

CHAPTER III

THE POST-BELLUM PERIOD

ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH was without regular services for two years after the Reverend Mr. Randolph was evacuated from Fredericksburg in November, 1862. Then Miss Mary Thom collected sufficient funds to support a provisional rector, the Reverend Magruder Maury, and services were resumed on December 2, 1864, in the basement lecture room of the shell-torn church.¹

The son of Richard B. Maury, Magruder was born in Fredericksburg. Thus this graduate of the University of Virginia and of Virginia Seminary was the first, and to date the only, native ever to be rector of St. George's. A chaplain in the Confederate Army, he later married Leila Andrews, the daughter of a prominent clergyman, the Reverend Charles W. Andrews, D.D., rector of Trinity Church, Shepherdstown, (now) West Virginia.²

Shortly after the end of the war Maury was sent north by the vestry to solicit funds for the repair of "our dismantled sanctuary." The Bishop of New York graciously gave him a letter to the clergy and laity of that diocese and he obtained \$514 in New York City and \$900 in Cold Spring, New York, with a promise of further aid, if required, from a Mr. Parrott of that village. The Reverend Mytton Maury was the rector at Cold Spring. In mid-July 1865 the vestry of St. George's Church congratulated Magruder Maury on his successful fund raising mission.³

On August 15, 1865, he resigned his position as temporary rector and received an appointment as rector effective September 1.⁴ To secure funds for his salary and to defray incidental expenses the vestry on April 13, 1866, authorized the assessment of an annual tax not to exceed \$20 on each pew. At the same meeting it ordered a collection to be taken in church every third Sunday, the proceeds to be used for paying the debt due on the rectory. A year later the vestry levied for church expenses an assessment of eight per cent of the original cost of each pew.⁵

¹ Vestry Minutes, [III], 9 verso; *Journal*, 1865, p. 85.

² "A Partial List of the Descendants of John De La Fontaine," Brock, *op. cit.*, pp. 127-128; W. A. R. Goodwin, *op. cit.*, II, 191-192.

³ *Journal*, 1865, p. 85; Vestry Minutes, [III], 9 verso, 10 recto.

⁴ *Ibid.*, [III], 10 verso.

⁵ *Ibid.*, [III], 12 verso, 14 verso; Letter from G. MacLaren Brydon to Carrol H. Quenzel, Oct. 13, 1950. In the period before and immediately after the Civil War a collection for the minister's salary and current expenses was not usually taken during church services. All offerings at church services were intended to be for charity, missions, or other benevolences. Money for the minister's salary and for the support of the church was given outside, directly by the donor to the

In April, 1867, Mr. Maury tendered his resignation because the term for which he had been elected rector was about completed and because he had received a call to locate permanently elsewhere. The vestry refused to accept his resignation and re-appointed him as rector.⁶ On May 5, 1868, the vestry voted to place a suitable tablet on the wall of the church in memory of Reuben Thom—a vestryman for more than fifty years.⁷ This memorial is still there.

The diocesan convention was held in St. George's Church in May, 1869, with General Robert E. Lee, the lay delegate of Latimer Parish, Lexington, as one of the chief attractions. General Lee stayed at Judge William Barton's on the site of the Princess Anne Hotel. Mrs. J. W. Timberlake, a communicant of St. George's, has a lock of the General's hair which he gave to Miss Clara Boggs at a breakfast during the 1869 convention. Miss Boggs was the daughter of Lewis A. Boggs, the lay delegate from Berkeley Parish, Spotsylvania County. She was one of a party of fourteen men and women who had made the wagon trip from the Livingston community.⁸

At the 1870 diocesan convention the Reverend Mr. Maury reported that during the preceding twelve months he had delivered one hundred and ninety-five sermons and addresses, and conducted six communion services and twenty-four catechetical exercises.⁹ In July, 1870, the vestry authorized Mr. H. R. Robey and his neighbors to build an Episcopal chapel approximately six miles west of Fredericksburg and within the parochial bounds of St. George's Parish.¹⁰

In a letter dated Easter Monday, 1871, Maury requested that his salary be raised from \$1250 to \$1600. Rejecting this request, the vestry voted to increase his salary to \$1500. Whereupon Maury asked that his resignation be accepted, if he had been correctly informed that his salary request had been rejected, not because a majority of the vestrymen considered the amount unreasonable or the church unable to pay, but because general dissatisfaction in the congregation towards him had caused them to use this method of forcing his resignation. On April 24 the vestry accepted his resignation and instructed the treasurer to pay him

treasurer, or by the payment of pew rents to him. It was therefore something unusual when the vestry adopted the plan of asking for collections in church services for the payment of the parish debt. The poverty of the post-bellum period was obviously the cause.

⁶ Vestry Minutes, [III], 14 verso, 15 recto.

⁷ *Ibid.*, [III], 16 recto.

⁸ Letter from Betty Lewis Boggs to Nannie Scott, June 2, 1869; *Journal*, 1869, p. 17.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 1870, p. 167.

¹⁰ Vestry Minutes, [III], 23 recto.

an additional \$350 so that his salary for the year ending on Easter Sunday, 1871, would be \$1600.¹¹

Little is known about Maury after he left Fredericksburg. He was rector of Meade Parish in Fauquier County and Johns Parish in Loudoun County in 1874 and 1875.¹² In his Council address in May, 1876, Bishop Johns reported that he had deposed Mr. Magruder Maury from the ministry, but he did not give the date or the cause. According to one conjecture Maury was ousted because he was one of the four clergymen in the diocese of Virginia who went into the Reformed Episcopal Schism. He opposed bitterly Bishop Johns' successful effort to bring the diocese of Virginia back into the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States of America from its former affiliation with the Protestant Episcopal Church of the Confederate States of America. He died at his residence in Philadelphia on Tuesday, May 8, 1877, in his forty-second year.¹³

At a meeting of the vestry on July 4, 1871, the Reverend Walter W. Williams of Georgetown received six votes to five for the Reverend Edward C. Murdaugh, whereupon Judge Barton, the nominator of Murdaugh, moved that the election of Mr. Williams be made unanimous. This motion carried but Williams declined the call. On July 29 the vestry set the rector's salary at \$1800 and unanimously elected the Reverend Mr. Murdaugh as minister.¹⁴

The clergyman thus called to St. George's was a Virginian who had been ordained deacon by Bishop Cobb in Alabama on January 6, 1845. After laboring in that diocese for several years, he had served successively as rector of Martin's Brandon and Southwark Parishes in Prince George and Surry Counties, Virginia, and of St. James' Church, Herring Creek, Maryland, before moving to Fredericksburg.¹⁵

At the suggestion of the new rector the vestry held a called meeting on January 8, 1872, to consider means of utilizing the laity of the parish. In an effort to achieve this the vestry adopted Judge Barton's resolution which provided for the organization of a male and a female church aid society.¹⁶

Murdaugh's health was so poor in the fall of 1872 that he tendered his resignation to the vestry. Instead of accepting it that body formally

¹¹ *Ibid.*, [III], 25 verso, 26 recto and verso.

¹² *Journal*, 1874, p. 8.

¹³ *The Virginia Star*, May 16, 1877.

¹⁴ Vestry Minutes, [III], 28 recto and verso.

¹⁵ *Journal*, 1859, p. 93; *ibid.*, 1862, p. 8; *ibid.*, 1865, p. 6; *ibid.*, 1868, p. 33; *ibid.*, 1869, p. 27; *ibid.*, 1887, p. 27.

¹⁶ Vestry Minutes, [III], 29 recto.

Resolved, that we should on our own behalf and on behalf of this Congregation deeply deplore the severance of the relations now existing with our beloved Rector who has become so endeared to us by his faithful and devoted labors among us, the fruits of which are, under the Divine blessing, so manifest to us all.

That we . . . most earnestly request that he will not insist upon his resignation which we are most unwilling to accept—That for many reasons we desire that our present relations, so harmonious and pleasant, so beneficial to this congregation and the welfare of this church may long continue to our mutual comfort and spiritual well-being.¹⁷

The vestry authorized Dr. Murdaugh to employ an assistant minister "so long as he may think such assistance desirable." In July, 1874, the vestry voted \$250 to reimburse the rector partially for the salary he had paid the "late assistant minister."

Mrs. Mary Green Browne resigned as organist on March 29, 1873, and the vestry coupled its acceptance with a statement describing her as a zealous, faithful and satisfactory organist. This tribute to her many years of service was richly deserved as we have quoted earlier a contemporary comment on her playing when the present St. George's was consecrated on April 22, 1849. Miss Hattie Slaughter was selected as Mrs. Browne's successor.¹⁸

In April, 1874, the St. George's Benevolent Society of Fredericksburg was incorporated by an act of the legislature to hold property not to exceed \$100,000 for the purpose of benefiting the poor of the town of Fredericksburg and assisting needy widows and orphans. The founders of the Society envisioned an ambitious program, as the act of incorporation empowered the board to establish asylums for the aged and the poor, orphanages, reformatories and schools.

The greater part of the funds held in trust by the Society today, \$7,250, comes from a bequest of the Peck family in 1874. A. Wellington Wallace left \$6,100 to the Society for the "benefit of needy, poor widows of the city of Fredericksburg over fifty years of age, in the months of December, January, February, and March for their imminent need each year."

At the present time the Society is assisting in the education of two boys at the Blue Ridge School, contributing to the support of a person crippled with arthritis, and supplementing the State Welfare allotment to ten widows in the community.

The major part of the trust funds of St. George's Church earmarked for charitable purposes in the community, \$35,000, is

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, [III], 31 verso.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, [III], 32 recto, 40 verso, 33 recto, *ante*, p. 35.

administered by "The Charity School Board," whose founding in 1795 has been previously mentioned. Although the act of the legislature did not establish it as an Episcopal Church fund, the Board has always been composed of members of St. George's Church.

Originally, the school established through the income from this fund was named the "Male Charity School of Fredericksburg." Subsequently it was changed to the "Female Charity School of Fredericksburg," under which title it operated until the School was closed in 1930. Formerly located on Hanover Street just back of the Masonic Lodge, it was moved in 1835 to what is now the southeast corner of Caroline and Lewis Streets. During the last twenty-five years of the school's history, Miss Sally M. Braxton, great-great granddaughter of Chief Justice John Marshall, was the efficient president of the board. "Her wise management and deep interest in the welfare of the children contributed much to the success of the school during its final years."

After its discontinuance the funds intended for the maintenance of the school, were dispensed by a board of eight women to supply good homes and education to needy children. Under the presidency of Mrs. J. Conway Chichester the board is now financing four girls in foster homes. In addition, the board contributed \$50.00 to a dental clinic in 1948 and the same sum in 1949 to the James Monroe Parent Teacher Association for tonsillectomies for poor pupils.¹⁹

In July, 1874, the vestry assented to the proposal that St. George's should part with its old organ in partial payment for a new one. Almost a year later the vestry formally thanked Mrs. Belle S. Taylor and some other ladies for securing \$3,000 to pay for the "noble" new organ.²⁰ On July 31, 1876, the choir was given permission to build an addition to the organ loft providing the vestry would be relieved of any financial responsibility for the project.²¹ Informed in November, 1876, that many present and former members of the congregation of St. George's desired "to place a handsome window in the church" as a memorial to the Reverend Edward C. McGuire, D.D., the vestry appointed a committee to receive voluntary contributions for this purpose.²²

In April, 1876, Bishop John Johns, of the diocese of Virginia, died and as a token of respect the vestry had St. George's Church draped with mourning for thirty days. At the expiration of this time the mourning was distributed amongst the poor of the town.²³

¹⁹ *Acts and Joint Resolutions Passed by the General Assembly of the State of Virginia at the Session of 1874* (Richmond, R. F. Walker, Supt. Public Printing, 1874), pp. 152-153; "Trust Funds for Benevolences," *loc. cit.*, p. 7.

²⁰ Vestry Minutes, [III], 40 verso, 44 recto; *Journal*, 1875, p. 185.

²¹ Vestry Minutes, [III], 49 recto and verso.

²² *Ibid.*, [III], 50 recto and verso.

²³ *Ibid.*, [III], 48 recto and verso.

At a meeting on April 6, 1877, Judge Barton read the following letter dated April 3:

The Vestry of St. George's Church
Gentlemen:

The Rectorship of the Parish which you represent is in your hands. I herewith lay before you my resignation. For such tolerance and support as you have given me please receive my thanks. The tolerance was more than I deserved and of the support I regret to have made so little use. May the Lord of the Vineyard send you a Minister who shall be the bearer of blessings to you and to all the people of St. George's.

Believe me Gentlemen to be
your most obe^t servant
In Christ Jesus and His Church

Edward C. Murdaugh²⁴

By a vote of six to three the vestry accepted the resignation. When the vestry met again on April 11, 1877, it was presented with a long list of members who insisted that Dr. Murdaugh be called to the rectorship of St. George's and with a letter from Judge R. C. L. Moncure expressing the same sentiments. After a lengthy discussion Judge Barton's motion that Murdaugh be elected rector was defeated seven to four.²⁵

The official minutes of the vestry give no reasons for Murdaugh's resignation or its acceptance by the vestry. The vestry merely adopted the following resolution on April 24:

Resolved, That in accepting the resignation of Revd. Dr. E. C. Murdaugh, the Vestry are sensible of, and fully realize the loss of a faithful, laborious minister, whose labours for a series of years past have been crowned with a full measure of success.

That their late minister will carry with him into the fields of future usefulness, which he may enter, the kindest feeling of this body. . . .²⁶

Accompanying this resolution was a gift of money which Murdaugh returned with his thanks.

If documentary material providing an objective explanation of the resignation ever existed, it has not survived. In its absence

²⁴ *Ibid.*, [III], 53 verso, 54 recto; *The Virginia Star*, April 7, 1877.

²⁵ Vestry Minutes, [III], 54 verso.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, [III], 55 recto and verso; *The Virginia Star*, June 16, 1877.

one is reduced to surmising—a hazardous exercise. Apparently Murdaugh was somewhat more ritualistic than some of the extremely low church vestrymen. It has also been suggested that his social gospel was more comprehensive than that to which the communicants of St. George's had been accustomed. As we will learn later, Murdaugh's successor was so disturbed by a few parishioners' slighting remarks about the policy of bringing the lower classes into the church, that the vestry formally assured him that all "classes and colors" were welcome.²⁷ Murdaugh has written that before coming to Fredericksburg he had had no experience with the workings of a city church.²⁸ Differences in temperament may also have created friction.

On June 4 Judge Barton offered a resolution stating that inasmuch as the vestry approved every movement tending to spread the Gospel, it would welcome another Episcopal Church in Fredericksburg into fraternal relations and cooperate with it in obtaining diocesan recognition. Laid over for "further consideration," the resolution received no further notice. In July, 1877, more than fifty communicants, who were opposed to the acceptance of Murdaugh's resignation, organized Trinity Church and made him its rector.²⁹ The new congregation received from the Methodists a two-year rent-free lease of the building known as Hanover Church on the condition that the Episcopalians would make the necessary repairs. Within a year one hundred and twelve communicants transferred from St. George's to Trinity, including Judge W. S. Barton, Judge J. B. Jett, George B. Scott, John L. Stansbury, George B. Pearson, R. B. Shepherd, John F. Tackett, John S. Berry, Dr. John R. Taylor, William K. Howard, Monroe Kelly, F. W. Johnson and W. R. Mason. Trinity Church stressed the fact that it was a free-seat church.³⁰

Dr. Murdaugh had a stroke of paralysis in the fall of 1885, but he continued as rector of Trinity until his death on Sunday afternoon, November 7, 1886. His passing evoked many tributes including the assertion that

No man had a stronger hold on the affections of our people, irrespective of denomination. His charity knew no bounds; the poor in our midst knew him as their true friend.

The Reverend Churchill J. Gibson, D.D., of Grace Church, Petersburg, the Reverend Mr. Shield of Kentucky and the Reverend John K. Mason of St. George's officiated at Dr. Murdaugh's funeral. Trinity Church was "densely packed" during the

²⁷ Vestry Minutes, [III], 76 verso.

²⁸ *The Virginia Star*, June 16, 1877.

²⁹ Vestry Minutes, [III], 56 recto; *The Virginia Star*, July 21, 1877.

³⁰ Slaughter, 1890, p. 72; *Journal*, 1878, p. 215; *ibid.*, 1880, p. 218.

services, and an "immense concourse" followed the remains to the city cemetery where they were interred with full Masonic rites. The unusually numerous "elaborate and exquisite" floral arrangements included a dove and "an elegant pillow" of chrysanthemums, white roses and feathery silver moss with the words "Brother Ned" in blue violets.³¹

As Murdaugh's successor at St. George's, the vestry selected the Reverend Robert J. McBryde, a South Carolinian. After completing his undergraduate studies at the University of Virginia, he had served in the Confederate Army, been graduated from the Virginia Theological Seminary and held parishes in Amherst County and the chaplaincy of the University.

When the register of the St. George's Vestry wrote to Charlottesville, he was advised that McBryde's sermons were "faithful, searching and practical," concerned exclusively with the vital truths of the Gospel, and delivered with such "directness, earnestness and unction" that they invariably created a solemn and salutary impression. He was further informed that the young clergyman's gestures were easy and natural, if not conspicuously graceful, and his voice distinct and strong, if not musical. The register's informant felt that a "constant and consuming desire to win souls to Christ," was the motive prompting everything McBryde said. He added that outside of the pulpit, the rector was so amiable and polished a gentleman that he had endeared himself to every family within his charge. Furthermore, McBryde's usefulness was promoted by the popularity of his wife, a "lovely person, in character and manners, as in appearance."³²

While McBryde was rector of St. George's, the church received several large gifts. Mrs. A. E. Ficklin donated \$500 towards painting the church, provided the requisite amount be raised to complete the job. Mrs. Agnes Gordon Knox Soutter of New York City gave a handsome surplice and vestment, and Major J. Temple Doswell of Fredericksburg, a black walnut case for the communion service. Major Doswell also personally paid for the repairs to the west end of the lecture or Sunday School room. On December 3, 1877, A. Wellington Wallace was elected to the vestry to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Monroe Kelly.³³

At a vestry meeting on March 4, 1878, a motion was made, and apparently carried, setting aside an entire block of seats in the gallery for the colored people. The hours for the annual election of the vestry on April 1, 1878, were from 4 P.M. to 6 P.M. The following year eighteen votes were polled for vestry-

³¹ *The Fredericksburg Star*, Nov. 10, 1886.

³² Letter from I. S. Davis to Dr. James F. Thompson, June 7, 1877.

³³ Vestry Minutes, [III], 63 recto, 80 recto, 72 recto, 60 recto.

men. In May, 1878, St. George's reported a Sunday School of twenty teachers and one hundred and fifty scholars.³⁴

Telling the vestry on May 16, 1879, that he was greatly concerned by criticism from a few of his communicants of his policy of bringing the lower classes into the church as members, McBryde asked for an expression of the sense of the vestry upon that subject. Whereupon that body

Resolved, That the Vestry of St. George's Church Speaking in behalf, as they believe of the entire congregation, cordially invite all calsses [sic] and colors of our Citizens to join with us in public worship and participation in all the benefits and sacraments of our Church.³⁵

In response to several requests for information concerning the records of St. George's Church, Miss Catharine Thom wrote a highly informative letter on the subject to the Reverend Mr. McBryde in April, 1878. In stating that the vestry minutes of St. George's Parish from 1726 to 1817 were found by John Minor IV in the Court-house at Williamsburg, she agreed with the account in the first history of St. George's, that by the Reverend Philip Slaughter. Miss Thom placed the date of the discovery of the two large and mutilated volumes containing the minutes at more than thirty years before 1878. Since Slaughter's history was published in 1847 the minutes must have been found that year or earlier. They were in the custody of Reuben Thom until his death in 1868 when they were kept by John Coakley. At his death the vestry placed them in the vault of the National Bank of Fredericksburg until the first volume was lent to the Reverend Mr. Slaughter to assist him in writing the history of St. Mark's Parish. In 1878 the other volume was in Judge William Barton's law office.

According to Miss Thom, the parish register used by the Reverend Mr. McGuire and other church records (probably the vestry minutes from 1817 to 1862) were taken by Dr. James Cooke to Richmond in 1862 and burned in the store of Purcell and Ladd when that city was evacuated by the Confederate Army in 1865. When Mr. Randolph took charge of the parish a new register was purchased and the names of all of the living communicants were copied therein by Dr. Cooke.³⁶

Early in 1879 the vestry bought seventy-five new benches for the Sunday School from a Baltimore firm and the Baltimore and Fredericksburg Line of steamers transported fifty of them to Fredericksburg free of charge. The vestry authorized the wardens

³⁴ *Ibid.*, [III], 62 verso, 64 recto, 75 recto, 67 recto.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, [III], 76 verso.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, [III], 67 verso, 68 recto.

to lend some old unused box benches to the Sons of Sobriety for their meeting room.³⁷ On May 16, 1879, the vestry passed a formal resolution expressing its unanimous opposition to the division of the diocese of Virginia and approving the appointment of an assistant bishop.³⁸

That Fredericksburg was definitely more rural in 1880 than it is today, is evidenced by the vestry's appropriation of \$18 to erect a cow house for the rector and \$20 to put the rectory green-house in order.³⁹

McBryde was plagued with poor health in the fall of 1880 and the vestry suggested that he officiate exclusively in St. George's Church and there only to the extent he deemed advisable. The rector's ill health persisted; so in February, 1881, the vestry granted him a two months vacation. At the same meeting the vestry directed the wardens to designate eight ladies to solicit funds from the members of the congregation for the support of a supply minister.⁴⁰ Dr. James Carmichael, who served during the rector's absence, reported that he held fifty-five services, including forty-nine at which he preached; prepared nine candidates for confirmation; officiated at four baptisms; and conducted two funerals.⁴¹

Dr. McBryde resumed his duties in April, 1881, but he continued to suffer from throat trouble; so his physician recommended in July that he spend a month at Healing Springs. This leave was granted with the understanding that he was to secure someone to conduct services each Sunday morning because the vestry felt it was important to have "the Church open in part" to keep its finances in a healthy condition.⁴² In May, 1882, he reported that he had suspended four communicants.⁴³

He left St. George's in 1883 because the bishop felt that McBryde's great influence with young men made him peculiarly qualified to be the rector at Lexington, Virginia. In his letter of resignation McBryde asserted that he had been sent to Fredericksburg to harmonize as far as possible all discordant elements in St. George's. He had been assured that he was leaving an united congregation.⁴⁴

The Reverend John Kercheval Mason, of St. John's Church, Heber Parish, Liberty (now Bedford city), was highly recommended as a rector to suit the St. George's congregation. He was unanimously elected rector of St. George's on March 27,

³⁷ *Ibid.*, [III], 71 verso, 72 recto and verso.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, [III], 76 verso.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, [III], 83 recto.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, [III], 83 verso, 84 verso, 85 recto.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, [III], 86 recto.

⁴² *Ibid.*, [III], 89 verso, 90 recto.

⁴³ *Journal*, 1882, p. 223.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 1883, p. 32; Vestry Minutes, [III], 96 recto.

1883. Subsequently St. John's recalled Mason as its rector and requested the St. George's vestry to release him from the call he had accepted. This request was politely refused, and he apparently reported to his new charge on May 15, 1883.⁴⁵

When Fredericksburgers inquired about their new minister they learned that he had been born on December 3, 1847, at "Westview" in Brunswick County, Virginia, to Dr. George Mason, a physician and "large cotton planter," and Lucy Binns Jones Mason. While John was still a young boy, he moved with his family to "Homestead," the old Mason plantation in Greensville County. He received his secondary education at Bingham Latin School in North Carolina. On August 27, 1864, he had been appointed a cadet at the Virginia Military Institute and he was a member of the corps when it was mustered into the Confederate Army and assigned to the defense of Richmond.⁴⁶

After the war Mr. Mason matriculated at Hampden-Sydney College on a scholarship that his father had established before 1861. Receiving his B.A. degree there in 1870, he returned to a rapidly disintegrating plantation to make enough money to permit him to study theology. For two years he did double duty, working in his father's fields and teaching in the free schools of Greensville and Sussex Counties. His success as an educator helped the public schools become an organized system and he was the first superintendent of schools of Greensfield County.

Entering the Virginia Theological Seminary in 1874 he was graduated and ordained deacon in 1876 and priest the following year. He began his ministry at Mt. Jackson and Middletown, and during the three and half years there he did much mountain missionary work and retrieved church property that had fallen into disuse. In 1879 he moved to an urban environment in another state when he accepted a call to St. Peter's Church, Charlotte, North Carolina. In that year he also married Claudia Hamilton Norton, the daughter of the Reverend George Hatley Norton and Ann Burwell Marshall. In time the John Kercheval Masons had five children, Dr. Hatley Norton Mason, the Richmond physician, and four daughters. Mason returned to Virginia when he moved to St. John's in 1881.⁴⁷

Mr. Mason took his stewardship of church property seriously and in each charge his care for individuals within and beyond his congregation went hand in hand with his efforts to keep the "House and Service of the Lord beautiful." In the first year

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, [III], 98 verso, 99 recto and verso; *The Fredericksburg Star*, May 23, 1883; *Journal*, 1883, p. 32.

⁴⁶ Letters from H. Norton Mason, M. D., to Carrol H. Quenzel, May 19, 1950; Feb. 23, 1951.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, Letter from David C. Wilson, Registrar of Hampden-Sydney College, to Carrol H. Quenzel, June 14, 1950; W. A. R. Goodwin, *op. cit.*, II, 154.

of his ministry at St. George's the ladies of the congregation raised \$1,839 for building renovation.⁴⁸

Being a musician himself, Mr. Mason's "enthusiasm and informed effort brought about the acceptance of paid singers in the choir." The vestry authorized two singers to be retained at "not more than \$100 per annum each."⁴⁹

In March, 1886, the expenses of the church exceeded its income. Furthermore, the base of church support was undesirably small. Of a congregation of one hundred and ninety-three communicants and many non-communicants, there were only sixty regular subscribers by the envelope system, during the twelve month period ending in March, 1886. The total amount collected for the support of the church, exclusive of the contributions of the sixty, was a mere \$350, or not more than an average of four cents a Sunday from all the other members and attendants. The vestry requested the rector to read to the congregation a resolution embodying this data and urging everyone who attended services regularly at St. George's to contribute to its support.⁵⁰

Joseph Walker was elected sexton on October 11, 1886, to replace the ailing Washington Wright, who was sexton at the time of the battle of Fredericksburg and probably considerably earlier. Joseph had been born a slave on the farm of Colonel William Goodwin in Spotsylvania County on December 17, 1854. This property and the adjoining McCool estate later formed the "Bloody Angle" where one of the fiercest battles of history was fought.

Coming to Fredericksburg in 1871, he worked a short time in the paper mill and then became a butler in the home of Judge William S. Barton. Joseph was hired as the janitor of the National Bank of Fredericksburg when the present president, Hugh D. Scott, "was a boy," and he was still employed there in 1938. At the time of his appointment as sexton, he had been a deacon in the Shiloh Baptist Church for almost nine years and he was destined to retain that position down to the eve of World War II. Subsequently, Joseph became a property-owner, voter, juror, and the contractor for hauling the mail between the postoffice and the railway stations.⁵¹

In view of modern trends in illumination it is somewhat amusing to note that a vestry meeting was held on May 27, 1889, for the specific purpose of deciding whether to continue lighting the church with electricity or to change to gas. Electricity lost, the vestry formally voting not to use that illuminant.

⁴⁸ *Journal*, 1884, p. 207; Mason, *loc. cit.*, Feb. 23, 1951.

⁴⁹ Vestry Minutes, [III], 107 verso, 108 recto and verso; Mason, *loc. cit.*

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, [III], 109 recto and verso.

⁵¹ [Warren Farmer], "Fredericksburg Personalities," *Free Lance Star*, July 5, 1938.

Mr. Mason was happy in Fredericksburg, but about 1890 he became convinced that the special work for which he had been called to St. George's was complete. On March 18, 1890, he resigned because he had accepted a call to St. James' Church in Marietta, Georgia. The vestry accepted the resignation, but ten days later it unanimously delegated two of its members to request the St. James' vestry to permit Mason to withdraw his letter of acceptance. He did not move to Georgia.⁵² However, when in October of that year, he was called to be associate rector with the Reverend Joshua Peterkin at St. James' Church in Richmond he felt that the larger duty lay there.⁵³

In 1891 he received the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity from his alma mater, Hampden-Sydney College. After Dr. Peterkin's death in 1892, Dr. Mason served St. James' as rector until 1896. He then accepted a call to St. Andrew's Church in Louisville, Kentucky, where he was rector of the church and delegate to four General Conventions in "an ever growing usefulness to the Episcopal Church until his death" on December 18, 1910, in Louisville. He was buried in St. Paul's Cemetery, Alexandria, Virginia.⁵⁴

The Reverend William Meade Clark, who succeeded the Reverend Mr. Mason at St. George's in 1890 and at St. James' Church, Richmond, in 1896, was born in Halifax County, Virginia. His father, the Reverend John T. Clark, was the rector of Roanoke Parish in that county and the owner of a large plantation. During part of 1862 Dr. Sparrow, of the Seminary faculty, and his family made their home with the John T. Clarks and the Seminary student body of four lived and pursued their studies there.

William Meade Clark received his early education in schools near his home and from tutors, including William Meade Dame who later was rector of Memorial Episcopal Church, Baltimore. Clark's obituary stated that he was a graduate of the University of Virginia. This is not corroborated by the records of the University as they attest to his attendance during the sessions of 1874-75, 1875-76 and 1876-77, but do not indicate that he was awarded a degree.⁵⁵ During his college days he sustained injuries in a railroad accident that were sufficiently serious to have reduced the typical man to incompetence. Instead, he overcame his handicaps and in the process he developed extraordinary

⁵² Vestry Minutes, [III], 129 recto and verso, 130 recto and verso.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, [III], 133 recto.

⁵⁴ H. Norton Mason, *loc. cit.*; David C. Wilson, *loc. cit.*; W. A. R. Goodwin, *op. cit.*, II, 124.

⁵⁵ Vestry Minutes, [III], 134 recto; *Fredericksburg Star*, July 15, 1896; *Daily Star*, April 30, 1914; W. A. R. Goodwin, *op. cit.*, II, 186; Letter from George O. Ferguson, Jr., Registrar of the University of Virginia, to Carrol H. Quenzel, July 3, 1950.

fortitude and admirable habit of punctuality. "His fixed determination to trouble nobody with his ailments turned his mind to things outside of himself." Naturally social, he took a lively interest in the people about him, and ignoring his own pains and troubles he adopted the best course to make others forget them.⁵⁶

While a student in the Virginia Seminary at Alexandria, he was an editor of *The Seminarian*, an eight page monthly, and he conducted services at Olivet Chapel on the "Bush Hill" estate in Fairfax County. Upon his graduation from the Seminary, Clark was ordained deacon by Bishop Whittle on June 25, 1880. A year later he was ordained priest.⁵⁷

Before his call to St. George's he was successively rector of: St. James' Parish, Boydton, Mecklenburg County, 1880-1881; Lexington Parish, Amherst County, 1881-1886; Chapel Hill and the Church of the Good Shepherd, Raleigh, North Carolina, 1886-1890.⁵⁸

Clark was still new at St. George's when the vestry voted to appeal to every member of the congregation over fourteen to contribute to the cost of re-roofing the church, a project costing approximately \$500. Also in 1891 St. Georgians were proud that their rector was chosen to preach the annual sermon before the Seminary Alumni Association. Taking his text from 2 Timothy 1:7, he spoke on "Timidity."⁵⁹ In 1892 Clark prepared a booklet entitled *St. George's Cemetery: An Historical Sketch* which was published and sold by the Ladies' Cemetery Guild of St. George's Church.

Apparently some members of St. George's Church considered the choir inadequate in November, 1892, as a called meeting was held to devise means of securing an urgently needed leading soprano. The following April the vestry placed at Clark's disposal as many of the unappropriated pews as he could have upholstered. Evidently he was interested in enlarging the number of free pews and in improving the appearance of the church.⁶⁰

The rector lost his wife during the winter of 1893-1894. In September, 1894, Mr. Clark reported that the ceiling in the church galleries was in bad condition, and he stated that if the vestry would give him its authorization he would raise the money for replastering. The next month the vestry approved his acceptance of an invitation to teach history at the Virginia Seminary

⁵⁶ *Journal*, 1914, p. 35.

⁵⁷ W. A. R. Goodwin, *op. cit.*, I, 378, 423; *Journal*, 1914, p. 91.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 1881, p. 8; *ibid.*, 1882, p. 7; *ibid.*, 1884, p. 7; *ibid.*, 1887, p. 32.

⁵⁹ Vestry Minutes, [III], 137 recto; W. A. R. Goodwin, *op. cit.*, II, 91.

⁶⁰ Vestry Minutes, [III], 145 recto, 147 verso.

for a few months while Dr. Carl E. Grammer was recovering from a severe attack of typhoid fever. These new duties did not prevent Clark from conducting services at St. George's. Four years later he declined the professorship of Church history at the Seminary.⁶¹ In 1895 Mrs. Annie T. Harrison of Philadelphia, a generous friend of St. George's on numerous occasions, presented the congregation with "a very beautiful and costly antique brass" lectern.⁶²

Late in 1895 the Reverend Mr. Clark declined the rectorship of St. Paul's Church, Petersburg. In July, 1896, he declined a call to Monumental Church, Richmond, but he accepted the rectorship of St. James' Church in the same city. Clark's resignation was effective as of August 31, 1896.⁶³

The move to St. James' was his final one as he served that congregation until his death on April 29, 1914. Clark was an examining chaplain of the diocese of Virginia, 1898-1913; editor of the *Southern Churchman*, 1899-1914, and a member of the General Board of Missions. He had the distinction of being a clerical deputy to six General Conventions. Washington and Lee University conferred the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity on Clark on June 15, 1910.⁶⁴

His funeral was held at St. James' Church on Friday morning, May 2. The services were conducted by Bishops Robert A. Gibson and Alfred M. Randolph and four other clergymen. The interment was in Hollywood Cemetery, Richmond.⁶⁵

To replace Clark as rector of St. George's the vestry appointed William Dickinson Smith, a native of Clarke County, Virginia, and the son of William D. and Agnes P. Smith. Born on November 19, 1863, the future clergyman was educated at the University of Virginia and the Virginia Theological Seminary. He was ordained deacon in 1891 and priest in 1892. He was assistant minister of Christ Church, Brooklyn. At the time of his call to St. George's Smith was rector of St. Paul's Church, Brambleton Parish near Norfolk. He assumed his duties at St. George's on January 3, 1897.⁶⁶

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, [III], 151 verso, 156 verso, 157 recto and verso; W. A. R. Goodwin, *op. cit.*, I, 281.

⁶² Vestry Minutes, [III], 159 recto.

⁶³ *The Fredericksburg Star*, Jan. 1, 1896; July 15, 1896; Vestry Minutes, [III], 165 recto.

⁶⁴ *Journal*, 1914, p. 91; W. A. R. Goodwin, *op. cit.*, II, 96, 407, Letter from C. L. Green, Registrar, Washington and Lee University, to Carrol H. Quenzel, July 11, 1950.

⁶⁵ *Fredericksburg Daily Star*, Apr. 30, 1914.

⁶⁶ *Journal*, 1945, pp. 34, 86; Vestry Minutes, [III], 170 recto and verso, 17 recto; *The Fredericksburg Star*, Dec. 12, 1896.

In his first month in his new charge Smith secured the vestry's consent to the replacement of the lectern with a "handsome pulpit" by some of "the ladies" of the parish. The community, as well as the congregation, was saddened in October, 1897, by the drowning in the Rappahannock River of Miss Jeanette S. Bradley, St. George's organist. The final two years of the Nineteenth Century were a fruitful, if somewhat uneventful, period in the annals of St. George's Church.⁶⁷

⁶⁷ Vestry Minutes, [III], 171 verso, 175 verso.

J S. Bradley/1897.

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