gadsden made numerous reports on the continuing efforts to increase the Episcopal Church’s presence among black South Carolinians. In particular, he heralded the fact that, through the Episcopal Church’s efforts, “the master and the servant … have been encouraged to unite in public worship and receiving Christian instruction.”\textsuperscript{55}

\textsuperscript{51} Thomas, \textit{Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina}, 23.

\textsuperscript{52} According to one source, it was during this period that “[l]owcountry Episcopalians built fifty chapels … , primarily for the use of slaves.” Edgar, \textit{South Carolina}, 293.

\textsuperscript{53} Thomas, \textit{Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina}, 34.

\textsuperscript{54} Thomas, \textit{Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina}, 34.

\textsuperscript{55} Thomas, \textit{Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina}, 34 (quoting 1847 diocesan convention address).
Furthermore, although he noted that chapels were being built for “the special benefit of the colored population,” those chapels were intended for the benefit of all in their respective parishes.56

A. Formation of Calvary Church, Charleston

At the 1847 diocesan convention, several resolutions were offered demanding greater efforts in the religious instruction of the enslaved population. As a result of those resolutions, a committee was formed with the express purpose of making “all necessary arrangements for establishing, and keeping up a Congregation of black and colored persons within the City of Charleston, and the suburbs, and for meeting the expenses incident thereto.”57

This effort resulted in a significant new development with the diocese – the establishment of the first South Carolina Episcopal Church founded primarily for persons of color in an urban environment (as opposed to slave chapels). That church was Calvary Episcopal Church in Charleston, founded as a congregation primarily for “black and colored persons.”58 The new church had something of a rocky road to its establishment—given concerns in the white community that such a congregation could foster among the black population “nurseries of self-government, in which the seeds of disloyalty and independence will be gradually sown to the ruin of the slave and the jeopardy of the

56 Thomas, Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina, 35 (quoting 1847 address).


58 Thomas, Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina, 35.
master.”59 Their first minister, the Rev. Paul Trapier, previously rector of St. Michael’s Episcopal Church, worked to allay concerns by speaking and writing regularly to white congregations arguing for the benefits of such work – even noting that, given laws against teaching slaves to read, any instruction of slaves in the church would be done orally.60

Ultimately, Calvary began meeting in 1848 in the basement of St. Philip’s parsonage and construction of a church building began in 1849.61 However, in the summer of 1849, due to an insurrection and escape of some enslaved prisoners in the Charleston workhouse located about block away from where Calvary was being constructed, a white mob briefly threatened to destroy the church – and there was a renewed public debate about whether such a church was appropriate.62 Ultimately, just over a week after the insurrection, there was a public meeting held at Charleston City Hall to decide the fate of the new church, which led to a committee of white citizens being formed to further investigate the matter.

The committee subsequently reported that it was satisfied with the safeguards that the diocese was putting into effect with respect to Calvary. They specifically noted that Calvary would not be governed by blacks but would remain under the control of the minister and a board of trustees appointed by the diocesan convention. Moreover, the


committee heralded at least one aspect of the church layout, which provided for “fifty white members, by seats set apart and raised, and by a distinct entrance, keeping before the eyes of the congregation at all times, a sensible image of the subordination that is due to those to whom by the course of Providence, they are to look up to as their rulers.”

The committee also noted that it had received numerous testimonials from ministers and leaders in other cities where the religious instructions of blacks had a positive influence on their communities.

As a result of the findings of the committee appointed in the wake of the Calvary controversy, the citizens meeting that heard those findings then adopted several resolutions – one of which concluded that “the Religious Instruction of slaves ... is a work highly acceptable, in a moral and religious view, and of great advantage to the commonwealth” and another of which found that the plan pursuant to which Calvary Church was being established “contravenes no law of the State, and furnishes no ground of alarm.”

Thus, construction of the church continued such that, on December 23, 1849, Calvary Episcopal Church was consecrated with Bishop Gadsden presiding.

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63 Durden, “Establishment of Calvary,” 79 (quoting Public Proceedings Relating to Calvary Church and Religious Instruction of Slaves: with an appendix containing the Reports of the Subcommittees, Charleston, 1850.)


66 Durden, “Establishment of Calvary,” 82. Rev. Trapier continued to serve as minister at Calvary until he retired due to illness in 1857 – at which he reported “51 Negro and 18 white communicants of the church.” Durden, “Establishment of Calvary,” 83. Calvary continued to have a white head priest until 1890.
B. Transition to Episcopacy of Thomas F. Davis

Bishop Gadsden’s episcopacy ended with his death in 1852, and, in retrospect, Gadsden’s episcopacy has been noted as a time of growth for the Episcopal Church – especially among the black population of South Carolina. In the diocesan history, Albert Thomas heralds the diocese’s growth under Gadsden, noting that, from 1840 to 1850, the diocese expanded in the following ways: (1) the number of clergy grew by 54 per cent, from 46 to 71; (2) parishes and congregations increased by 43 per cent, from 37 to 53; (3) the number of communicants grew by 67 percent, from 2,936 to 4,916.\(^{67}\) Moreover, Thomas concludes that was “particularly notable” about communicant growth was “the remarkable increase in the number of Negro communicants,” such that while “the white communicants increased from 1,936 in 1840 to 2,659 in 1850, or 35 per cent., the colored communicants increased from 973 in 1840 to 2,247 in 1850, or 130 per cent.”\(^{68}\)

In 1853, Thomas F. Davis succeeded Gadsden as Bishop of the Diocese of South Carolina, and his episcopacy continued through tumultuous years of the Civil War. Soon after he became bishop, at the 1854 diocesan convention, the diocesan canons were amended to make it clear that parish records and reports should record the numbers of “white and colored persons … distinctively,” though this appears to have already been the prevalent practice.\(^{70}\)

\(^{67}\) Thomas, *Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina*, 47.

\(^{68}\) Thomas, *Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina*, 47.

\(^{70}\) *Journal of the Proceedings of the Sixty-Fifth Annual Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in South-Carolina* (Charleston, SC: A.E. Miller, 1854) [hereinafter *1854 Journal*], 32 (recording the passage of a new canon respecting the information to be provided to the Bishop in annual parochial reports).
At the time of his 1857 diocesan address, Bishop Davis would note that, within the diocese, there were then “45 places of worship for the slaves, about 150 laymen and women engaged in giving them catechetical instruction, and 150 congregations of slaves.”\textsuperscript{71} Then, in 1858, the diocesan convention appointed a committee to “consider and report under what circumstances a clergyman may unite slaves in marriage.”\textsuperscript{72} At the 1859 convention, a follow up report was presented on marriage among enslaved persons and the participation of the clergy in consecrating those unions. The report concluded that the “same divine obligation” existed within marriages between slaves as existed between free persons.\textsuperscript{73} Furthermore, a “Christian master” was “bound to preserve inviolate the marriage tie between his slaves, and to prevent, as far as in him lies, the separation of husband and wife.”\textsuperscript{74} Thus, the report admonished slave owners from separating enslaved persons who were bound in holy matrimony. However, the report recommended that, in those cases where through no fault of their own, married slaves have been separated and can no longer live as a married couple, the church should allow those enslaved persons to remarry when it is desired.\textsuperscript{75} The report recommended that the


\textsuperscript{72} Journal of the Proceedings of the Seventieth Annual Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in South-Carolina (Charleston, SC: A.E. Miller, 1859) [hereinafter 1859 Journal], 30.

\textsuperscript{73} 1859 Journal, 31.

\textsuperscript{74} 1859 Journal, 31.

\textsuperscript{75} 1859 Journal, 35. In explaining this exception, the Report noted: “Our municipal law, although it gives no sanction to divorce, or to the marriage of divorced parties, yet furnishes some analogy to the case under consideration, in permitting the marriage of a
convention adopt resolutions respecting these findings, but the convention ultimately decided to publish the report with proposed resolutions but that any decision on the resolutions be deferred to the following year’s convention.\textsuperscript{76} When the resolutions were brought before the 1860 convention, they were once again tabled.\textsuperscript{77}

\section*{III. Developments during the Civil War}

Just prior to the Civil War, the Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina was almost evenly divided between white and black Episcopalians – with, according to the totals provided in the 1861 diocesan journal, only a half a dozen more white communicants than black communicants (2,979 to 2,973).\textsuperscript{78} However, other denominations, such as the Methodists, had a substantial black majority at that time.\textsuperscript{79} Given that a majority of the largest slaveowners in the state were Episcopalian – and that enslaved persons generally

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party whose husband or wife has been absent for seven years. In such case, the law presumes the death of the absent party. In like manner a separation of married slaves, which as completely severs the married parties as though one were dead, should be entitled to like relief, and ought to receive equal indulgence at the hands of the clergy.” 1859 Journal, 34.
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\textsuperscript{76} 1859 Journal, 46.


\textsuperscript{78} Journal of the Proceedings of the Seventy-Second Annual Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in South-Carolina (Charleston, SC: A.E. Miller, 1861) [hereinafter 1861 Journal], 57. However, Edgar notes, that, at this time, “[s]ome individual congregations were overwhelmingly black. At All Saints Episcopal in Georgetown District 254 out of 290 members were black ….” Edgar, South Carolina, 293.

\textsuperscript{79} At the same time that Episcopalians were almost evenly divided, Methodists recorded 46,740 blacks and 37,095 whites in South Carolina. Edgar, South Carolina, 293.
were ministered to by someone of the master’s choosing, it is notable that there were not
more black Episcopalians at the outset of the Civil War.\textsuperscript{80}

In the midst of the Civil War, the Episcopal diocese (now part of the Protestant
Episcopal Church in the Confederate States) continued to hold conventions and offer
reports on activities across the diocese.\textsuperscript{81} Interestingly, in his 1862 diocesan convention
address, Bishop Davis reports having confirmed 206 individuals of whom 123 were white
and 83 “colored.”\textsuperscript{82} He also notes having consecrated, on July 28, 1861, Bethel Chapel in
Grahamville, which was “erected chiefly for the accommodation of the colored people.”\textsuperscript{83}
The parochial reports included in the 1862 diocesan journal also continue to report on
several missions “to Negroes,” where clergy were holding services and even expanding
their work on plantations.\textsuperscript{84} However, while the number of white communicants was

\textsuperscript{80} Edgar, \textit{South Carolina}, 629 n. 20 (“Of the 440 ‘great’ planters in 1860 [in South
Carolina], 235 were Episcopalians.”) In his history of the Episcopal Church, Holmes
asserts that, at the outset of the Civil War in South Carolina, “an estimated fourteen
thousand African Americans were Episcopalians.” Holmes, \textit{Brief History of the
Episcopal Church}, 79. The source for this figure is not apparent.

\textsuperscript{81} In 1865, however, a diocesan convention was called but, when a quorum did not
gather, it adjourned without conducting any business. \textit{Diocesan Records of the Year A.D.
1865} (Charleston, SC: Walker, Evans & Cogswell Co., 1865) [hereinafter \textit{1865 Records}],
9. Nonetheless, Bishop Davis addressed those who had gathered there, and a “Diocesan
Records” was printed. \textit{1865 Records}, 10-16 (Bishop’s address).

\textsuperscript{82} \textit{Journal of the Proceedings of the Seventy-Third Annual Convention of the Protestant
Episcopal Church in South-Carolina} (Charleston, SC: A.E. Miller, 1862) [hereinafter
\textit{1862 Journal}], 22.

\textsuperscript{83} \textit{1862 Journal}, 20.

\textsuperscript{84} \textit{1862 Journal}, 40-41 (St. Luke’s, Clarendon), 44-45 (Christ Church Parish), 46 (though
Rev. Alexander Glennie of All-Saint’s Parish, Waccamaw, noted that “[i]n consequence
of the condition of the country, missionary work among the negroes has been much
interrupted”), 49 (St. Stephen’s and Upper St. John’s), 51 (St. James’, James Island).
down only slightly from 1861 (from 2,979 to 2,818), the number of black communicants was cut almost in half from 1861 to 1862 (2,973 to 1,528). So, while ministry to individuals of African descent continued, the war was already taking its toll on black participation in the diocese.

However, those numbers then dwindled. At his 1863 diocesan convention address, Bishop Davis reported 296 confirmations, of which only 64 were “colored.” In that address, Bishop Davis went on to note that “[t]he number of confirmations among the colored people for the past year is less than one-sixth part of the annual confirmations of each year for the last preceding nine.” Describing the cause for this decline as “only too apparent,” Bishop Davis laments that “[a]long our entire coast, including its islands and adjacent territories with rare exceptions, the voice of our ministers is no longer heard among them nor their footsteps seen.” Despite the hardships, Davis argues that “the Southern people must alone be looked to for the religious instruction of the negro population” and therefore urges “for increased exertion in this sphere of duty.”

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85 1862 Journal, 61.

86 Journal of the Proceedings of the Seventy-Fourth Annual Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in South-Carolina (Charleston, SC: A.E. Miller, 1863) [hereinafter 1863 Journal], 25. Perhaps due to the paucity of information provided to the diocese that year, the 1863 diocesan journal did not include an “Abstract of Parochial Reports” with totals of communicants from across the diocese.

87 1863 Journal, 28.

88 1863 Journal, 28.

89 1863 Journal, 28.
concludes the portion of his address on this subject with the following call to continued action:

We must be governed by our sense of duty, and the magnitude of the trust committed to us. It is a work of self-denying labor, and often of many discouragements and disappointments. ... Let us be convinced of its great importance and necessity. Let us consider it as placed upon us by God. Let us make it a work honored and esteemed. Let us uphold the hands and cheer the hearts of those who give up their lives to constant, faithful labors in this department of Christ’s kingdom; and thus let us await the blessing of God.\textsuperscript{90}

At the 1864 diocesan convention, Bishop Davis was able to announce a surprising turn of events. Over the past year, he had confirmed 696 person – just over half of which, 354, were “colored.”\textsuperscript{91} Unfortunately, though his list of official acts includes a number of services on plantations, Bishop Davis offers no commentary on these increased numbers. However, overall the number of black communicants reported – 1,200 – declined in comparison to last reported total from two years prior 1,528 though the rate of decline was not as rapid as had been reported in 1862.\textsuperscript{92}

When clergy and delegates gathered for the 1865 diocesan convention in Camden in May 1865, as the Civil War was coming to a close,\textsuperscript{93} there was no quorum – so official business was not conducted. However, Bishop Davis still addressed those gathered. His

\textsuperscript{90} 1863 Journal, 29.

\textsuperscript{91} Journal of the Proceedings of the Seventy-Fifth Annual Council of the Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina (Columbia, SC: Evans & Cogswell, 1864) [hereinafter 1864 Journal], 25.

\textsuperscript{92} 1864 Journal, 67.

\textsuperscript{93} Although the end of the Civil War is often dated to April 9, 1865, when General Robert E. Lee surrendered the Army of North Virginia at Appomattox, there continued to be additional surrenders throughout May of 1865 and even beyond that.
report on the numbers confirmed indicated a steep decline from the prior year—160 white persons and 91 “colored” persons. Bishop Davis then offered the following explanation for the brevity of his record for the past year:

[T]he reason is but too obvious. Events of momentous and evil character have passed over the country, the State, and the Church. Calamities and sadness press upon us. We feel that we are suffering under the mighty hand of God.95

With the conclusion of the Civil War, however, the work of assessing the full impact of those calamities upon the diocese and its parishioners would begin—as would the debates and differences about how the diocese would respond to its new context: a world in which slavery had been legally abolished and, as such, the dynamics between black and white South Carolinians, both inside and outside of the church, had been dramatically altered.

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94 1865 Diocesan Records, 14.

95 1865 Diocesan Records, 15.
Chapter Two

The Diocese in the Immediate Aftermath of the Civil War

Whereas, prior to the Civil War and emancipation, there were roughly the same number of black and white Episcopalians in South Carolina, the number of black Episcopalians dropped precipitously after the Civil War. The Diocese of South Carolina counted 2973 black Episcopalians in 1860 – but by 1876, there were only 262 black Episcopalians left in the diocese.96 Newly freed African Americans were not leaving Christianity, however. They were often forming their own churches – such as in the African Methodist Episcopal Church and the Colored Baptist Church traditions.

For the most part, predominantly white Baptist and Methodist worked to retain black membership, either within predominantly white congregations or by forming separate congregations for blacks, while South Carolina’s Episcopal Church ultimately had the least hospitable approach to people of color who were worshipping in their midst. Regardless of their official attitude, however, none of the predominantly white churches were successful in retaining a substantial portion of black Christians in the aftermath of emancipation.97

Over the course the Civil War, the Episcopal Church in South Carolina had experienced destruction of numerous churches and loss of membership across the board. In the aftermath of the war, at the 1866 diocesan convention, Bishop Davis commented at

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96 Edgar, South Carolina, 382 (using numbers from diocesan journals for those years). The decline in the Methodist Church in South Carolina was even more drastic – going from 46,640 black Methodist in 1860 to 421 remaining in 1876. Edgar, South Carolina, 382.

97 Edgar, South Carolina, 382
length on the challenges then facing the church—in finances, in numbers, in property, and in personnel.

When he addressed the 1866 diocesan convention, Bishop Davis reported two year’s worth of confirmations—since there had been no quorum to hear his 1865 address—so, once the totals for 1865 are subtracted, his report shows a continued decline in confirmations of “colored” persons from 91 to 49.\(^9^8\) Moreover, the number of current communicants in the diocese was greatly reduced – with only 514 total communicants, of which 464 were white and only 50 were “colored” – though the extent that of reduction was likely exaggerated due to numerous parishes failing to submit reports.\(^9^9\) Despite the “season of extraordinary trial” through which the churches and the people of the diocese had passed, Bishop Davis attempted to make the case that “the Church in the Diocese had never a stronger hold upon the hearts of her people than at this moment.”\(^1^0^0\) Furthermore, though acknowledging the circumstances by which “the colored population separated from us,” Bishop Davis expressed his high hopes that “in all cases here the colored population shall be re-instated in their former localities, [and] they will return to the communion of the Church.”\(^1^0^1\) In particular, Bishop Davis noted two primarily black

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\(^9^8\) *Journal of the Proceedings of the Seventy-Sixth Annual Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina* (Charleston, SC: Joseph Walker, 1866) [hereinafter *1866 Journal*], 25. In 1866, Bishop Davis reports a total of 477 total communicants for the prior two years – comprised of 337 whites and 140 “colored” persons. *1866 Journal*, 25.

\(^9^9\) *1866 Journal*, 84 (Abstract chart).

\(^1^0^0\) *1866 Journal*, 26.

\(^1^0^1\) *1866 Journal*, 26.
congregations in Charleston – Calvary and the newly-formed St. Mark’s in Charleston – as evidence that all was not lost.\textsuperscript{102}

In 1865, the congregation worshipping at Calvary had organized themselves into a parish, elected vestry and wardens, and made preparations to call a rector. At the 1866 diocesan convention, the delegates were presented with a letter from Calvary reporting on these steps and, given that the church property remained under the control of a council appointed by the diocese, asking that the convention give them permission, as a newly organized parish, to continue to use that property. Thereafter, the convention approved a resolution stating that the newly formed “regular congregation” of Calvary Church is “authorized to use the church building belonging to this Convention, and known as Calvary Church, with the consent and at the will of the Bishop.”\textsuperscript{103}

Thus, Bishop Davis encouraged the members of the diocese to consider how to respond to “our Christian responsibilities to the colored population of the State.”\textsuperscript{104} In doing so, he noted that the Freedmen’s Aid Commission had been set up by the national organization of the Episcopal Church in the United States and was offering to assist in those efforts. However, given the separation between the southern and northern church during the war, he had not yet accepted those entreaties.\textsuperscript{105} This concern was then

\textsuperscript{102} 1866 Journal, 26.

\textsuperscript{103} 1866 Journal, 43-44.

\textsuperscript{104} 1866 Journal, 28.

\textsuperscript{105} 1866 Journal, 28.
referred to a special committee to report back on the diocese’s history of outreach to the black population in the state.\textsuperscript{106}

On the fourth day of the convention, the special committee on “the relations of the Diocese to the Colored People” offered its report.\textsuperscript{107} In its report, the committee began by praising the ongoing efforts that the diocese, its clergy, missionaries, and people had made over the course of time with respect to ministry to the black population of the diocese.\textsuperscript{108} The committee lamented that, though these efforts had led to success prior to the war, “the effect of the war, and of their consequent emancipation” had led to a temporary suspension of those efforts.\textsuperscript{109} Moreover, though “the special obligation heretofore resting upon us as owners, to provide for the spiritual as well as physical wants of our servants” has been “released,” the report noted that they remained “partakers with them of a common redemption, and fellow members of the same household of faith … being all one in Christ Jesus.”\textsuperscript{110} The report further noted a concern that, “unless the influences of the Gospel, truly preached, truly received, and truly followed, can be brought to bear upon them in the future, as in their past, a relapse into flagrant heathenism must ensue.”\textsuperscript{111} Thus, the report called the diocese to “prompt and vigorous

\textsuperscript{106} 1866 Journal, 29-30. The Rev. P.F. Stevens, who will be discussed later in this paper, was one of the three clergy members assigned to that committee. 1866 Journal, 29.

\textsuperscript{107} 1866 Journal, 46-49.

\textsuperscript{108} 1866 Journal, 46.

\textsuperscript{109} 1866 Journal, 46.

\textsuperscript{110} 1866 Journal, 46-47.

\textsuperscript{111} 1866 Journal, 47.
exertion, to keep or to reclaim, to the wholesome teaching of the Church, this numerous and important class of our population."\textsuperscript{112}

The report then recommended several resolutions respecting the creation of a Board of Missions to the Colored People and Freedmen of the Diocese consisting of three clergymen and three laymen with the Bishop as \textit{ex officio} Chairman. This board would then be responsible for: 1) reviving and sustaining "Missions to colored people"; 2) considering "the expediency of organizing churches and congregations, consisting in whole or in part of colored people"; 3) establishing and maintaining "Parochial Schools for the secular and religious instruction of colored people"; 4) recruiting, guiding, and supporting those within the black population who might be suitable candidates for ordination; and 5) receiving and disbursing funds in support of these efforts.\textsuperscript{113} The report and its proposed resolutions were then agreed upon and adopted by the diocesan convention, and an election was then held to constitute the Board of Missions.\textsuperscript{114}

The following year, at the 1867 diocesan convention, the Board of Missions offered its first report, in which it stated that the board had organized and entered into communication with the national church's Freedmen's Commission to see their assistance.\textsuperscript{116} The report discussed the Board's work toward establishing schools,

\textsuperscript{112} 1866 Journal, 48.

\textsuperscript{113} 1866 Journal, 48-49.

\textsuperscript{114} 1866 Journal, 50. Among those elected to the Board of Missions were the following members of the clergy: C.C. Pickney, C.P. Gadsden, and A.T. Porter. 1866 Journal, 50.

\textsuperscript{116} Journal of the Proceedings of the Seventy-Seventh Annual Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina (Columbia, SC: W.W. Deane, 1867) [hereinafter 1867 Journal], 23.
including the purchase of a building in Charleston with outside financial assistance and
continued efforts to secure teachers and supplies necessary to commence. The board
warned that, without concerted efforts, “this class of our population is in danger of
passing away from what we hold to be the most perfect branch of the Catholic and
Apostolic Church in this land” and, therefore, emphasized the need to focus on youth in
their mission efforts. Unfortunately, the board concluded that their lack of funding was
impeding the church’s ability to make any progress in that regard.

Bishop Davis, in his convention address of 1867, noted that, with the support of
the Freedman’s Aid Commission, there were now four schools actively operating in the
diocese and that the Board of Domestic Missions was offering financial support of
missionaries in the diocese. However, with a more comprehensive offering of
parochial reports, the number of “coloured” communicants reported in the diocese – 411
– was still significantly reduced from prior to the war.

The 1867 parochial report offered by the Rev. William Johnson, rector of the
Church on Edisto Island, provides perhaps some insight into an overall trend with respect
to this aspect of the church’s ministry. Johnson writes that, when he returned to his
parish in March 1866:

I had in view to offer my services to the freedmen, hoping I should find
many of my former coloured members here, and that they would manifest

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117 1867 Journal, 23.

118 1867 Journal, 24.

119 1867 Journal, 47.

120 1867 Journal, 96-97. The total number of communicants was 2710 – of which 2299
were white. 1867 Journal, 96-97.
interest in my return, and in the prospect of having the Church open again. I found many of the individuals but though they seemed glad to see me, they were, for the most part, quite indifferent to the Church services. ... After making several trips to the Island, and not finding a single individual at the Church, I discontinued going there.\textsuperscript{121}

Similarly, the 1868 parochial report offered by the Rev. Robert Wilson, Rector of Claremonts, Stateburg, lamented that:

\begin{quote}
The large colored congregations reported last year, disappeared, \textit{en masse}, and without notice, on Whitsunday, 1867. They are now organized as the "African Episcopal" Congregation, have a place of worship erected in sight of the Church, and have never given me, since the day they left, the slightest opportunity to minister among them.\textsuperscript{122}
\end{quote}

At the 1868 diocesan convention, the Board of Missions reported that, in June 1867, the board was able to open a new school in Charleston, which provided religious and academic instruction and now has 800 children on the roll.\textsuperscript{123} However, the board noted its concern that the Freedmen’s Commission in New York was likely to reduce its funding due to its own financial shortfalls.\textsuperscript{124} The board therefore encouraged the diocese to increase its support of these efforts.

In his 1868 diocesan convention address, Bishop Davis reports having confirmed a total of 294 persons – 204 white and 90 “colored.”\textsuperscript{125} Bishop Davis addressed this state of affairs in the following words:

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\textit{1867 Journal}, 53-54.
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\textit{1868 Journal}, 33.
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\textit{1868 Journal}, 33.
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You are aware how large a proportion of the colored population have been lost to our Church; we are not however, without hope that a more established state of things, and a more mature judgment will bring many home again to their old fold. Those who remain are chiefly to be found in the congregations of St. Mark's and Cavalry in this city [Charleston], and the missions now in vigorous operation in Middle St. John's and St. Stephen's Parishes, under the zealous and devoted ministry of Rev. Mr. Stevens and the congregations also remaining in Upper St. John's.\textsuperscript{126}

Bishop Davis went on to lament that only two of the schools connected with the Freedman’s Aid Commission remain in operation – though, thankfully, the one remaining in Charleston was “in full vigor.”\textsuperscript{127}

However, at the time of the 1868 diocesan convention, the diocese continued to be in a state of disarray with twenty-two parishes being listed as being without a rector.\textsuperscript{128} The 1868 Convention also received two reports on the state of the diocese. The first report, titled the “Report of Committee to Collect Information Concerning Destruction of Churches and Property in the Diocese of South Carolina,” had been initiated by a resolution at the 1866 diocesan convention for presentation at the 1867 convention but, at the 1867 convention, the report was withdrawn for further investigation and supplementation.\textsuperscript{129} This report presents a thorough accounting of the damage sustained to churches throughout the diocese in the midst of the Civil War. In particular, the report focuses on the damage caused by Sherman’s march through South Carolina, which the

\textsuperscript{126} 1868 Journal, 50.

\textsuperscript{127} 1868 Journal, 50.

\textsuperscript{128} Thomas, Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina, 68.

\textsuperscript{129} 1868 Journal, 79-92 (Appendix III, the Report); 1866 Journal, 43 (resolution creating the committee approved); 1867 Journal, 32 (report withdrawn for further work).
report describes as "[t]hat fierce tornado which swept over our State from its southwestern to its north-eastern borders, leaving the ashes of cities, villages, and Churches, and homesteads to mark its desolating track."\textsuperscript{130} Thus, in order to follow the narrative of Sherman's march, the report presents its findings starting in the southwestern portion of the diocese – with churches in Robertville, Grahamville, and Bluffton along the Georgia border – and concludes with the church in Cheraw on the North Carolina border.

Included in that report are several references to the impact upon ministry among the black population. One of the more extensive references is found with respect to the "Five Churches at Georgetown and Waccamaw" under the care of the Rev. Alexander Glennie, who did much work with the enslaved populations living on plantations in that area. Though Glennie is lauded for having brought "[h]undreds of the colored race" into the church such that "thousands of colored children recited the catechism, and answered as intelligently as any of their age in Europe or America,"\textsuperscript{131} the report states that they have since "forsaken the way which they had learned, and taken to themselves teachers of their own color" with "indications of a return to African barbarism."\textsuperscript{132}

The report concluded with the following summary of losses: "That ten Churches have been burnt; That three have disappeared; That twenty-two Parishes are suspended;

\textsuperscript{130} 1868 Journal, 79.

\textsuperscript{131} 1868 Journal, 88-89. Of course, the "colored children" referenced here were, in fact, in America.

\textsuperscript{132} 1868 Journal, 89.
That eleven parsonages have been burnt.”\footnote{133} Furthermore, the report continues with an accounting of the significant financial losses to the Diocese. Given the “impoverished condition” of the diocese, the report concluded with a prayer that God would grant the members of the diocese “faith and patience, to try and build again the waste places of Zion.”\footnote{134}

The second report received at the 1868 convention is entitled “Report of Committee on the State of the Church” and, notably, one of the members of that committee was the Rev. William B. W. Howe, who was then serving as Rector of St. Philip’s in Charleston.\footnote{135} This report, which was solicited pursuant to a resolution passed at the 1868 convention and then prepared over the course of the several days of the convention, provides a listing of those parishes which are not currently active or for which the committee had no information,\footnote{136} an overview of the dire financial condition of the individual parishes as well as other diocesan funds,\footnote{137} and then, in its longest section, provides a report on the condition of “colored people” in the diocese.

The portion of the report addressing the condition of the “colored people” describes the reduction of their numbers in the parishes of the diocese as “lamentable in

\footnote{133} 1868 Journal, 91.

\footnote{134} 1868 Journal, 92.

\footnote{135} 1868 Journal, 93-99 (Appendix, IV, the Report); 1868 Journal, 26 (creation of Committee with Howe as a member).

\footnote{136} 1868 Journal, 94. The report notes that 15 parishes are “without any ecclesiastical organization” and that the Committee had no information with respect to 10 more parishes. 1868 Journal, 94.

\footnote{137} 1868 Journal, 95-96.
the extreme” and notes that “[i]n some Parishes where they were numbered by hundreds there are now none.”\textsuperscript{138} The report goes on to note that, whereas there were 2960 “colored communicants” in 1860, there are only 291 – a loss of nine out of ten black communicants over the course of the war.\textsuperscript{139} According to the report, in contrast to the faithful work that was being done among the black population prior to the war, little such work was being done at that time – leaving many “to the blind guidance of ignorant, and sometimes grossly vicious preachers of their own class and color.”\textsuperscript{140} The report offered the following harsh assessment of the current state of ministry in this regard:

That in a majority of the parishes of our diocese, there is a painful lack of instruction, religious, and secular; that while in some anxiety is shown for instruction, in many others there is a total indifference evinced; that while a few do contribute for the support of churches and schools, the major number contribute nothing, and the means of support to their preachers is mysterious. That political and other influences combine to alienate them from their former pastors, and to deter them from attending their services. That, in consequence of these and other causes now in active operation, the condition of the colored people in many sections of the diocese, physical, mental and moral, is every day becoming worse.\textsuperscript{141}

Thus, the report noted that numerous chapels that had been built for the previously enslaved were now abandoned. However, the report did note “a few rays of light and hope” in the diocese. In particular, the report held up the work of the Rev. P.F. Stevens as someone who “with a self-denial, devotion and zeal … has been laboring among this

\textsuperscript{138} 1868 Journal, 96-97.

\textsuperscript{139} 1868 Journal, 97. The origin of this number is not immediately apparent. The abstract of parochial reports included in the 1868 diocesan journal lists the total number of black communicants as 395 (out of 3074 total communicants). 1868 Journal, 126-127.

\textsuperscript{140} 1868 Journal, 97.

\textsuperscript{141} 1868 Journal, 97.
class with marked success, sometimes keeping his appointments on foot” as “he has succeeded in securing their confidence.”

The report then concluded with a plea for all in the diocese to recognize that the church has “reached a momentous crisis in its history” and that both clergy and laity must now give “out of our poverty” in the midst of the “tempest of civil and religious discord ... howling around us.”

At the 1869 diocesan convention, the Board of Missions offered a limited report that, over the past year, they were limited to the work being done with the “Franklin Street School” in Charleston. However, given decreasing funds received from the Domestic Board in New York, the Board of Missions has had to “curtail our operations” resulting in the resignation of the superintendent and four teachers. Moreover, the board announced that, in all likelihood, it would soon lose the building on Franklin Street out of which the school was operating. Thus, the board stated its regret at “the necessity of giving up the building, or suspending the School, after so satisfactory an experiment.”

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142 *1868 Journal*, 98.

143 *1868 Journal*, 99.

144 *Journal of the Seventy-Ninth Annual Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of South Carolina* (Charleston, SC: Wm. G. Mazyck, 1869) [hereinafter *1869 Journal*], 38-39. It would come to be known as the Franklin Street School for Colored Children.

145 *1869 Journal*, 70. Based on this report, it is difficult to understand how Kershaw, who is credited with authoring this portion of the diocesan history, could state that, at the 1869 diocesan convention, the board “reported the school in Charleston as in full vigor.” Thomas, *Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina*, 70.
Nonetheless, the board reports that it has received “encouraging reports from many of our clergy of their labors among the colored race.”\textsuperscript{146} The report notes three new churches in St. John’s and St. Stephen’s parishes “built partly by the freedmen themselves.”\textsuperscript{147} The report expresses a hope that “the prejudices of the last few years are rapidly melting away beneath the kind and Christian sympathy of their former owners and that abundant opportunities are now presented to the Church of winning back their allegiance to Christ, and to the purifying influence of His gospel.”\textsuperscript{148} It is worth noting that the report is apparently unironically referring to the “prejudices” of the formerly enslaved population – not their white former masters.

After the board’s report was received, the diocese approved a resolution introduced by the Rev. A. Toomer Porter that the Board of Missions be merged, effective January 1, 1870, into the general Missionary Board of the diocese.\textsuperscript{149}

In his address to the 1869 convention, Bishop Davis struck a hopeful tone that the church had “reached the lowest point of depression and, now, “a better day is dawning upon us.”\textsuperscript{150} Furthermore, though he did not offer any specifics, he stated that “there seems also an increasing spirit of return among our colored people to their homes and churches.”\textsuperscript{151} Though the number of confirmations of “colored” persons reported by the

\textsuperscript{146} 1869 Journal, 39.

\textsuperscript{147} 1869 Journal, 39.

\textsuperscript{148} 1869 Journal, 39.

\textsuperscript{149} 1869 Journal, 39.

\textsuperscript{150} 1869 Journal, 52.

\textsuperscript{151} 1869 Journal, 52-53.
bishop – 82 – was down from the prior year, the abstract of parochial reports does provide some evidence of in this regard – showing 545 “colored” communicants out of 3429 total communicants in the diocese.\(^{152}\)

At the 1870 diocesan convention, Porter noted that, pursuant to the resolution that he introduced at the last convention, the Board of Missions had ceased to exist in January.\(^{153}\) Porter then offered a report on the Franklin Street school stating that the building had been purchased and was now being held in trust “for educational purposes, without distinction to race or previous condition” with three hundred children now receiving instruction there.\(^{154}\)

At the 1870 diocesan convention, the Committee on the State of the Church noted that eighteen clergymen had failed to make any reports on the state of their ministries.\(^{155}\) (Thus, the tabulation of parish statistics was noted to be “partial and imperfect.”\(^{156}\)

\(^{152}\) 1869 Journal, 99.

\(^{153}\) Journal of the Eightieth Annual Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of South Carolina (Charleston, SC: Walker, Evans & Cogswell, 1870) [hereinafter 1870 Journal], 33.

\(^{154}\) 1870 Journal, 33. However, at the 1874 convention, the Rev. J.V. Welch reports that he continues to visit “the Franklin street School, for colored children ... where I catechize and exhort the children on every visitation.” Journal of the Eighty-Fourth Annual Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of South Carolina (Charleston, SC: Walker, Evans & Cogswell, 1874) [hereinafter 1874 Journal], 112.

\(^{155}\) 1870 Journal, 44. Included among that list was Howe.

\(^{156}\) 1870 Journal, 44. Total communicants in this “partial and imperfect” tabulation were provided as follows: 3,016 total, 2,668 whites, and 348 colored. 1870 Journal, 45. A slightly different total is provided in the abstract of parochial reports: 2,991 total; 2,633 whites and 358 “colored.” 1870 Journal, unnumbered “Summary of Statistics abstracted from Reports.”
Furthermore, in his address to the 1870 convention, Bishop Davis noted the decline in confirmations – a total of 194, of which 21 were “colored”\textsuperscript{157} – across the diocese and concluded with the following observation and call:

Before I close this address brethren, permit a few remarks from one who has closely observed the condition of the Church in all parts of the Diocese. That there is a crisis upon us cannot be doubted: we are compelled to feel it at every point. The old Church of South Carolina is gone—in those particulars, I mean, which gave especial character [sic] to its visibility; but with this there was embodied also, be it remembered, its spiritual and eternal influences. In its old forms and realizations it is more than probable that it can never be reestablished. Its history is fulfilled, its record is on high, and what is written, is written;—the reflection carries sadness to many a loving heart, and many a tear has been shed over the desolations of Zion. We are entering, then, upon a new era. ... Brethren, you who are in the midst of health and life, you who are young and vigorous—clergymen and laymen this work is yours. A trying dispensation is calling you to heroic efforts for the Church you love. Rouse yourself to battle bravely for a pure faith and a true Church.\textsuperscript{158}

Bishop Davis then concluded his address by introducing the next chapter in the story of the leadership of the diocese – calling for the election of an assistant bishop at the following convention. Thus, when the diocese gathered for their next annual convention at St. Philip’s in May 1871, the clergy and lay delegates were called upon to elect an assistant bishop who would then succeed Bishop Davis as the next diocesan bishop upon his retirement.

On May 12, 1871, the second day of the Eighty-First Annual Convention of the diocese, Bishop Davis offered his convention address prior to the election of a new assistant bishop. In doing so, he noted that confirmations had more than doubled over the

\textsuperscript{157} 1870 Journal, 68, 70.

\textsuperscript{158} 1870 Journal, 69.
past year—with 439 total confirmations, of which 168 were “colored” persons.159

Nonetheless, Bishop Davis cautioned that this increase “does not exactly indicate a corresponding religious progress” since many of the confirmations were among “the colored population, whom I had not been able to visit since the war.”160 Davis then concluded his address by renewing his call for the election of an assistant bishop.

In accordance with the Bishop’s request, after hearing several necessary reports, the clergy and lay delegates then began voting to elect an assistant bishop for the diocese. Pursuant to the rules for electing a bishop, the election would only conclude when one candidate had received a majority of votes cast in both the clergy and the lay orders. Only one ballot was held on the second day of the convention, and the Rev. Christopher P. Gadsden, who was the rector of St. Luke’s in Charleston and the nephew of Christopher E. Gadsden, who had served as the fourth bishop of South Carolina, gained a bare majority of the clergy order. However, no one gained a majority of the lay order—though the Rev. William B. W. Howe led Gadsden on that first ballot.161 After that first inconclusive ballot, the convention then adjourned for the evening with balloting

159 Journal of the Eighty-First Annual Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of South Carolina (Charleston, SC: Walker, Evans & Cogswell, 1871) [hereinafter 1871 Journal], 54.

160 1871 Journal, 55. The parochial report totals included later in the diocesan journal provide support to Bishop Davis’ reservations – the total for white communicants had increased significantly from 2668 to 3874 but the number of “colored” communicants had dropped from 348 to 321. 1871 Journal, 59. However, another summary provided after the parochial reports states that the total number of communicants was 4,143 – with 3,359 white and 784 colored. 1871 Journal, 125. The basis for this discrepancy is not clear.

161 1871 Journal, 28. The vote totals that follow are found on pages 29-39 of the 1871 Journal.
continuing throughout the third day—with no one able to obtain a majority of both orders until the twenty-fourth ballot late that day. The balloting followed a somewhat peculiar course as indicated by the chart that follows.\(^{162}\)

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As indicated by the chart, the balloting started with Gadsden and Howe as the top two vote getters in both orders—though with Gadsden as the choice of the clergy and Howe as the choice of the laity. After the eleventh vote, the convention adjourned until

\(^{162}\) The vote totals in the chart are based on the tallies provided on pages 28-39 of the 1871 diocesan journal. In the chart, a darkened block indicates that the total represents a majority of the respective order on that ballot.
6:00 PM, and, when the twelfth vote was taken after that adjournment, there was a clear shift among both the clergy and the laity from Howe to the Rev. William Porcher DuBose as the alternative to Gadsden. DuBose then consolidated the lay vote and gradually increased his votes among the clergy, as Howe faded into the single digits on the ballots thirteen through twenty-three. Gadsden remained the first choice of the clergy until the seventeenth ballot, when there was a shift from Gadsden to the Rev. John H. Elliott as the first choice of the clergy. On twentieth through the twenty-third ballots, DuBose had gained the lead in the clergy vote and continued to maintain a majority amongst the laity. However, for some reason that is not indicated in the diocesan journal, there was a massive shift to Howe, who had been in single digits in both orders since the twelfth ballot, on the final, twenty-fourth ballot – with Howe gaining an overwhelming majority in both orders. On motion, Howe’s election was then declared unanimous.163

According to the diocesan journal, Howe then acknowledged that “no course was left him, under the circumstances, but to take up the burden thus thrust upon him, and avowed his earnest purpose, relying on help from on high, to uphold the hands of the Bishop, and in the discharge of the solemn duties of the holy office, to know nothing ‘save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.’”164

Though Gadsden had looked like the strongest candidate at the outset of voting, he was apparently of ill health. One year prior, at the 1870 diocesan convention, the Rev.

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163 1871 Journal, 39. In the history of the Diocese, Kershaw mistakenly states that Howe was elected on the “thirty-fourth ballot.” Thomas, Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina, 81.

164 1871 Journal, 39.
A. Toomer Porter had introduced a resolution, which was unanimously adopted, noting Gadsden’s “extreme illness” and assuring him of “our sympathy and prayers that his life may be spared for further usefulness in the Church of God.” 165 Though he had briefly recovered from that illness by the time of the 1871 convention, on July 24, 1871, just over two months after he came close to being elected bishop, Gadsden died at the young age of forty-five.

In a memorial tribute to Gadsden, the Rev. James H. Elliott, who had also contended for bishop just months earlier, emphasized Gadsden’s ministry to the black population in the Low Country. Elliott thus stated, “The galleries of [Gadsden’s] church were frequented by the colored people after they had deserted those of almost every other Episcopal Church in the city; and his communion seasons found him ministering as usual to numbers who could not be induced to leave their pastor and tried friend by any appeal to prejudices of color and caste.” 166 Moreover, the tribute stated that, during his prolonged illness in 1870, numerous freedmen gathered in prayer for Gadsden, and, at his funeral, the black population was “largely represented.” 167

Notably, the other leading candidate, DuBose, was, within months, called to be chaplain and professor of moral science at the University of the South at Sewanee and

165 1870 Journal, 57.


would later describe the bishop’s election as “one of the most fortunate escapes of my life.”

On July 30, 1871, Howe, as the Assistant Bishop-elect, preached a sermon at St. Luke’s in tribute to its former rector, Gadsden. In doing so, Bishop Howe notes that, just months earlier, Gadsden had been “repeatedly, and for fourteen successive ballots, elected by his brethren of the clergy to the Episcopate.” Later in that sermon, Howe provides an answer as to the mystery of what happened between the twenty-third and twenty-fourth ballots that shifted the vote so dramatically. Howe states that, “after a most unusual number of ballotings, [Gadsden] withdrew his own name, and nominated, and begged his friends to cast their vote for [Howe], who had received, but not at all to the same extent which he had, a portion of the suffrages of the Convention.”

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168 William Porcher DuBose, Reminiscences, 151. Unpublished manuscript (Collection #1006-z), Southern Historical Collection, The Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. DuBose further asserted that “[i]t would have been the great misfortune of my life if I had been elected.”


170 Howe, “A Sermon, Preached July 30, 1871,” 44. DuBose, in describing his “fortunate escape” from being elected bishop, provides a slightly different, though not contradictory account of what happened, stating that Gadsden and Howe represented “different, but so very different, schools of churchmanship” and that, once it appeared that DuBose could be elected instead, “the representatives of [Gadsden and Howe] ... came to an agreement and Bishop Howe was elected.” DuBose, Reminiscences, 151.
Chapter Three

A New Bishop

I. Background on Bishop Howe

For those who are aware of the suspicion with which South Carolinians have often treated those of Northern origin in the years since the Civil War, it may come as a surprise that the first post-bellum Episcopal bishop elected in South Carolina, William Bell White Howe, hailed from New England. Howe, whose father was also an Episcopal priest, was born in Claremont, New Hampshire, on March 31, 1823.¹⁷¹ Both his parents, the Rev. James Blake Howe and Mary White Howe, were from Massachusetts families, but had come to live in New Hampshire, where James Howe was, for many years, the rector of Union Episcopal Church in Claremont, having begun his work there on a supply basis in 1818.¹⁷² William Bell White Howe grew up in New Hampshire and then went to the University of Vermont in Burlington, graduating in 1843.¹⁷³

According to one biographical account, Howe “was a delicate lad,” such that, upon his graduation from college, “his friends were anxious lest he should go into a consumptive decline.”¹⁷⁴ Or, as another biographical account stated it, Howe, in his


¹⁷² Waterman, “Howe,” 344.


youth, “was not physically strong ... and in the judgment of his father the climate of his native State was too severe in winter for his delicate lungs.”175 Therefore, when a year after graduation from college, William Howe was contemplating following his father into ordained ministry, James Howe took the opportunity to introduce his son to Bishop Christopher Gadsden at the 1844 General Convention.176 Upon that introduction, James Howe suggested to Bishop Gadsden that his son might do well to continue his studies toward ordination “in the milder climate of the South.”177 Soon thereafter, Gadsden extended a “cordial and urgent invitation to South Carolina” to the younger Howe, who at twenty-one years of age moved to the Palmetto State, where he remained for the rest of his life.178


176 Waterman, “Howe,” 356. At least one account suggests that James Howe and Gadsden were friends prior to the meeting at General Convention. Capers, Sermon Preached in Commemoration of the Episcopate of Rt. Rev. William Bell White Howe, 5. The 1844 General Convention took place in Philadelphia from October 2 to 22. However, other records indicate that James Howe died of apoplexy in Albany, New York, on September 17, 1844, while traveling to Indiana to visit some of his children living there. Calvin R. Batchelder, A History of the Eastern Diocese, vol. I (Claremont, NH: Claremont Manufacturing Co., 1876), 239; Samuel Blake, Genealogical History of William Blake, of Dorchester, and His Descendants (Boston, MA: David Clapp, 1857), 51. Thus, there is reason to doubt the story about James Howe introducing his son to Gadsden at the 1844 General Convention.

177 “Biographical Sketch,” Sermons Preached, xi. See also Capers, Sermon Preached in Commemoration of the Episcopate of Rt. Rev. William Bell White Howe, 6.

178 “Biographical Sketch,” Sermons Preached, xi. See also Capers, Sermon Preached in Commemoration of the Episcopate of Rt. Rev. William Bell White Howe, 5. One other biographical account states that Howe came to South Carolina “at the age of nineteen” whereupon he taught “in a private family, prepared pupils for college, while pursuing his
Upon his arrival in South Carolina, Howe was assigned to the “care and instruction” of the Rev. Cranmore Wallace, who was then the rector of St. John’s Berkeley. Thus, in his 1844 parochial report for St. John’s, Berkeley, Wallace references “a Lay Reader, who is pursuing classical studies with a view to the ministry” under his direction and who has regularly “catechized the negroes” on a local plantation and “acted as Catechist at Strawberry Chapel.”

In 1845, Howe was accepted as a candidate for holy orders, whose “work was chiefly among the Negro slaves on the plantations.”

Howe was ordained to the diaconate on April 9, 1847, and became Wallace’s Assistant at St. John’s. In the midst of Howe’s two-year diaconate Wallace left St. John’s, Berkeley, in November 1848 to serve at St. Stephen’s Chapel, Charleston. Thereupon,

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179 Journal of the Proceedings of the Fifty-Fifth Annual Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in South-Carolina (Charleston, SC: Miller & Browne, 1844) [hereinafter 1844 Journal], 58.

180 Capers, Sermon Preached in Commemoration of the Episcopate of Rt. Rev. William Bell White Howe, 6. In the same year that Howe was accepted as a candidate for Holy Orders, Christopher P. Gadsden, nephew to Bishop Gadsden who would later be one of the other leading candidates for bishop in 1871, was also accepted as candidate for Holy orders. Journal of the Proceedings of the Fifty-Sixth Annual Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in South-Carolina (Charleston, SC: Miller & Browne, 1845) [hereinafter 1845 Journal], 22.

181 Capers, Sermon Preached in Commemoration of the Episcopate of Rt. Rev. William Bell White Howe, 6. See also Journal of the Proceedings of the Fifty-Ninth Annual Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in South-Carolina (Charleston, SC: Miller & Browne, 1848) [hereinafter 1848 Journal], 15, 38-39 (noting that Deacon Howe was now serving as Assistant to the Rector at St. John’s Berkeley).

182 Journal of the Proceedings of the Sixtieth Annual Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in South-Carolina (Charleston, SC: Miller & Browne, 1849) [hereinafter 1849 Journal], 18, 52.
Howe assumed the ordained leadership of St. John’s, Berkeley, and, upon his June 3, 1849 ordination to the priesthood, Howe became Rector of St. John’s—a position that he would hold for over a decade.¹⁸³

Howe’s years at St. John’s, Berkeley, which ended in 1860 with his departure to become the Assistant Minister of St. Philip’s, Charleston, would later be described in the following words as his “golden years”:

It was then that [Howe] gave himself to reading, to study, and to the preparation of sermons. It was then that he studied Holy Scriptures and ancient authors with all the force of his penetrating intellect and mastered the deep and yet simple theology of the Catholic faith, which made him one of the clearest, most impressive, and most convincing of preachers.¹⁸⁴

Moreover, in 1850, Howe married Catharine Gadsden Edwards, a niece of Bishop Gadsden, who presided over the wedding at St. Philip’s in Charleston.¹⁸⁵ In spite of frailty as young man, Howe became “a man of ‘more than average height,’” growing

¹⁸³ Capers, Sermon Preached in Commemoration of the Episcopate of Rt. Rev. William Bell White Howe, 6 (providing date of Howe’s ordination to the priesthood). See also Journal of the Proceedings of the Sixty-First Annual Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in South-Carolina (Charleston, SC: Miller & Browne, 1850) [hereinafter 1850 Journal], 4 (listing Howe as Rector of St. John’s).


¹⁸⁵ Waterman, “Howe,” 357; Blake, Genealogical History of William Blake, 80.
latterly to be ‘well-knit in frame and stout in person,’ and ‘dignified and imposing in presence, particularly in his robes of office.’”\^{186}

During Howe’s time as Rector of St. John’s, Berkeley, the parish was overwhelmingly composed of individuals of African descent – presumably almost all of whom were enslaved. For example, in his first parochial report as rector, Howe’s lists the communicants of the parish as follows: “40 white; 220 colored, total, 260.”\^{187} In his 1860 parochial report, his final as rector of St. John’s, Howe noted that, within the parish, there were then 49 white and 260 colored communicants for a total of 309.\^{188} His commitment to ministry among enslaved persons during this time was noted by Bishop Davis in the midst of his 1856 diocesan convention address. After spending several days in March with Howe visiting churches, chapels, and plantations within St. John’s parish and confirming over eighty persons of color, Bishop Davis noted he had “observed a manifest improvement in the religious condition of the blacks” demonstrating “the necessity and benefit of constant and laborious attention to their spiritual interests.”\^{189}

When in June 1860 he became Assistant Minister of St. Philip’s Episcopal in Charleston, where the Rev. William Dehon was rector,\^{190} Howe went from a rural parish

\^{186} Waterman, “Howe,” 363 (quoting from the memorial sermon delivered by the Rev. John Johnson, who was Rector of St. Philip’s at the time of Howe’s death).

\^{187} 1850 Journal, 42.

\^{188} 1860 Journal, 44-45.

\^{189} 1856 Journal, 29-30. In perhaps another acknowledgment of Bishop Howe’s preaching prowess, Bishop Davis’ diocesan address also records that Howe traveled with him around the diocese to serve as guest preacher at several parishes. 1856 Journal, 32, 34.

\^{190} 1860 Journal, 3, 43, 45.
of primarily enslaved persons to the predominantly white “mother church” of the diocese located in the wealthy, urban center of the diocese.\textsuperscript{191} Moreover, by the time he moved to Charleston, Howe had, in addition to his marriage into a prominent South Carolina family, taken on another quality of the Southern elite. According to the 1860 Federal Census, Howe was, by 1860, a slave owner. The 1860 Federal Census Schedule of Slave Inhabitants lists “William B.W. Howe” of Charleston as the owner of nine enslaved persons, including two adult females aged forty-five and twenty-eight, two teenage males, a teenage female, and four children ranging in age from two to ten years old.\textsuperscript{192} Thus, Howe had, at least in that critical respect, become quite familiar with the powers and privileges afforded to his fellow white parishioners at St. Philip’s.

Howe’s move to St. Philip’s was, however, in the midst of a time of great uncertainty – as the nation moved closer and closer to war. Even after the outbreak of hostilities, Howe continued to travel with Bishop Davis and preach in other parts of the diocese.\textsuperscript{193} In December 1862, Dehon died, and Howe became the rector of St. Philip’s,

\textsuperscript{191} 1860 Journal, 43 (parochial report for St. Philip’s lists present communicants as “285 white, 80 colored; total 365”).

\textsuperscript{192} 1860 U. S. Census, Charleston County, South Carolina, Schedule 2 – Slave Inhabitants, 3d Ward, Charleston City, p. 16, William B. W. Howe; digital image, Ancestry.com (http://www.ancestry.com : accessed April 1, 2020); citing NARA microfilm publication M653.

\textsuperscript{193} 1861 Journal, 14-15 (traveled and preached with Bishop Davis in the Upstate, including Abbeville, Anderson, Newberry, Laurens, Unionville, and Glenn Springs); 1863 Journal, 26 (traveled with Bishop Davis to preach at services at Christ Church Greenville).
having begun to take on more leadership roles within the diocese—serving as Secretary of Convention and as a member of the Standing Committee for the Diocese.\textsuperscript{194}

During the bombardment of Charleston in the Civil War, St. Philip’s suffered tremendous damage as it was “hit repeatedly and its interior wrecked.”\textsuperscript{195} In November 1863, the bombardment of Charleston forced St. Philip’s to close, as described in the following account:

Though the sound of battle grew nearer, from Port Royal to James Island in 1861 and 1862, and the smoke of battle hung around [the Charleston] harbor in the spring and summer of 1863, the regular services of [St. Philip’s] were maintained in [the church] building. And it was not until the autumn of 1863 that, while [Howe] was preaching one Sunday in this pulpit, a shell fired upon the city from the enemy’s batteries on Morris Island, was heard to fall and explode in the western churchyard. The congregation sat until the sermon was concluded in the regular time and manner. But from that date the religious services at St. Philip’s were discontinued, the doors were shut, the damages of the bombardment proceeded, and the building came in for its share of them.\textsuperscript{196}

Thereafter, with the onset of Advent 1863, the congregations of St. Philip’s, St. Michael’s, and Grace began joining in worship at St. Paul’s, “which was beyond the reach of the bombardment.”\textsuperscript{197}

\textsuperscript{194} 1862 Journal, 17 (Howe elected Secretary of Diocesan Convention); 1863 Journal, 18 (Howe re-elected Secretary), 30 (Howe listed as a member of the Standing Committee); 1864 Journal, 17-18 (Howe continuing on Standing Committee).

\textsuperscript{195} Walter J. Fraser, Charleston! Charleston! The History of a Southern City (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1989), 266.

\textsuperscript{196} Capers, Sermon Preached in Commemoration of the Episcopate of Rt. Rev. William Bell White Howe, 9 (quoting from the memorial sermon delivered by the Rev. John Johnson, who was rector of St. Philip’s at the time of Howe’s death).

\textsuperscript{197} 1864 Journal, 48 (noting that public worship at St. Philip’s ended in November 1864); Capers, Sermon Preached in Commemoration of the Episcopate of Rt. Rev. William Bell White Howe, 9; “Biographical Sketch,” Sermons Preached, xi (source of quote about St. Paul’s).
According to Howe’s successor as bishop, Ellison Capers, “When [the Civil War] burst with its fury upon Charleston, it found [Howe] in the faithful discharge of his holy office [at St. Philip’s], in fullest sympathy with the cares and anxieties of his flock, a warm friend of their cause, and as true to South Carolina as if St. John’s, Berkeley, had been the place of his birth, and the home of this youth.”

Another account described Howe’s allegiance as follows:

When the war came on [Howe] had been in the South nearly twenty years, and had imbibed freely the sentiments of this section as to the questions then agitating the country, so much so that instead of going North with hostilities began, he cast in his lot with our people and remained here to experience in full force the privations and trials of that terrible time.

These accounts of Howe’s allegiances seem to be offered, at least in part, to challenge any assertions that his later controversial efforts as bishop on matters of race were somehow revealing of Howe’s northern roots.

Moreover, on February 19, 1865, after Union troops had captured Charleston on the previous day, Howe, while leading in the shared services at St. Paul’s, omitted the prayer for the President and the Congress so that


199 “Bishop Howe,” The Record.

200 Howe’s allegiance with the South can also be seen in several sermons that he preached in the midst of the Civil War. For examples, see William B. W. Howe, “Sermon Preached at St. Philip’s on the Sunday after the Battle of Manassas, July 28, 1861,” in Sermons Preached, 321-331; William B. W. Howe, “Cast Down, But Not Forsaken! A Sermon Delivered in St. Philip’s Church, Charleston, December 15th, 1861, being the Sunday after the Great Fire,” (Charleston, SC: Evans & Cogswell, 1861); William B. W. Howe, “God’s Mercy and Our Own Right Arm. A Sermon Delivered in St. Philip’s Church, Charleston, February 28, 1862”; William B. W. Howe, “Sermon Delivered at St. Philip’s Charleston, November 19, 1863” (sermon that Howe delivered during the bombardment of Charleston when a shell landed near the church).
he would not have to make a choice between the governments of the Union and the Confederacy – and, according to Howe, this was done without incident. In preparation for the following Sunday’s services, Howe consulted with the federal military authorities who agreed with his plan “to omit all prayers having a political bearing.” However, after the Sunday evening services on February 26, Howe was informed by the federal commanding officer that if Howe wish to preside at further services he must include prayers for President Lincoln. Thereafter, the military authorities gave Howe permission to hold one final Sunday service, which was held on March 5, 1864, the First Sunday of Lent. After presiding at that final service and then closing St. Paul’s, Howe departed Charleston for the remainder of the Civil War, taking refuge in Darlington County with his family.

At convention after the war, Howe reported that he was initially assisting at another parish in the diocese but he expected that, once repairs were completed, he would

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201 Capers, *Sermon Preached in Commemoration of the Episcopate of Rt. Rev. William Bell White Howe*, 10 (quoting from an account previously provided by Howe).


resume his duties at St. Philip’s.\textsuperscript{208} Upon St. Philip’s reopening on March 4, 1866\textsuperscript{209} Howe preached that, though he remained “satisfied” as to the “justness” of the cause for which the Southern states fought in the Civil War,\textsuperscript{210} the people of the South now had a duty of “submission to the ‘powers that be, as ordained of God.’”\textsuperscript{211} Furthermore, speaking of the new political and legal realities respecting the relations between those who were formerly enslaved and their former owners, Howe encouraged his parishioners to recognize the change in status of “those who were once our bondmen” and commit themselves to “do all we can to make them equal to their new responsibilities.”\textsuperscript{212}

God forbid that we should throw so much as a straw in their way to prevent them from reaching any position, however high, to which He may have assigned them, and to fulfil which they shall show themselves competent. We believed, and we still believe that slavery has been a great blessing to them; that it was the primary school of their civilization, in which they had made good progress, comparing them with their fathers and the condition in which they would have been without it; and we had thought that their tutelage should have been longer ere they matriculated as citizens; for we did not feel that every blessing under the sun was denied them while this was denied .... But God’s ways are not our ways, nor His thoughts our thoughts. He has permitted that to come to pass which is come to pass, and now we wait to see good come out of evil, and glad, if we may, to contribute to that good, looking not for approval unto man, but to Him who judgeth righteous judgment.\textsuperscript{213}

\textsuperscript{208} \textit{1866 Journal}, 57.

\textsuperscript{209} \textit{1867 Journal}, 49.


\textsuperscript{211} Howe, “Sermon Preached on the Reopening of St. Philip’s Church,” 339.

\textsuperscript{212} Howe, “Sermon Preached on the Reopening of St. Philip’s Church,” 341.

\textsuperscript{213} Howe, “Sermon Preached on the Reopening of St. Philip’s Church,” 342.
Howe concluded his sermon with a plea to his parishioners not to look “away from the wrecks of your temporal fortunes, away from the ruins of your State, away from the trying future, to that farther future which shall bring in everlasting righteousness and set up a kingdom which cannot be shaken.” In that hope, Howe encouraged his parishioners to find “the true balm for all our wounds.”

II. Elevation to the Episcopacy

In his additions to the history of the Diocese, retired Bishop Albert Thomas, writing in the mid-twentieth century, introduce his chapter on Bishop Howe by describing this time in the life of the Diocese as “the tempestuous Episcopate of William Bell White Howe.” According to Thomas, Howe was called the “Puritan-Cavalier” – both due to the geographical course of his life from New England to South Carolina but also “because both the character of the Puritan and that of the Cavalier was illustrated in his strong personality.” Thomas does not, however, note that Bishop Howe’s

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215 Howe, “Sermon Preached on the Reopening of St. Philip’s Church,” 343. In those years immediately after the war and prior to his election to the episcopacy, Howe also continued to increase his involvement in various leadership roles in the diocese, serving on the Standing Committee, as Alternate to General Convention, Trustee to the University of the South, and the Diocesan Board of Missions. 1866 Journal, 31 (Standing Committee), 52 (Alternate to General Convention); 1867 Journal, 18 (Standing Committee), 23 (Trustee to Proposed University of the South); 1868 Journal, 3-4, 27 (Standing Committee, Alternate to General Convention); 1869 Journal, 5-6, 25 (Standing Committee, Alternate to General Convention); 1870 Journal, 5, 24 (Standing Committee, Alternate to General Convention); 1871 Journal, 5 (Standing Committee, Board of Missions).

216 Thomas, Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina, 83.

217 Thomas, Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina, 83.
episcopate was (and still is) the longest of any other Bishop of the Diocese of South Carolina (or Upper South Carolina).\textsuperscript{218} Perhaps one can see in his long and “tempestuous” election – which, as previously described, did not occur until the second day of voting on the twenty-fourth ballot – a foreshadowing of that 23-year episcopacy.

On October 8, 1871, almost five months after his election, Howe was consecrated Assistant Bishop of South Carolina at St. Paul’s Church in Baltimore, Maryland, and charged “to assist the Bishop of South Carolina and to succeed him in case of survivorship.”\textsuperscript{219} His consecration took place in the midst of the General Convention of that year, which was held in Baltimore from October 4 to October 26.\textsuperscript{220} Less than two months later, on December 2, Bishop Davis died, thereby making Bishop Howe the Sixth Bishop of the Diocese of South Carolina – a position that he would hold until his

\textsuperscript{218} Bishop Howe’s episcopacy started in 1871 and ended with his death in 1894, thereby spanning 23 years. The second longest episcopacy was that of Bishop Nathaniel Bowen, whose episcopacy spanned 21 years – from 1818-1839. In 1922, the Diocese of South Carolina was divided into the Diocese of South Carolina, which covered the Low Country parishes, and the Diocese of Upper South Carolina.

\textsuperscript{219} “Letter of Consecration,” in *Journal of the Eighty-Second Annual Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of South Carolina* (Charleston, SC: Walker, Evans & Cogswell, 1872) [hereinafter *1872 Journal*, 176-77. The Canons of the Episcopal Church at that time provided that an Assistant Bishop could be elected with the Diocesan Bishop “is unable, by reason of old age, or other permanent cause of infirmity, to discharge his Episcopal duties.” The Canons provided that the Assistant Bishop would then, “in all cases, succeed the [Diocesan] Bishop in case of surviving him.” *Digest of the Canons for the Government of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America*, Title I. Canon 13. § V (1869).

\textsuperscript{220} Howe’s election to Assistant Bishop was approved by the House of Deputies at General Convention on October 6, 1871, and then consented to by the House of Bishops on October 7 – with the consecration then taken place on the following day. *Journal of the Proceedings of the Bishops, Clergy, and Laity of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America Assembled in a General Convention, 1871* (Hartford, CT: Church Press, 1872) [hereinafter *1871 GC Journal*, 25, 271.
death. On December 10, 1871, Bishop Howe addressed the clergy and laity assembled at St. Philip’s in his first sermon as their new diocesan bishop. In his new role, he prayed, “God grant that I may be to the ‘flock of Christ a shepherd, not a wolf; that I may feed them and not devour them; that I may hold up the weak, heal the sick, bind up the broken, bring again the outcast,’ and all this I will strive to do, the Lord being my helper.” Furthermore, he challenged the clergy and laity, in the continuing aftermath of the Civil War, not to forget “the deserted parishes in our diocese—of the silent churches which once resounded with the voice of prayer and praise, and of the altars whereon the fires have become extinct.” He warned his audience against “learn[ing] to endure easily and with indifference, the closed and dilapidated church.” Of course, many of those abandoned churches and chapels in the rural lowcountry had been where enslaved persons of color had joined in the worship of the Episcopal Church. Notably, within the same month that he became the diocesan bishop, Howe visited the black Episcopalians of

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221 Initially, as had been the case with prior bishops, Howe continued to serve as rector of his parish (St. Philip’s). On January 1, 1873, he resigned the rectorship of St. Philip’s, thereby establishing a new tradition of the Bishop of the Diocese no longer holding a rectorship. Journal of the Eighty-Third Annual Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of South Carolina (Charleston, S.C.: Walker, Evans, & Cogswell, 1873) [hereinafter 1873 Journal], 39.


St. Mark’s and Calvary Church – one of which would be the subject of great controversy over the course his episcopacy.\textsuperscript{226}

In May 1872, at St. Philip’s Church, Howe gave his first convention address as bishop. It was fairly unremarkable – with no indications of the controversies on the horizon.\textsuperscript{227} At that time the diocesan parochial reports recorded 3,720 total communicants, of which 618 were “colored” and 3102 were white.\textsuperscript{228}

\section*{III. The New Bishop’s Early Efforts Relating to Race}

When the diocese gathered for its annual convention at Grace Church, Camden, in May 1873, Bishop Howe noted, in his address to the convention, that, over the course of his first full year as bishop, he had confirmed 400 persons – of which 226 were white and 174 “colored.”\textsuperscript{229} He also used a portion of his address to call attention to his concerns regarding the church’s ministry to the black population in the state—and his interest in providing a separate system of oversight for African American Episcopaliens. In that address, Howe used the condition of one particular plantation chapel that had been built as a place of Episcopal worship for the enslaved to broaden his concerns in this regard:

\textsuperscript{226} \textit{1872 Journal}, 28.

\textsuperscript{227} \textit{1872 Journal}, 26-35.

\textsuperscript{228} \textit{1872 Journal, Summary of Statistics, from May 12\textsuperscript{th}, 1871, to May 1\textsuperscript{st}, 1872}.

\textsuperscript{229} \textit{1873 Journal}, 46. Interestingly, the Summary of Parochial Report numbers included in the 1873 diocesan journal does not break down communicants based on race – with total communicants being 3751. \textit{1873 Journal, Summary of Statistics Reported from May 1\textsuperscript{st} 1872 to May 1\textsuperscript{st}, 1873}. Perhaps this is due to the fact that, at the 1873 convention, the diocese adopted new canons—and the requirements relating providing a distinct "white and colored persons" in each parish were not included in the new canons. See \textit{1873 Journal}, 79-82 (Appendix VIII.B., Canons. Adopted in 1873).
[S]adder far than the decay of the outward temple of God is the spiritual condition of the people to whom it is meant to minister, and who, as I have said, still use it exclusively for their religious meetings.

The broken stained glass spoke not of wanton destruction, but of religious frenzy, which in its heat thought not of beauty, nor of reverence. I do not mean to enlarge on this point, but who is there in this Convention, especially if he is from the low country, that does not know something of the delusions and the excesses into which a congregation of ignorant colored people, led by teachers as blind and ignorant as themselves, is apt to fall in their public assemblies? Can we see these things, and not desire in the spirit of the Master to do something for these people who are as sheep scattered abroad? 230

After some continued advocacy on behalf of ministry to African Americans in the state, Howe offered the following proposal for consideration:

Let a missionary jurisdiction be erected by the General Convention with express reference to these people, and let a Missionary Bishop be consecrated, who shall give his whole time and thought to this work; who, as the executive, not of a single Diocese, but of the entire Church, shall organize congregations, provide them with Church schools and pastors, and, in due time, raise up from among the colored people themselves, and to minister to themselves, deacons and priests who shall be educated men, and competent to the work of the ministry. 231

In an apparent attempt to ease the minds of his flock, however, the Bishop concluded his thoughts by drawing back, noting that he was "throw[ing] out this suggestion as a mere hint, and with a modesty, I trust, becoming one who has been so recently acquainted with the duties, and trials, and anxieties of the Episcopate." 232 Furthermore, he was quick to note that he sought no action or discussion at the diocesan convention but merely "wish[ed] it to be lodged, for the present, in the mind of the Church, as a something to be


231 Howe, 1873 Journal, 42.

232 Howe, 1873 Journal, 42.
ruminated upon, and to take tangible shape at some future time if God wills, or to be dropped, if further reflection and greater experience should decide against it.”

A year later, in his address to the 1874 diocesan convention, Howe discussed the continued need for more ministry to be done among the black population—and speculated that the time had come for the church to focus on identifying candidates for ordination from within that population. After noting that several “congregations of colored people” were now “as sheep without a shepherd,” Howe states that licensing “colored men” as lay readers and catechists is not sufficient. Instead, Howe asserted that:

The time must come when we must invoke the aid of colored men themselves to preach and minister the Sacraments to their own race, when we must look out from among them men of honest report and full of humility, whom the authorities of the Church may commission and invite into the Ministry, that so they may instruct others; and when such are found competent by education, and well reported of for good works, to teach and be examples to the flock, I will be glad, as far as in me lies, to bid such go and work in the Master’s vineyard; for otherwise without their aid, and relying wholly upon a white ministry, I do not see how this Church, which we believe to be Catholic, is to make herself felt among the colored people.

Interestingly, for the first time, in his summary of confirmations, Howe does not provide a breakdown based on race but merely states the total of 347.

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233 Howe, 1873 Journal, 42. In the historical account of the diocese, Kershaw notes Bishop Howe’s proposal to set up a “special jurisdiction for the colored people, should disabuse the minds of those who in the heat of controversy subsequently charged him with the desire to ignore racial lines in the Church and break down social barriers.” Thomas, Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina, 84 (quoting from portion attributed to Rev. Kershaw).


235 1874 Journal, 49.
Howe then returned to the topic of oversight that he had raised in his 1873 address noting that, within the wider church, there was now under discussion a “perhaps . . . better way” of structuring ministry to African Americans.\textsuperscript{236} Specifically, this new proposal would be “to repeal the canon against suffragan Bishops, and to introduce them into the American Church” so that suffragan bishops could be elected to oversee ministry African Americans.\textsuperscript{237} Howe noted that the proposal was then under consideration by a special committee of the national church such that, if desirable, it could be brought before the next General Convention.\textsuperscript{238}

\textsuperscript{236} Howe, \textit{1874 Journal}, 57.

\textsuperscript{237} Howe, \textit{1874 Journal}, 57.

\textsuperscript{238} In his address, Howe also briefly references “one of the saddest chapters in our Church history” – the recent loss of an Episcopal Bishop “not by death.” \textit{1874 Journal}, 58. In particular, he is referencing the departure of the Rt. Rev. George David Cummins, formerly the Bishop of Kentucky, who left the communion for the newly-formed “Reformed Episcopal Church.” As Howe notes, his departure was over a concern about “Romanizing tendencies” in the Episcopal Church. However, as discussed later in this paper, the Reformed Episcopal Church would later play a more significant role in the story of the diocese for other reasons.
Chapter Four

A Black Parish Seeks Admission to Diocesan Convention

I. Background on St. Mark’s Episcopal Church

St. Mark’s Episcopal Church in Charleston was formed in 1865 and first shows up in the diocesan journal in 1866, where the Rev. Joseph B. Seabrook, a white priest, is listed as its first rector. Like Calvary, it is listed as a Mission Congregation “NOT ENTITLED TO REPRESENTATION IN THE CONVENTION.”

After Charleston came under Federal occupation, Grace Church was for some time the only Episcopal church open for worship. According to a report made to the 1876 diocesan convention regarding the development of St. Mark’s, since Grace did not have galleries, which was the seating expected to be used by blacks worshipping amongst whites, those black Episcopalians began to worship at the Orphan House Chapel—given that the orphan children had been moved to Orangeburg during the war. Once that chapel was needed for its usual purposes, the black congregation purchased a wooden chapel that had formerly been used by St. Luke’s. Soon after the end of the war, the congregation, under the leadership of Seabrook, organized itself under the name St. Mark’s.

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239 1866 Journal, 7.

240 1866 Journal, 9 (emphasis in original).

241 1876 Journal, 44.

242 1876 Journal, 44.
According to the accounts provided at the 1876 diocesan convention, the individuals that came to compose St. Mark’s, were, prior to the Civil War, mostly free persons of color who attended several Episcopal churches in Charleston. As described by the Rev. James Elliott in one of those accounts, “many of them were of great respectability, and were accounted of sufficient piety to be admitted to the most solemn ordinance of the Christian Church.” Furthermore, “[s]ome possessed considerable property, and were as well educated as the disadvantages of their position allowed.” A later history of African Americans in Charleston after the Civil War describes the new parish as follows:

Seven of the original eight vestrymen and wardens had been free before the war, and among this same group in 1880, six of the nine were included in the upper class. Indeed, St. Mark’s congregation was composed overwhelmingly of mulattoes, many of whom were as color conscious as they were class conscious. They usually chose to socialize with upper-class whites or other freemen of like heritage. Coldness and aloofness characterized their attitudes toward the black masses.

In considering the context in which both Calvary and St. Mark’s came into being, it is worth noting that Charleston was a relatively unusual place in the South – or, for that matter, the entire country – when it came to the presence of the free African American elite during this time period. As of 1860, “in South Carolina and the rest of the Lower South, slaves accounted for 98 percent of the Negro population.” However, in

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243 *1876 Journal*, 44.

244 *1876 Journal*, 44.


Charleston at that time, only “81 percent of Charleston’s 17,146 Negroes were slaves.” Moreover, “[i]n Charleston and elsewhere freedom was associated with light skin,” such that, in Charleston, free persons of color were “uniformly brown.”247 Prior to the war, many free persons of color owned slaves.248 One prominent example was the African American Episcopalian William Ellison, who owned 900 acres, 63 slaves, and “a pew in the Episcopal Church of the Holy Cross” in Stateburg.249

In 1866, St. Mark’s first raised the issue of being admitted as a parish to convention. (In this respect, it is worth noting that Constitution and Canons of the Diocese recognized that a church or parish could exist as a part of the diocese without necessarily seeking to be admitted into the convention.250) According to several accounts, Bishop Davis received the vestry of St. Mark’s for a meeting at Toomer Porter’s home to discuss St. Mark’s interest in admission to convention. In Porter’s recounting of that meeting, Davis advised them to delay application since “they were not yet established, they had no church building, and it was not clear that they could maintain

247 Johnson, No Chariot Let Down, 6.
248 Johnson, No Chariot Let Down, 6.
249 Edgar, South Carolina, 309.
250 Constitution of the Diocese, Article XII, Of the Admission of Churches or Parishes into the Convention, 1866 Journal, 66-67.
their organization.” However, according to several accounts, Davis let them know that “when the time came, he would be ready to welcome them into the Convention.”

In 1871, Seabrook reported that the congregation had doubled in size since its inception and was seeking to begin work on a new church building. According to the parochial report, St. Mark’s had 130 communicants in 1871, and the congregation was “entirely self-supporting.” Furthermore, Seabrook stated that, in his twenty-three years in ordained ministry, he had not “found a more earnest, active, kind, polite, and worthy set of people in every sense of the word.”

In 1872, in the midst of Bishop Howe’s inaugural year, St. Mark’s raised the possibility of applying for admission once again. Howe advised further delay at that time. As he later explained, his counsel was based on his desire not to have “my first Convention disturbed by a question upon which I knew there must be a very serious conflict of opinion.” Then, in 1875, they sought the Bishop’s advice again, and, this

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252 Porter, *Led On!*, 308. See also 1876 Journal, 44 (noting that Davis, “while advising delay, encouraged them in the hope that at a future time the action of the Convention would be favorable to their admission”); Howe, *1876 Journal*, 62 (referencing Bishop Davis’ reply “in which he endorsed their movement most emphatically, and commended them for their filial adherence to the Church in which they had been brought up”).

253 *1871 Journal*, 64.

254 *1871 Journal*, 119.

255 *1871 Journal*, 119.

256 Howe, *1876 Journal*, 62.

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time, Howe agreed that the application to convention should be made and that it would be made with his support. And so began a series of controversies involving St. Mark’s regarding the rights of black Episcopalians in the Diocese of South Carolina that would span the next decade under Bishop Howe's leadership.257

II. Controversy at the 1875-1877 Conventions

At the diocesan convention in 1875, which took place at St. Philip's, Bishop Howe was confronted much more directly with the issue of how the Diocese of South Carolina would treat its African American members in the post-bellum era. Specifically, St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Charleston, which was a self-sustaining African American congregation with a white rector, petitioned the diocese for full parish membership.258 At that time, according to the parochial report provided by its Rector, the Rev. Joseph B. Seabrook, St. Mark's had grown to 187 communicants – with 506 as the “[w]hole number of souls” associated with the church.259 Convention numbers were

257 It is worth noting that, at the 1875 convention, the summary of parochial report statistics indicated that there were 4,439 total communicants, composed of 3,610 white and 829 “colored.” Journal of the Eighty-Fifth Annual Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of South Carolina, (Charleston, SC: Walker, Evans & Cogswell, 1875) [hereinafter 1875 Journal], 150. This would represent the highest number of African American Episcopalians in the post-Civil War period (at least through the end of the nineteenth century). Certainly, the events of the 1875 diocesan convention and those that followed played a role in the decline that followed 1875.

258 Holmes, Brief History of the Episcopal Church, 84.

259 1875 Journal, 143. At the same time, Calvary Church, under the leadership of the Rev. J.V. Welch, reported 208 communicants, only 1 of whom was white. 1875 Journal, 144.
swelled by those opposed to the seating of an African American parish, which accounts for “an unusually large attendance on the part of the laity.”

Upon the Bishop introducing St. Mark’s application on the first day of the convention, Edward McCrady, Sr., a prominent lay delegate from St. Philip’s who served on the Standing Committee and as a lay deputy to General Convention, immediately offered a resolution to refer the application to a commission to be appointed by the Bishop “to report to the next Convention upon the same, and all its relations to the Church and Constitution of this Diocese.” Discussion on the resolution to refer then continued through adjournment of the first day.

McCrady and his son, Edward McCrady, Jr., were both members of Charleston’s elite, “distinguished lawyers and respected churchmen” who “came from a well-to-do family of considerable influence.” Moreover, they both served at different times in the South Carolina legislature and “were so alike in outlook, interests, and ability that it was often difficult to distinguish the activities of one from the other.” Both “passionately believed in the superiority of the white race over the black.” In 1882, the younger McCrady would, while serving as a member of the S.C. House, write and introduce

260 Thomas, Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina, 87.

261 1875 Journal, 19.


legislation that “upon adoption became known as the Eight Box Law, a complicated voting process designed to confuse voters, especially Afro-Americans.” 265 The younger McCrady was also a vocal advocate for the “‘Lost Cause’ in speeches and writings, condemning the selfishness and aggressiveness of the North on the eve of the Civil War and justifying the South’s secession.” 266

Once discussion on St. Mark’s application continued, the delegates debated a number of proposed responses – whether to give limited non-voting seats to “any Missionary Station, or Congregation of colored people” with the limitation that may be allowed to speak only on “any question directly and specially affecting their respective Parishes or Stations” (moved by the Rev. John H. Cornish), to grant the petition in full with express reservation that this should not be seen as a precedent for future acceptance of African American congregations (moved by the Rev. William Prentiss), to grant the petition without reservation (moved by E.M. Seabrook), or to grant the petition but only allow it to be effective at the following convention (moved by the Rev. John Johnson) – before the delegates ultimately approved the elder McCrady’s resolution to establish a commission that would report back at the following convention. 267 Bishop Howe then appointed the following individuals to serve on that commission: the Rev. C.C. Pinckney, the Rev. James H. Elliott, the Rev. R.S. Trapier, the Rev. Ellison Capers, Edward McCrady, George Trenholm, and W.F. Colcock. 268

265 Fraser, Charleston!, 314.

266 Fraser, Charleston!, 314.

267 1875 Journal, 19-21.

268 1875 Journal, 22.
At the same convention, Howe reported to the delegates that the national church committee looking into options for continued ministry to African Americans had “reported almost unanimously against” the proposal to create Missionary Bishops exclusively to minister to African Americans across several dioceses.\textsuperscript{269} The committee’s opposition, which was based “chiefly on the ground that it was against ecclesiastical precedent,” had then been affirmed by the Mission Board of the national church, which Howe saw as definitive.\textsuperscript{270} Therefore, Howe offered the following assessment: “In the matter of work, therefore, among the colored people, we are where we have always been. We must work in and through the Diocese, and, as far as we can, through the parochial clergy.”\textsuperscript{271}

In his annual address to the 1876 diocesan convention, which was being called upon to deliberate on St. Mark’s application, Bishop Howe did not, however, discuss the controversy over St. Mark’s nor did he mention the diocesan ministry to African Americans more generally. Beyond the review of clergy transitions, canonical changes, and other standard notices, Howe primarily focused his address upon encouraging the

\textsuperscript{269} Howe, 1875 Journal, 38.

\textsuperscript{270} Howe, 1875 Journal, 38-39.

\textsuperscript{271} Howe, 1875 Journal, 39. At the 1875 diocesan convention, the diocese adopted a new set of canons superseding the ones adopted just a few years earlier—and reinstating the requirement that “white and colored persons shall be reported separately” on all parochial reports. 1875 Journal, 87, Canon XIII, § VII.
more frequent observance of Holy Eucharist in the parishes of the diocese; meanwhile the
Diocese was seeing a stunning decline in African American parishioners.272

On the third day of 1876 diocesan convention, the commission formed to consider
the petition of St. Mark’s to be seated as a parish at the diocesan convention offered a
lengthy “majority” report, supported by three of the five remaining members of the
commission, in opposition to St. Mark’s petition.273 The three members signing the
“majority” report were Edward McCrady of St. Philip’s; R.S. Trapier, rector of St.
Michael’s, Charleston; and William F. Colcock of Holy Trinity, Grahamville. Notably,
two of the original members of the commission did not participate in deliberations over
the report. During the intervening year, after the first meeting of the commission, Ellison
Capers left Christ Church for St. John’s in Selma, Alabama, and George Trenholm’s
health prevented his further participation.274 Thus, the “majority” offering the report
constituted a majority of the members of the commission still able to participate—but not
a majority of the original number.

272 Howe, “Bishop’s Address,” in 1876 Journal, 78-82. Notably, however, the Summary
of Parochial Statistics in the 1876 diocesan journal lists 4062 total communicants—3800
white and 262 colored—a dramatic decline in African American parishioners from the
829 reported in 1875. 1876 Journal, 151.

273 In the diocesan history, Kershaw states that “[i]t was conceded that as originally
composed a majority of the commission favored the proposed measure, but [given that
two of the original members did not participate in later meetings] the minority became a
majority.” Thomas, Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina, 89 (quoting from
portion attributed to Rev. Kershaw). The basis for this claim is not apparent from the
diocesan record.

274 1876 Journal, 25. However, by the time of the 1877 diocesan convention, Rev. Capers
had returned to his prior position in the diocese as rector at Christ Church, Greenville.
The “majority” report, which reveals a position of “extreme racism” on the part of its signers, begins by noting that St. Mark’s application, to the extent that it comes from “a congregation composed altogether of colored persons,” is a first for the diocese.275 The report then raises a number of objections to the seating of St. Mark’s, starting with the specter of “miscegenation.”276 With respect to the particular character of the community at St. Mark’s, the report expressed concern that many members of St. Mark’s were “mulattoes, many of whom were free before the late civil war,” who had “reputations for integrity and civility.”277 Thus, the majority report asserted that, to the extent that the borders between the St. Mark’s community and the white community were already blurred, any action that invited the parish into full communion with whites would only continue that trend toward more mixture between those communities—which according to the majority report was not something to be permitted.

The lengthy report goes on to make a series of arguments, some more noxious than others, as to why St. Mark’s application should not be granted. First, as a matter of procedure, the report asserted that the question of St. Mark’s application should be considered as one that “primarily, chiefly, almost entirely, concerns the Laity,” since the impact of accepting St. Mark’s application would be such that “the Delegates from St. Mark’s, if admitted, will count as much as the best informed delegates of the oldest and best trained Parish in determining the vote of the laity.”279 Thus, the report urged the

275 1876 Journal, 25.
276 1876 Journal, 24-40.
277 1876 Journal, 25.
279 1876 Journal, 25.
clergy to “show their consideration for the rights of their lay brethren, by refraining from using their influence in this matter.”

280 It is notable that, however, when the issue of seating African American clergy came up a decade later, the opposing leaders of the laity showed none of the restraint urged by the report on this basis.

In support of their argument for segregation of church governance – such that whites and blacks should not both be involved in governance of the same church, the report noted that the Church of England was divided into various national organizations and that the United States – and, in particular, the South – is peculiar in that it has within it at least two nations – white and black – and possibly more given that “[p]eople of all nations are invited and welcomed to come and make settlements within our borders.”

281 According to the authors of the report, what united the Episcopal Church in the United States was not national borders but rather “our unity of race, the common origin and nationality of those who framed our organism.”

282 The report went on to offer a virulently racist assessment of the differences between the white and black races or “nations” at the time of the settling of the Americas by English colonists:

Two centuries ago, (after how many of ignorance of each other we know not,) our forefathers had made a history of more than a thousand years, had established institutions of learning, reared a wonderfully contrived civil government, possessed a most enlightened jurisprudence, had made themselves masters of the ocean, and had circum-navigated the globe. To do all this, it had taken our race perhaps full fifteen centuries. Then we

280 1876 Journal, 25.

281 1876 Journal, 32.

282 1876 Journal, 32.
were brought in contact with this primitive race of black men, who were then savages, without arts or civilization of any kind, their whole country broken into petty tribes or kingdoms, warring against, and preying upon each other, from thirst of blood, or rapine, and either butchering their captives in cold blood, or reducing them to the condition of beasts of burden.\(^{283}\)

The report then asserted that, through the “care” of their white masters, blacks in the South have been formed into “the most civilized, if not the only civilized portion of their race.”\(^{284}\) Nonetheless, the report concluded that blacks were not yet ready to take their position amongst the councils of the Church. Furthermore, even were that day to arrive, the authors of the report would still advocate for the “formation of a distinct and independent church for our colored people.”\(^{285}\) In the meantime, the report advocated for separate missionary jurisdictions for black congregations supervised by some system missionary bishops, though still under the oversight and control of diocesan bishops.\(^{286}\)

In a clear attempt to stoke concerns based on white’s experience of black majority political rule in the state, the report also stated that, if St. Mark’s were allowed to seat lay delegates at convention, the convention might soon find itself facing more and more applications by black congregations—and, given the number of vacant or deserted parishes in the low country, such a precedent could “put it into the power of blacks to become the majority” in the diocese.\(^{287}\)

\(^{283}\) 1876 Journal, 33.

\(^{284}\) 1876 Journal, 33.

\(^{285}\) 1876 Journal, 37.

\(^{286}\) 1876 Journal, 37-38. The report notes that similar structures are already under consideration in the national church.

\(^{287}\) 1876 Journal, 34.
Later in the report, the authors laid bare that the basis for their objections rested upon their unequivocal belief in white supremacy:

For ourselves we not only object to miscegenation, but denounce it as injurious to our race; and, as we believe, opposed to the law of God, as revealed in Scripture, and developed in the uniform course of his creation and the ordinances of what we call nature. We do not intend to encourage the commingling of these two races. We believe our race to be the superior race, and do not hesitate to assert and maintain our faith in this truth and intend to conform our ecclesiastical organization to this faith, and never can consent to give countenance and approval to such admixture, even when the result of lawful wedlock, but would leave all such admixture to bear the stamp and wear the livery of unlawful intercourse. We refuse to recommend to a body of Christian men that which we believe would tend to counteract God’s order in Providence or creation, and to obliterate distinctions which He has seen fit to make as manifest and as conspicuous as the sun at noonday, or as the stars at midnight.  

Notably, the report also included a veiled threat of schism, stating that, if the Convention admitted St. Mark’s, it would be the duty of any parish disagreeing with that decision “quietly to withdraw [from the Convention], and patiently await the consequences of the admission.”

After the “majority” report was received, the two other members of the commission – the Rev. James H. Elliott, Rector of St. Paul’s, Radcliffeboro, and the Rev. C.C. Pinckney, President of the Standing Committee and Rector of Grace Church,

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288 1876 Journal, 36.

289 1876 Journal, 30.

290 Radcliffeboro (or Radcliffeborough) is a neighborhood on the Charleston peninsula. In 1949, while remaining at the same location, St. Paul’s would combine with St. Luke’s to become the Church of St. Luke and St. Paul, and, at a later date, would become the Cathedral of St. Luke and St. Paul. Fraser, Charleston!, 417 (noting that St. Luke and St. Paul became the Cathedral on September 20, 1963).
Charleston – submitted reports favoring the admission of St. Mark’s.\textsuperscript{291} In his report, Elliott provided some history of St. Mark’s, and, on the basis of that history, noted that St. Mark’s therefore “has received the encouragement of one, and the sanction of another of our Bishops; that the congregation so applying has been organized for ten years, and during that period has supported the pastor in charge, contributed liberally to all Church purposes, and waited very patiently for the decision of this Convention.”\textsuperscript{292}

Elliott clearly stated that “St. Mark's is only asking for what would be granted, as a matter of course, to a white congregation with similar qualifications.”\textsuperscript{293} Elliott noted that those in opposition to St. Mark’s have raised the concern that, if St. Mark’s is admitted, the convention could soon be overrun with black delegates sufficient to “reduce our Ecclesiastical Assemblies to the level of our State Legislature.”\textsuperscript{294} However, addressing those concerns directly, Elliott argued that it is “unfair to conclude, because they have failed, under circumstances so unprecedented as those which have given them, untrained and misled as they were, the command of our State Legislature, that, therefore, they are not fit now, and never will be fit to appear in a body over which they can exercise no possible control.”\textsuperscript{295} Elliott noted that, under the canons, the convention had the authority to consider the application of each parish separately and particularly—such

\textsuperscript{291} 1876 \textit{Journal}, 43-56. Pinckney offered a much briefer report stating his support for admitting St. Mark’s into the Convention. The following focuses on Elliott’s report.

\textsuperscript{292} 1876 \textit{Journal}, 44.

\textsuperscript{293} 1876 \textit{Journal}, 45.

\textsuperscript{294} 1876 \textit{Journal}, 45.

\textsuperscript{295} 1876 \textit{Journal}, 45.
that, if concerns were to arise based on numerous future applications from black congregations, those concerns could then be addressed.

Elliott then addressed the concerns that, from a societal standpoint, it was not appropriate for black and white persons to be working together in a setting such as the Diocesan Convention. Elliott rejected that argument as follows:

Much stress will be laid upon the social aspect of the case. It is, after all, the difficulty which will have most influence upon the minds of those opposed to the admission of St. Mark's. It is unfortunate that considerations of this kind, which are essentially worldly, should be allowed to influence a great Church question. If these Conventions are to be looked upon in the light of social gatherings mainly, we have, indeed, mistaken their aim and purport. We would respectfully submit that this would be to encourage a sentiment from which the Church in this Diocese has already grievously suffered. In all its past it has been regarded too much as the Church of a class. The Christian idea has been, we will not say subordinated to the social, but at all events hampered and controlled by it. Delegates have been sent here fully as much because they were gentlemen, as because they were Christians. In selecting them, their Christian character has far too often been left out of the account altogether.296

Elliott continued with the following argument that, in the church’s convention, matters of social standing are irrelevant:

Upon this sacred ground a man's Christianity is his first qualification. His fitness to represent the Church which sends him here is his second qualification, and that is properly left with his constituents. If they are fit to be in the Church of Christ, their delegates are fit to be here.297

Elliott then laid forth what he saw as the theological issues at stake:

The principles of our holy religion should have greatest weight with all who here represent the Church, and these certainly favor the extension of equal religious privileges to all men indiscriminately, without regard to race, color, or condition. With God, the Maker of all, there is no respect of

296 1876 Journal, 47.

297 1876 Journal, 47.
persons. In Christ the Redeemer of all there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free, but Christ is all and in all. The gospel proclaims the true brotherhood of men, and makes paramount the tie which unites them in Christ their living Head. This give its character to the Christian Church, and constitutes its true catholicity. Whatever tends to promote the perfection of this union is in harmony with its principles; whatever obstructs or impedes it, is hostile to them.\footnote{298}

Elliott noted that the early church, as recorded in the Acts of Apostles, provided guidance through its account of the Council of Jerusalem. Though to the original disciples “the introduction of the Gentiles to equal privileges with the Jews in the Church of Christ was a new thing,” perhaps “an innovation as abhorrent to the Jewish mind, as the admission of colored delegates to seats upon this floor can possibly be to the instincts of our own people,” nonetheless, “under the power of the grace of God in this assembly of apostles, elders and brethren, they were not only accorded their equal place in the Church of Christ, but were allowed by their chosen representatives, to take part in its legislation, and to determine its action.”\footnote{299} Elliott then cautioned those determining St. Mark’s application against disregarding the disciples’ “noble example.”

Before concluding, Elliott also reports that he has communicated with representatives of other Southern dioceses and offers letters from each indicating that “several have already admitted colored delegates to their Conventions.”\footnote{300} Therefore, if

\footnote{298} 1876 Journal, 48.

\footnote{299} 1876 Journal, 49.

\footnote{300} 1876 Journal, 50. Elliott attached letters from Secretaries to the Conventions of the Episcopal Dioceses of Florida, North Carolina, Virginia, and Georgia. Florida reported having approved “by a unanimous vote” a black congregation and, though they do not yet have black clergy, “they would be admitted to a seat.” North Carolina stated both black ministers and black parishes had been admitted to their Convention. Georgia reported that both black ministers and a black parish had been admitted to their Convention. Virginia
South Carolina rejected St. Mark’s application, “in this position we shall stand very much alone.” Ultimately, according to Elliott, the convention was being presented with a question as to “whether we will grow and expand or wither and die; whether we will plant ourselves at once upon principles, Christian and catholic, or yield to prejudices of class and education; whether we have that faith which overcometh the world, and removeth mountains, or that which magnifies mole hills into mountains, and sees a lion in every shadow thrown across our path.”

Thereafter, Bishop Howe was granted leave to address the convention on this particular issue, whereupon he argued vigorously in favor of seating St. Mark’s. Howe stated that, if the convention followed the lead of the “majority” report and refused admission to St. Mark’s solely “on the ground of race—and it will be utterly idle to allege any other—you will, I say, in my judgment, do a most uncatholic act, and register the Church in this Diocese as the Church of a caste.” Furthermore, according to Howe, such an act would further exacerbate the South Carolina Episcopal Church’s historical problem of being “so closely allied with wealth in times past, and with the social position that usually accompanies wealth.” Though some may prefer that the Episcopal Church be only a “‘white man’s’ Church,” Howe stated that moving even further in that direction

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301 *1876 Journal*, 50.

302 *1876 Journal*, 53.

303 Howe, *1876 Journal*, 60.

304 Howe, *1876 Journal*, 60.
would leave the church “seriously impaired” in its ministry in this diocese. Howe then offered the following prophetic words: “If you will believe me, the dangers which lie over against this Convention do not arise from the multitude of its Deputies, but they threaten rather from the opposite quarter, that you will dwindle down to a very small body, even of white representatives.”

Bishop Howe concluded his remarks with the following plea:

I ask you not as Carolinians, but as representatives of the Church in Convention assembled—if the two races in this State, under adverse influences, are drifting asunder, one from the other—shall the Church of God catch the evil infection, and instead of trying to put a stay to it, rather add fuel to the flame? I do not argue from expediency … but from sound ecclesiastical principle; but not infrequently the best results attend upon adherence to well established principles, and if the action of this Convention should be such as to bear witness of our willingness to give to all their dues, even in opposition to a very strong and traditional pressure, I am sure it would do much to make for peace and conciliate confidence. But if it did not have any such result, nevertheless, I know, and am assured, that it would witness for the Church in this Diocese with Him who has pronounced a benediction upon the peace makers. And then, too, though the world outside of us, in the approaching political canvass, shall roar loudly and angrily, as small doubt it will do, like a tempestuous sea which cannot rest, but ‘casts up mire and dirt,’ yet shall this Convention be a lighthouse upon a rock, whose steady flame of truth and love shall burn without a flicker from the blasts without . . .

Immediately after Howe’s remarks, a vote by orders was called. Despite Howe’s strong rhetoric and the overwhelming support of the clergy in the subsequent vote, the resolution

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305 Howe, 1876 Journal, 60.

306 Howe, 1876 Journal, 61.

307 Howe, 1876 Journal, 63.
to seat St. Mark’s was ultimately rejected based on its failure to gain the support of a majority of the lay delegations.\textsuperscript{308}

In preparation for the 1877 diocesan convention, Howe wrote to St. Mark’s and advised them to neither elect deputies or make another application for union with the upcoming diocesan convention—but rather to wait for a “more auspicious time.”\textsuperscript{309} As justification for this request, Howe noted that the State had “just passed through a most exciting State election the results of which, at this present writing, are not fully determined.”\textsuperscript{310} Bishop Howe stated his hope that, “by waiting for calmer times, you may be admitted not only without irritation to any one, but, I trust, with the assent of a large majority of all our Churches.”\textsuperscript{311} By letter dated March 19, 1877, the Chairman of St. Mark’s Vestry, W.H. Berney stated that the suggestion in Howe’s letter had received the Vestry’s “hearty approval” and then approved by the male members of the

\textsuperscript{308} 1876 Journal, 63. For the resolution to pass, it was necessary for it to receive the support of a majority of the clergy order and a majority of the lay order. The clergy vote was 17 in favor St. Mark’s admission and 9 against. The lay vote, based on votes within delegations of each parish represented, was 12 in favor, 17 against, and 2 divided.

\textsuperscript{309} Letter from Howe to the Congregation and Vestry of St. Mark’s Charleston, dated March 16, 1877, reprinted in Journal of the Eighty-Seventh Annual Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of South Carolina (Charleston, SC: Walker, Evans, & Cogswell, 1877) [hereinafter 1877 Journal], 47.

\textsuperscript{310} Letter from Howe, 1877 Journal, 47.

\textsuperscript{311} Letter from Howe, 1877 Journal, 47
congregation. In conclusion, Berney stated his belief that Howe would continue his "kind efforts" on behalf of St. Mark's.

Though, St. Mark's did not renew its petition at that convention held at St. Philip's in May 1877, Howe returned to the issue in his address. As he explained, he did so in part so "that this question may not be altogether passed over in silence" and also to respond to "the report and resolutions adopted by the congregation of St. Philip's Church" in the intervening year expressing its opposition. Thus, Howe sought to challenge those who continued to oppose St. Mark's. In particular, he singled out those in the legal profession serving at convention for mistakenly operating under "habits of mind" that "tend very strongly to assimilate the functions of a Church Council with those of a State Legislature, as if the kingdom which is not of this world must take its pattern here, in all things from the State." Howe reminded the convention that "the Church's birth and life must have a higher source than the will of man, if indeed there is to be a

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314 Howe, *1877 Journal*, 39. After the 1876 convention, St. Philip's had a congregational meeting at which they approved the action of their delegates in rejecting St. Mark's petition and appointed a committee of parishioners, including the elder McCrady, "to confer with other churches in sympathy with us as to the best means to prevent the further agitation of the question." Tyler, "Drawing the Color Line," 111.

315 Howe, *1877 Journal*, 40. Bishop Howe's address further raised the ire of the elder McCrady, leading him and others at St. Philip's to publish a lengthy statement of the justifications for their position. Tyler, "Drawing the Color Line," 111.
Church with a divine element. 316 He then offered the following theological claim:

"While Man may create a State, but God alone can found a Church." 317

Bishop Howe asserted that the rejection of St. Mark’s was based in large part on the contemporary political culture and reminded the delegates that their primary allegiance was to God and the Church—not the State. Though the two need not be opposed, Bishop Howe speculated that “it may be that one of the saddest days for the Church was when the State entered into alliance with her, in the person of Emperor Constantine.” 318

The Bishop then offered the following assessment of the attitude that prevailed at the prior year’s convention in its handling of St. Mark’s application:

I think this attitude having its inspiration from without, and not from within the Church, contradicts the true Church instincts in regard to the ecclesiastical brotherhood of its members, in that it excludes persons on account of race, from participation in synodal action, which is a function of the Church. 319

He concluded his treatment of the issue by expressing hope for a day when the diocese would no longer refuse to seat those who were qualified to be there. On that day, Howe declared “we shall then have put our feet upon a rock, and shall become strong, not in point of numbers, indeed, but as witnesses to the truth that the Church belongs not to

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316 Howe, 1877 Journal, 41.
317 Howe, 1877 Journal, 41.
318 Howe, 1877 Journal, 41.
319 Howe, 1877 Address, 42.
man, or to illustrate our social position, but to God, and to illustrate the things which be freely given to us from God.”

Despite the hope expressed in Bishop Howe’s letter to St. Mark’s vestry and in his address to the 1877 Convention, the record would indicate that there were no further attempts to admit St. Mark’s to diocesan convention during Howe’s episcopacy. In fact, the matter apparently lay dormant for over three-quarters of a century—until, by a resolution passed at the 1954 convention, St. Mark’s was finally admitted as a parish in union with diocesan convention. That said, St. Mark’s would continue to play a central role in the succeeding controversies over race during Bishop Howe’s episcopacy.

In his address to the 1878 diocesan convention the following year, Howe began by lamenting the deaths of two clergymen who had been united with the Bishop in his support of St. Mark’s application, the Rev. James H. Elliott, rector of St. Paul’s,

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320 Howe, 1877 Address, 43.

321 Thomas, Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina, 92 (stating that, at the time of his writing in 1920, “there was never any renewal by St. Mark’s of their application to be admitted into union with the Convention”). A review of the succeeding diocesan convention journals also confirms this.

322 Thomas, Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina, 159; Ronald James Caldwell, A History of the Episcopal Church Schism in South Carolina (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2017), 22. At the same time that St. Mark’s was admitted to the Diocesan Convention, Calvary Church in Charleston was admitted as an organized mission. By that time, however, St. Luke’s was no longer a part of the Diocese of South Carolina—since it had become part of the Diocese of Upper South Carolina at the time of the division of the diocese in 1922. The Diocese of Upper South Carolina had already approved allowing black parishes to be represented at its conventions in 1946. Thomas, Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina, 476. Even after St. Mark’s was admitted to convention, however, the diocese continued to maintain a separate diocesan convocation for black parishes until that separate structure was abolished in 1965. Caldwell, A History of the Episcopal Church Schism, 23, 26-27.
Radcliffeboro, and the Rev. Joseph B. Seabrook, rector of St. Mark’s. Elliott had been a member of the commission tasked with considering St. Mark’s application and had spoken passionately and at length in support of that application at the 1876 convention. Regarding Seabrook, Howe only briefly commented upon his work with St. Mark’s— noting that the congregation “strengthened and increased” under Seabrook’s leadership” and lamenting that “no one has yet been found to fill his place and do his work” at St. Mark’s.\(^{323}\)

Another significant development with respect to African American participation in the life of the Diocese was the entry of the Reformed Episcopal Church into South Carolina. The Reformed Episcopal Church was formed in 1873 as a reaction against the influence of the Oxford Movement on the Episcopal Church, but it found adherents in South Carolina for other reasons. In particular, the Reformed Episcopal Church was able to gain a foothold in the Diocese of South Carolina because it was willing to accept African Americans both as clergy and in governance.\(^{324}\) Moreover, the Reformed Episcopal Church was able to recruit a leading Episcopal clergymen, P.F. Stevens, known for his success in ministry among African Americans in the South Carolina lowcountry.

\(^{323}\) Howe, “Bishop’s Address,” *Journal of the Eighty-Eighth Annual Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of South Carolina* (Charleston, SC: Walker, Evans, & Cogswell, 1878) [hereinafter 1878 Journal], 35-36. Bishop Howe also notes that, though St. Mark’s has been building a new church building, “hard times that are upon us” prevented Seabrook from seeing that construction through to completion.

\(^{324}\) Herbert Geer McCarrier, Jr., "History of the Missionary Jurisdiction of the South of the Reformed Episcopal Church, 1874-1970," *Historical Magazine of the Episcopal Church*, XLI (June 1972), 197-220.
Although much of the story of the years immediately after the Civil War is about reduced participation of African Americans in the life of the Episcopal Church, Stevens had a growing ministry among African Americans in South Carolina. In his 1868 parochial report, Stevens wrote at length about his efforts in this regard:

If it please God to prosper me and give me the means I will build a Church expressly for this people, when, I make no doubt, many more of the numbers who once were connected with us will again be drawn to us. The field of labor here is an exceedingly interesting one, and I hope by God’s blessing, will prove a productive one. My labors among the colored people of my other Parish still go on notwithstanding the moving to and fro; I have at “Nazareth Church” full congregations with, I trust, an increasing interest on the part of regular attendance and a widening influence on the surrounding population.\textsuperscript{325}

Furthermore, Stevens had begun to identify candidates for Holy Orders among the black population. In particular, he mentioned Frank C. Ferguson, a freedman who had expressed his “desire to enter the ministry,” and noted Ferguson’s successful efforts to enroll at the Training School in Raleigh, North Carolina.\textsuperscript{326}

In his parochial report for 1869, Stevens reported that he had recently completed two chapels for the black population and that the “congregations in each have been very encouraging, and are constantly increasing.” Furthermore, he reported now having two candidates for ordination – Frank Ferguson, previously mentioned, and Laurens Dawson – now pursuing studies toward ordination.\textsuperscript{328}

\textsuperscript{325} 1868 \textit{Journal}, 68.

\textsuperscript{326} 1868 \textit{Journal}, 68. Stevens also noted, but did not name, a second young man whom he had identified as a suitable candidate for ordination. 1868 \textit{Journal}, 69.

\textsuperscript{328} 1869 \textit{Journal}, 82.
Unfortunately, the Diocesan Standing Committee later rejected Dawson and Ferguson.\textsuperscript{329} After that rejection, in December 1874, Ferguson began meeting with a number of African American Episcopalians to consider whether they should, given the treatment that they were receiving, leave the Episcopal Church.\textsuperscript{330} Ultimately, they decided to petition the Reformed Episcopal Church, which was then just a year old, for entry into that communion.\textsuperscript{331}

In early 1875, Ferguson and others reached out to Stevens in hopes that he would help them align with the Reformed Episcopal Church.\textsuperscript{332} In the meantime, the Reformed Episcopal Church had notified Ferguson and other African American Episcopalians that they would be welcome in the Reformed Episcopal Church.\textsuperscript{333} Ultimately, Stevens accepted their request for help and, in November 1875, was appointed by the Reformed Episcopal Church as “Pastor over all the Colored churches.”\textsuperscript{334} In the same month, five

\textsuperscript{329} McCarriar, “History of the Missionary Jurisdiction of the South of the Reformed Episcopal Church,” 200.

\textsuperscript{330} McCarriar, “History of the Missionary Jurisdiction of the South of the Reformed Episcopal Church,” 200-201.

\textsuperscript{331} McCarriar, “History of the Missionary Jurisdiction of the South of the Reformed Episcopal Church,” 201.

\textsuperscript{332} McCarriar, “History of the Missionary Jurisdiction of the South of the Reformed Episcopal Church,” 202.

\textsuperscript{333} McCarriar, “History of the Missionary Jurisdiction of the South of the Reformed Episcopal Church,” 202.

\textsuperscript{334} McCarriar, “History of the Missionary Jurisdiction of the South of the Reformed Episcopal Church,” 203. In order to evaluate the importance of Stevens in this ministry, it is worth noting that, in his 1873 parochial report, when he was serving in St. Stephen’s Parish in the Lowcountry, Stevens reported that the parish had grown to 430 communicants, of which 404 were “colored.” 1873 Journal, 155. By 1875, after Stevens
African-American missions, with over 500 communicants, entered the Reformed Episcopal Church. In the month that followed, Frank Ferguson was ordained in the Reformed Episcopal Church, becoming the first ordained person of color in that communion.

After leaving the Episcopal Church to join the Reformed Episcopal Church, Stevens was, on February 8, 1876, deposed from his ministry within the Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina. Several years later, in June 1879, he was consecrated “Missionary Bishop to the Special Jurisdiction of the South” in the Reformed Episcopal Church, and he served as a Bishop in the Reformed Episcopal Church until his retirement in 1909. Thus, the story of the Reformed Episcopal Church’s entry into South Carolina provides just one example of the consequences of the Diocese’s failure to allow African Americans to participate fully in the life of the church.

Had departed St. Stephen’s Parish, the number of communicants had dropped to 13. *1875 Journal*, 142.


336 McCarriar, “History of the Missionary Jurisdiction of the South of the Reformed Episcopal Church,” 204. Lawrence Dawson was also ordained in the Reformed Episcopal Church later that month. Guelzo, *For the Union of Evangelical Christendom*, 223.

337 Thomas, *Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina*, 87. The 1876 Parochial Report for St. Luke’s Newberry, notes that Rev. Stevens “resigned his charge of this Church” on June 22, 1875. *1876 Journal*, 131. In Bishop Howe’s list of official acts and services offered as part of his 1876 Diocesan Convention address, it is noted that, on February 8, 1876, Bishop Howe had deposed from the Priesthood, under Canon VI, Title II, the Rev. P.F. Stevens. *1876 Journal*, 87

Chapter Five

The Introduction of Black Clergy into the Diocese

The rejection of Ferguson and Lawson by the Standing Committee, followed by their departure from the Episcopal Church, provided a preview of the next major racial controversy to impact the diocese: the issue of ordaining persons of color. Once again, developments at St. Mark’s would take center stage.

Although the 1879 convention passed with little controversy and no particular discussion of questions relating to ministry to the black population, Bishop Howe did briefly note that, on November 7, 1878, he had participated in the consecration of St. Mark’s Church and congratulated that congregation and their new rector, A. Toomer Porter, on their accomplishment with hopes that “its present prosperity be long continued.”

In his parochial report for St. Mark’s, Porter recorded the parish as having 181 communicants. Porter had become rector on June 6, 1878 – ending a period of one year and nine months that St. Mark’s had been without rector since the death of Seabrook. During that time, work on the new church building had stopped, but, under Porter’s leadership, the work was quickly completed such that the Bishop was able to consecrate it in November. Foreshadowing future controversies, Porter noted that a

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340 1879 Journal, 106.
member of the parish, Thaddaeus Saltus, was now a candidate for Holy Orders.\footnote{1879 Journal, 106. See also 1879 Journal, 159 (including Thaddaeus Saltus among the Candidates for Holy Orders). Mr. Saltus is also listed in the Bishop's address as a candidate for Holy Orders who is "studying under a Presbyter of the Diocese." Howe, 1879 Journal, 41. This was apparently the first reference to a black candidate for Holy Orders to appear in the diocesan journal since Ferguson and Lawson had been rejected by the Standing Committee and subsequently ordained in the Reformed Episcopal Church.} According to Porter, "there is no more flourishing and encouraging Parish [than St. Mark's] in the Diocese."ootnote{1879 Journal, 106.}

At the 1881 diocesan convention, Saltus was then listed as a deacon and the Assistant Minister at St. Mark's, Charleston, but, unlike the three other deacons, is noted as not being entitled to votes.\footnote{Journal of the Ninety-First Annual Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of South Carolina (Charleston, SC: Walker, Evans, & Cogswell, 1881) [hereinafter 1881 Journal], 11.} Although Saltus was not recorded as present when the roll of clergy was called on the first day of convention, he was present on the second day of the convention and was noted in the journal without incident.\footnote{1881 Journal, 17-18, 20.}

In his address to the convention, Bishop Howe reflected upon the death of the senior priest of the Diocese, the Rev. Alexander Glennie. In 1844, Glennie had been nominated and confirmed Missionary Bishop to Cape Palmas, Liberia, but Howe noted that Glennie had declined "for Africa was at his own doors on the Waccamaw."\footnote{Howe, "Bishop's Address," 1881 Journal, 40.} Howe described Glennie's "labors among the slave population" as "well organized and
untiring,” though Glennie “spoke of his work among the negroes as a failure.”

However, the Bishop noted, with gratitude, that what he found most moving about Glennie’s burial was “not the bells of Georgetown and the flags at half-mast, but the many colored people on the Waccamaw, who come from the neighboring plantations, to honor their old pastor in his burial, and in memory of faithful labors of other years, when he sought their spiritual good in heat and cold, in sunshine and in storm.”

In his address, Howe noted, without further comment, that he had ordained Thaddaeus Saltus a Deacon and appointed him to serve at St. Mark’s. In his list of acts and services, Howe stated that, with respect to Saltus, the Standing Committee had delivered to him their “Canonical Testimony recommending [him] as a suitable person to be admitted into the Sacred Order of Deacons, [with] the signatures of all the members of the Standing Committee.”

Several days after receiving that recommendation, on February 6, 1881, Howe ordained Saltus to the diaconate. Several of the priests who presided over black congregations in the Diocese were there to assist in the service, including the Rev. B.B. Babbitt of St. Luke’s, Columbia; the Rev. Toomer Porter of St. Mark’s; the Rev. J. V. Welch, rector of Calvary Church; and the Rev. J. Mercer Green, who was then serving as Superintendent of the Charleston City Public Schools.

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346 Howe, 1881 Journal, 40.
347 Howe, 1881 Journal, 40.
349 Howe, 1881 Journal, 41.
350 1881 Journal, 61.
351 1881 Journal, 61.
In approving the ordination of Saltus to the diaconate, however, the Standing Committee noted that it had passed a series of resolutions “intended to promote harmonious religious relations between the races.”  Those resolutions, which were then included with the Standing Committee’s report to the Convention, suggested that, given the alleged differences between the races with respect to “Christian knowledge and culture,” it would not be appropriate for “the race having the lesser Christian knowledge and culture [to] be advanced to the position of teachers and rulers of the other race.”  Moreover, although the “practice of the early Church” would suggest that “Evangelists and Catechists, or some order of inferior clergy” be established in these circumstances, the national Church had not provided for any such appropriate “remedy.”  Nonetheless, the Committee resolved that any objections to Saltus were “sufficiently obviated” by his stated intention “to confine the ministrations of his office to St. Mark’s and similar congregations.”

In February 1882, the Standing Committee recommended Saltus to be ordained to the priesthood, and his ordination took place on May 3. There is no record of any further resolutions clarifying the grounds upon which Saltus was being approved. Those listed as joining in the laying on of hands upon Saltus were C.C. Pinckney (President of

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354 1881 Journal, 66.

355 1881 Journal, 66.

the Standing Committee and Rector of Grace Church, Charleston), Toomer Porter
(Member of the Standing Committee and Rector of Church of the Holy Communion and
St. Mark’s, Charleston), W.O. Prentiss (Minister to St. James’; Santee; Trinity, Black
Oak; Edisto Island; and Christ Church, Wilton), J.M. Green (Minister to the Church on
John’s Island), John Johnson (Member of the Standing Committee and Rector of St.
Philip’s Church), J.V. Welch (Minister to Calvary Church and Missionary to St.
Stephen’s Parish), and T.A. Porter (Rector of the Church of the Holy Comforter, Sumter,
and St. Mark’s, Clarendon).357 It is notable that three out of the five clergy members of
the Standing Committee are listed as having taken part in the laying on of hands for
Saltus.

In his parochial report for that year, Porter reported on continued growth at St
Mark’s, concluding that the parish was in “prosperous condition.”358 Moreover, he noted
that, with the new church built and Saltus ordained, he had “gradually withdrawn from
the actual charge of the Church, leaving it almost entirely in the hands of [Saltus]” and
looked forward to the day when he could “retire entirely.”359 Thus, Saltus was clearly
being prepared to become the next rector of St. Mark’s.

At the 1882 Convention, held at Church of the Advent, Spartanburg, Saltus was
listed amongst the priests of the diocese and was marked with others as being “[e]ntitled

357 1882 Journal, 60. The list includes a “Johnston.” However, since there was no
“Johnston” listed on the clergy role of the diocese at that time (and no other mention of a
“Johnston” in the 1882 diocesan journal), I have presumed that this was Rev. John
Johnson, who was the only “Johnson” on the clergy role that year. Welch is alternatively
listed as “Welsh” and “Welch” in the same journal.

358 1882 Journal, 135.

359 1882 Journal, 135.
to all the privileges of the Convention.” Moreover, when the convention was called to order on its first day, Saltus answered to his name and was listed in the diocesan journal accordingly. When, at two different points in the proceedings, votes on amending canons were taken (as required) by orders, the name “Saltus” was routinely recorded with the other “aye” votes who carried the question. Unfortunately, this was not a harbinger of things to come.

Saltus appeared again on the clergy roll for the 1883 diocesan convention—and was once again listed as being “[e]ntitled to all the privileges of the Convention.” However, he did not answer when the roll was called at convention. According to the parochial report for St. Mark’s submitted by Toomer Porter, the parish was continuing to thrive, and Saltus had for some time “had the entire charge” of the work of the parish. But Saltus “has broken down under his labors, and has been compelled to seek rest in Summerville,” and the parish therefore solicited prayers that God would “spare his life and restore his health.” A year later, Bishop Howe explained in his address that Saltus

360 *1882 Journal*, 12.

361 *1882 Journal*, 17.


363 *Journal of the Ninety-Third Annual Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of South Carolina* (Charleston, SC: Walker, Evans, & Cogswell, 1883) [hereinafter *1883 Journal*], 11-12.

364 *1883 Journal*, 18.


366 *1883 Journal*, 133.
continued to suffer from “extreme ill health” such that he “has been compelled to retire from the work of the ministry.”\textsuperscript{368} Furthermore, St. Mark’s had since called the Rev. H.C. Bishop from the Diocese of Maryland to serve as their assistant minister. Although Bishop had begun officiating at St. Mark’s earlier that year, he had not yet been formally transferred from Maryland so he did not yet appear on the list of clergy.

Apparently in response to the continued introduction of black clergy into the diocese – as well as in acknowledgment of the 1883 General Convention’s failure to allow for Southern dioceses to set up proposed separate diocesan organizations based on race,\textsuperscript{369} the 1884 diocesan convention approved a resolution creating a special committee “to devise such measures as may seem expedient under the circumstances.”\textsuperscript{370} The committee met during the diocesan convention and ultimately drafted a proposal that was then unanimously passed by the convention. However, after asserting the “great duty cast upon them by being placed in the midst of the ignorant multitude of colored people

\textsuperscript{368} Howe, “Bishop’s Address,” \textit{1884 Journal}, 67. It is worth noting that, on February 13, 1884, just a few months prior to the 1884 convention, Bishop Howe’s wife had died. Waterman, “Howe,” 364. However, there is no mention of her passing in the diocesan journal. Perhaps the only reference to her death is in the midst of the Bishop’s Address, when he states that, due to “reasons of a personal character, I have not been able to make the usual number of visitations.” Howe, \textit{1884 Journal}, 58.

\textsuperscript{369} In the summer of 1883, Bishop Howe had played a significant role in the Sewanee Conference, a gathering of bishops, priests, and laymen from Southern dioceses, which developed the proposal to General Convention that would have allowed for the creation of separate missionary organizations for black parishes. Shattuck, “One Fold and One Chief Shepherd,” 43-72.

\textsuperscript{370} \textit{1884 Journal}, 27.
which surrounds them,” the proposal merely established an “Advisory Council to the Bishop in all matters pertaining to the interests of the Mission work among the colored people,” to which the Bishop would “annually appoint two or more presbyters, and two or more laymen” who were members of the diocese.

According to the authors of the proposal, this framework was necessary to come up with a remedy for the lack of suitable candidates for ordination within the black community, such that “men of their own race” could be identified to do the necessary work. Beyond that, the committee also proposed a revision to the Constitution of the Diocese whereby, with respect to those who were entitled to seat and vote at convention, the term “Clergymen” would be replaced with “Presbyter.” This revision to the Constitution, which was then approved at convention, was apparently intended to remove deacons from those who were entitled to seat and vote at convention—perhaps based on the thought that more black individuals could be ordained to the diaconate—and not the priesthood—without impacting the composition of those voting at convention.

Approximately one month after the 1884 convention, Thaddaeus Saltus died. Bishop Howe, in his 1885 diocesan address, lamented the briefness of Saltus’ ministry—though he noted his service “was quite a consecrated one, and will no: be found without

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371 1884 Journal, 48. However, the authors of the proposal noted, perhaps in an attempt to sound less harsh with respect to the individuals who composed St. Mark’s, that there was a “a small fraction of colored persons who have always been free, and who differ in so many respects from other colored congregations, as not to affect materially the policy which is required for the general colored population.” 1884 Journal, 48.

372 1884 Journal, 48-49.

373 1884 Journal, 48.

374 1884 Journal, 49.
fruit.” However, there were two new African American clergy on the roll of the diocese at the 1885 convention. Hutchins C. Bishop, previously of the Diocese of Maryland, was listed as the assistant minister of St. Mark’s, and Thomas G. Harper, a deacon transferred from the Diocese of Pennsylvania, was serving as assistant minister of St. Luke’s, Columbia. Both Bishop and Harper answered the roll indicating their presence on the first day of the Convention.

According to the clergy roll printed in the diocesan journal, neither Bishop nor Harper were entitled to vote at the convention. This, however, was not due to the color of their skin—but rather to the length of time during which they had been canonically resident in the diocese. Under Article III, Section II of the Constitution then in place, any clergyman who had been actually and canonically resident in the diocese and serving as a rector, minister, or assistant minister of a parish (or missionary or chaplain) for twelve months prior to the convention was “entitled to all the privileges of a member of the

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375 Howe, “Bishop’s Address,” *Journal of the Ninety-Fifth Annual Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of South Carolina* (Columbia, SC: Charles A. Calvo, Jr., Printer, 1885) [hereinafter *1885 Journal*], 46. According to the necrology printed in the back of the diocesan journal, Saltus died on June 20, 1884, at the age of 33. *1885 Journal*, 151.

376 *1885 Journal*, 10-11, 135. Despite the approved change to the constitution at the prior convention respecting “Clergymen” versus “Presbyters,” at least one deacon, the Rev. T.B. Clarkson, was still listed as having all privileges at convention. *1885 Journal*, 11. This was due to the fact that the change to the Constitution still needed to be confirmed at the 1885 convention. However, on the fourth day of the convention, it was decided that the matter of the Constitution’s amendment would be held over to the following year’s convention. *1885 Journal*, 37.

377 *1885 Journal*, 11, 47.

378 *1885 Journal*, 17.
Convention.”379 With respect to those who had not yet been canonically resident for
twelve months, they were “entitled to all privileges of the Convention, except the right to
vote.”380 It would appear then that, under the Constitution then in place, the only thing
preventing Bishop and Harper from voting was the length of their domicile – not the
color of their skin.

However, when the committee charged with reviewing the clergy list for accuracy
reported back favorably to the convention, a resolution was immediately offered by W.C.
Benet of Trinity Church, Abbeville, seeking to amend the clergy roll by striking the
names of both black clergy and referring the question of their eligibility to a committee of
five – made up of two clergymen and three laymen – to report to the following
convention.381 There were numerous attempts to amend the resolution or to table it, and,
though the clergy solidly favored tabling it, the laity were overwhelmingly in opposition
to tabling it.382 Once a vote by orders was then held on the original resolution to strike
the names of the two black clergy from the roll, the resolution failed due to the
overwhelming vote of the clergy against it – though it passed the lay order.383 Notably,
neither Bishop nor Harper are recorded as having voted on the question. The convention
then adjourned for the day.


381 1885 Journal, 19.


On the third day of the convention, the matter continued to be the subject of debate. When Drayton, a lay delegate, moved to suspend the order of business to return to the matter of the clergy roll, Bishop Howe, in his role as chair, ruled that the motion was out of order, and, when an appeal was made, the decision of the Chair was sustained. Another lay delegate, Jervey, then "gave notice of a protest against the seating of the colored clergy."\textsuperscript{385}

With that, the matter does not appear again until, on the fourth and final day of the convention, one lay delegate, R.W. Shand, introduced an amendment to the Constitution that sought to address the concerns about how clergy were qualified to vote at convention by limiting clergy who would be automatically entitled to convention privileges to those clergy who are serving in congregations or parishes "in union with this Convention," thereby eliminating black clergymen, since those parishes where they serve have not been admitted into union with the convention.\textsuperscript{386} However, this amendment was tabled—though it would be briefly reconsidered the following year.

Just prior to adjournment on that fourth day, two different protests regarding the handling of the clergy roll were placed in the record.\textsuperscript{387} The first and most significant, which was presented by Jervey and signed by thirty laymen and four members of the

\textsuperscript{385} \textit{1885 Journal}, 32. In the Standing Committee election that followed, there may be some evidence of the laity being initially unwilling to elect Toomer Porter to the Standing Committee—perhaps due to his association with and support of black clergy and congregations. After failing to be elected by the lay order on several ballots, however, Porter was elected by both orders on the fourth ballot. \textit{1885 Journal}, 36.

\textsuperscript{386} \textit{1885 Journal}, 39.

\textsuperscript{387} \textit{1885 Journal}, 38-40.
clergy,\textsuperscript{388} stated that the failure to have the convention adopt, by motion, the report of the clergy roll committee was “unparliamentary and illegal, and as drawing into question the very organization of the Convention itself.”\textsuperscript{389} The signers of the protest thereby disagreed with the position of the Bishop that was then acted upon by the convention – “that by virtue of their names being on the Bishop’s list, and reported upon by the Committee on Credentials, certain persons who have been admitted to Holy Orders, to wit, Messrs. H.C. Bishop and Thos. G. Harper, are entitled to and do occupy seats in this Convention.” Furthermore, the signers go on to make it clear that they are protesting that the convention had thereby affirmed “that under our Constitution and laws persons of color, and not belonging to the white race, are entitled to seats upon the floor of this Convention and participation in the government of the Church in this Diocese.”

According those protesting, “such an innovation in the government of the Church can and should be effected only by the consent of the Church, expressed unequivocally at a Convention, after a full, fair, calm and deliberate discussion of the question on its merits.”\textsuperscript{390}

\textsuperscript{388} The members of the clergy signing the protest were: W. H. Campbell, rector of St. Paul’s, Radcliffeboro; R.S. Trapier, rector of St. Michael’s Charleston; Legrand F. Guerry, rector of St. Paul’s, Summerville; and Wm. H. Hanckel, rector of Trinity, Abbeville. \textit{1885 Journal}, 39. Notably, Legrand F. Guerry was the father of a future bishop, William A. Guerry.

\textsuperscript{389} \textit{1885 Journal}, 39.

\textsuperscript{390} \textit{1885 Journal}, 39. The second protest, which was lodged by T.M. Hanckel was a more limited protest objecting to the failure to adjudicate fully the question of whether the two black clergymen were entitled to seats at the Convention as well as an objection to the position taken by a majority of the clergy that these two clergymen were entitled to be seated, which he contends was “based upon an unfair and erroneous interpretation of the language of the Constitution and Canons.” \textit{1885 Journal}, 40. No explanation was provided as to why the interpretation was unfair and erroneous.

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The dispute over the seating of Bishop and Harper at the 1885 diocesan convention made the June 24, 1885 issue of the *New York Times*. The article noted that almost ten years had passed since the diocese was divided over the question of St. Mark’s being admitted to convention. It further noted that Saltus had been previously allowed to vote at the 1882 diocesan convention—and that “[n]o question upon his rights and privileges upon the ground of color had been raised up to this time in either convention.” However, the dispute arising at the 1885 convention over black clergy had continued to be the subject of dispute among the clergy and the laity according to local press reports.

The remainder of the article provided the impressive biographies of both Bishop and Harper. Notably, Harper’s father was a white English barrister who had married his mother, who was “West Indian,” while serving as Governor of Demerara in what is now the South American country of Guyana. Prior to his entry into the ministry, Harper had studied at Greenwich Observatory, traveled around the world serving in the British Navy, subsequently graduated from King’s College, and then studied at Leipzig University in Germany. The article thus noted that, though his race was the source of

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controversy in the Diocese of South Carolina, Rev. Harper’s "whole life has been spent more among white people than the colored race."\textsuperscript{395}

Since the issue over whether the report of the credentialing committees needed to be approved would arise again, it is worth noting here that, based on a review of prior journals, it was the practice that the rolls would be reviewed by committee and then reported back to the convention. Then the reports would be considered received by convention with the President or Chair then declaring that a quorum was present (or not) and that the convention was duly organized. There was no precedent for the clergy and lay delegate roll reports to be subject to approval by the convention.

In this respect, it may be helpful to note that, in 1872, revised Rules of Order, Constitution, and Canons had been adopted by the Diocese. Up through 1871, the Rules of Order specified the procedure in this regard in greater detail as follows:

\textbf{II. At the opening of each Annual Convention, when the President shall have taken the Chair, the Secretary shall first call over, in alphabetical order, the names of the clergy from the list furnished by the Ecclesiastical authority, and a Committee of three clergymen shall be immediately appointed to report which of the Clergy are entitled to seats and votes, and which only to seats. The Secretary shall then call over the List of Parishes and Churches in union with this Convention, when the Deputies shall lay their certificates on the Secretary’s table. These, together with the list laid upon the table by the Treasurer, shall be referred to a Committee of three laymen, who shall forthwith examine them and report to the Convention, specifying in their report which Parishes or Churches are entitled to all the privileges of the Convention, and which are, by Article XII of the Constitution, debarred from voting until admitted by a vote of the Convention. A constitutional quorum having been found present, the President shall declare the Convention duly organized.}\textsuperscript{396}


\textsuperscript{396} 1871 \textit{Journal}, Appendix VII.C., Rules of Order, 145.
This procedure did not provide for the convention having to vote to accept the report from the committee. In 1872, new rules of order were adopted, which no longer provided these details but instead, in Rule I, merely starts with the following: “After the Convention has been declared duly organized, and the Committees on Credentials appointed, the Order of Proceedings for the first day shall be …”

Furthermore, the Constitution of the diocese then in place, with respect to clergy participation at convention, merely provides the following criteria:

The Bishop, the Assistant Bishop, when there is one, and every other Clergyman, who has been actually, as well as canonically, resident within the Diocese for the space of twelve calendar months next before the meeting of the Convention, and has for the same period been performing the duties of his station as Rector, Minister, or Assistant Minister of a Parish; or as a Missionary, acting under the Ecclesiastical authority of the Diocese; or as a Chaplain in any public or benevolent institution; or as a Professor in the Theological Seminary of the Diocese, or who, after a continued service of at least twenty years in this Diocese, by the infirmities of health or age may have been incapacitated for further active duties of the Ministry, shall be entitled to all the privileges of a member of the Convention.

Thus, there was no mention of race with respect to the criteria for clergy being entitled to vote at convention. In fact, there is no mention of race in the Constitution of the diocese. The only mention of race in the Canons of the diocese was with respect to the information to be recorded in parochial reports.

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398 1879 Journal, Constitution, Article III, Of Convention—Members, § II, 124. After 1879, the Constitution was no longer printed in each year’s diocesan journal.
When the diocese gathered for its 1886 convention, neither Bishop nor Harper were listed on the clergy roll. According to St. Mark’s parochial report, Bishop had resigned St. Mark’s to become the rector at St. Philip’s, New York. In his address, Howe briefly lamented that this left the parish with only that little oversight that Toomer Porter could provide. Howe also noted that, upon request, he had transferred Harper, still a deacon, to the Diocese of Northern New Jersey.

However, based on the events recorded in the diocesan journal, the diocese was still bitterly divided over the question of race – this time through proxy questions over where the authority lay for decided who was qualified to be seated at convention as well as over who would be elected to Standing Committee and to represent the diocese at General Convention.

First, the question of what steps were necessary to approve the rolls of clergy and lay delegates led to an extended debate that encompassed almost the entire second day of the convention and continued on into the third day. Basically, it appears that the convention was brought to a standstill over the question of who had authority to approve the rolls of clergy and laity and how a challenge to that approval should be handled. In the past, the credentialing committees would merely report back to the convention any items that were identified that needed the convention’s action (for example, if there were a question about whether a lay deputy was properly credentialed) and the convention

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399 *Journal of the Ninety-Sixth Annual Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of South Carolina* (Charleston, SC: Walker, Evans, & Cogswell, 1886) [hereinafter *1886 Journal*], 7-9.

400 Howe, “Bishop’s Address,” *1886 Journal*, 43.

401 Howe, “Bishop’s Address,” *1886 Journal*, 44.
could then act upon those recommendations. However, the convention had not been
called upon to approve the reports of those committees. Ultimately, the question became
whether both orders were necessary to approve or reject the committee’s report.

In summary, Bishop Howe took the position, supported by past practice, that a
motion to adopt the reports of the credentialing committees was out of order. In
particular, with respect to the Clergy, Howe ruled that “the Convention having been
declared ‘duly organized,’ the Clergy were seated under the Constitution and Canon, and
not by a direct vote of the Convention.”402 An appeal was then taken from Howe’s
decision ruling motions to adopt the reports of both credentialing committees out of
order. When the vote was finally taken, on the third day of convention, it was properly
described as a vote to sustain the decision of the Chair – but Howe failed to recognize
that both orders had to vote against sustaining the Chair for the Chair not to be sustained.
While the clergy voted overwhelmingly – 24 to 4 – to sustain the decision of the Chair,
the laity voted overwhelmingly – 5 to 26 with 1 divided – against sustaining the decision
of the Chair.403 Unfortunately, the journal then reads that the decision of the Chair was
not sustained, whereas, under parliamentary procedure, the decision of the Chair had
been sustained because those opposing the ruling of the Chair had failed to win the
vote—since they had lost the clergy order.

402 1886 Journal, 19.

403 1886 Journal, 20-21. The four clergy voting against the Bishop were W. H. Campbell,
rector of St. Paul’s, Radcliffeboro; Legrand F. Guerry, rector of St. Paul’s, Summerville;
R.S. Trapier, rector of St. Michael’s Charleston; and Robert Wilson, rector of St. Luke’s,
Charleston.
Thereafter, several resolutions were considered and failed on divided votes by orders. Ultimately, a resolution was passed stating that the convention “recognizes the right of those Clergymen whose names have been reported on the Clergy List submitted by the Committee as entitled to all the privileges of the Convention, according to the classification of the Committee.”

In the wake of this series of votes over the question of who was entitled to rule upon the credentials of clergy and lay delegates, a lay delegate, T.M. Hanckel proposed amendments to the Canons which would allow, upon the petition of any clergyman or any lay delegation, for the convention to put to a vote whether any particular clergyman or lay delegate was entitled to the privileges of convention—and that, unless a majority of both orders agreed, the individual would not be entitled to those privileges.

On the fourth day of the convention, Bishop Howe finally read his address, which did not mention the controversies over which the convention had been—and continued to be—so divided. After Howe’s address, the Rev. Benjamin Allston, who had

404 1886 Journal, 24. After this vote, the Revs. Joyner and Allston, who had consistently supported the Bishop’s position throughout the voting, then voiced their concern that they had withheld their votes on this final resolution “believing it to be extra-judicial and subversive of the laws which govern us.” 1886 Journal, 25.

405 1886 Journal, 27-28. Of course, this type of rule begs the question of who is entitled to vote if everyone’s right to vote is subject to vote.

406 1886 Journal, 33 (noting that, on the fourth day, Bishop Howe read his Annual Address); Howe, “Bishop’s Address, 1886 Journal, 41-52. There is an interesting note for the date of July 3, 1885, in the list of “Bishop’s Acts and Services” that is appended to his address. 1886 Journal, 54. The note references a “letter of remonstrance” that he sent to the Standing Committee that related to some dispute about their election at the 1885 Convention. In doing so, he “assured the Standing Committee that I regarded them as my council of advice only because they were duly elected by the Diocesan Convention of 1885, and not because they held over from the Convention of 1884.” 1886 Journal, 54. Thereafter, dated July 17, he records, with relief, the response from the President of the
consistently supported the Bishop’s position throughout the convention, apparently
growing frustrated with the various canonical, constitutional, and parliamentary
maneuvers seeking to exclude black representation at the convention, offered a resolution
that would lay bare the policy sought by those on the other side of the issue. Specifically,
he moved that the Constitution simply be amended to insert “the word ‘White’ before the
words Clergymen and Laymen, wherever they occur.” 407 The record indicates that,
although it was initially agreed to refer this to the Committee on Constitution and
Canons, “this action was reconsidered, and the reference was refused.” 408 The
Committee on Canons then turned to the consideration of the amendments to the Canons
proposed by Hanckel, which would have allowed an objection lodged against any
individual clergyman or lay delegate to subject that clergyman’s or lay delegate’s
privileges to a Convention vote. The Committee, however, reported that it felt that the
issue was better resolved by the proposed amendment by Shand (limiting automatic
privileges to those clergy who served parishes admitted to the convention) that remained
on the table from the previous convention. 409 Though the proposal was then briefly
considered, a motion to suspend further consideration of the issue was adopted. 410

Standing Committee stating: “We have neither impugned or cast any reflection upon the
Convention, or its proceedings.” 1886 Journal, 54. Apparently, the Standing Committee
had taken the peculiar step of having the Committee re-elect two members of the
committee who had already been elected at convention.

407 1886 Journal, 33.
408 1886 Journal, 33.
409 1886 Journal, 34.
410 1886 Journal, 34.
Thereafter, the elections for Standing Committee and General Convention Deputies were held. Going into the convention, the Standing Committee was composed of the Revs. C.C. Pinckney, John Johnson, Toomer Porter, R.H. Wilson, and W.H. Campbell, of which only Wilson and Campbell had opposed the Bishop’s position. Clergy deputies to General Convention were the Revs. C.C. Pinckney, J.D. McCullough, Toomer Porter, and Ellison Capers, of which only Capers had opposed the Bishop’s position.

On the first ballot, the Revs. Pinckney, Johnson, Wilson, and Campbell were re-elected—but Porter was elected by the clergy and Trapier, who had consistently opposed the Bishop, was elected by the laity. The second through fifth ballots continued with the same result. After several other candidates were considered but no agreement reached by the twelfth ballot, a special committee was formed to see who the clergy and laity could agree upon, and the Rev. W.O. Prentiss was elected to the final clergy spot on Standing Committee.\(^\text{411}\)

With respect to General Convention clergy deputies, there was a similar result with Pinckney, Capers, and McCullough elected on the first ballot by both orders—and Porter elected by the clergy order and Campbell, who had opposed the Bishop, elected by the laity. After the third ballot ended in the same result, Porter withdrew and nominated John Johnson, who quickly received the clergy vote, but with Campbell still having the support of the laity. After the same trend continued on subsequent ballots, another

\(^{411}\) *1886 Journal*, 34-37.
committee was formed to identify an agreeable candidate, but that was not successful—
though, on the seventh ballot, Johnson ending up winning both orders.\footnote{1886 Journal, 37-39.}

Significantly, after many years of service, Toomer Porter had not been re-elected
to either position due to lay opposition.

Bishop Howe then rose to offer some concluding words. He acknowledged that it
had been “a laborious and exciting Convention” in which many “sparks” had flown, and
so he suggested “that we all address ourselves in the ensuing Convention year to thoughts
and methods of unity in the working of the Diocese.” However, he concluded with
apparent resignation, “if no common ground can be found for united action, then depend
upon it your Bishop will not stand in the way of the unity of the Diocese.”\footnote{1886 Journal, 39.}

At the following convention in 1887, however, Bishop Howe confronted another
racially-charged controversy regarding the inclusion of an African American on the roll
of clergy entitled to a seat at convention. In January 1887, several months prior to the
diocesan convention, St. Mark’s had called a new assistant minister, J. H. M. Pollard,
who was an African American.\footnote{“The Rev. J. H. M. Pollard,” Frank Leslie’s Sunday Magazine, vol. XXIV, no. 1 (July
1888), 148.} As had been his custom, Bishop Howe then included Pollard on the list of clergy canonically resident in the diocese.\footnote{Journal of the Ninety-Seventh Annual Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of South Carolina (Charleston, SC: Walker, Evans & Cogswell, 1887) [hereinafter “1887 Journal”], 8. In his address to the convention, Bishop Howe also noted that, in his opinion, a candidate for the diaconate, J.S. Quarles, had been rejected by the Standing Committee merely due to his race. Howe, “Bishop’s Address,” 1887 Journal, 37-43.}
Despite the notation that Pollard would not be entitled to vote because he had not resided in the diocese for twelve months prior to convention, there were several attempts to have him removed from the role—partly due to the precedent that his inclusion could set for future conventions, when he would be entitled to vote.\textsuperscript{416} The initial motion to strike Pollard’s name had overwhelming support from the lay delegations but failed, due to non-concurrence of orders, after the clergy order rejected the it with 25 against and only 3 supporting it.\textsuperscript{417} When these efforts failed to accomplish Pollard’s removal from the role, the lay delegates of between thirteen to twenty parishes and one clergy member walked out of the convention.\textsuperscript{418} However, with a quorum still in place, the convention continued its business.

One action that the remaining delegates took was finally to adopt the amendment to the Diocesan Constitution, which had been initially passed at the 1884 convention, whereby the word “clergymen” was replaced by “presbyters” with respect to those who

\textsuperscript{416} 1887 Journal, 17 (motion made by Mr. J.C. Haskell to strike Rev. Pollard’s name from the Roll of the Clergy).

\textsuperscript{417} 1887 Journal, 18-19.

\textsuperscript{418} For a general account of this controversy, which puts the number of departing lay delegations at thirteen, see Thomas, Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina, 96-97. An account written by a committee formed by those who departed the convention lists the number of lay delegations at twenty. Statement of the Causes which Led to the Withdrawal of the Deputies from the Late Diocesan Convention of South Carolina (Charleston, S.C.: Walker, Evans, & Cogswell, 1887), 27; see also Tyler, “Drawing the Color Line,” 115 (placing the number at twenty-one). The diocesan journal states that the following lay delegations withdrew: St. Paul’s, Radcliffeboro; St. Philip’s, Charleston; St. Michael’s, Charleston; St. Andrew’s; St. John’s, Berkeley; Prince Frederick’s; All Saints; Black Oak; Grahamville; Abbeville; Aiken; Grace Church, Charleston; “and others.” 1887 Journal, 23.
would have voting privileges at convention, thereby taking away voting privileges from deacons.\textsuperscript{419} Although this change was intended to allow for the possibility that provision could be made for most black clergy to remain deacons without voting privileges, this change did not pacify the delegates who had left the convention.

Just prior to the close of the convention, Bishop Howe addressed the remaining delegates expressing his “very great regret” over what had transpired.\textsuperscript{420} He noted however that withdrawal from convention did not constitute withdrawal from the diocese. He even pointed to the example of St. Mark’s, which was a congregation of the diocese despite never being seated at convention.\textsuperscript{421} Thus, he declared that he would continue to exercise his right as bishop to visit all of the congregations in the diocese “unless the doors of the Churches are locked against me.”\textsuperscript{422}

However, the split in the diocese persisted over the course of the next year, and, when the diocese held its next annual convention in 1888, those parishes whose lay delegates had walked out did not return. Pollard remained on the clergy roll and was now listed as entitled to vote at the convention.\textsuperscript{423} The primary work of the 1888 convention

\textsuperscript{419} 1887 \textit{Journal}, 26.

\textsuperscript{420} 1887 \textit{Journal}, 31.

\textsuperscript{421} 1887 \textit{Journal}, 32.

\textsuperscript{422} 1887 \textit{Journal}, 32. In his concluding remarks, Howe also noted that: Pollard had been seated in Virginia diocesan conventions for eight years prior to coming to South Carolina. \textit{1887 Journal}, 32.

was to pass a resolution establishing a committee of three clergymen and three laypersons to consult with the African American congregations and clergy and to draw up a plan “to effect the complete separation into two complete organizations” based on “the two races in this Diocese.” An apparently chastened Howe offered a very limited address to the convention noting that he would “not call your attention, as might perhaps be at first sight expected, to our difference, but shall leave you to deal with them as you best may in Convention.”

In 1889, most of those parishes whose lay delegates had walked out of the 1887 convention returned to diocesan convention based on their understanding that the diocese would become segregated. Thus, after many years of wrangling, the Diocese of South Carolina finally instituted, based on the recommendations of the committee formed at the prior convention, with a separate diocesan structure for African American congregations, placing them within one mission district under the authority of the bishop with the assistant of an archdeacon. In addition, the language of the Diocesan Constitution was

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427 Holmes, *Brief History of the Episcopal Church*, 84.
amended such that the clergy connected to the African American congregations would not be entitled to vote at convention.\textsuperscript{428}

In a small compromise, however, the language included a proviso that allowed any clergy member seated at the 1889 convention would continue to have the same privileges at future conventions. As a result, Pollard did not have his voting privileges taken away and was the one African American clergy member with voting rights at the 1889 convention and at future conventions until his retirement or departure from the diocese.\textsuperscript{429} Pollard, therefore, continued to have the right to participate in conventions until his departure, in January 1898, to become Archdeacon in North Carolina.\textsuperscript{430}

Given Howe’s limited and somewhat critical remarks in his address at to the 1889 convention, it would appear that he was not entirely satisfied with the solution. At the 1890 diocesan convention, with lay deputies from thirty-two parishes in attendance, the constitutional amendments first approved in 1889 were adopted.\textsuperscript{431}

Although he was certainly disappointed with many of the consequences of having reached this compromise, Bishop Howe had finally succeeded in creating some structure that he hoped would allow for greater outreach to African Americans in South

\textsuperscript{428} 1889 \textit{Journal}, 16-21.

\textsuperscript{429} Thomas, \textit{Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina}, 110.

\textsuperscript{430} Thomas, \textit{Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina}, 232.

\textsuperscript{431} \textit{Journal of the One Hundredth Annual Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of South Carolina} (Charleston, S.C.: Walker, Evans & Cogswell, 1890), 18, 26-27.
Carolina.\textsuperscript{432} This structure remained in place, with some adjustments, until 1965, when the Diocese of South Carolina finally voted to abolish the separate diocesan structure for African American congregations and formally integrate the organization of the diocese.\textsuperscript{433}

\textsuperscript{432} Moreover, the new structure could be seen as a local adaptation of the 1883 Sewanee Conference proposal for the national church, which Howe had helped draft and supported. Shattuck, "One Fold and One Chief Shepherd," 43-72.

\textsuperscript{433} Caldwell, \textit{A History of the Episcopal Church Schism}, 23, 26-27
Conclusion

In May 1891, Bishop Howe made what would be his final appearance before a diocesan convention. In his address, he noted that, although the political climate outside the church had been heated, he was thankful that, "within the Diocese, so far as I have observed, the questions which, of late, have agitated us and rent us asunder have not disturbed our peace."\(^{434}\) Howe then expressed his hope that this time of relative peace would continue.

Approximately one month prior to the next diocesan convention, on Easter Day, April 17, 1892, while visiting St. Paul’s, Summerville, Bishop Howe had the onset of some paralysis affecting his speech and, soon thereafter, pursuant to his doctor’s recommendation, went to his family home in Saluda, on the southern edge of the North Carolina mountains, for rest and recuperation.\(^{435}\) Several weeks later, in mid-May, however, Howe suffered a paralytic stroke "affecting the entire left side of his body," though he did recover somewhat in the weeks that followed.\(^{436}\) Just prior to the onset of his initial paralysis, Bishop Howe appointed Edmund N. Joyner as "Archdeacon to Colored people," in furtherance of the new segregated diocesan structure for ministry to African Americans.\(^{437}\)

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\(^{437}\) Thomas, *Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina*, 451.
During this time, as his health was failing, Bishop Howe submitted his resignation from the episcopacy, but the House of Bishops refused his resignation.\textsuperscript{438} With his health in decline and his attempt at resignation rebuffed, Bishop Howe requested that the diocese elect an assistant bishop to take responsibility for the many episcopal duties that he was no longer able to perform.\textsuperscript{439} Thus, in 1893, Ellison Capers, former Confederate general turned Episcopal priest, was elected Assistant Bishop of the Diocese of South Carolina.\textsuperscript{440} Howe’s episcopacy continued until his death, on November 25, 1894, in Charleston over two years after the onset of the episode of paralysis and stroke.\textsuperscript{441}

One retrospective on Howe’s life summarized his episcopacy as follows:

It must suffice to say that Bishop Howe was faithful, and patient, and wise, and that in twenty years and a half, before a merciful stroke of paralysis let his burden fall, he had consecrated twenty-nine churches, built anew or thoroughly rebuilt, had ordained forty-eight clergymen, had laid his hands upon six thousand seven hundred persons in Confirmation, and had raised the number of his clergy to forty-five, and the congregations to ninety-eight.\textsuperscript{442}

However, with all of that noted, his episcopacy was largely remembered – to the extent that it has been remembered – for the controversies that he faced over the inclusion of

\textsuperscript{438} Waterman, “Howe,” 389; “Bishop Howe,” \textit{The Diocese}.


\textsuperscript{440} 1893 Journal, 27-28. In contrast to Bishop Howe’s election, Capers was elected by both orders on the first ballot.


\textsuperscript{442} Waterman, “Howe,” 377. See also “Biographical Sketch,” \textit{Sermons Preached}, xvi.
African Americans within the life of the diocese. Thus, despite the great progress that was made in rebuilding the diocese in the aftermath of the Civil War, his time as bishop is most often described in terms of strife and turmoil – “the stormiest episcopate known to the Church in South Carolina.”

Howe’s successor, Bishop Capers, noted that tension in his summary of Howe’s episcopacy—as he sought to minimize the conflicts and emphasize the accomplishments with respect to the rebuilding of the diocese:

But for the unhappy divisions and distractions which for a time paralyzed our efforts for Diocesan progress, and put us back at least a decade, the Diocese to-day would be a more satisfying witness of growth and progress, a better testimony to the unting devotions of him who had the rule over us, and who spoke the word of God to us with so much of knowledge, and power, and love.

With Bishop Howe’s death, Capers became the new diocesan bishop—and, in some sense, represented, within the Episcopal Church, the restoration of the old political order that had taken place within the political realm some twenty years prior – perhaps further evidence that the State would generally, if not always, prevail in that Constantinian alliance between Church and State that Howe had lamented in his 1877 convention address.

In looking back over the race-based controversies of Bishop Howe’s episcopacy, his friend and supporter in those controversies, Toomer Porter, would later write that “the

443 “Bishop Howe,” *The Diocese*.


dreadful contest … almost killed me, and it did kill the Bishop, for he died of a broken heart; broken by his love for the Church which he ruled and loved so well."\textsuperscript{446}

\textsuperscript{446} Toomer, \textit{Led On!}, 337.
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