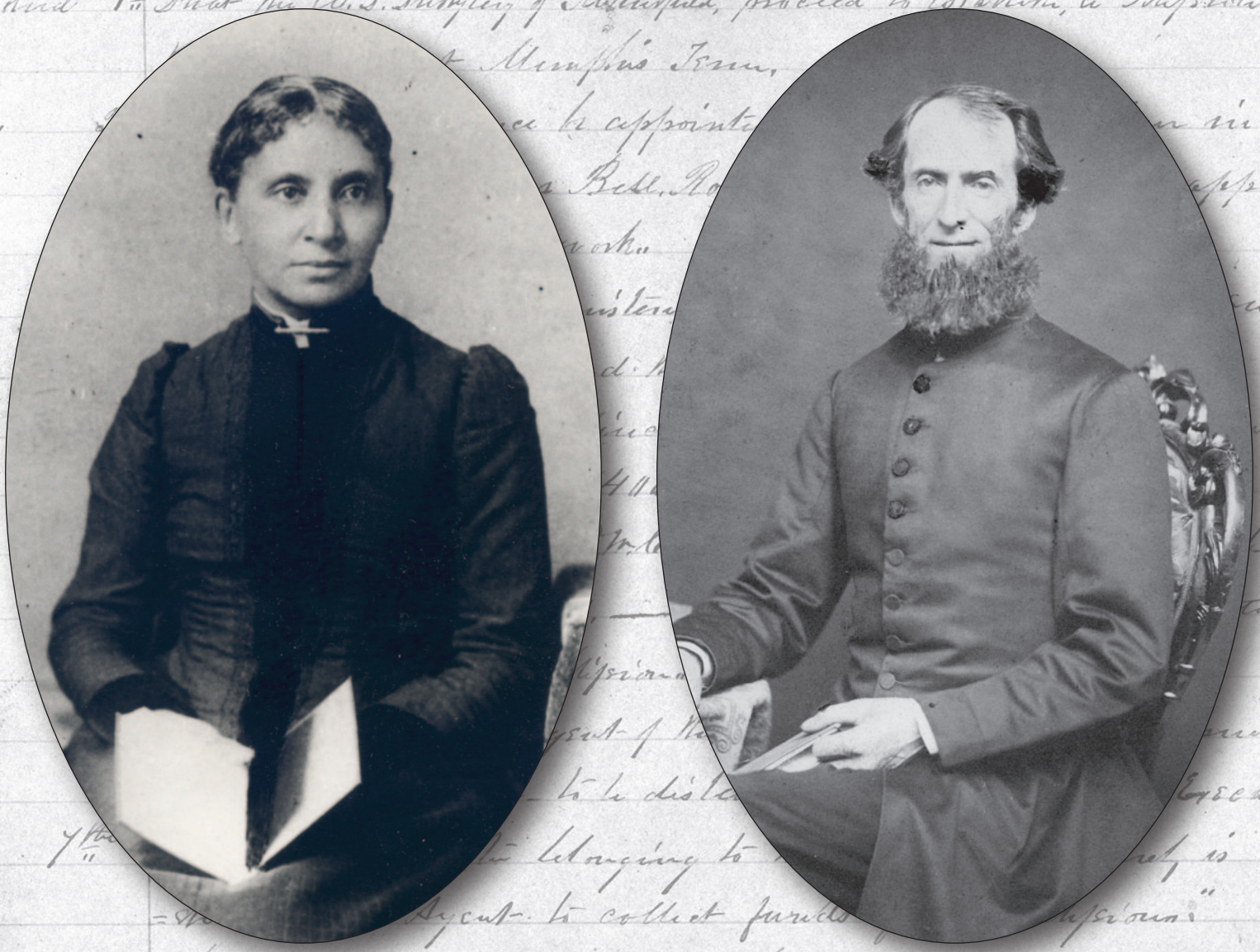
The Journal of Presbyterian History

Volume 89 • Number 1 Spring/Summer 2011



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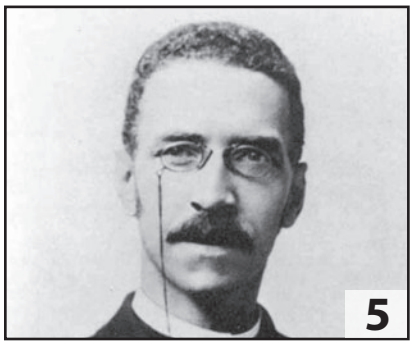

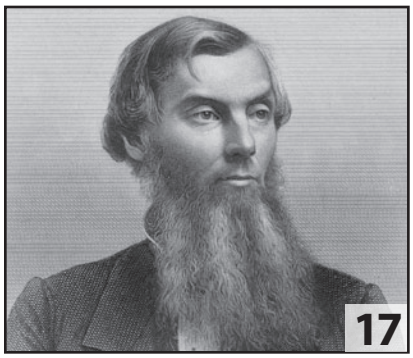

Articles

Departments

Front cover: Charlotte Forten Grimké; Rev. Alexander M. Stewart.
Back cover: First Presbyterian Church, Raleigh, North Carolina; McWilliams Cemetery, Waterloo, Pennsylvania.

The Journal of Presbyterian History

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Mission

The *Journal* is intended to inform, nurture, and promote among its readers an understanding and appreciation of religious history (specifically Presbyterian and Reformed history) in its cultural setting; educate readers about the importance of preserving that history; engage and involve readers to ensure that this history remains for posterity an important resource; and make known to Presbyterians and the broader scholarly community the resources and services of the Presbyterian Historical Society.

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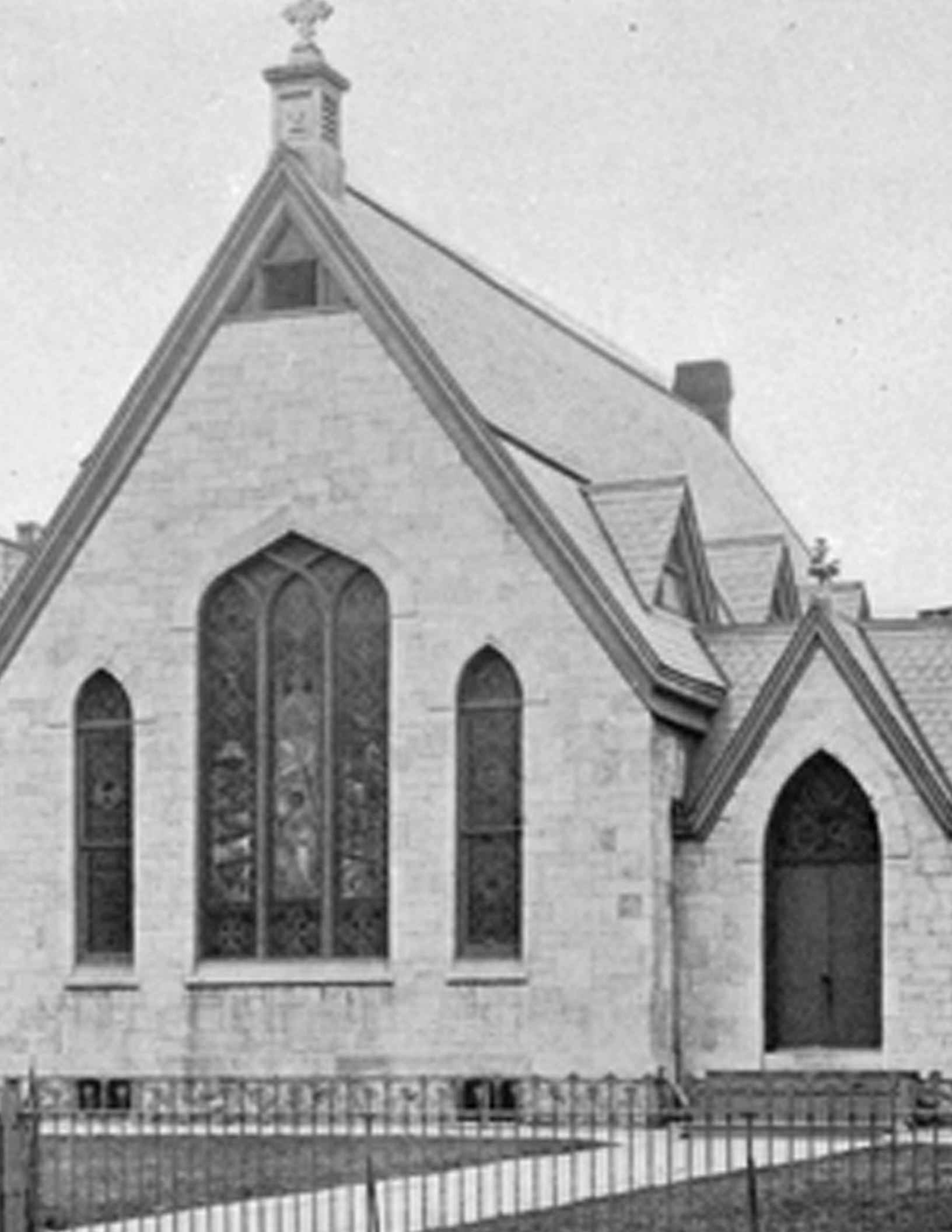
Editors' Message

In This Issue

The current year marks the one hundred fiftieth anniversary of the beginning of the American Civil War. Those familiar with the timeline of Presbyterian history in the United States are already aware of the war's impact on church structures. Author Mark Noll poses a different issue for our consideration. "With over 600,000 combatants slain," he observes, "even more veterans permanently disabled, and a still greater number of families cataclysmically affected, the war left a wake that cried out for deep Christian reflection." He concludes that relatively little deep reflection took place. In the post-war era, Presbyterians argued a great deal about the nature of the Bible's authority in light of the latest critical theories, but spent almost no time pondering what the scriptures might have to say about the lynching of African Americans, the passage of Jim Crow laws, and the considerable labor unrest occurring amidst economic upheaval. By drawing briefly upon the experience of Canadian Presbyterians and of the Reformed tradition in the Netherlands, Noll invites us to assess the route American Presbyterians generally traveled by comparing it with the paths taken elsewhere. Noll's essay suggests areas in which we need to do more research and proposes new angles of vision we might adopt in order to rethink the legacy of the Civil War for the Presbyterian experience.

Shifting focus to the intersection of theology and politics in one case study, Marcus J. McArthur examines the controversy that swirled about Samuel B. McPheeters, a Presbyterian pastor in St. Louis during the Civil War. Missouri, a border state where Unionist and Confederate sympathies collided, was a deeply contentious place. By 1862, Reverend McPheeters had fallen under suspicion that he was a Confederate sympathizer even though he made no public declarations to that effect and took a loyalty oath to the federal government. Throughout the controversy, McPheeters insisted that political loyalties, whether Yankee or Southern, had no place within the church, and that the church should not take stands on such matters. The McPheeters case is historically important because it became an occasion for Abraham Lincoln to define his policies with regard to churches and ministers in Union occupied territory. Moreover, as McArthur suggests, the story of McPheeters is a case study of "complex issues such as the limits of civil and religious liberties; the responsibilities of civil loyalty in balancing religious conscience; the use of martial law; and the relationship and boundaries between church and state."



Theology, Presbyterian History, and the Civil War

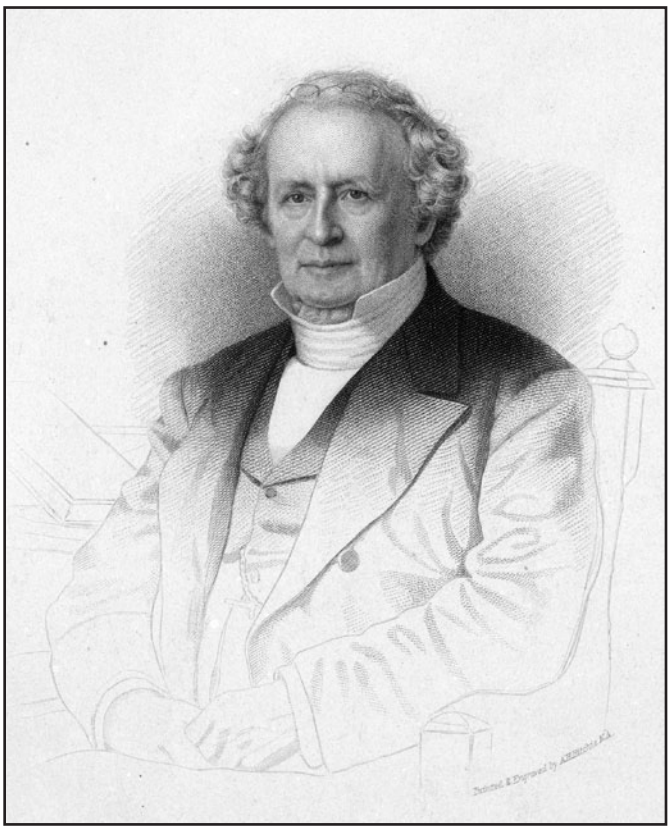
by Mark A. Noll

In the generation after the American Civil War, the main theological issues American Presbyterians addressed were church order, biblical criticism, and confessional revision. But the Civil War raised other important theological questions, including whether the war had been justified by classical just-war criteria and how traditional Reformed theology could accommodate the run-away civil religion that was so palpable in both the North and the South. Few Presbyterians seemed interested in addressing the theological problems raised by the systematic imposition of Jim Crow segregation or the rapidly industrializing society that the Civil War had stimulated. This article also suggests that some Presbyterian and Reformed voices did address these issues, such as Abraham Kuyper, who proposed a theological approach to industrialization, and Francis Grimké, who sought to combine the "spirituality of the church" and the promotion of racial justice, but they have not appeared in the main Presbyterian histories. Considering what Presbyterians did or did not say about race, civil religion, and industrialization broadens theological history in keeping with the comprehensive perspectives of historical Presbyterianism itself.

Standard histories of American Presbyterianism have done a good job describing the dramatic consequences of the Civil War for the organization of Presbyterian churches. Yet it remains an open question whether historians have fully appreciated the long-term theological impact of the conflict. With over 600,000 combatants slain, even more veterans permanently disabled, and a still greater number of families cataclysmically affected, the war left a wake that cried out for deep Christian reflection. Further, the conflict raised many questions of first-level theological importance, representing a pressing invitation to think more carefully about the ways of God among humans. At first glance, however, Presbyterians after the Civil War seem to have addressed only a limited number of the profound questions raised by the conflict. They paid closest attention to theology that was preoccupied with church order, fixated on general questions of perennial doctrine, or focused on newer concerns with no apparent connection to the war.

Many Presbyterian historians have ably tracked the organizational reshuffling that the war directly caused.[1] They have provided illuminating accounts of events in 1861 when Southern Presbyterians left the Old School church and almost immediately joined the small Southern element of the New School to establish the Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America (later the Presbyterian Church in the United States [PCUS]). They have also addressed the reunion of Northern Old School and New School denominations in 1869, which as Henry Boynton Smith anticipated in an address to the New School General Assembly in 1864, occurred because of common lessons learned in wartime about "the awful result and retribution of the spirit of disunion and hatred" as well as "the priceless value of Christian fellowship and brotherhood."[2] Scholars have focused only slightly less attention on the Northern Old School's insistence, from 1865 to 1866, that Southern and border-state ministers pass a loyalty test and publicly repent if they had supported the Confederacy, an action that drove Kentucky and Missouri presbyteries out of the denomination and guaranteed the continuing existence of the PCUS.

Mark A. Noll, the Francis A. McAnaney Professor of History at the University of Notre Dame, is the author of *The Civil War as a Theological Crisis* (University of North Carolina Press, 2006) and *Protestantism—A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford University Press, 2011).



Charles Hodge, 1797-1878. Painted and engraved by A. H. Ritchie N. A. No date. RG 414, PHS.

Thereafter, historians have depicted the main Presbyterian narrative as a broader American story following the struggles of the British-origin Protestant denominations that once dominated the religious landscape. Many works treat these denominations' intramural conflicts over biblical criticism, debates on whether to change their historical confessions, and struggles to master cultural shifts taking place among their prime constituency, the better educated, wealthier, and more self-reliant, white middle classes. This narrative records the continuing importance of the older denominations for American public life; prime examples include the different Presbyterian varieties practiced by President William Henry Harrison (1889–1893), President Woodrow Wilson (1913–1921), and the populist three-time presidential candidate William Jennings Bryan. Yet the standard picture also sees the steady waning of this older Protestantism as new sources of cultural authority (Catholics, Jews, immigrants, industrial wealth, popular entertainments, new universities) transformed the American landscape, pointing teleologically to the debilitating fundamentalist-modernist conflicts of the 1910s and 1920s.[3]

Yet scholars have succeeded in drawing a clear link between the magnitude of wartime experience and theological developments after the war for two groups of Americans. In the case of pragmatic and skeptical thinkers, Louis Menand has shown how the war's apparently mindless devastation pushed savants like Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr. and William Dean Howells away from belief in God, revelation, and providence toward trust in science, law, literature, business, or government.[4] Menand's view, therefore, positions the Civil War on a trajectory underlying twentieth-century American history and the rise of secularism. Similarly, Molly Oshatz has shown how persuasive use of Scripture to defend slavery in the antebellum period pushed a number of Northern theological liberals to value progressive ethical principles like abolition more highly than once standard deference to the Bible and traditional interpretations of Scripture.[5] Her work, in turn, pictures the Civil War as an enduringly important stimulus for progressive Christian efforts from the Social Gospel through the Federal and National Council of Churches to at least some reformist activity in current mainline circles. The success of Menand's and Oshatz's research is encouragement to think we might discern a similar story for Presbyterians if only we knew where to look.

Whatever that possibility, there can be no doubt about the depth and breadth of theological challenges related to the war.[6] The heated debates over whether Scripture permitted slavery, which became intense from about 1830 and remained in play even after Lee surrendered, raised momentous questions about the interpretation of individual biblical texts. Even more, they involved fundamental concerns about the overall purposes of Scripture and the appropriate ways of guiding Christian life by biblical standards. Leading Presbyterian lights differed greatly in major published works of the antebellum period. Charles Hodge and Robert Breckinridge defined slavery as not sinful but needing to be gradually eliminated, Albert Barnes attacked it as sinful, and James Henley Thornwell defended it as legitimate, and all claimed to reason from Scripture. As a result, considerations of slavery, race, and general biblical understanding became primary theological concerns.[7]

The instinctive providentialism that Presbyterians shared with almost all other American Christians of the era also called out for careful theological reflection.[8] Was it really so obvious that slavery afforded the providential means of bringing

the gospel to Africans, that John Brown's martyrdom was a divine gift to raise up an army of abolitionists, that Stonewall Jackson had been sustained (or killed) for reasons that God made plain, that the blood of dying soldiers represented a national atonement, or that Lincoln was assassinated because God knew he was too compassionate (or too stern) to do what reconstruction required? With the exception of those who gave up on God altogether and a few cautious theists like Lincoln, almost everyone else thought they saw clearly what God, in the words of the Westminster Confession (III.1) was "freely and unchangeably ordain[ing]."[9] The realities that now seem so obvious—that contradictory interpretations of providence cannot both be correct, or that facile confidence in reading providence betrays more hubris than insight—surely must have caused some who lived through these dramatic events to ponder humbler ways of expressing their confidence in the rule of God over human affairs.

The fevers of civil religion, which treated various individuals, institutions, and national ideals as if they simply embodied Christianity, also raised the specter of idolatry. References to soldierly sacrifice as constituting a national atonement touched questions of soteriology. Claims to see the Last Day adumbrated in military victory represented a challenge to the era's various systems of eschatology. Assertions that all who died in battle for the cause (Northern or Southern) went to heaven posed an even more direct challenge to traditional Christian teachings about personal salvation and the afterlife. And lack of concern for just-war criteria—for both going to war and conducting the war—marked a serious lapse in practical theology.[10]

Developments after the war continued to raise theological issues. The failure of the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Constitutional Amendments to secure basic civil rights for African Americans underscored immensely important issues of Christian anthropology and Christian social ethics. These concerns reached a critical point when in the 1890s the systematic imposition of Jim Crow laws legitimized the disenfranchisement of African Americans at a time when extra-legal lynchings were epidemic. The impetus the war gave to large-scale mobilization of men and material, and the way this mobilization facilitated the nation's breakneck industrialization brought further challenges for Christian reasoning about wealth, poverty, social alienation, and the economy. Finally, in a development that most U.S. citizens ignored, the Civil War helped to precipitate the formation of the Dominion of Canada in 1867, and thus redirected the course of Canadian culture—including its churches, raising important comparative issues about national character in relation to Christian expression that would have been highly instructive if anyone had chosen to pursue them.

The one theological issue connected to the war that Presbyterians did debate at length was ecclesiology. But even here, the divisions of 1837 (New School and Old School) and 1861 (Old School North and South), as well as the reunions of 1861 (New School and Old School South) and 1869 (New School and Old School North) occurred in response to specific events and took place with only a few Presbyterians stopping to think through the deeper meaning of their actions.[11]

The story as told in the best histories reveals that as the war ended, the white churches faltered in facing the crises of race, civil religion, providence, and ecclesiology. Moves to create the PCUS and a reunited Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (PCUSA) did not for the most part reflect classical Presbyterian convictions. Instead, Northern leaders insisted on treating the Union and its ideals as more important than the ecclesiastical principles articulated in the Westminster Confession and so drove out the border-state members who doubted that the Union cause equaled God's cause. Northern leaders confidently claimed to see God's visible hand of providence behind the Northern victory. Southern leaders insisted on the biblical uprightness of the Confederacy. They also insisted that treating African Americans as a subordinate subspecies did not violate biblical and confessional positions on the unity of the human race—a tricky argument considering that in those very years they and their Northern peers were busily arguing against theories of human polygenesis. With a confidence equal to that of the North, Southern leaders depicted the defeat of the Confederacy as God's manifest chastisement of his chosen people. Together, for leaders both North and South, local principles of fidelity to nation, entrenched habits of race prejudice, and time-specific conceptions of providence trumped the broad universalism that the Confession affirmed about "the visible Church" as "consist[ing] of all those throughout the world that profess the true religion." (XXV.2)

Meanwhile, several Northern Presbyterians did undertake serious efforts in practical theology, organizing efforts to educate, evangelize, and

Samantha Jane Neil. From a photo taken in church, date and photographer unknown. RG 414, PHS.

provide churches for freed slaves. Mrs. Samantha J. Neil was one of these now forgotten individuals who spearheaded these efforts. In 1865 in Amelia Court House, Virginia, she set up a school under an oak tree for newly liberated African Americans.[12] A few white Southerners also joined her effort, including Samuel C. Alexander and Willis L. Miller, who in 1867 founded the college in Charlotte, North Carolina, that would be known as the Biddle Institute and then Johnson C. Smith University. Alexander and Miller had begun their ministry as Southern Presbyterians but transferred their membership to the Northern church about the time they began this work.[13] They, with Mrs. Neil, represented a response to the complex theological challenges of the war that sprang directly from historical Presbyterian convictions about the oneness of the human race and the unity of the visible church as a body for all of the elect.

At the same time, as the United States debated programs of Reconstruction to bind up national wounds, political leaders in Canada West, Canada East, and Britain's colonies on the Atlantic coast moved toward establishing the Dominion of Canada. In no small part, fears that without this step Canada would be absorbed into the war-making republican behemoth to its south drove this decision. The push for the new Dominion enjoyed the strong support of some Canadian Presbyterians who saw in confederation a prod for uniting the separate Presbyterian churches that Scotland's fractious history had bequeathed to British North America. One of these Presbyterians was George Monro Grant, who would go on to become the most influential church leader of his generation.[14] From his position in the 1860s as a parish minister in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Grant strategized on how national union might assist ecclesiastical union. He also conducted a pulpit ministry of straightforward biblical preaching while supporting social programs for immigrants and the industrial poor. A noteworthy feature of his preaching was its serious attempt to mediate between the increasingly conflicted interests of capital and labor.

Pushed on by key figures like Grant, the four largest Presbyterian denominations joined together in 1875 as the Presbyterian Church in Canada. More generally, Grant's devotion to the project of Canadian unification strengthened his commitment to mediation as the best means for resolving conflict in the church as well as conflicts between the churches and secular society. Grant developed this approach at least in part to avoid the American pattern where Presbyterians of all sort took their cues for conflict resolution from the life-and-death ferocity of the Civil War.[15]

Historians' accounts of the next phase of American Presbyterian history have been dominated, and with considerable justice, by the intense debates within the PCUSA over biblical criticism and proposals to revise the Westminster Confession. The signal events included: the 1874 removal from the Presbyterian ministry of David Swing in Chicago, who was charged with departing from the Westminster Confession; a series of eight learned articles in *The Presbyterian Review* from 1881 to 1883 that debated the newer biblical criticism coming from Germany and Scotland;[16] and the furor over the 1891 inaugural address of Charles A. Briggs at Union Seminary whose account of "the authority of Scripture" led to ferocious debate and an extensive ecclesiastical trial.[17] The subsequent departure of Briggs from the denomination, along with significant figures who sympathized with him like Henry Preserved Smith, only fueled the hot debates on whether to revise the Westminster Confession that ended in stalemate in 1893 with no action taken. Ten years later, the PCUSA did add chapters on the

Holy Spirit and "the Gospel and the Love of God and Missions" along with a Declaratory Statement disavowing reprobation and affirming the salvation of those who died in infancy. Yet accounts of these important matters have only infrequently paused to set the conflicts in broader chronological perspective. In a speculative leap that would merit further research, one could say these disputes represented indirect efforts at responding to the theological challenge of the Civil War.

At its most profound, that challenge reflected interconnected crises of confidence concerning Scripture, providence, confessional Protestantism, and the place of Presbyterianism in American society. Antebellum Americans had looked to Scripture for a determinative word on slavery, but the strongest defenders of the authority of Scripture had delivered cacophony. Instead of looking to their confession to explain the workings of providence, Presbyterians before, during, and after the war largely adopted facile conventions of civil religion. North and South differed in conclusions about where Providence was tending, but most Presbyterians took for granted the transparency of the divine will.

Partly as a result of the war, well-educated theologians found their leadership in American culture usurped by secular intellectual elites, but even more by the rapid pace of industrial, urban, and economic change. That usurpation posed difficult issues for Presbyterians about the relevance of their confessional traditions. Could they be shown to be true? And did confessions provide the resources for comprehending America's rapid development and organizing Christian responses to it?

With such questions from the war in view, the well publicized doctrinal controversies of the late nineteenth century look somewhat different. For at least two decades the denomination stood firm against confessional and biblical liberalization. Debates over biblical criticism did reveal growing fissures on substantive issues, though the ouster of Briggs and Preserved Smith also showed the PCUSA's reluctance to give up traditional approaches. When confessional revision finally arrived, the changes were in fact so relatively minor that even most conservatives accepted them grudgingly. Yet, the progressive and liberalizing tendencies that were squelched in the late nineteenth century did gain ground in the early years of the new century.

From a broader angle, the denomination's theological decisions reflected choices about what was to be discussed as well as about resolutions on subjects actually debated. How, for example, could the integrity of the Bible be best maintained in the wake of interpretive strife over slavery? The main Presbyterian answer affirmed that taking the measure of higher criticism was more important than determining how Scripture might address race discrimination, burgeoning economic opportunity, and the conditions propelling industrial strife. Attending to questions of biblical higher criticism left scant time or energy to use Scripture for addressing social issues.

The effect of these decisions on theological emphases can be illustrated from the pages of the *Presbyterian and Reformed Review*, a new journal that began publication in 1890 under the editorship of theological leaders from the PCUSA and representatives from the German Reformed, Dutch Reformed, and Canadian Presbyterian churches. The journal's first six years of publication, from 1890 to 1895, coincided with the peak years of race-based lynching and the final implementation in the South of Jim Crow laws, which carried on the Civil War's entanglements over race. The early 1890s were also years of severe economic downturn and sharp labor conflict, with the Homestead Strike of 1892, the Panic of 1893, the Pullman Strike of 1894, and the march of Coxey's Army of unemployed on Washington that same year, pushing to the forefront issues of America's economic expansion that were rooted in the troubled aftermath of the Civil War. During these years the *Presbyterian and Reformed Review* published many scholarly studies on theology and church history, including at least forty-two separate articles on questions relating to biblical criticism—many monographic in length and quality—as well as a separate four-part series on the composition of Genesis. During the same period there were no major articles on race, Jim Crow, or the general treatment of African Americans. Only eight articles touched on issues of society in some sense. One analyzed how and why Presbyterians were losing touch with "the working poor." Its author, Reverend R.V. Hunter from Terre Haute, Indiana, detailed why a Boston minister thought "the masses" were leaving the churches: "the effect of the recent Civil War, speculation and wealth, the Sunday newspapers, weakening in Sabbath observances, lower standards of proper worldly pleasures, [and] rented pews." But Hunter disagreed, pointing instead to problems of preaching and

confidence in Scripture.[18] The implication from the *Review* was that some theological issues were worth full attention while others were not.

American Presbyterians did receive a lesson on how traditional confessions could be made relevant to an industrial age when Abraham Kuyper came from the Netherlands to Princeton Seminary in 1898 in order to deliver a series of lectures on Calvinism.[19] These lectures did not provide much instruction on how traditional Calvinism might counteract the race prejudice that was so prevalent in the United States or—closer to Kuyper's own interests—in the Dutch colonies of South Africa. But Kuyper did try to show how confessional Calvinism could respond to the theological problems of rapid industrialization as well as to the challenges of confessional relevance in an age defined by new patterns of wealth and new pluralization of social interests. Specifically, he drew on his Dutch Calvinist tradition to develop the idea of society as an "organic" whole, a place where government, business, labor, the churches, and a whole range of other institutions all enjoyed a proper sovereignty in their own spheres; but only when each sphere respected the prerogatives of the others could society progress.[20] With this, he attacked excessive individualism on the one side and what he described as excessive scientism on the other.

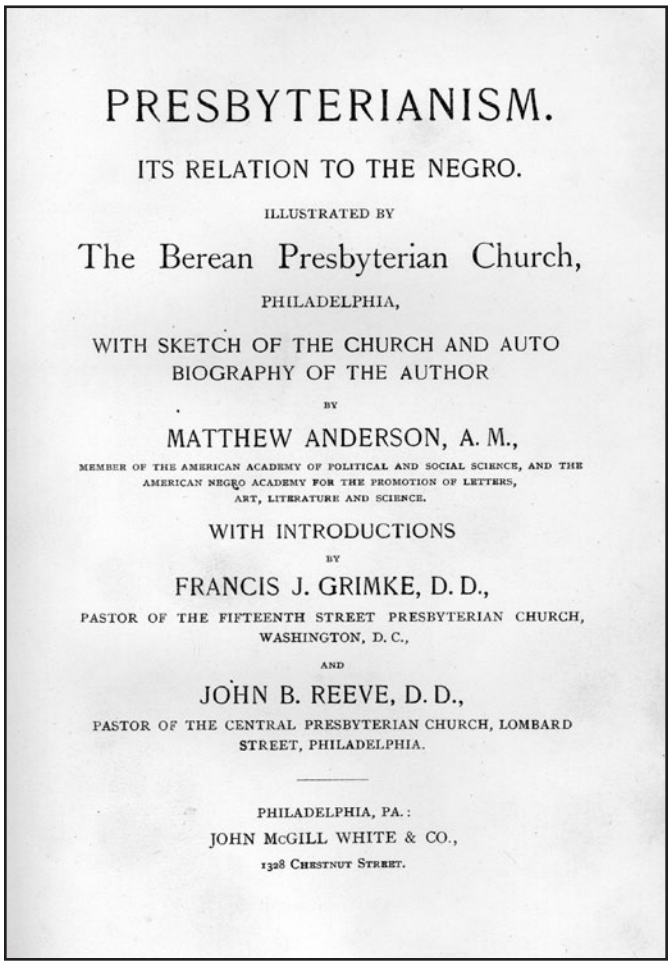
American Presbyterians, however, were not ready to follow Kuyper's lead. Their debates over confessional revision more clearly responded to problems of the Civil War era than to conditions of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Thus, the new Declaratory Statement of 1903 affirmed that "all dying in infancy are included in the election of grace and are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit."[21] Although weighty exegetical discussions led up to this statement, it is also easy to read it as a response to the great sentimentalization of death that scholars like Drew Gilpin Faust have shown was spurred by the war.[22] Similarly, it is easy to read the 1903 addition to the confession on "the Gospel of the Love of God and Missions" as a response to the United States' rapid post-bellum rise to leadership in world Protestant missions, an advance that could take place only after the nation had reunited in 1865, eliminated slavery, and enjoyed an expanding national economy.

American Presbyterians in the last third of the century faced the question of how they would respond to the pluralization of society and the encroaching secularism of the academy. Their

Abraham Kuyper. From the original by W.K. Ross, date unknown. RG 414, PHS.

response took several forms. Some members of the PCUSA joined forces with leaders of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, who spearheaded the National Reform Association. Its goal, as announced in 1864 and pressed in following years, was to amend the Preface to the Constitution in order to acknowledge "Almighty God as the source of all authority and power in civil government, the Lord Jesus Christ as the Governor among the nations, and His revealed will as of supreme authority."[23] Other Presbyterians took up the fight to keep Bible-reading central in the public schools.[24] Still others continued an old Protestant tradition of attacking Catholics as harmful to the republic or took up a new cause in warning about Mormons as a similar threat.[25] For these campaigns, the instinct in responding to great public questions was to fight for victory. That instinct came in substantial measure from the experiences of the Civil War.

Meanwhile in Canada, Presbyterians who had embarked on a course that veered away from U.S. Presbyterianism in the 1860s continued along that different path. A celebrated heresy trial in 1877 led to an ambiguous acquittal for Daniel James Macdonnell and a cautious general liberalization in applying the Westminster standards. In the same year, George Monro Grant became principal and divinity professor at Queen's College (Kingston, Ontario). From that position he charted an



PRESBYTERIANISM.

ITS RELATION TO THE NEGRO.

ILLUSTRATED BY

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BY

MATTHEW ANDERSON, A. M.,

MEMBER OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF POLITICAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCE, AND THE AMERICAN NEGRO ACADEMY FOR THE PROMOTION OF LETTERS, ART, LITERATURE AND SCIENCE.

WITH INTRODUCTIONS

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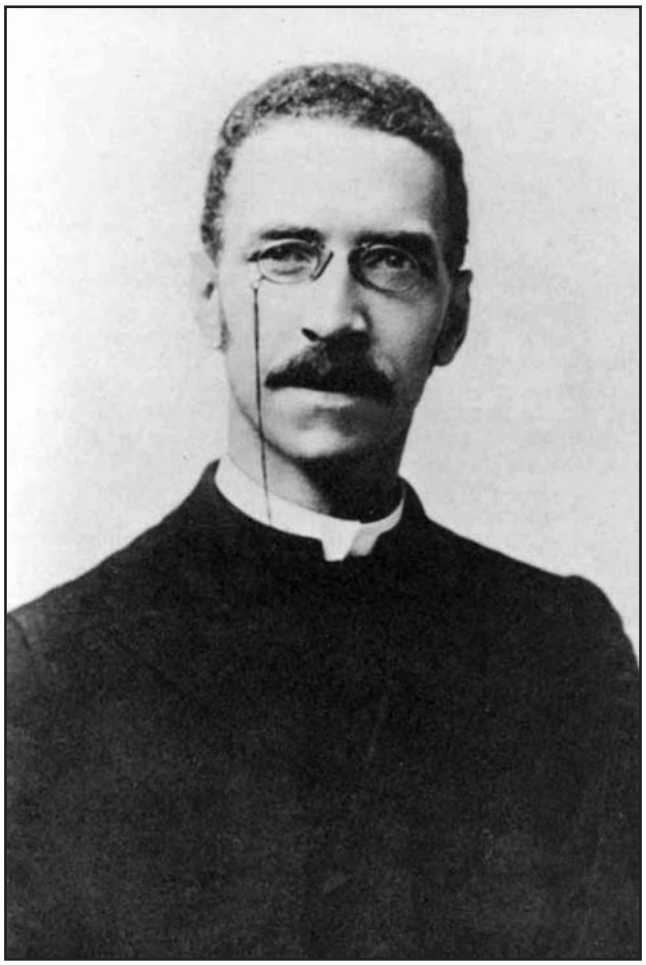


Francis Grimké. Courtesy of the Howard University Library. RG 414, PHS.

influential course that is hard to square with any trajectory among American Presbyterians. Grant was almost as open to modern biblical criticism as Charles Briggs, but like moderate conservatives in the United States he was cautious about changing the Confession. He resembled leaders of the Social Gospel movement in his activities on a broad range of social issues—defending the rights of women, aboriginals, immigrants, and Armenians, while advocating profit-sharing for relief of industrial strife. Yet he also supported popular revivals, encouraged fair treatment of Catholics, and maintained a lifelong enthusiasm for Martin Luther. He underscored his differences with the United States by offering vocal support to the imperial aspirations of the British Empire—aspirations, however, that he defined in moral terms indebted to Prime Minister William Gladstone. Historian Barry Mack has concluded that "to Grant . . . belongs at least some of the credit for the absence in Canadian Presbyterianism of the theological polarization that troubled Presbyterians in the United States in the 1890s."[26]

Neither Grant nor his Presbyterian colleagues effected permanent solutions. Much of what Grant held together soon unraveled after two-thirds of Canadian Presbyterians in 1925 went into the United Church, Canada's grand experiment in institutional ecumenism. The Canadian Presbyterians who continued as a separate denomination did maintain the confessional elements that Grant had valued from his Scottish heritage but did so as a sectarian body marginalized from cultural influence. For its part, the United Church fully embraced a Social Gospel program but moved rapidly away from the liberal evangelicalism that Grant had also championed.[27]

In the same post-war years, black Presbyterians in the United States mounted their own efforts to address these same crises. In the mid-1870s,

Berean Church, South College Avenue above Nineteenth Street. From William P. White and William H. Scott, *The Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia: a camera and pen sketch of every Presbyterian church and institution in the city* (Philadelphia: Allen, Lane and Scott, 1895).

Princeton Seminary enrolled several promising African Americans who willingly took to the conservative doctrine of the seminary while not signing on to the whole Old School package. One of these students was Matthew Anderson, who reported favorably on the absence of prejudice he experienced at the Seminary and also on the help that James McCosh, president of Princeton College, provided in counteracting the race prejudice of some white colleagues.[28] Anderson would go on to pastor Philadelphia's Berean Presbyterian Church and advocate forcefully for black civil rights.

Anderson's near contemporary at Princeton Seminary, Francis James Grimké, was the most notable black Presbyterian of his generation. In later years, Grimké highly commended the conservative theology he had learned from the elderly Charles Hodge, and Hodge returned the compliment by telling James McCosh that he "reckoned [Grimké] equal to the ablest of his students."[29] Grimké, the son of a South Carolina slave owner and his slave, Nancy Weston, had endured a period of slavery before serving as a valet in the Confederate army. After the war he went North to study, first at the primarily black Lincoln University and Howard Law School, and then at Princeton Seminary. From the late 1870s to the late 1920s he served an influential pastorate, with one brief interlude, at the Fifteenth Street Presbyterian Church in Washington, D.C.[30]

Grimké's response to the challenges of the Civil War makes for an interesting comparison with better known theological expressions of the era. His basic doctrinal position, though worked out in much less detail, resembled what the era's master systematic theologians, Charles Hodge and William G. T. Shedd, published in three-volume compendia as, respectively, *Systematic Theology* and *Dogmatic Theology*. Yet unlike Hodge or Shedd, Grimké actively campaigned against the systematic racism that besmirched both North and South during this era. In the first decade of the twentieth century, he was one of the founders of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

Grimké's commitment to gospel proclamation, traditional morality, and the development of African American character could make him sound on many occasions like an advocate of the doctrine of "the spirituality of the church." James Henley Thornwell had given this concept memorable shape in 1848 when he affirmed in a report to the Old School General Assembly that "it is . . . beside the province of the Church to render its courts, which God ordained for spiritual purposes, subsidiary to the schemes of any association founded in the human will, and liable to all its changes and caprices."[31] As a few commentators like John Leith have noted, "the spirituality of the church" had great positive potential in an American landscape where varieties of civil religion so regularly dictated a political agenda for the churches. Yet as Leith also notes, this doctrine was "corrupted" when Southern leaders, with Presbyterians in the lead, used it to defend slavery in the antebellum church and tolerate segregationist injustice after the Civil War.[32]

From a preacher like Francis Grimké, however, pronouncements sounding like "the spirituality of the church" had much greater credibility. Grimké, for example, in 1892, at the very time that lynching was at its height, proclaimed that African American "character" was the key factor for "race elevation."[33] When in 1919 he gave an address reviewing Reconstruction, he stressed almost exclusively "the spiritual needs of men" that were and were not met in Reconstruction efforts.[34] In 1936, when he defined "Christ's Program for the Saving of the World," he focused not on a Social Gospel but on Christianity defined by "the publication of God's plan for the saving of sinners—namely, repentance and faith in Jesus Christ."[35] Yet, crucially, the same preacher who could expound so eloquently on the spiritual imperatives of Christian faith also spoke forthrightly about "Christianity and Race Prejudice." Thus, in 1910 a memorable sermon proclaimed

boldly that the only "reason why we have white churches and colored churches, white Sunday schools and colored Sunday schools, white Endeavor Societies and colored Endeavor Societies, is because of race prejudice." Therefore, asserted Grimké, the church "ought to repent; . . . it ought to strive to bring its actual life into harmony with the great principles that it professes to . . . believe in. There is need today for some John the Baptist to go all over this land, in all the white churches, among the millions of professing Christians in them, and cry aloud, 'Repent, repent. Cease to be ruled by race prejudice . . . . Cease this anti-Christian race feeling, and let brotherly love prevail.' 'Let the wicked man forsake his ways, the unrighteous man his thoughts' (Isa. 55:7)—that is what God says . . . . If race prejudice is wrong, then the church must forsake it, must give it up."[36]

By combining a strongly spiritual focus with this unflinching attack on racism, Grimké provided a distinctive response to the theological turmoil created by the nation's earlier history. On May 27, 1904, a memorable intervention on the floor of the General Assembly revealed the practical implications of Grimké's position. At issue was the proposed reunion of the largely southern Cumberland Presbyterian Church with the PCUSA. It was a reunion facilitated by the PCUSA's recent additions to the Westminster Confession, but also a reunion that the Cumberlands would not countenance unless the PCUSA allowed for racially segregated presbyteries. Grimké's eloquent statement ended with a memorable peroration: "Union? Yes; but never at the sacrifice of a great principle; never by the sanctioning of the spirit of caste, or by putting the stamp of inferiority upon any class or race within the Church. Here is where I stand; and here is where the church ought to stand; where it will stand; if it is true to Jesus Christ."[37] This protest failed to sway the General Assembly. Even more discouraging was that a similar protest in Grimké's own Washington Presbytery, where he had been elected the first black moderator some years before, also failed—despite another impassioned speech and the support of lay elder John Marshall Harlan, Associate Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court.[38]

A telling comparison with Grimké's urgent plea of 1904 came from statements on the proposed union by Benjamin B. Warfield of Princeton Seminary. Warfield's comments on this occasion are poignant because Warfield was one of the few Presbyterian leaders of his age to publish criticisms about the nation's persistent race prejudice.[39] Yet when Warfield went on record as opposing this reunion with the Cumberland church, his lengthy article addressed only theological issues with no mention of segregated presbyteries.[40]

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

The history of American Presbyterians takes on a new dimension if we accord figures like Samantha Neil, George Monro Grant, and Francis Grimké relative parity alongside David Swing, Charles Hodge, Charles A. Briggs, and B. B. Warfield. In terms dictated by views of providence and national destiny that were conventional in the last part of the nineteenth century, a readjustment of Presbyterian history in that direction would be foolish. But when considered from the angle of the doctrinal and biblical convictions that gave Presbyterianism its initial shape, and also from sensitivity to all the theological crises of the period, it may be long overdue. ℙ

Notes

[1] Particularly useful for this essay have been Lewis B. Vander Velde, *The Presbyterian Churches and the Federal Union, 1861–1869* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1932); Lefferts A. Loetscher, *The Broadening Church: A Study of Theological Issues in the Presbyterian Church since 1869* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1954); Andrew E. Murray, *Presbyterians and the Negro: A History* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Historical Society, 1966); Ernest Tice Thompson, *Presbyterians in the South*, 3 vols. (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1963–1973); John S. Moir, *Enduring Witness: A History of the Presbyterian Church in Canada*, 2nd edition (Toronto: Presbyterian Church in Canada, 1987); David B. Calhoun, *Princeton Seminary, Vol. 2: The Majestic Testimony, 1869–1929* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1996); and especially Gary Scott Smith, *The Seeds of Secularization: Calvinism, Culture, and Pluralism in America, 1870–1915* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985).

[2] Henry Boynton Smith, "Christian Union and Ecclesiastical Union," in Smith, *Faith and Philosophy* (New York: Scribner, Armstrong, and Co., 1877), 273.

[3] See especially Robert T. Handy, *Undermined Establishment: Church-State Relations in America, 1880–1920* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991); and Steven K. Green, *The Second Disestablishment: Church and State in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

[4] Louis Menand, *The Metaphysical Club* (Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2001).

[5] Molly Oshatz, "The Problem of Moral Progress: The Slavery Disputes and the Development of Liberal Protestantism in the United States," *Modern Intellectual History,* vol. 5, 2008, 225–50; and "No Ordinary Sin: Antislavery Protestants and the Discovery of the Social Nature of Morality," *Church History,* vol. 79, 2010, 334–58.

[6] Many of the individual issues mentioned in the next paragraphs are well identified in James H. Moorhead, *American Apocalypse: Yankee Protestants and the Civil War, 1860–1869* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978).

[7] For a survey, see Mark A. Noll, *The Civil War as a Theological Crisis* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 31–74.

[8] See especially Nicholas Guyatt, *Providence and the Invention of the United States, 1607–1876* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007); and the full treatment of providence in George C. Rable, *God's Almost Chosen People: A Religious History of the American Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010).

[9] Quotations from the Westminster Confession, with PC(USA) numbering, are from *The Book of Confessions* (Louisville: Office of the General Assembly, 2002).

[10] Just war criteria are well treated in Harry S. Stout, *Upon the Altar of the Nation: A Moral History of the Civil War* (New York: Viking, 2006).

[11] On the patriotism of the Northern war effort as a spur to the 1869 reunion, as well as on the theological concerns that only a few Old School leaders insisted on considering, see George M. Marsden, *The Evangelical Mind and the New School Presbyterian Experience* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970), 212–25.

[12] Murray, *Presbyterians and the Negro*, 171.

[13] Ibid., 174.

[14] For Grant, I am dependent on D. B. Mack, "George Monro Grant" (Ph.D. dissertation, Queen's University, 1992); and "Grant, George Monro," in Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online: http://www.biographi.ca/index-e.html.

[15] See Moir, *Enduring Witness*, 134–35.

[16] For a summary, see Mark A. Noll, *Between Faith and Criticism: Evangelicals, Scholarship, and the Bible in America,* 3rd edition (Vancouver: Regent College Publishing, 2004), 15–17.

[17] Charles A. Briggs, *The Authority of Holy Scripture: An Inaugural Address*, 1891, and *The Defence of Professor Briggs before the Presbytery of New York*, 1893, both in Charles Augustus Briggs, *Inaugural Address and Defense*, ed. E. S. Gaustad (New York: Arno, 1972); and as an illustration of reactions, Talbot W. Chambers, "The Inaugural Address of Professor Briggs," *Presbyterian and Reformed Review,* vol. 2, 1891, 481–94. (Hereafter *PRR*.)

[18] R.V. Hunter, "The Church and the Masses," *PRR*, vol. 4, 1893, 78-93.

[19] For illuminating context, see *Abraham Kuyper: A Centennial Reader*, ed. James D. Bratt (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998).

[20] For expert analysis of Kuyper's 1898 lectures, see Peter S. Heslam, *Creating a Christian Worldview: Abraham Kuyper's Lectures on Calvinism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), with 142–66 especially detailed on Kuyper's organic conception of "sphere sovereignty."

[21] *The Book of Confessions*, 164.

[22] Drew Gilpin Faust, *The Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War* (New York: Knopf, 2008); see also Mark S. Schantz, *Awaiting the Heavenly Country: The Civil War and America's Culture of Death* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008).

[23] Quoted in Smith, *Seeds of Secularization*, 59. See also Gaines Foster, *Moral Reconstruction: Christian Lobbyists and the Federal Legislation of Morality, 1865–1920* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002).

[24] For example, David G. Wylie, "Three Views of the Public School Question," *PRR,* vol. 1, 1890, 465ff. For context, see Smith, *Seeds of Secularization*, 85–89.

[25] As examples, D. H. MacVicar, "Abjuration of Romanism," *PRR,* vol. 5, 1894, 303ff; and against Mormons, William M. Sloane, "Christianity and Tolerance," *PRR,* vol. 2, 1891, 235ff.

[26] Mack, "Grant, George Monroe," Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online.

[27] This reading of the Canadian situation follows Duff Crerar, "'Crackling Sounds from the Burning Bush': The Evangelical Impulse in Canadian Presbyterianism before 1875," and Barry Mack, "From Preaching to Propaganda to Marginalization: The Lost Centre of Twentieth-Century Presbyterianism," in *Aspects of the Canadian Evangelical Experience*, ed. G. A. Rawlyk (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1997), 123–36, 137–53.

[28] Murray, *Presbyterians and the Negro*, 182.

[29] Calhoun, *Princeton Seminary*, 54.

[30] The indispensable source is *The Works of Francis J. Grimké*, ed. Carter G. Woodson, 4 vols. (Washington, D.C.: Associated Publishers, 1942). Four of Grimké's sermons have been made conveniently available in *The Faithful Preacher: Recapturing the Vision of Three Pioneering African American Pastors, ed.* Thabiti M. Anyabwile (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2007). See also Louis Weeks, "Racism, World War I, and the Christian Life: Francis Grimké in the Nation's Capital," in *Black Apostles: Afro-American Clergy Confront the Twentieth Century*, ed. Randall K. Burkett and Richard Newman (Boston: G. K. Hall, 1978), 57–75.

[31] J. H. Thornwell, "Societies for Moral Reform," in *The Collected Writings of James Henley Thornwell*, eds. John B. Adger and John L. Girardeau, vol. 4 (Richmond: Presbyterian Committee on Publication, 1873), 470.

[32] John H. Leith, "Spirituality of the Church," in

Encyclopedia of Religion in the South, eds. Samuel S. Hill and Charles Lippy, 2nd ed. (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2005), 759.

[33] Grimké, "The Afro-American Pulpit in Relation to Race Elevation," in Anyabwile, ed., *Recapturing the Vision*, 123–34.

[34] Grimké, "The Religious Aspect of Reconstruction," in ibid., 155.

[35] Grimké, "Christ's Program for the Saving of the World," in ibid., 173.

[36] Grimké, "Christianity and Race Prejudice," in ibid., 138, 142.

[37] Henry Justin Ferry, "Racism and Reunion: A Black Protest by Francis James Grimké," *Journal of Presbyterian History,* vol. 50, 1972, 85.

[38] Ibid., 87.

[39] See Warfield, "A Calm View of the Freedman's Case," 1887, and "Drawing the Color Line," 1888, as reprinted in B. B. Warfield, *Selected Shorter Writings*, ed. John E. Meeter, vol. 2 (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1970 and 1973), 735–42, 743–50; and a poem "Wanted—A Samaritan" in B. B. Warfield, *Four Hymns and Some Religious Verse* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1910), 11.

[40] B. B. Warfield, "The Proposed Union with the Cumberland Presbyterians," *Princeton Theological Review,* vol. 2, 1904, 294–316.

THE COMPLETE CORRESPONDENCE

BETWEEN

UNION MEMBERS

OF

PINE STREET PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

AND THEIR PASTOR,

Rev. S. B. McPHEETERS, D. D.,

UPON THE SUBJECT OF

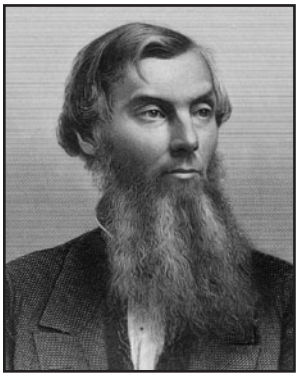
LOYALTY TO THE GOVERNMENT.

ST. LOUIS, MO.

PRINTED FOR THE USE OF THE MEMBERS OF THAT CHURCH
AND CONGREGATION.

"There Can Be No Neutral Ground": Samuel B. McPheeters and the Collision of Church and State in St. Louis, 1860–1864

by Marcus J. McArthur



This paper examines the case of Samuel B. McPheeters, an Old School Presbyterian minister in St. Louis accused of disloyalty to the Union by a small faction of his church during the Civil War. In spite of an absence of specific evidence that would have demonstrated the preacher's disloyalty, this faction worked with Union military officials to have the minister arrested and his church closed on charges of general disloyalty. McPheeters appealed to the doctrine of the spirituality of the church in defense of his refusal to endorse either side in the war, and was able to obtain a meeting with President Lincoln in order to appeal his case in person. This essay argues that the McPheeters case presented Lincoln with the first major conflict of church and state in the war. The paper also examines the fate of religious liberty in Missouri under martial law, and demonstrates the political divide in that state regarding the federal military campaign to identify and punish civil disloyalty throughout the state.

During the Civil War, the St. Louis Presbytery (Old School) found itself preoccupied with the case of Samuel B. McPheeters, pastor of Pine Street Presbyterian Church. In spite of his good reputation among fellow Old School Presbyterian clergymen, by 1862 McPheeters faced rumors proliferating around St. Louis that he was a Confederate sympathizer. While the preacher professed his civil loyalty throughout the war, circumstantial evidence combined with his apolitical theological convictions—the belief that churches should remain neutral in political affairs—to elicit the suspicions of several ardent unionists in the city. For nearly two years, McPheeters fought against ecclesiastical and political enemies over the true object of his civil loyalty and his duty as a minister to a community at war. The episode culminated in federal forces removing the clergyman from the Pine Street pulpit in December 1862 in accordance with Special Order No. 152, which specifically targeted McPheeters and his family. The McPheeters case has historical importance for several reasons. It reflects the divisive nature of the competing visions regarding the relationship of church and state, as well as the church's role in a society at civil war—both questions that bitterly divided the Old School Presbyterian Church. It raises complex issues such as the limits of civil and religious liberties; the responsibilities of civil loyalty in balancing religious conscience; the use of martial law; and the relationship and boundaries between church and state. Finally, the McPheeters episode played a prominent role in Civil War history by providing the occasion for President Abraham Lincoln to formulate his policy on the federal military's treatment of churches and suspected disloyal ministers in territories under Union control.

Samuel McPheeters, along with his older brother William, grew up in Raleigh, North Carolina. While William went to Philadelphia to study medicine, Samuel decided to take up his father's profession by becoming a Presbyterian minister. After obtaining a theological education at Princeton Seminary and serving a brief stint as an itinerant minister, he accepted a call to pastor a church in Amelia, Virginia. In early 1851

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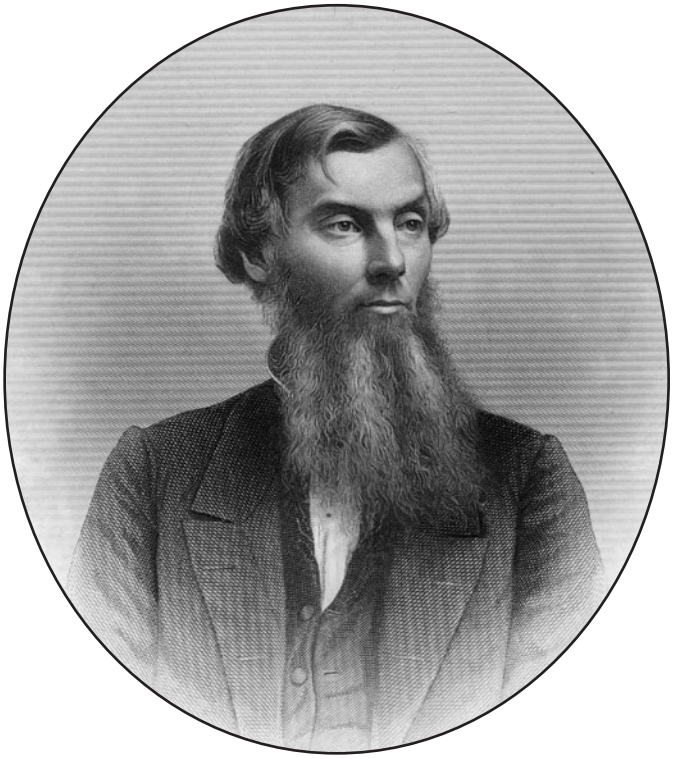


The Rev. Samuel B. McPheeters, D.D. Photo. by J.C. Elrod. Eng[rave]d by J.C. Euttre. No date. RG 414, PHS.

Samuel followed William, who had opened his own practice in St. Louis, by accepting a call to Westminster Presbyterian Church in downtown St. Louis (which merged with another congregation two years later to form Pine Street Presbyterian Church). Samuel's Old School style of preaching, however, was not always palatable to his listeners' tastes. Samuel R. Curtis, a city engineer who would later lead Union troops victoriously at Pea Ridge and serve as the head of the Department of the Missouri, recorded in his diary his impression of McPheeters's homiletic style that emphasized themes of divine judgment and redemption. "In the evening I took a party of ladies and heard Rev. McPheeters preach a terrible sermon. Miss Fourier said it made her nervous and really I did not wonder."[1] Curtis's negative impression of McPheeters foretold the antagonistic role Curtis would play in the minister's future.

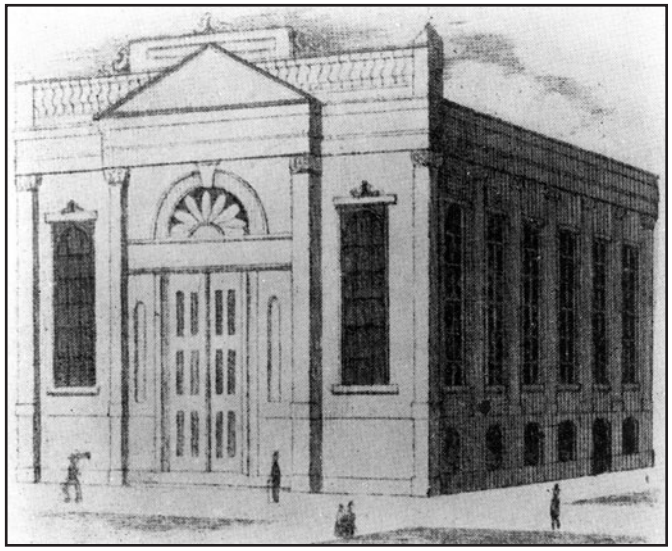
At a congregational meeting on May 23, 1860, McPheeters shocked his Pine Street parishioners by tendering his resignation.[2] A week later, the church met once again, deciding unanimously to deny McPheeters's resignation request, instead granting him a one-year leave of absence in order to tend to his health. McPheeters accepted the church's counterproposal, immediately withdrawing his resignation.[3] The preacher's health quickly improved during his sabbatical, allowing him to accept a temporary position as chaplain for the U.S. government at Fort Union in New Mexico, where he preached to soldiers and taught children. By spring of 1861 news of the Confederate attack on Fort Sumter reached New Mexico. The Pine Street congregation immediately came to his mind, moving him to pen a pastoral letter on May 14, in which he observed, "The Divine Arm is bare to smite our land with His terrible but righteous judgment."[4] The majority of the letter pertained to his concern over the state of the nation and the church's proper role in the matter. McPheeters explained at the beginning of the letter that he was addressing the Pine Street Church "not as a friend or advocate of any party or section, but as an ambassador of One whose 'kingdom is not of this world.'" Stating that his greatest fear was the danger of dissension emerging within the church, he admonished the members to refrain from voicing their respective views on the war during church-related gatherings, encouraging them to be "conscientiously guarded in what they say—by the exercise of charity, and by a spirit of prayer." Toward the end of the letter, McPheeters expressed his concern over the direction of the General Assembly of the Old School Presbyterian Church, which would meet in Philadelphia later in the week. Aware that the question of the proper relationship between church and state would play a central role in the ecclesiastical deliberations, he advised his congregation to wait for his return before making any official statements on the proceedings of the meeting. Two days after he composed the pastoral letter, the 1861 General Assembly approved the Gardiner Spring Resolutions, by which the church officially endorsed the North.[5] By the end of the month, McPheeters was back in St. Louis to resume his pastorate.

McPheeters arrived in a city that was vastly different from the one he had left just a year earlier. Though strongly sympathetic to the Union cause when compared to the rural parts of the state, St. Louis was a city immensely divided. General Henry Halleck described the region's political climate to President Lincoln, warning, "I cannot at the present time withdraw any [troops] from Missouri without risking the loss of this State."[6] One reason he cited was that some disgruntled residents in the city and surrounding counties were "insurrectionary,—burning bridges, destroying telegraph lines, etc." In addition to the constant fear of guerrilla

activities, the bloody confrontation between General Nathaniel Lyon's Union forces and Confederate militiamen at Camp Jackson in early summer 1861 was likely another factor that heightened the Union's anxiety over the city. In a November 21 letter to General George B. McClellan, Lincoln declared, "If General McClellan and General Halleck deem it necessary to declare and maintain martial law at Saint Louis the same is hereby authorized."[7] In this dispatch, Lincoln expressed concern over the balance of power and loyalty in St. Louis, suspending the writ of *habeas corpus* in the city.

The storm clouds of regional political conflict that gathered over the peace of Pine Street Church opened with a flood of controversy in 1862. Early suspicion regarding McPheeters's civil loyalty, however, had little to do directly with the minister's actions or statements. Excluding McPheeters's refusal to make any political declarations as a minister of the church, there was no specific evidence that he was a threat to the federal government. The circumstantial evidence, however, was mounting. By the middle of 1861, Dr. William McPheeters had earned a reputation as a Southern sympathizer. His open condemnation of Lyon's attack on Confederate-aligned Camp Jackson, combined with his refusal to take the required loyalty oath, landed him on Halleck's disloyalty list. By June, William McPheeters had joined the Confederate army as a surgeon, serving with Sterling Price in the battle at Wilson's Creek. Though Samuel never publicly endorsed his brother's sentiments or actions, the minister's enemies used William's Confederate service as evidence of the true object of Samuel's hidden loyalty. Under martial law, such circumstantial evidence could prove sufficient to brand citizens as enemies of the United States government.

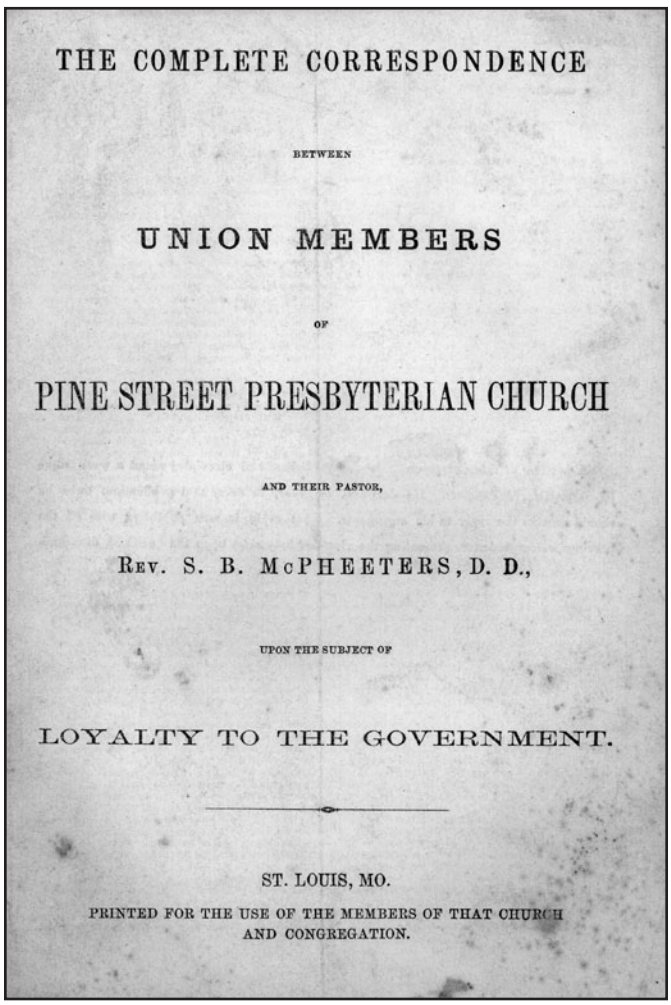
Samuel McPheeters's role in the 1862 General Assembly in Columbus, Ohio only served to increase the volume of growing rumors of his disloyalty that circulated throughout St. Louis. During the national meeting of the Old School Presbyterian Church, Dr. Robert J. Breckinridge, the prominent professor and founder of Danville Seminary in Kentucky, presented a scathing letter against Southern Presbyterians, accusing them of blasphemy, conspiracy and treason for their refusal to support the federal government. Breckinridge then turned his venom toward the denomination's apolitical ministers residing in the border states, who "had been faithless to all authority, human and divine, to which they owed subjection."[8] Responding



Pine Street Presbyterian Church, St. Louis, Missouri. RG 425, PHS.

to Breckinridge's paper, McPheeters delivered a speech defending the Southern Presbyterian doctrine of the spirituality of the church that prominent divines such as James Henley Thornwell and Stuart Robinson championed. In his speech, McPheeters claimed that the minister as a citizen is bound to the civil government, but as an officer of Christ's church he is bound only to his spiritual constitution—the Bible. As a result, he reasoned, it is not the role of the minister to proclaim any particular party or political faction to be favorable in the eyes of God. Following a two-kingdom paradigm that such figures in church history as Augustine and Martin Luther promoted (at least in theory), McPheeters implored his fellow ecclesiastical officers to uphold the important distinction between the spiritual kingdom of God and the civil kingdom of the world.[9] In his defense of the spirituality of the church, McPheeters defended perhaps the most distinctive doctrine of Southern Presbyterianism. He revealed his background as a Southerner, therefore, more in his theology than his politics. For many staunch Unionists in St. Louis, however, this was a distinction with a difference. In their eyes, the civil strife of the region warranted more than theological rhetoric.

His speech on the General Assembly floor angered a small but vocal faction of Pine Street Church. Upon his return from Columbus, McPheeters found a letter waiting for him from this faction of thirty-one members, led by elder George P. Strong. The letter opened with a statement of the group's disappointment that McPheeters, after returning from New Mexico, had refused to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Frontispiece, *The Complete Correspondence between Union Members of Pine Street Presbyterian Church and their Pastor, Rev. S. B. McPheeters, D.D., upon the Subject of Loyalty to the Government* (St. Louis: 1862). RG 425, PHS.

announce his views on the war in a public manner. Reproving his speech at the recent General Assembly, Strong and associates explained, "we feel more and more convinced that it is every man's duty, not only *to be* on the right side in this controversy, but to have it known and understood, that he is on the right side…there are only two sides to this controversy. There can be no neutral ground."[10] In their estimation, the extenuating political climate of St. Louis necessitated a public response from their pastor denouncing the moral evil of civil rebellion. The direction of the Old School Presbyterian Church, according to these pro-Union church members, took a back seat to the current civil strife.

The proceedings of a Pine Street Church service that occurred just days after McPheeters's General Assembly speech appeared to confirm the suspicions of those who questioned his civil loyalty. The signers of the letter expressed their disapproval that their pastor had performed the baptism of Samuel Robbins's child, who was named after "that arch rebel and traitor, *Sterling Price*," the former Missouri Governor who was presently leading Confederate forces in an invasion of southern Missouri.[11] The intent of the letter was not to convince their pastor to preach politics from the pulpit but to elicit a clear statement revealing his true allegiance. In the context of the political strife of the region, the signers of the letter thought their pastor had a civil and moral duty to declare his support of the Union publicly.

In his response, McPheeters refused to meet the political demands of the faction, treating the matter solely as an ecclesiastical issue. The minister was taken aback by the group's letter, which demanded their pastor take a public stand on the political state of the nation. The first problem with the letter, according to McPheeters, was one of ecclesiastical jurisdiction. As a minister in the Presbyterian Church, his "responsibility for the faithful discharge of these duties is to the Head of the Church, and under him to the Presbytery to which I belong."[12] In other words, this faction did not meet as an official representation of the congregation, session, or presbytery in making their demands. As a result, their request carried no ecclesiastical authority. He was also concerned with the precedent he would set if he complied with their request. "For, brethren, if you may ask of me as your pastor a written answer to a paper going over the whole field of a great national convulsion involving not simply questions of moral right and wrong, but also questions of constitutional law, and most intricate questions of State policy, then what questions may you not ask and demand of me my answer?"[13] According to McPheeters, the faction's letter assumed that all congregants possessed the right to demand that their pastor reveal his personal opinion on any civil matter. From his apolitical theological perspective, while both church and state were divinely ordained, each was designed for different purposes and thus possessed separate jurisdictions. In the eyes of his accusers, however, the church always possessed a moral imperative to denounce sin, including the nation's civil sins.

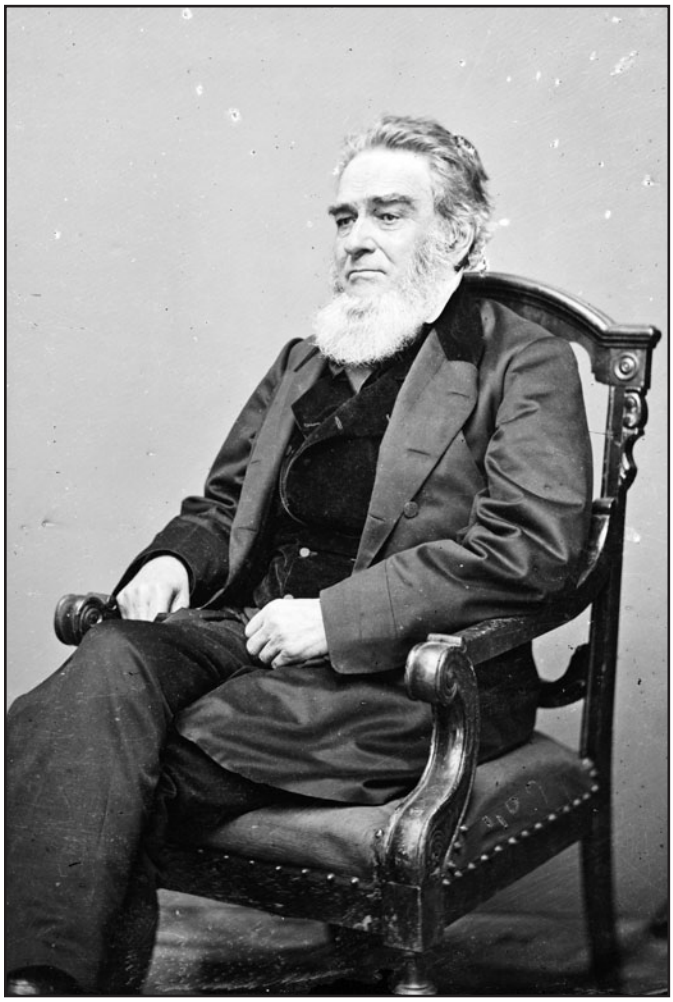
McPheeters continued to treat the matter exclusively as an ecclesiastical and theological issue. In defense of his baptism of Sterling Price Robbins, McPheeters claimed that the parents had not divulged the name of their child prior to the service, thus catching the pastor by surprise in their

choice of name. Confronted with this situation, the preacher had relied on the Presbyterian Directory of Worship, which dictated how ministers were to conduct the sacrament of baptism. Quoting from the Directory, McPheeters reasoned, "'The Minister is to pray for a blessing to attend to ordinance, after which, calling the child by its name, he is to say—I baptize thee,' &c. This is all that I did. I had no right to decline doing it…." Maintaining his argument, based on Presbyterian polity, McPheeters pointed out that the logic of their argument also implicated one of the signers of the letter. "One of the signers of this paper is the clerk of Session. Will he refuse to enter that child's name upon the Church Register?" he asked. "I suppose not. But why, I ask, would my simply official act in pronouncing a name be considered in a different light from his official act in recording the same name upon the public Register of the Church?"[14] McPheeters appealed to the standards of the Presbyterian Church in order to avoid evaluating the civil actions of the nation. The pastor concluded by noting that on two recent occasions he had taken the loyalty oath of allegiance to the Constitution of the United States required of Missouri's civil officials and ministers. In this turbulent border state context, however, the minister's arguments failed to placate the concerns of Pine Street Church's radical faction.

In an October 15 meeting, the pro-Union contingent of the congregation unanimously agreed that McPheeters's response was unsatisfactory in appeasing their request for his public support of the Union. Their primary point of contention, according to the meeting minutes, was that the minister failed to declare clearly whether he was an ally or enemy of the federal government. This left those Unionist members of the church without an answer to the rumors, "very current in St. Louis, and elsewhere," that Pine Street was a disloyal church.[15] These reports maintained that not only was McPheeters a Southern sympathizer but that there was "active disloyalty of many of its members" as well.[16] It is important to note the influential role of rumor in border-state cities during the Civil War, especially in the context of martial law. Even without any evidence to substantiate claims, rumors and innuendo often caused great controversy and forced the accused to go on the defensive, publicly declaring their true allegiance.

In a lengthy letter to McPheeters in late November, Strong, James Corbitt, and John Ferguson expressed their wish to cease the private correspondence with their pastor that they had initiated in July, declaring their dialogue a stalemate. About three weeks later, on December 13, these men attempted to sway local public opinion in their favor, publishing their November 25 letter to McPheeters in the *Missouri Democrat*, the leading Republican newspaper in St. Louis. The pastor had consented to the publication of their correspondence, hoping the rumors would die down once readers understood that his silence derived from his apolitical theological interpretation of the ministerial office rather than from Confederate sympathy. McPheeters, however, did not expect Strong, Corbitt, and Ferguson to publish only their final letter or to run it in the undoubtedly pro-Union *Democrat*. It appears these men disregarded their pastor's request in the conclusion of his November 3 letter, "that I shall be consulted as to the place and manner of publication; and I ask you to appoint a committee to confer with me as to the time and manner of its publication."[17] As was common in nineteenth-century civil and religious controversies, their debate would resume in the public realm of a local newspaper.

Cognizant of the important role of local public opinion, McPheeters published a reply in the *Missouri Democrat* on December 22 in an attempt to communicate his spirituality of the church doctrine to the public. In his response, he only attempted to correct one misstatement of Strong, Corbitt, and Ferguson as an example of the faulty and disingenuous nature of their entire letter. This issue had to do with his baptism of the child named after Sterling Price. According to McPheeters, he thought the parents were joking when they told him their son's name, thus proving that he did not perform the baptism as a deliberate affront to the federal government or those who support it. This explanation differed slightly from his original claim that he was not aware of the name the parents had chosen until he was performing the rite. He then expounded on what he perceived to be the true point of contention between him and the Pine Street faction—the nature of the church and the minister's office.[18] The intolerant political climate of St. Louis under martial law, however, afforded no patience for complex debate over a theological doctrine that sounded all too convenient for a southern-born Presbyterian to invoke. As he penned his December 22 letter for publication in the *Missouri Democrat*, McPheeters must have known that his future as pastor of Pine Street Presbyterian Church, and possibly as a St.



Edward Bates. Photograph taken between 1855 and 1865. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Brady-Handy Photograph Collection, LC-BH82- 4097.

Louis citizen, was in grave danger. He concluded his letter with a view toward ensuing trials. "And if I am not spared to see that future on earth," he wrote, "yet I know assuredly that another future comes…. For this I hope and labor, and am willing, I trust, to suffer; and knowing, too, that when that day comes I shall only escape by having much forgiven, it becomes me, and I do now, from my heart, desire to forgive others."[19]

Yet even as McPheeters wrote this letter a confluence of forces, including the aggressive policies of General Samuel Curtis and Provost Marshal General Franklin A. Dick, rampant local rumors, and a small but disgruntled faction of Pine Street Church, effected the December 19, 1862, issuance of Special Order No. 152. Dick issued the order, which stated that "on account of unmistakable evidence of sympathy with the rebellion," McPheeters and his wife were banished from Missouri and commanded to flee to any free state north of Indianapolis and west of Pennsylvania.[20] It appears the "unmistakable evidence" referred to the accusations Strong, Corbitt, and Ferguson submitted in their letter, specifically, that the minister refused to support the Union publicly, had a rebel brother and wife, had not observed Buchanan's call for a national day of prayer and fasting on January 4, 1861, and had negatively influenced the youth of his church. In an attempt to rid St. Louis of all Confederates in Union clothing through his banishment policy, General Curtis set about to make an example of rebels who attempted to hide their disloyalty behind a church pulpit. Under martial law, there was no room for political exemptions for religious conscience.

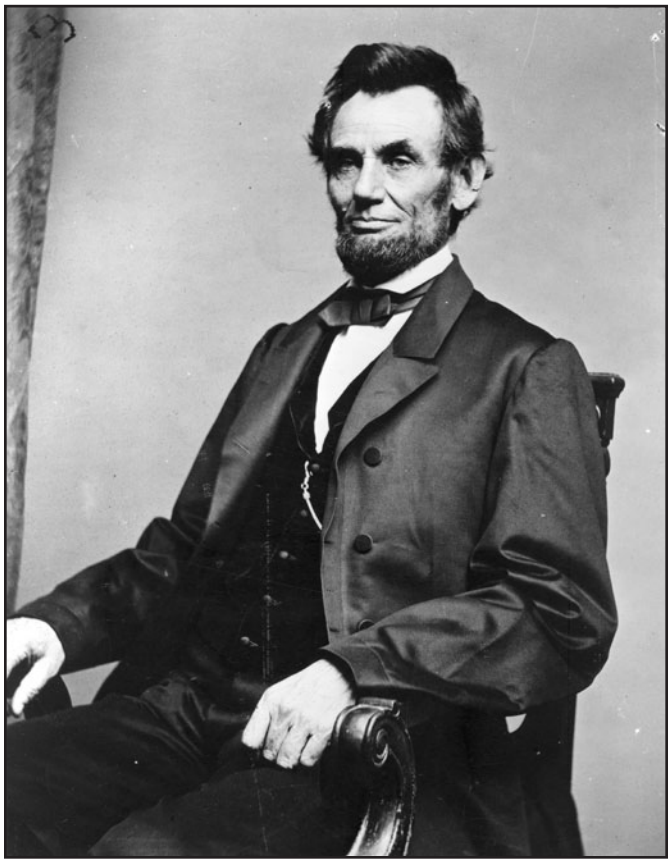
In order to understand McPheeters's immediate response to Special Order No. 152, one must consider the political climate in St. Louis. By late 1862, a number of prominent St. Louisans had become uncomfortable with General Curtis's aggressive policies against suspected enemies of the federal government.[21] This tension intensified with the December issuance of General Order No. 35, which granted military provost marshals further authority to arrest alleged Confederate sympathizers, particularly at religious gatherings. Edward Bates, McPheeters's old friend and former member of his congregation, used the political leverage that accompanied his post as Lincoln's Attorney General to arrange a meeting between the president and the minister. Had it not been for the local political tension between Bates and Curtis, or the personal friendship between McPheeters and Bates, it is unlikely that the minister could have secured an audience with Lincoln in order to air his grievances.

On December 27, McPheeters and Bates appeared before Lincoln in Washington to appeal Special Order No. 152. In a risky move, the minister declined to present to the president Missouri Governor Hamilton Gamble's letter of recommendation in support of McPheeters. "If I should go to Washington and present this letter," he reasoned, "I shall obtain my release at once, without opening my mouth, but I shall then give up the principles for which I have been contending, and the maintaining of which has been the occasion of my pulpit being taken from me."[22] McPheeters was so confident in his apolitical theological convictions that he was willing to risk Lincoln taking the view of his accusers that these religious beliefs were nothing more than a cover for treason.[23] It immediately became clear to the preacher that Lincoln had already

received letters from McPheeters's opponents on the matter. "It was evident," he observed, "that these letters had prejudiced the President against me for he remarked, 'If this order should be revoked it would be considered a secession triumph.'"[24] McPheeters's presented to the president one of the loyalty oaths that he had taken upon his return to St. Louis from New Mexico in 1861. After reviewing the evidence, Lincoln found the oath to be very strong and specific. In addition, the minister assured Lincoln that it had been his custom even before the war began to pray for the president and the entire civil government during church services.[25]

After considering the arguments of both sides in the dispute, Lincoln was prepared to make a decision at the beginning of 1863. In a letter to General Curtis dated January 2, Lincoln acknowledged that McPheeters's accusers never charged that the minister violated his oaths of allegiance, nor had they brought any specific charges against him. The president concurred with Curtis's general suspicion that the preacher sympathized with the South, though he did not explain what led him to this conclusion or precisely what he meant by "sympathy."[26] It is possible that Lincoln made this statement in order to placate Curtis to some degree before stating his disagreement with the general's order. Even if he truly believed McPheeters to be a Southern sympathizer in some manner, Lincoln questioned "whether such a man, of unquestioned good moral character, who has taken such an oath as he has, and can not even be charged of violating it, and who can be charged with no other specific act or omission, can, with safety to the government be exiled, upon the suspicion of his secret sympathies."[27] In spite of his acknowledgement that no evidence or specific charges had been presented against McPheeters, however, Lincoln agreed that the matter must be left ultimately to the discretion of those in charge of the region, namely General Curtis. Lincoln's point was clear—Curtis had permission to withdraw the president's suspension of the order if the general deemed it necessary for the public good, but Lincoln also made it clear that, in his opinion, McPheeters and his family should not suffer banishment.

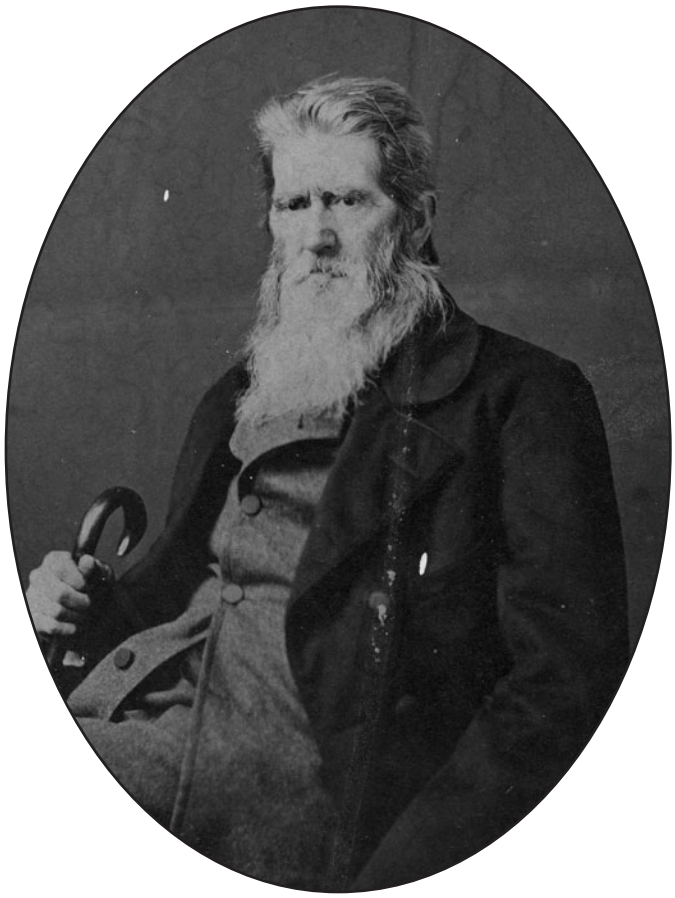
The president concluded his note with a declaration on the relationship between federal authorities and the nation's churches, asserting that the "United States Government must not, as by this order, undertake to run the churches.... It will not do for the United States to appoint trustees, supervisors, or other agents for the churches."[28]



Abraham Lincoln, January 8, 1864. Photograph by Matthew Brady. RG 414, PHS.

Unwilling to concede this defeat against his hard line policy regarding suspected enemies of the U.S. government, Curtis reinstated a modified version of Special Order No. 152 on January 2, 1863, that no longer required McPheeters to leave Missouri but still barred him from the Pine Street pulpit.[29] As a result, according to the commands of Curtis and Dick, the military closed the doors of Pine Street Church and gave control of it to George Strong and his supporters. McPheeters appealed to Judge Bates regarding the military's control of the church in spite of Lincoln's directive. By March 4, the military restraints on the church were lifted, allowing the church to open its doors once again. McPheeters, however, remained barred from the Pine Street pulpit.[30] The situation revealed to all involved that federal officials were willing to use their power to dictate further developments in the McPheeters case. In spite of Lincoln's declaration that the federal government should not control a church, local military officials had temporarily shut the doors of Pine Street Presbyterian Church.[31]

Toward the end of 1863 a group of some three-dozen members of Pine Street Church petitioned



Robert Jefferson Breckinridge, 1800-1877. Date and photographer unknown. RG 414, PHS.

Lincoln for the restoration of McPheeters to his former position. The petition condemned Provost Marshal Dick's order that interrupted the pastoral duties McPheeters had been supplying to the community. In his reply to the petition, Lincoln claimed never to have "deprived Doctor McPheeters of any ecclesiastical right, or authorized or excused its being done by any one deriving authority from me."[32] He explained that his January 1863 correspondence to Curtis directed the general to treat McPheeters the same as any other citizen but prohibited government interference in matters regarding who should preach in the churches. Lincoln was shocked by the petition's charge that federal officials were keeping the pastor from executing his ministerial duties at Pine Street Church. "If any one is doing this by pretense of my authority," the president wrote, "I will thank any one who can to make out and present me a specific case against him."[33] As far as Lincoln was concerned, the case should not have been subject to any meddling by local military officials; in his eyes, he had settled the matter at the beginning of the year. Several days after the president's letter arrived in St. Louis, McPheeters resumed his pastorate at Pine Street Church.[34]

Lincoln's doubletalk in the McPheeters case was consistent with his treatment of border states throughout the war. By giving a recommendation in favor of McPheeters, Lincoln could say later that he thought he had settled the matter if he received additional complaints. But by doing it in the form of a recommendation instead of an official order, he gave Curtis the power to continue doing what he thought best.

Having failed to expel McPheeters through the highest civil channels in the nation, the minister's opponents within the St. Louis Presbytery turned their case to the highest ecclesiastical authority in the Presbyterian Church—the General Assembly. At the meeting of the 1864 General Assembly, which convened in May in Newark, New Jersey, McPheeters and Pine Street Church elder William T. Wood presented a formal complaint against the St. Louis Presbytery, which had determined in an April 9 meeting in the St. Louis suburb of Kirkwood, under the influence of George Strong, to prohibit McPheeters from preaching in Pine Street Church. After extensive proceedings, which featured debate on the Assembly floor between McPheeters and Strong, the Assembly rejected McPheeters's appeal in a 117–47 vote. Soon thereafter, McPheeters and his family moved to another border state, where he assumed the pastorate of a Presbyterian church in Mulberry, Kentucky.

For two years McPheeters had tried to steer the discussion concerning his civil loyalty toward a theological debate regarding the proper role of the church and its clergy in civil society. Throughout the ordeal, his apolitical theological appeals to the doctrine of the spirituality of the church proved ineffective in appeasing ardent Unionists in St. Louis, whether they were military officials, leaders of the local government, or members of his own church. When at the 1864 General Assembly his case finally reached an arena in which theological discussion was the standard mode of discourse, however, his apolitical theological arguments failed to convince the vocally pro-Union majority. Though McPheeters had fought a long battle against federal military officials and their zealous supporters, it was at the hands of his fellow Presbyterians that he was finally expelled from the Pine Street Church pulpit. Even after the highest federal leaders adjudicated his case to their satisfaction, it was ecclesiastical leaders that levied the final judgment.

The McPheeters case had important ramifications for relations between church and state in ensuing years. Lincoln appears to have viewed his decisions in the Pine Street Presbyterian Church controversy as a precedent to follow in his future deliberations regarding ecclesiastical and civil matters throughout the remainder of the war. In a February 11, 1864, letter to Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton, the president recounted his January 1863 communication to General Curtis, after Franklin Dick had "taken the control of a certain church from one set of men and given it to another."[35] After quoting directly from the McPheeters letter in which he declared that the government must not attempt to run the churches, Lincoln wrote, "you can conceive of my embarrassment at now having brought to me what purports to be a formal order of the War Department… giving Bishop Ames control and possession of all the Methodist churches in certain Southern military departments, whose pastors have not been appointed by a loyal bishop."[36] A few weeks later, the president issued a memorandum concerning the policy of the U.S. military regarding churches for the remainder of the war, in which he again borrowed the language of his letter in the McPheeters case. In the 1864 memorandum, he asserted, "the United States Government must not undertake to run the churches. When an individual in a church or out of it becomes dangerous to the public interest he must be checked…. It will not do for the United States to appoint trustees, supervisors, or other agents for the churches."[37] On numerous occasions throughout the course of the war, Lincoln's pronouncements on church-state wartime relations reflected his initial position on the McPheeters case.[38]

The McPheeters episode is just one of the more celebrated cases among many instances in which Union officials accused Missouri ministers—usually acting from apolitical theological convictions—of disloyalty and treason for their refusal to publicly support the Union cause. For example, in his two-volume chronicle *Martyrdom in Missouri*, which treats "the persecution of ministers of the gospel in the state of Missouri," Reverend William Leftwich recounted over seventy cases in which Missouri clergy of various denominational affiliation faced fines, arrest, imprisonment, banishment, physical violence, and even death at the hands of federal military officials.[39] While highly partisan, as the title reflects, Leftwich's volumes are important for revealing the large number of Missouri ministers that faced charges of disloyalty during the war. Unfortunately, historians have conducted almost no research on this Civil War phenomenon. As the McPheeters case suggests, further study of this neglected area of American religious and Civil War history promises to shed new light on the relationship of church and state in American history. 𝒫

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Notes

[1] Samuel R. Curtis, City Engineer 1850-1852, Journals and Diaries, April 27, 1851, Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis.

[2] Pine Street Church Session Minutes, May 23–30, 1860. The minutes are housed at Westminster Presbyterian Church in St. Louis.

[3] Ibid.

[4] John S. Grasty. *Memoir of Rev. Samuel B. McPheeters*, (St. Louis: Southwestern Book & Publishing Co., 1871), 116; Samuel B. McPheeters to Pine Street Church, May 14, 1861, in Grasty, *Memoir*, 117–20.

[5] Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. (Old School). Minutes of the General Assembly, 1861, 303.

[6] Letter from Henry Halleck to Abraham Lincoln, Jan. 6, 1862, in John G. Nicolay and John Hay, eds., *Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln*, vol. 7 (New York: Lincoln Memorial University, 1905), 75–78.

[7] Abraham Lincoln to George B. McClellan, November 21, 1861, in Roy P. Basler, ed., *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, vol. 5 (New Brunswick, NJ.: Rutgers University Press, 1953), 27.

[8] Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. (Old School). Minutes of the General Assembly, 1862, 16, 62–63.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Faction of Pine Street Presbyterian Church to Rev. Samuel B. McPheeters, June 18, 1862, in *The Complete Correspondence Between Union Members of Pine Street Presbyterian Church and Their Pastor, Rev. S. B. McPheeters, D. D., Upon the Subject of Loyalty to the Government* (Printed for the use of the Members of that Church and Congregation, 1862), 4, Missouri Historical Society, St Louis.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Rev. Samuel B. McPheeters to faction of Pine Street Presbyterian Church, July 8, 1862, in *Complete Correspondence*, 4.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Faction of Pine Street Presbyterian Church to Rev. Samuel B. McPheeters, October 15, 1862, in *Complete Correspondence*, 6.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Strong, Corbitt, and Ferguson to McPheeters, November 25, 1862, in *Complete Correspondence*, 10–18; McPheeters to Jno. S. Thompson, Thos. Morrison, and Geo. P. Strong, November 3, 1862, in *Complete Correspondence*, 10; *Missouri Democrat*, December 13, 1862.

[18] *Missouri Democrat*, December 22, 1862.

[19] Ibid.

[20] Pine Street Presbyterian Church, Session Minutes, December 20, 1862.

[21] Louis S. Gerteis, *Civil War St. Louis* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2001), 276.

[22] Grasty, *Memoir*, 169.

[23] Ibid.

[24] Grasty, *Memoir*, 184–85.

[25] President Lincoln to Samuel R. Curtis, January 2, 1863, in Basler, *Collected Works*, vol. 6, 33–34.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Special Order No. 152, March 4, 1863, Missouri's Union Provost Marshal Papers, Missouri State Archives, Jefferson City, Missouri; Grasty, *Memoir*, 186. Sources vary on the exact date of Curtis's modification, but Grasty places it on January 2, 1863.

[30] Grasty, *Memoir*, 187-88.

[31] President Lincoln to Samuel R. Curtis, January 2, 1863, in Basler, *Collected Works*, vol. 6, 33–34; Pine Street Presbyterian Church Session Minutes, April 9, 1863.

[32] Abraham Lincoln, "Endorsement on Petition Concerning Dr. McPheeters," December 22, 1863, in Nicolay and Hay, *Complete Works*, vol. 9, 269–72.

[33] Ibid.

[34] Lincoln to Curtis, January 2, 1863, in Basler, *Collected Works*, vol. 6, 33–34; Milan J. Kedro, "The Civil War's Effect Upon An Urban Church: The St. Louis Presbytery Under Martial Law," *The Bulletin of the Missouri Historical Society,* 27, 3 (1971), 186–87.

[35] Abraham Lincoln to Secretary Stanton, February 11, 1864, in Nicolay and Hay, *Complete Works,* vol. 10, 4–5.

[36] Ibid.

[37] Lincoln, "Memorandum About Churches," March 4, 1864, in Nicolay and Hay, *Complete Works*, vol. 10, 30.

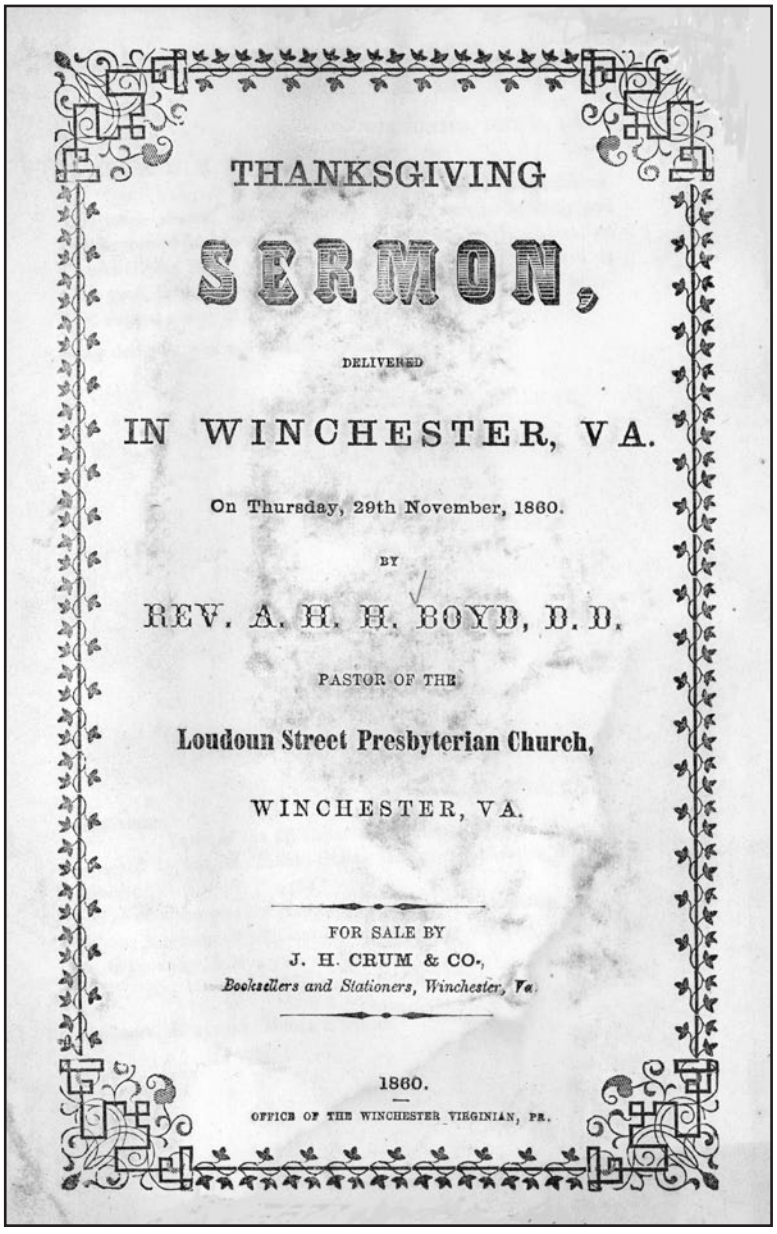
[38] Ibid.

[39] William M. Leftwich, *Martyrdom in Missouri: a history of religious proscription, the seizure of churches, and the persecution of ministers of the gospel, in the state of Missouri during the late civil war, and under the "test oath" of the new constitution*, 2 vols. (St. Louis: S. W. Book & Publishing Co., 1870).

Our Documentary Heritage

Presbyterians and the American Civil War

Presbyterians North and South recorded their experiences during the Civil War in words, images, and music. The Presbyterian Historical Society holds a rich collection of these sermons, publications, diaries, correspondence, and photographs. These materials document the horrendous conflict that split the country and the church, and affected people's religious and spiritual life.



THANKSGIVING

SERMON,

DELIVERED

IN WINCHESTER, VA.

On Thursday, 29th November, 1860.

BY

REV. A. H. H. BOYD, D. D.

PASTOR OF THE

Loudoun Street Presbyterian Church,

WINCHESTER, VA.

FOR SALE BY
J. H. CRUM & CO.,
Booksellers and Stationers, Winchester, Va.

1860.

OFFICE OF THE WINCHESTER VIRGINIAN, PR.

Delivered before the outbreak of civil war in November 1860, Rev. A. H. H. Boyd's Thanksgiving sermon offered hope for the preservation of the Union to his Winchester, Virginia congregation.

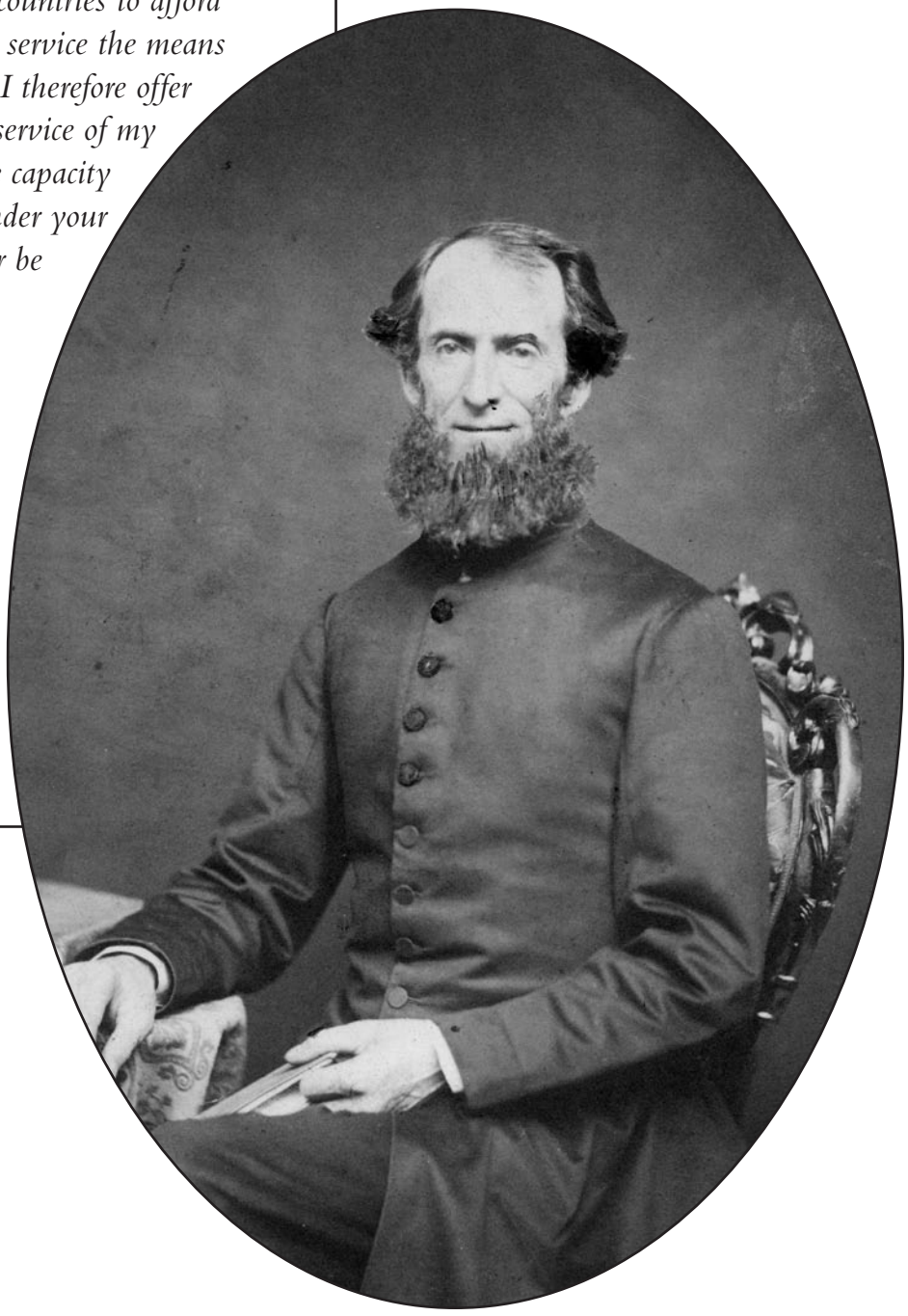
> *"As we then this day, my brethren, come before the throne of God, to offer our thanksgivings … let us, before His altar this hour, purpose to do our part to strengthen, by all legitimate means, the ties that should bind together every part of this Union."*
>
> Rev. Boyd, *Thanksgiving Sermon,* Nov. 29, 1860, Winchester, VA.

One week after the attack on Fort Sumter that started the Civil War, Rev. Alexander M. Stewart (1814–1875), pastor of the Second Reformed Presbyterian Church in Pittsburgh, wrote to Brigadier General J.S. Negley offering his services to the Union as a chaplain.

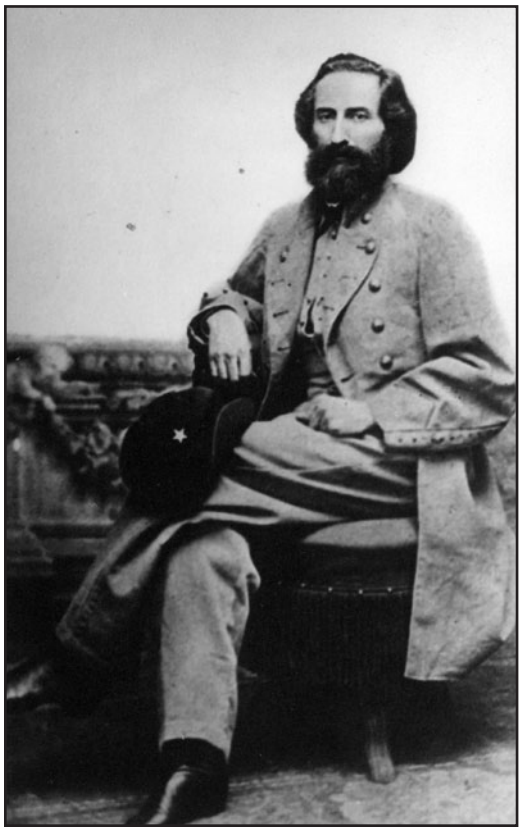
"*April 19, 1861. Dear Sir: As it is the praiseworthy custom of Christian countries to afford their soldiers during military service the means and consolations of religion, I therefore offer myself as a volunteer to the service of my country and my God, in the capacity of Chaplain to the troops under your command. Should the tender be accepted, I am ready.*"

Stewart went on to serve as chaplain to the 102nd regiment of Pennsylvania Volunteers, or the "Old Thirteenth."

Quote from A.M. Stewart, *Camp, March and Battle-Field : or, Three Years and a Half with the Army of the Potomac* (Philadelphia: J.B. Rodgers, 1865) p. vi.



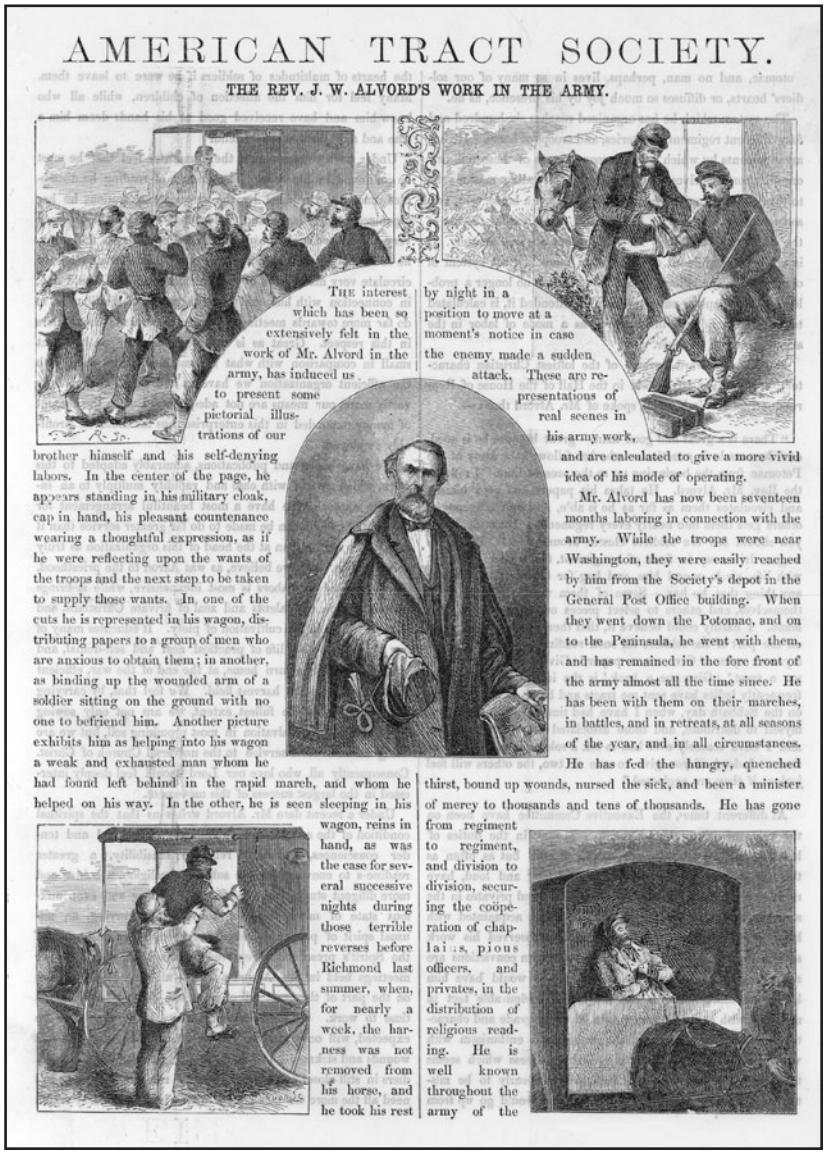
Rev. Alexander M. Stewart, RG 414.



Rev. Robert F. Bunting, PHS-M Photograph Collection, 10-0203, Box 4.

Rev. Robert Franklin Bunting (1828–1891) served as a commissioner to the organizing General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America. That same year, he entered military service as chaplain to the celebrated "Terry's Texas Rangers"—the Eighth Texas Cavalry. He also served as a war correspondent for several Texas newspapers and ran a hospital for Confederate soldiers in Alabama.

Congregational minister John W. Alvord (1807–1880) served as a chaplain to the Union Army during the Civil War. The American Tract Society published this broadsheet in 1863 to educate the public about the important role of chaplains in the war effort.



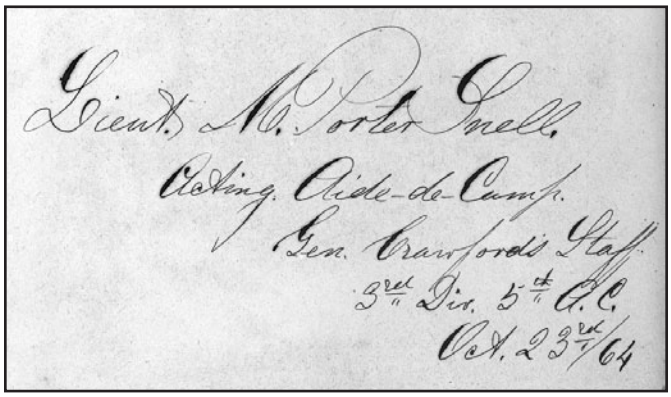
AMERICAN TRACT SOCIETY.

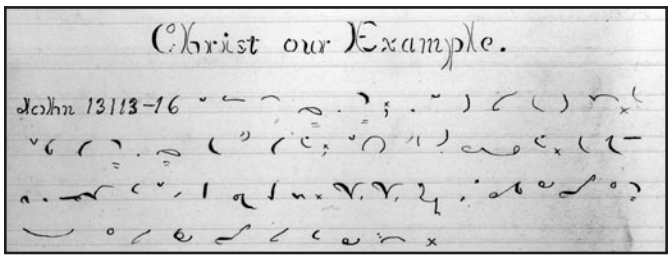
THE REV. J. W. ALVORD'S WORK IN THE ARMY.

THE interest which has been so extensively felt in the work of Mr. Alvord in the army, has induced us to present some pictorial illustrations of our brother himself and his self-denying labors. In the center of the page, he appears standing in his military cloak, cap in hand, his pleasant countenance wearing a thoughtful expression, as if he were reflecting upon the wants of the troops and the next step to be taken to supply those wants. In one of the cuts he is represented in his wagon, distributing papers to a group of men who are anxious to obtain them; in another, as binding up the wounded arm of a soldier sitting on the ground with no one to befriend him. Another picture exhibits him as helping into his wagon a weak and exhausted man whom he had found left behind in the rapid march, and whom he helped on his way. In the other, he is seen sleeping in his wagon, reins in hand, as was the case for several successive nights during those terrible reverses before Richmond last summer, when, for nearly a week, the harness was not removed from his horse, and he took his rest by night in a position to move at a moment's notice in case the enemy made a sudden attack. These are representations of real scenes in his army work, and are calculated to give a more vivid idea of his mode of operating.

Mr. Alvord has now been seventeen months laboring in connection with the army. While the troops were near Washington, they were easily reached by him from the Society's depot in the General Post Office building. When they went down the Potomac, and on to the Peninsula, he went with them, and has remained in the fore front of the army almost all the time since. He has been with them on their marches, in battles, and in retreats, at all seasons of the year, and in all circumstances. He has fed the hungry, quenched thirst, bound up wounds, nursed the sick, and been a minister of mercy to thousands and tens of thousands. He has gone from regiment to regiment, and division to division, securing the coöperation of chaplains, pious officers, and privates, in the distribution of religious reading. He is well known throughout the army of the

Frontispiece from *The Rev. J. W. Alvord's Work in the Army* (Boston: American Tract Society, 1863).



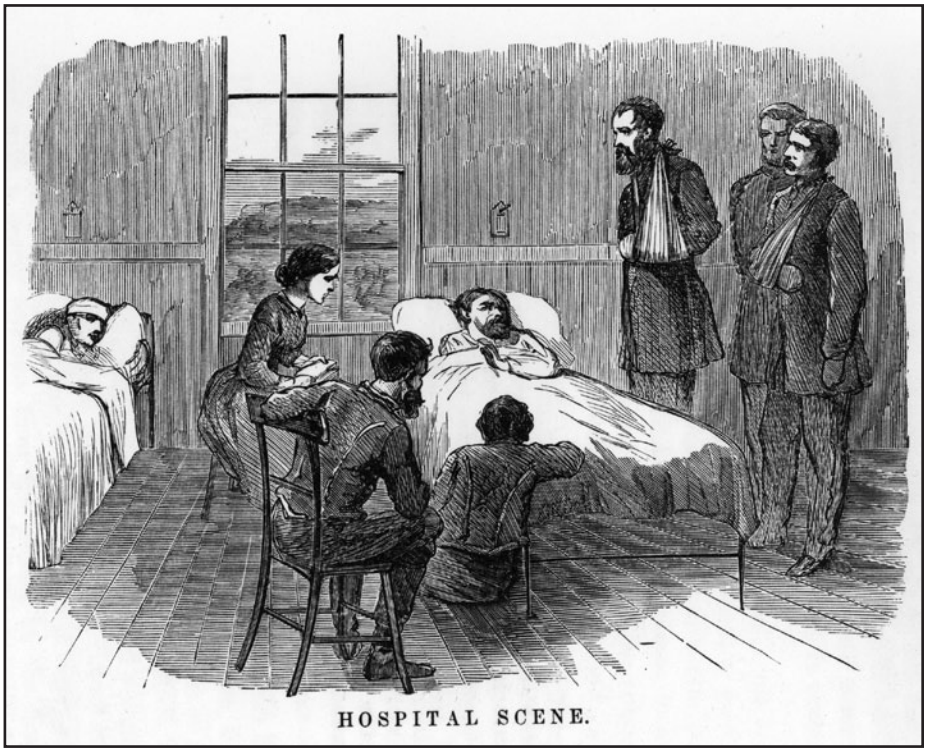


Moses Porter Snell Papers, 05-0429o.

Moses Porter Snell (1839–1908) served as an aide-de-camp to Union General Samuel Crawford during the Richmond–Petersburg Campaign. While in camp during October 1864, Snell kept a journal of biblical studies, written predominantly in shorthand. A deeply religious man, Snell was later ordained a Presbyterian minister in 1887.

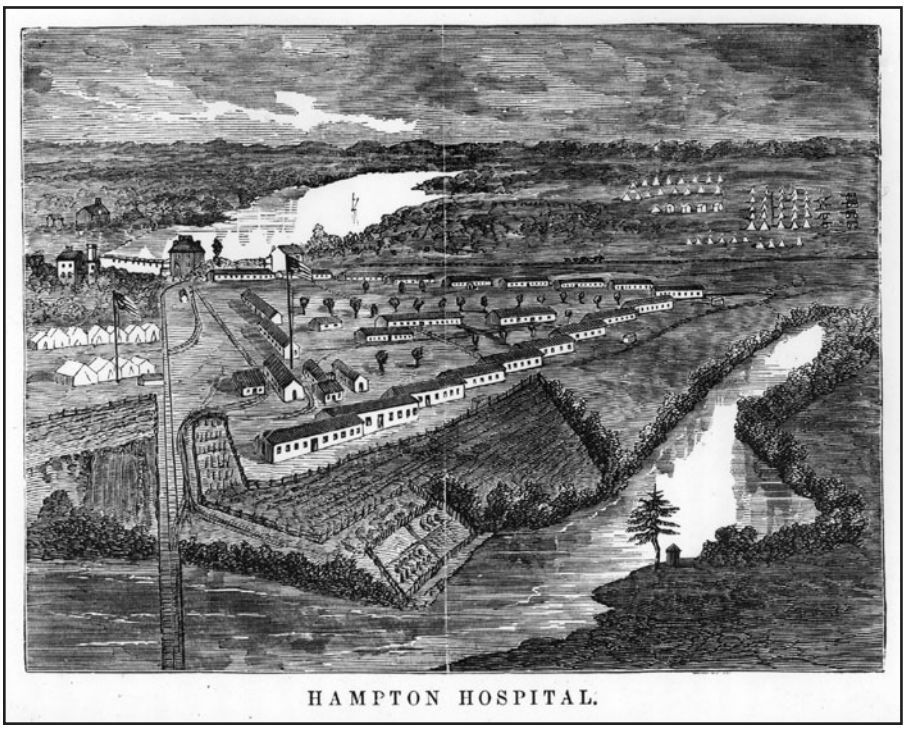
PHS-M Photograph Collection, 10-0203, Box 4.

During the Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln suspended the writ of *habeas corpus* in certain key military areas, allowing military authorities to hold citizens without trial if they were suspected of being traitors. Rev. Isaac Handy, a Presbyterian minister from Virginia, got caught in this snare while traveling to Delaware to visit his father-in-law in June, 1863. Union authorities captured Handy and imprisoned him at Fort Delaware, purportedly because he had served as a chaplain in the Confederate Army and made statements against the American flag. During his 15-month imprisonment, Handy (to the far left) taught theology and led worship services for both Confederate and Union soldiers.

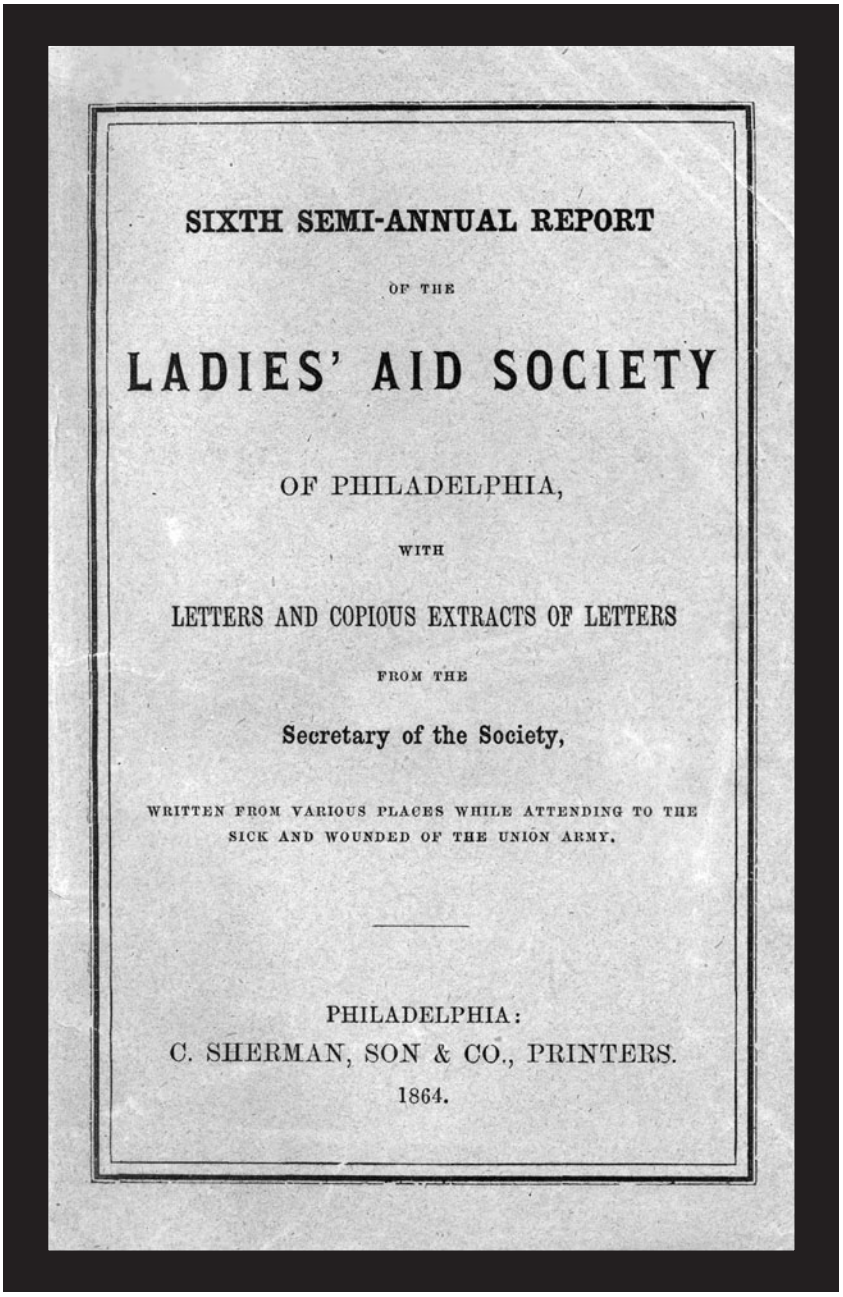


Anna Sands Roe (on left) at Hampton Hospital, 1864. Image originally printed in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine;* reprinted in A.S. Billingsley, *Christianity in the War* (Philadelphia: Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, 1872) p. 119.

Fortress Monroe, Virginia, remained under Union control throughout the Civil War and housed two military hospitals, Hampton and Chesapeake. Presbyterian pastor Rev. Edward Payson Roe (1838–1888) served as chaplain of Hampton Hospital alongside his wife, Anna Sands Roe (1842–1911). Together they gave spiritual counseling, provided supplies, read and talked to wounded soldiers, and even campaigned for the installation of a hospital library.



Hampton Hospital during the Civil War. Image originally printed in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine;* reprinted in A.S. Billingsley, *Christianity in the War* (Philadelphia: Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, 1872) p. 93.



SIXTH SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

LADIES' AID SOCIETY

OF PHILADELPHIA,

WITH

LETTERS AND COPIOUS EXTRACTS OF LETTERS

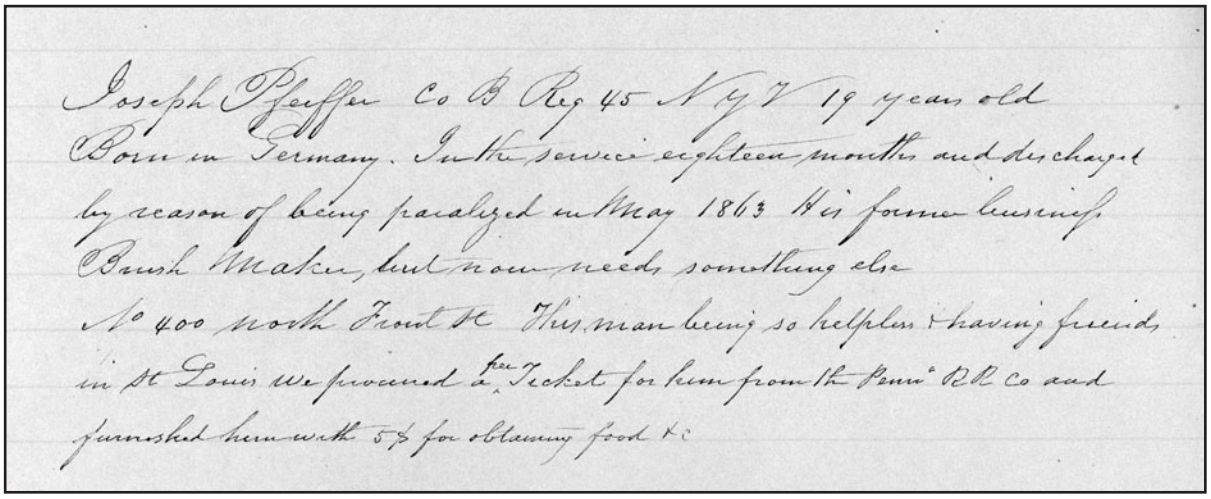
FROM THE

Secretary of the Society,

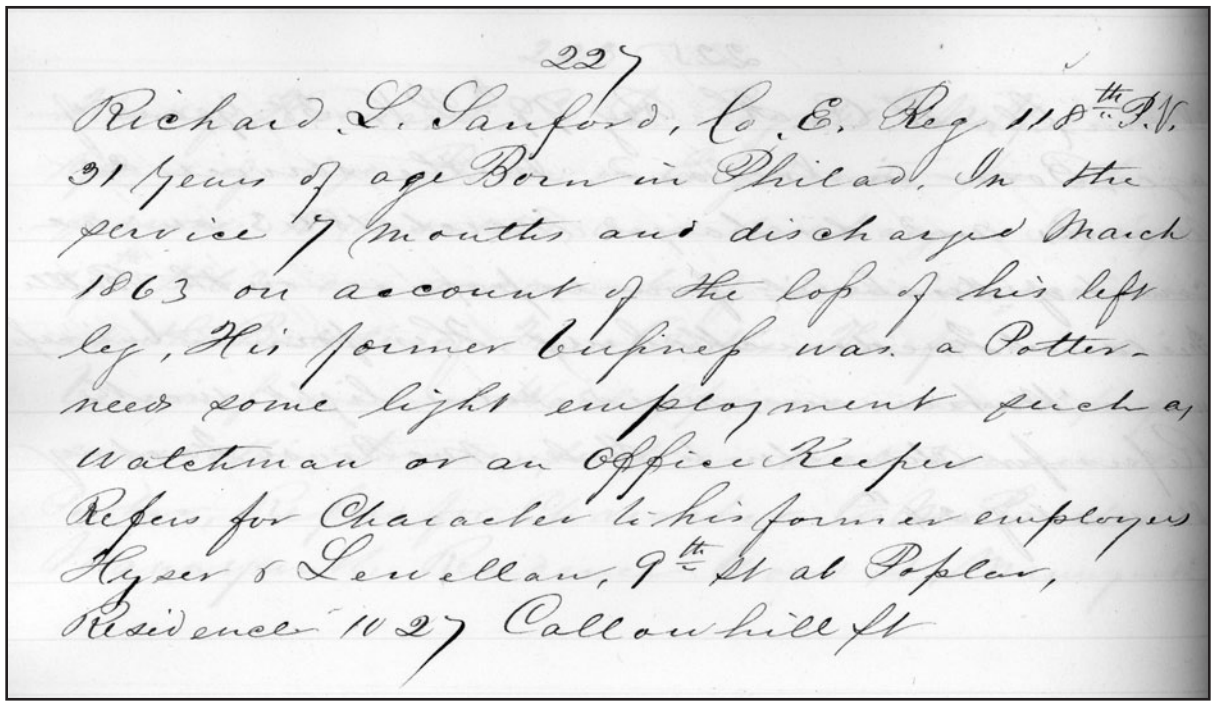
WRITTEN FROM VARIOUS PLACES WHILE ATTENDING TO THE SICK AND WOUNDED OF THE UNION ARMY.

PHILADELPHIA:
C. SHERMAN, SON & CO., PRINTERS.
1864.

Organized in April 1861, the Ladies' Aid Society of Philadelphia was one of the first and most famous of many formal and informal women's groups dedicated to providing supplies, medical aid, and emotional and religious support to soldiers during the war. Though members of the society belonged to more than twenty churches of various denominations, it was nicknamed the "Presbyterian Ladies' Aid Society" since meetings were held and supplies packed in the basement of Tenth Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia.


Joseph Pfeffer Co B Reg 45 N Y V 19 years old
Born in Germany. In the service eighteen months and discharged
by reason of being paralyzed in May 1863 His former business
Brush Maker, but now needs something else
No 400 north Front St This man being so helpless & having friends
in St Louis We procured a free Ticket for him from the Penn R R Co and
furnished him with 5$ for obtaining food &c

The Ladies' Aid Society of Philadelphia kept a "record of honorable discharged soldiers" in the city needing assistance in 1863 and 1864. The volumes detail the names, addresses, and reason for discharge of soldiers as well as their housing and employment needs.


227
Richard L. Sanford, Co. E. Reg 118th P.V.
31 years of age Born in Phila'd. In the
service 7 months and discharged March
1863 on account of the loss of his left
leg, His former business was a Potter-
needs some light employment such as
Watchman or an Office Keeper
Refers for Character to his former employer
Hyser & Lenellan, 9th St at Poplar,
Residence 1027 Callowhill St

Ladies' Aid Society of Philadelphia. Names of Honorable Discharged Soldiers, 1863–1864.

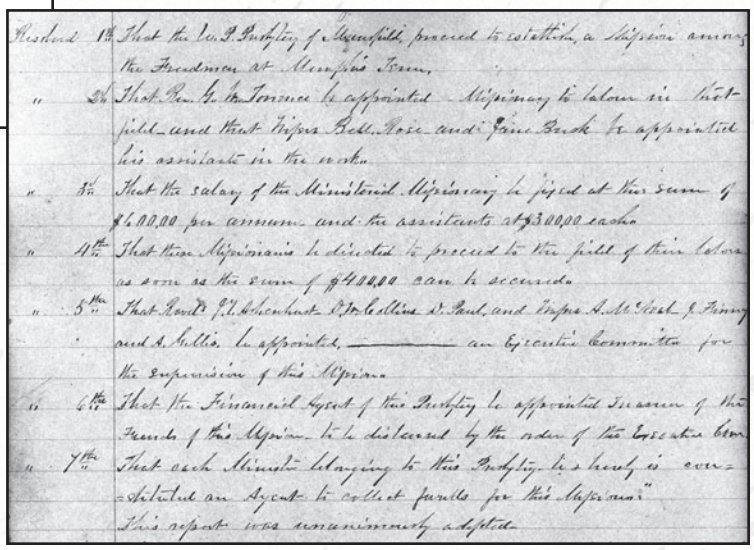
Charlotte Forten Grimké, RG 414.

Even as the war raged on, Northerners began traveling south to offer assistance and education to freed slaves. After Union troops liberated the Sea Islands off South Carolina in 1862, Charlotte Forten (1837–1914) went to Fort Royal to teach the "contraband." Charlotte was the first black teacher to journey south, and she chronicled her experiences in the *Atlantic Monthly* in May and June of 1864. She later married Presbyterian pastor Francis Grimké.

Northern Presbyterians at the national level formally organized Freedmen's work during the war—in 1863 for the United Presbyterian Church of North America, and in 1864 for the Old School and New School branches of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Northern synods and presbyteries often led the effort, sending delegations south to set up and staff schools and provide other assistance.

"An additional corps of teachers had recently been sent to [Camp President's Island] by the Presbytery of the United Presbyterians of Mansfield, Ohio, under charge of Rev. G.W. Torrence, Missionary; J.R. Finney, teacher, assisted by Miss Jennie L. Buck and Miss Bell Rose Heysuth. The school has just been commenced, with about two hundred and fifty pupils, aged from five to twenty."

Quote above from James E. Yeatman, *A Report on the Condition of the Freedmen of the Mississippi, presented to the Western Sanitary Commission* (St. Louis: Western Sanitary Commission, 1864) p. 3.



Resolved 1st That the U. P. Presbytery of Mansfield, proceed to establish a Mission among the Freedmen at Memphis Tenn.

" 2d That Rev. G. W. Torrence be appointed Missionary to labour in that field and that Misses Bell Rose and Jane Buck be appointed his assistants in the work.

" 3d That the salary of the Ministerial Missionary be fixed at the sum of $600.00 per annum and the assistants at $300.00 each.

" 4th That these Missionaries be directed to proceed to the field of their labors as soon as the sum of $1000.00 can be secured.

" 5th That Revds J. H. Shoemaker D. McMillan D. Paul, and Misses A. M. Stark J. Finney and A. Gillis, be appointed, ——— an Executive Committee for the supervision of this Mission.

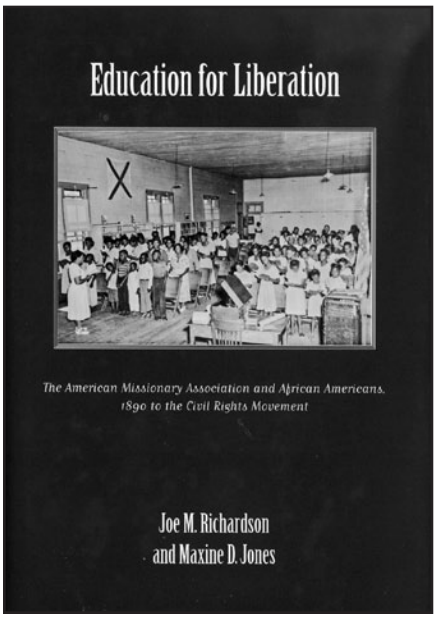
" 6th That the Financial Agent of this Presbytery be appointed Treasurer of the Funds of this Mission to be disbursed by the order of the Executive Com.

" 7th That each Minister belonging to this Presbytery be hereby is constituted an Agent to collect funds for this Mission.

This report was unanimously adopted.

At right, page of manuscript minutes recording the resolution to send Rev. Torrence and his delegation South to minister to the Freedmen, UPCNA Presbytery of Mansfield minutes, July 1, 1863.

Book Reviews



Education for Liberation: The American Missionary Association and African Americans, 1890 to the Civil Rights Movement. By Joe M. Richardson and Maxine D. Jones. (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2009. 287 pp. $49.50.)

Few scholars of race relations are unaware of the efforts of the American Missionary Association (AMA) to improve the quality of black life. Begun as an anti-slavery organization in 1846 in Albany, New York, by black and white members of Presbyterian, Congregationalist, and Methodist churches, the AMA became the leading private foundation underwriting and organizing black educational institutions after the Civil War. It established hundreds of primary schools and dozens of colleges, based mostly in the South. Some still thrive today, including Fisk University, Clark Atlanta University, Talladega College, Tougaloo College, and Dillard University. The AMA has been responsible for educating and training a legion of black professionals.

Education for Liberation joins the limited but significant literature on the history of the AMA. Unlike most scholars, Joe Richardson and Maxine Jones focus on the more recent history of the AMA, from the end of Reconstruction until the Civil Rights Movement, and patiently chronicle its steady efforts—some more successful than others—to create a national network of black schools. They argue that the AMA, despite bouts of internal tensions, "never wavered from its claim that blacks were equal in God's sight, that any 'backwardness' was created by circumstances rather than inherent inferiority, and that blacks should and could eventually become equal citizens." Convinced that education was the basis for social mobility, leaders within the AMA viewed their labors as essential for uplifting the black race, and viewed the AMA's efforts as a steady bulwark against racism.

Richardson and Jones provide a fine overview of the workings and culture of the AMA. They are careful to interweave the history of the AMA into the fabric of America's evolving racial history and demonstrate how its schools did far more than simply teach basic skills. While average schools and colleges offered much to their communities in the form of jobs to students and nearby residents, public libraries on their campuses, and basic healthcare to the surrounding communities, research centers like the one led by Charles S. Johnson at Fisk published crucial reports on the state of black life. In 1942 the AMA created the Race Relations Department, which was a political wing of the organization that hosted hundreds of institutes designed to educate whites and blacks alike about desegregation. These schools also acted as crucibles for political organizing and protest.

Education for Liberation offers a remarkable wealth of insight into the operations of the AMA and its place in post-Civil War society. It is a traditional institutional history, however, and perhaps predictably omits important cultural questions. Who were its black critics? How did the AMA understand and represent black working-class culture? Most curious is how little the authors address questions of religion, given the AMA's heritage. How did the AMA work with the different black denominations and what was its view of black Christianity? Notwithstanding these queries, Richardson and Jones offer a valuable portrait of a vital organization in American history.

John M. Giggie
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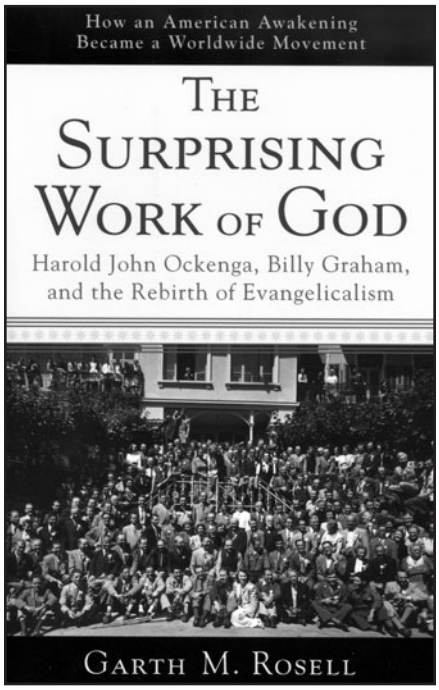
Tuscaloosa, Alabama



The Surprising Work of God: Harold John Ockenga, Billy Graham, and the Rebirth of Evangelicalism. By Garth M. Rosell. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2008. 288 pp. $19.95 paper.)

Garth Rosell has given us a lively, well-written analysis of the life of Protestant leader Harold J. Ockenga (1905–1985). *The Surprising Work of God*, which is the product of years of careful research in Ockenga's personal papers, gives us a new interpretation of Ockenga's life. While Margaret Bendroth's *Fundamentalists in the City* and Joel Carpenter's *Revive Us Again* have surveyed areas of Ockenga's life, Rosell's work dedicates more attention to Ockenga and presents a somewhat different view of the man and his work.

Ockenga was born in Illinois and educated at Taylor University, Princeton Theological Seminary, Westminster Seminary, and the University of Pittsburgh. He was a protégé of both J. Gresham Machen and Clarence Macartney. During the early 1930s, Ockenga served as the pastor of Pittsburgh's Point Breeze Presbyterian Church, and between 1936 and 1969, he pastored one of the most highly visible congregations in New England: Boston's Park Street Church. During these middle decades of the twentieth century Ockenga was one of America's most influential Protestant leaders. Along with men such as Billy Graham and Carl F. H Henry, he played a leading role in the creation of neo-evangelicalism. Neo-evangelicals such as Ockenga sought to remain true to the fundamentals of the faith while steering clear of what they saw as the unnecessarily belligerent rhetoric and actions of fundamentalists like Carl McIntire and John R. Rice. As many scholars have noted and as Rosell makes evident, neo-evangelicals such as Ockenga were suspicious of doctrinal innovation but also willing (on occasion) to make common cause with men whose theological positions were to their left.

The Surprising Work of God is not an especially evenhanded analysis of Ockenga's career. Nor is it an unusually capacious one; huge swaths of Ockenga's life—for example, his quotidian pastoral work at Park Street Church and his (often rocky) relations with Boston Catholics—receive scant attention in this book. So it would be inaccurate to say that Rosell has given us the definitive biography of Ockenga. He has, however, given us an extremely useful one and one that makes skillful use of material gleaned from years of digging in the relevant primary sources. Rosell's accounts of a number of events that took place early in Ockenga's life—his call to the ministry, his work as a traveling evangelist while at Taylor, and his decision to leave Princeton for Westminster—are especially helpful. So is his analysis of the strained relations between Ockenga and fundamentalists such as Rice and McIntire.

Ockenga was a gifted educator and a first-rate organizer. He was also a highly effective preacher. So it is entirely fitting that Rosell's *The Surprising Work of God* includes a good number of homiletical passages. These passages emphasize Ockenga's great gifts and many achievements, and they exhort the reader to follow the example set of men such as Ockenga, Graham, and Henry. Rosell implies that it would be a terrible mistake for contemporary Protestants to adopt a set of beliefs or practices that differed significantly from these men's beliefs and practices. If contemporary Protestants wholeheartedly devote themselves to following these examples, Rosell asserts, God will use them to spark religious revivals throughout the world. That assertion is at the heart of *The Surprising Work of God*. Some readers will find that assertion convincing, others will not.

David Harrington Watt
Temple University
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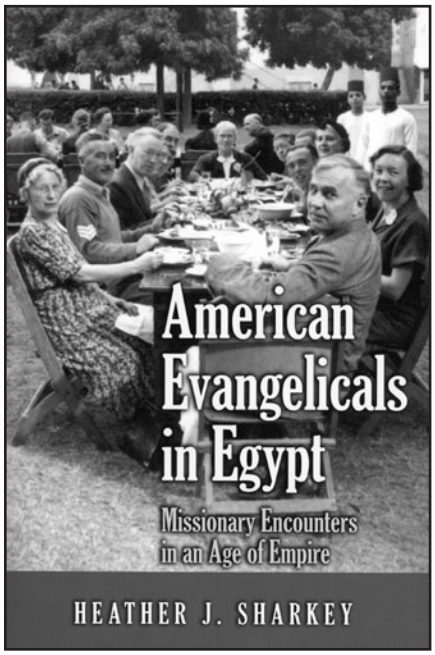

American Evangelicals in Egypt: Missionary Encounters in an Age of Empire. By Heather J. Sharkey. (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2008. xviii + 318 pp. $39.50.)

In this volume, Heather Sharkey has written a comprehensive history of American Presbyterian missionary activity in Egypt. The mission began in 1854 under the auspices of the United Presbyterian Church of North America (UPCNA) and ended in 1967 when war forced all missionaries to leave the country. Painstakingly researched from archives and published sources (in Arabic as well as English) and supplemented by interviews held in Egypt and America, this work carefully traces the development of the mission and its relations with Egyptians and other Westerners during twelve eventful decades.

This complex and multifaceted story is difficult to tell because of the many competing narratives it encompasses. Sharkey begins: "In 1854 American Presbyterian missionaries arrived in Egypt as part of a larger Anglo-American Protestant movement that aimed for universal evangelization." Their activity set off "massive, mutual and ongoing transformations." She divides her history into four periods, separated by three transforming events: the 1882 British occupation of Egypt, the Great War, and the Second World War. Each of these upheavals inaugurated momentous changes in Egypt and its relations with the West.

During the first period, from 1854 to 1882, the American mission sought to evangelize Egypt as part of a call to preach the gospel throughout the world. "Constrained by social strictures against conversion from Islam… [the missionaries consequently] set out to trigger what they hoped would be a reformation of Coptic Orthodoxy." She argues that this approach "spurred Coptic Orthodox leaders to rise to the competition and enact reforms…as a way of retaining followers." Although most Copts did not join the Evangelical Church established by the mission, they were deeply affected by its work.

The second era (1882–1918) she calls "the mission's colonial moment—its period of greatest expansion and self-assertion." Protected by British power and the Capitulations (treaties which gave unequal power to Westerners in Egypt), and financed by robust support from the Church at home, the mission flourished and sought to carry its message to Muslims as well as to Copts. In so doing, it stimulated Muslim opposition to its work, opposition which encouraged Muslims to imitate American missionary methods.

Sharkey characterizes the third age, spanning from 1918 to 1945, as one of "chronic anxiety." Financial constraints loomed, especially with the onset of the Great Depression, and the mission had to retrench. Struggles between "liberals" and "conservatives," particularly over the question of the "Social Gospel," increasingly split the Church at home. Along the Nile, missionary activity stimulated Muslim propaganda against Christian proselytizing; consequently the Cairo government sought to control mission institutions. The 1937 Montreux Convention ended the Capitulations and made clear the reality of Egyptian sovereignty. Nonetheless, many Egyptians read the absence of United States military or colonial structures in Egypt as evidence of benevolent disinterest, especially in comparison to European states.

During the final phase, following World War II, Egypt and the region experienced a series of political shocks to which the mission could not respond positively. These included the 1948 establishment of the State of Israel, Egypt's 1952 coup, which led to Nasser taking power, the 1956 Suez Crisis, and the 1967 Six-Day War. Sharkey calls this period "Egyptianization, meaning the steady assertion of policies intended to reduce foreign influence and place Egyptians in charge." During the Cold War, the United States government played an increasingly active diplomatic and military role in the region; viewed from the perspective of 2009, U.S. policy appears to have hurt America's reputation among Egyptians, eventually

leading to the end of the mission. The emergence of Israel caused a split between the mission and the U.S. government. The mission sympathized with the Arab view that it was unjust to Palestinians to allow Israel to establish itself on their land; it opposed the U.S. government's support for Zionism. This policy bought the mission time, and the Egyptian government tolerated its existence until 1967, when U.S. support for Israel during the Six-Day War caused Cairo to expel all Americans.

Sharkey regards the history of the Presbyterian mission in Egypt as one of growth and conversion, a word she defines as "the act of turning toward or into something else." Few Egyptians became Evangelical Christians, but Sharkey argues persuasively that the mission was an important agent of change in the country. She states unequivocally that, "the experience of the American Presbyterians in Egypt…broadly affected institutions, social practices, and ideas, exerting influences that went well beyond the range of professing Christian communities."

Once such change was the promotion of universal literacy. As more and more Egyptians came to read and write, increasing numbers of them began to examine their own religious traditions and fundamental texts. This strengthened both the Coptic Orthodox Church and Islam. Indeed, one can see from Sharkey's presentation that the Presbyterian mission played an important role in stimulating development of the Muslim Brotherhood, which became an important force in Egypt's intellectual and political transformation, and continues to influence the current dialogue between Islamism and secularism. The most durable institution established by the mission was the American University of Cairo, whose history she discusses at length.

The mission also played a key role in the development of the worldwide ecumenical movement, whose efforts at improving communication grew from merely Protestant groups, to all Christians, and eventually to Christians and Muslims. These efforts emphasized common values and aspirations rather than differences and conflicts. In this sense, the American mission in Egypt played an important role in educating the United States about its place in the larger world. In conclusion Sharkey notes of the missionaries that "by the time they left Egypt in 1967 they were aware…that the United States was just one small part of this world and that it had no monopoly on 'true gospel.'"

This substantial book is essential reading for anyone who seeks to understand America's relationship with the Middle East, especially the rich history of mission work as an agent of social change in the twentieth century. It belongs in every academic and church library.

Michael Zirinsky
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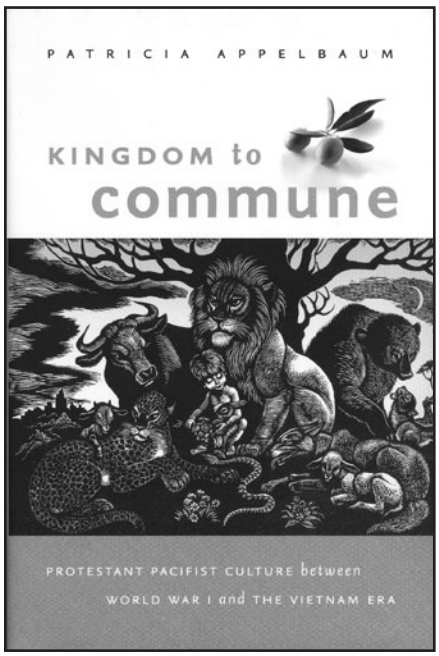

Kingdom to Commune: Protestant Pacifist Culture between World War I and the Vietnam Era. By Patricia Appelbaum. (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2009. 330 pp. $39.95.)

According to Patricia Appelbaum, scholars of pacifism have too often treated their subject as an eternal monolith; pacifism, in their hands, has become an unchangeable idea that floats above historical particularity. In *Kingdom to Commune*, she attempts to correct this ahistorical tendency by tracing twentieth-century pacifism from its Protestant foundations to the religiously ambiguous counterculture of the Vietnam era. If Appelbaum somewhat overstates the weaknesses of previous scholarship, she nevertheless provides a fresh account that demonstrates the value of examining the history of pacifism through ethnographic and cultural lenses.

Appelbaum begins with the proposition that pacifism has never been merely an ideological position but rather describes

an entire culture, inclusive of "social networks, theology, performance, iconography, individual spiritual practice, rituals of identity, narratives, and material culture." Rather than taking a strictly chronological approach, she treats these cultural strata in series, examining the ways that the "paradigm shift" toward secularity and sectarianism permanently affected every aspect of pacifist culture. For readers accustomed to tightly wound institutional or intellectual narratives, her treatment of organizations and ideas can feel loose and perfunctory. Nevertheless, this "messier" technique uncovers some fascinating artifacts: a Methodist church's canonization in stained glass of Charles Lindbergh, a new kind of "pacifist saint" who employed technology and science for peaceful pursuits; a dramatic play in which Christ figures as the "unknown soldier;" a pacifist liturgy in which the sermon is replaced by quasi-creedal readings from the Kellogg-Briand Peace Pact. Appelbaum uses these artifacts to portray a sort of pacifist-Protestant syncretism that retained Protestant forms even after jettisoning most of its explicitly theological commitments. That pacifism moved by mid-century into confessionally ambiguous waters is hardly surprising; still, Appelbaum delightfully depicts the unexpected ways that Protestants and pacifists reconciled themselves to modernity's shifting social, political, and technological landscapes.

While Appelbaum excels in her treatment of pacifist culture, however, she sometimes neglects the historical context that would make these descriptions intelligible. Much remains to be said about pacifist construction of gender, particularly with respect to the phenomenon of "muscular Christianity." How, for instance, did notions of masculinity inform pacifist ideology, especially following the Great War, when martial valor was resurgent? How, for that matter, did women's suffrage, fraught as its emergence was with issues of war, peace, and morality, impact the development of pacifist culture? Likewise, Appelbaum gives few clues about how the specific circumstances of twentieth-century conflicts might have shaped pacifist identity and goals. The semi-obligatory religiosity of the Cold War period, for example, would seem to have had a direct impact on the cultural shift that Appelbaum describes. Surprisingly, though, she mostly steers clear of obviously relevant topics such as anti-communism and the postwar evangelical revival. These omissions point to a curious tension in Appelbaum's book: even as she attempts to historicize pacifism, her methodology undercuts narrative coherence. She provides the reader with glimpses of a rapidly changing pacifist culture but is strangely reluctant to explain this evolution by way of the major historical events that punctuated twentieth-century pacifist consciousness.

The decision to root her study in the swirling waters of culture weakens Appelbaum's narrative, but she still makes her point; pacifism by the mid-1970s retained vestiges of its Protestant beginnings but otherwise bore little resemblance to its roots—explicitly religious opposition to the Great War some sixty years earlier. Appelbaum presents somewhat disjointed fragments of a pacifist culture in transition, but the fragments are nevertheless appealing. Those with an interest in American religious culture will find much to appreciate in *Kingdom to Commune*.

Aaron W. Sizer
Princeton Theological Seminary
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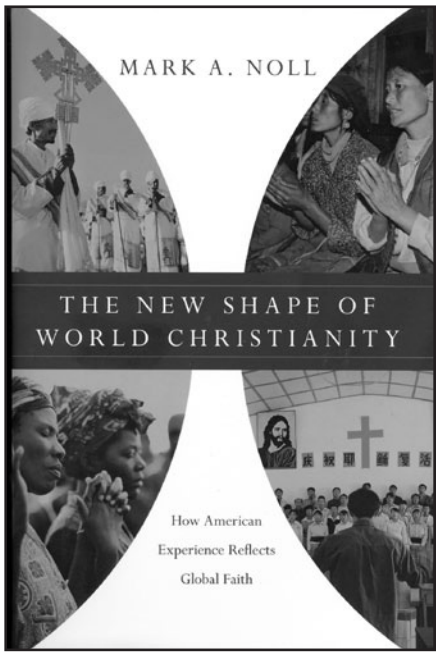

The New Shape of World Christianity: How American Experience Reflects Global Faith. By Mark A. Noll. (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2009. 212 pp. $25.00.)

Those who study world Christianity will be deeply grateful that the wise and highly prolific historian of North American Christianity, Mark Noll, has in this publication extended his scope beyond North America. In this

volume, Noll offers a perceptive and well-argued account of the relationship between North American and non-European Christianity today. Noll's fundamental assumption is that the influence of the United States has become pervasive across the world in almost all areas of life, including politics, economics, and secular and religious culture. Given this assumption, Noll's fundamental question concerns the nature of the relationship between Christianity in the United States and non-Western Christianity in the Global South. These non-Western forms of Christianity predominate in the global context of the Christian household of faith today. "What, in fact, has been the American role in creating the new shape of world Christianity and what is now the relation of American Christianity to world Christianity?" Noll asks.

There are three possible answers to this broad question, according to the author. One is that the United States, through its political and economic power, controls what is happening in the world today, a control extending to Christianity. A second answer is that the U.S. does not actively control but rather influences Christianity in the rest of the world. A third is that non-Western nations, emerging from the strictures of Western imperialism and indigenous traditionalism in the latter half of the twentieth century, are undergoing a similar historical experience to the United States in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In this model, North American and non-Western Christianity are similar inasmuch as they represent adaptations to similar historical circumstances. Noll opts for "some combination" of the second and third answers. In short, Noll sees the social situation of the non-Western world in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries somewhat paralleling that of North America in the nineteenth century, where "social fluidity, personal choice, the need for innovation and a search for anchorage in the face of vanishing traditions have prevailed." In this situation, North American Christianity's (and especially North American evangelicalism's) signal characteristics of a faith driven by personal choice, volunteerism, conversion, and a dependence on biblical rather than traditional authority have taken hold in the world outside Europe and North America because they are best suited to the new global circumstances. As Noll writes, "American experience is most important for the world not so much as a direct influence but as a template for recent Christian history."

To his credit, Noll acknowledges significant recent research into non-Western Christianity which argues that Christianity outside the West is not simply a transplantation of missionary Christianity from North America or Europe, but a faith that is rooted in indigenous culture and religion. While not denying this, Noll does credit the influence of North American Christianity more than these studies do. As he puts it, "it would be foolish to deny a large role both for the United States and for American believers in the recent world history of Christianity. Even more foolish would be to think of American missionaries as the sole, or even the most important, engines driving the churches around the world." In effect, Noll steers a middle course between those who argue that American Christianity essentially shapes and forms Christianity outside of the West, and those who claim that indigenous culture is the overriding force in the formation of any non-Western Christianity.

One of the great virtues of this lucid and cogent volume is its potential for stimulating further debate on the nature of Christianity across geography, cultures, and history. My own work has focused on Christianity in the Philippines and India, and there are many issues raised in Noll's book that seem to deserve more probing and pondering. I shall mention two. The first has to do with the taxonomy of Christian traditions, and specifically the incredibly broad definition he attributes to evangelicalism, using that term to cover a whole host of movements that may actually have very little to do with each other. Such an understanding of evangelicalism has arisen through David Bebbington's positing of "four key marks of evangelicalism as biblicism (a reliance on the Bible as ultimate religious authority), conversionism (a stress on the New Birth), activism (an energetic, individualistic approach to religious duties and social involvement) and crucicentrism (a focus on Christ's redeeming work as the heart of essential Christianity). This definition allows one to clump together seventeenth-century English Puritans with twenty-first century Indian Pentecostals, and I wonder if this does any good in the study of world Christianity. In fact, I would argue, there are far more commonalities

between current Indian evangelicals and Indian Roman Catholics than between twenty-first century Indian evangelicals and American Methodists in the time of Bishop Asbury. In other words, I have my doubts about the heuristic value of Bebbington's definition beyond a certain phase of Western Christianity from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries.

A second issue that bears discussion is Noll's lack of attention to the importance of tradition in the non-Western world. To an American, it may seem that an outside culture's adoption of certain American characteristics, such as individualism and volunteerism, would represent a rejection of tradition, because that is what happened in American history. In colonizing the United States, European settlers considered the new land a continent on which to write their own destiny, and they ignored the native traditions already existing there. In fact, I would argue that the story of cultural adoption and adaptation is quite different in most cultures of the world, including Europe. People outside the United States have a deep sense of history and tradition which continues to exert a powerful influence, even when challenged. In other words, American influence is not a replacement of indigenous tradition as occurred in the United States; rather, it adds to and amplifies what has existed before, with varying degrees of fit. For example, India's current democracy is strong and vibrant, but has also strengthened the bonds of caste beyond what they were in pre-British India—a rather inexplicable development if one uses the United States as the model of democracy, but a rather natural development if one views Hindu social structures as the foundation of modern Indian society. Moreover, it is important to remember that Asia's ancient traditions have experienced challenge and growth in the past, and have adapted themselves without losing vital strands of continuity to the past. Looking at the surface, the experience of the world (and of world Christianity) may seem to be becoming more American. However, the surface is a far less important element of the total experience of people across the world as it is in the United States.

It is clear that Mark Noll has provided us with much wonderful food for thought and discussion regarding the nature of world Christianity and the place of the United States within it. I trust that further thought and discussion will continue in as clear, open, and generous a spirit as Noll exhibits in the reflections he has shared with us.

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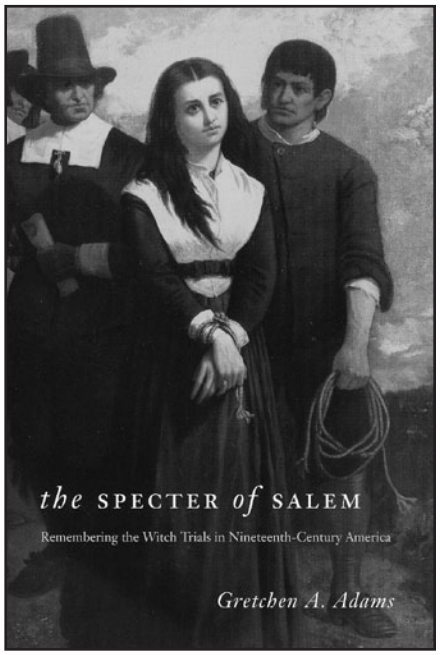

The Specter of Salem: Remembering the Witch Trials in Nineteenth-Century America. By Gretchen A. Adams. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008. 240pp. $35.00.)

The Specter of Salem examines "the history of Salem witchcraft as a cultural metaphor," focusing on the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Gretchen Adams argues that as Americans sought to craft a common national identity in the aftermath of independence, they used both positive and negative symbols to promote a particular vision—one of rational, enlightened, and progressive citizenship. Salem featured as a potent negative symbol of disorder, irrationality, fanaticism, governmental tyranny, and a generally regressive mentality. Long before Arthur Miller's *The Crucible* used the persecutions at Salem to launch a veiled attack on Senator McCarthy's Red Scare, carefully crafted accounts of the witch trials at Salem served in the early national and

antebellum periods as an effective political weapon.

As post-Revolutionary writers, including schoolbook authors, sought to shape a narrative of U.S. history that began with Puritan New England's commitment to moral order, they had to find a way of reconciling that positive narrative with the witch hunts. They did so by depicting Salem as the expression of a superstitious and authoritarian past in which even Puritans succumbed occasionally to delusion, irrationality, and tyranny. Salem served to show how far Americans had come; they pointed to it as a prime example of what the new nation should avoid as it proceeded into the nineteenth century. With this symbolic weight, Salem became a convenient tool to discredit certain groups. Adams examines the association of Catholics, Mormons, and Spiritualists with Salem so as to label them fanatical, superstitious, and backward-looking. She also discusses the deployment of Salem as a negative symbol by those campaigning to purge evangelical Protestantism of beliefs and practices seen as superstitious and retrograde, but she omits what might have been an interesting discussion of the town histories that began to appear during this period and their treatment of traditional folk beliefs.

Adams does make a powerful argument for the importance of Salem in the cultural warfare of the Civil War period. Southerners sought to counter Northern attacks on their peculiar institution by pointing to Salem as an example of Northern fanaticism and intolerance, now revived in the form of abolitionism. The impact of this assault forced Northerners dealing with the aftermath of Civil War to make a new distinction between Massachusetts Puritans, who were responsible for the witch hunts, and their more sympathetic Pilgrim forebears. The Pilgrims became an important symbol through which Northerners could sanitize and thus salvage their place in national mythology.

Given the important role played by gender in New England's witch trials and the prominence of gender issues in the cultural debates of the early national period, it is very surprising that Adams has so little to say about gender in this book. Did Americans in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries make no connection between the prominence of women among the accused at Salem and their own concerns about gender? If not, why not?

Adams claims that Salem was largely absent from public discourse for much of the eighteenth century, including the debates over evangelical revivals. This is not entirely convincing. Attacks by opponents of the revivals, focused on what they saw as excessive zeal and delusional imaginings, may well have been intended and read as coded references to what happened in 1692, especially given the parallels between the fits of the accusers that year and the somatic symptoms exhibited by converts some decades later.

Yet this book is a valuable addition to scholarship on the crafting of nationhood and also on religious discourse in the Civil War era. Adams draws on a range of disciplinary perspectives and methodologies to enrich her analysis but never allows that apparatus to impede the flow of her story, which she lays out in refreshingly transparent prose. There is doubtless more to be said about Salem's power as a cultural symbol prior to its mobilization against the Red Scare, but this book is an important step toward understanding that history.

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On Holy Ground

First Presbyterian Church of Upper Hardwick
Johnsonburg, New Jersey

There isn't much left of the original First Presbyterian Church of Upper Hardwick. The log structure that once housed the congregation has long since been dismantled. Only a few gravestones that straddle either side of Dark Moon Road in northern New Jersey remain, in a cemetery where some of the original German settlers are buried as well as a traveling minister named Joseph Thomas, who called himself the White Pilgrim.

In the mid-1700s, German and Quaker settlers started trickling into northwestern New Jersey near the Delaware River. Sometime between 1750 and 1763, they built a log church to serve the local Presbyterian population. It was the first Presbyterian church in the region. As church records prior to 1823 have burned, it is impossible to pinpoint the exact date of construction. The original congregation acquired a 99-year lease for the building site and burial ground from a local Quaker named Dyer.

After the Revolutionary War, the area's mineral wealth led to an expanding population that demanded a newer facility than the log church. A controversy broke out among the congregation about where to build. Some wanted a newer building on the same site, others wanted to move. According to legend, what settled the matter was an act of vandalism, when some logs were pried out of the log church mysteriously during the night. The congregation moved to Shaw's Lane, north of the old site, and dedicated a yellow frame church in September 1786. The Yellow Frame Presbyterian Church still meets on that site today although their current building dates to 1887. The cemetery on Dark Moon Road remained in use for nearly fifty years after the congregation moved to the new site.

Entry No. 361
American Presbyterian and Reformed Historic Sites Registry

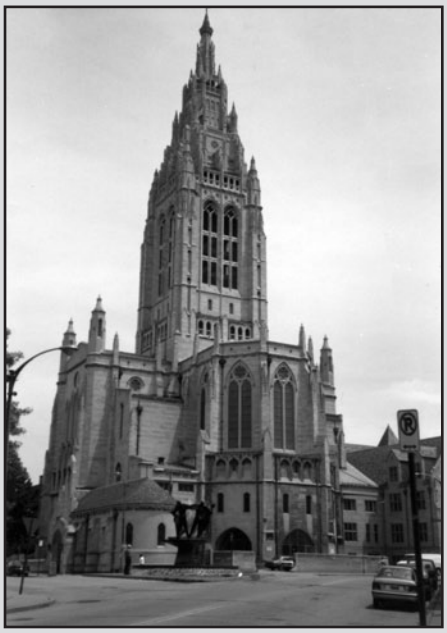
Presbyterian Church of Coachella Valley
Coachella, California

In her 2006 book *Sacred Stacks: The Higher Purpose of Libraries and Librarianship*, author Nancy Maxwell compares libraries to churches. In Europe, many librarians were originally monks, or members of other religious orders, who copied and preserved books. Melvil Dewey, the inventor of the Dewey decimal system, came up with his famous method while in church. It is fitting, therefore, that the first church in Coachella Valley, California is now a public library.

The Presbyterian Church of Coachella Valley has roots in the late nineteenth century when early settlers began meeting in private homes. The majority were Methodists and originally petitioned to have their first church be a Methodist congregation. The denomination did not think a permanent community would last in such an arid environment and declined. The inhabitants then turned to the Presbyterians. The Presbytery of Riverside organized the Church of Coachella Valley on November 30, 1902. Reverend Albert Dilworth was the first pastor. Its construction was a true community effort. The Presbyterian Board of Church Erection provided $800 for the building, and Coachella Realty Company donated two lots. Local resident Charles McDonald purchased lumber and other materials. The total cost was $2,400. When completed in 1908, the structure stood about 78 feet below sea level.

As the population grew, so did the church. The congregation built a Sunday school and social hall in 1927 and another annex in 1948. The church was further renovated and enlarged again in 1952. Today, the original church building hosts adult education classes and a senior center in addition to serving as the Coachella Branch Library. It continues to remain a center of the Coachella Valley community.

Entry No. 362
American Presbyterian and Reformed Historic Sites Registry



East Liberty Presbyterian Church
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Everything about East Liberty Presbyterian Church is grand. The massive gothic sanctuary with beautiful stained glass windows occupies a full city block. It has 100 rooms, a nave length of 202 feet and an Aeolian-Skinner organ with 7,734 pipes. The $4 million building also has a carillon that can be heard from five miles away. The church's architect, Ralph Adams Cram, also designed Princeton's University Chapel. The building was a gift from Mr. and Mrs. Richard Beatty Mellon to serve as a monument to Presbyterianism in Western Pennsylvania.

Yet this enormous sanctuary is the fifth Presbyterian building to stand on the site. Jacob and Barbara Anna (Winebiddle) Negley donated land for the first church building in 1819. Negley's father Alexander had immigrated to the East Liberty Valley of Western Pennsylvania in 1778 along with other Scotch-Irish settlers steeped in Calvinist teachings. The Presbytery of Redstone formally organized the church as the First Presbyterian Church of East Liberty in 1828.

As the area's population grew, so did the congregation, whose members built three more churches in 1847, 1864, and 1887. The current sanctuary opened in 1935, after four years of construction, and has become renowned in the Presbyterian community. In 1942 the 154th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A elected one of its pastors, Dr. Stuart Nye Hutchison, as Moderator. In May 1958, the church hosted the final General Assembly meeting for the PCUSA before it joined with the United Presbyterian Church of North America.

Today, the congregation is still very active, with well over 600 members.

Entry No. 363
American Presbyterian and Reformed Historic Sites Registry

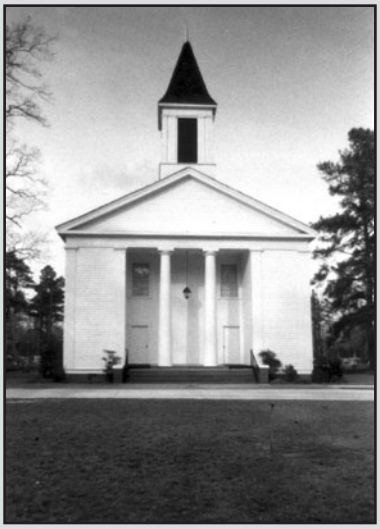
McWilliams Cemetery
Waterloo, Pennsylvania

The Tuscarora Valley, located in a rural stretch of central Pennsylvania, was once the American frontier. The earliest Europeans who settled this area in the mid-eighteenth century faced a rugged wilderness, conflict with native inhabitants, and few conveniences. But as Irish Presbyterians began to settle the area, they brought their faith and the need for a house of worship. Around 1750, Presbyterians established a log church and a burial ground, now known as McWilliams Cemetery, about five miles north of present-day Waterloo.

The original log church would eventually become the Upper Tuscarora Presbyterian Church. During its brief history, local Delaware Indians burned the church down, possibly in the year 1765 during Chief Pontiac's War. Congregants rebuilt the log structure, and it remained an active meeting place until about 1802. The current Upper Tuscarora Presbyterian Church is located in Waterloo and was built in 1858.

Records place McWilliams Cemetery as the oldest burial ground in Juniata County, PA. The marked gravestones date from around 1766, but there were earlier burials at the site. A quarter of the graves are just marked with mountain stones bearing no inscription. Listed in some records as the Barton-McWilliams Graveyard, the cemetery took its name from two Irish Presbyterian settlers. John McWilliams was originally from Northern Ireland and immigrated to America in 1793, while Samuel Barton arrived in 1811 from County Derry to escape persecution. McWilliams' wife Margaret died in 1805 and was buried at the cemetery, which is also the resting place of Dr. Thomas Laughlin, founder of Waterloo, who died in 1803 at age 36. Today, McWilliams Cemetery remains the only link to the original Presbyterian settlers and their first church.

Entry No. 364
American Presbyterian and Reformed Historic Sites Registry



Philadelphus Presbyterian Church
Red Springs, North Carolina

"Philadelphia" is Greek for brotherly love, and Philadelphia was also one of seven churches mentioned by the apostle John in the Book of Revelations. Thus, it makes a fitting name for a church.

But the reason the name Philadelphus (the masculine form of Philadelphia) has stuck to this Presbyterian Church in Red Springs, North Carolina is probably more related to its early connection with the Synod of Philadelphia. In the mid-1700s, Scotch Presbyterians in the Cape Fear Valley petitioned the Synod (the closest one at the time) for a preacher. The first pastor sent Reverend Hugh McAden, who could not speak Gaelic, and the new immigrants did not understand English. Reverend James Campbell, who spoke both Gaelic and English, soon replaced him. The church itself was organized around 1792, and congregants initially worshipped in the home of a local member.

Construction of the present church building began around 1858. It was built in the Greek Revival style with Doric columns and two outside entrances, one for men and one for women. The church still has the partition down the middle that separated men and women during services. Another reminder of a bygone era is the upper floor balcony, which was originally intended as seating for African Americans. Construction, without furnishings, cost around $2,500, and the dedication ceremony occurred in 1861. During the Civil War, General Sherman's army passed through the area, devastating much of the surrounding countryside but leaving the church untouched. Today it looks much the same as it did when it was built in the mid-1800s.

Entry No. 365
American Presbyterian and Reformed Historic Sites Registry

First Presbyterian Church
Raleigh, North Carolina

Not only was First Presbyterian Church Raleigh's original Presbyterian house of worship, it also housed the North Carolina Supreme Court from 1831 to 1840, and the North Carolina Constitutional Convention in 1835.

The church is located on the southwest corner of the Capitol Square historic district in Raleigh. The congregation formally organized in 1816. Many of its founding members were connected with North Carolina state government. In 1818 construction began on a brick sanctuary with round, arched windows, and the congregation added a frame session house to the east side of the building in 1825. Seven years later, when a fire destroyed the North Carolina State House, the congregation met and offered its facility to the state. According to the *Raleigh Register,* June 23, 1831, "We learn also, that the use of the Session House of the Presbyterian Church has been politely offered to the Judges of the Bar of the Supreme Court, at present in session, and the offer has been thankfully accepted." A new state house was still under construction during the 1835 Constitutional Convention, and delegates met in the sanctuary of First Presbyterian Church.

In 1900, the present Romanesque Revival-style building replaced the original church and session house. First Presbyterian Church of Raleigh is also listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Entry No. 366
American Presbyterian and Reformed Historic Sites Registry

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