

Stewart Bell Jr. Archives
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Christ Episcopal Church Records
Collection Number: 684 THL

CONDITIONS GOVERNING ACCESS: Collection is open to all researchers.

CONDITIONS GOVERNING REPRODUCTION AND USE: Restrictions may apply concerning the use, photoduplication, or publication of items in this collection. Consult a member of the archives staff for information concerning these restrictions. The user assumes all responsibility for identifying and satisfying any claimants of copyright. Some materials may require special handling.

Note: A number of items in this collection are on long term loan from Christ Episcopal Church. Researchers may need to contact Christ Episcopal Church to obtain permission to publish or reproduce materials.

PROCESSING INFORMATION: Initial processing undertaken in 1987. Last update by Lorna M. Loring on October 28, 2023

EXTENT: 41 volumes plus 0.42 linear feet miscellaneous files

DATE: 1782 – 2008

SCOPE AND CONTENT: Christ Episcopal Church Records consists of parish registers, directories, vestry records, treasurer's records, minutes, journals, and bound volumes of the church's newsletter, *The Angelus* (1946-1976). Of note is the journal of Alexander Balmain (1740-1821), who served as rector of Christ Church and Frederick Parish. Many of the materials in this collection contain records of birth, marriage, and death, making them valuable as genealogical sources.

In addition to records of the church's official functions and services, the collection also includes materials concerning the American Colonization Society, the building of the church and other properties, tours, volunteer activities, correspondence, and programs. The cash book of Henry Baetjer (Box 6) was one of the items included in the loan of items in this collection. Baetjer was the owner of a dry goods business in Winchester, Virginia.

The collection contains a parish register from St. Stephens Episcopal Church in Stephens City, Virginia covering 1900 to 1956. The St. Stephens mission was a planting of Christ Church, Winchester, begun around 1900 by Reverend Nelson P. Dame to serve the rural communities of Frederick County. A small church was consecrated in 1912.

BIOGRAPHICAL/HISTORICAL: Frederick Parish was organized in 1738 as the first parish west of the Blue Ridge Mountains in the Colony of Virginia. Initially, the area covered by this parish included approximately half of the Shenandoah Valley and western Virginia (what is now West Virginia). Its first vestry was elected in

1744. As settlement increased in the Shenandoah Valley increased during the late 1700s and early 1800, Frederick County gradually split off into several smaller administrative units, and new churches formed in these parishes.

The first church building was a wooden structure built in 1744, which was replaced in 1766 by a stone building. The present building, which stands at 140 West Boscawen Street in Winchester, Virginia, replaced this stone church and was constructed in 1828. The architect was Robert Mills (1781-1855), who also designed the Washington Monument. It is the oldest church building in Winchester in continuous use for religious purposes.

From its founding until the Revolutionary War, Frederick Parish was part of the established church and responsible for both pastoral and social care of residents of the Valley. Following the Revolutionary War and disestablishment of the Anglican Church, the church lost both land and revenue. The Church survived, but was reestablished as the Episcopal Church. The task of providing for the poor or infirm then fell to the Overseers of the Poor.

The Clergy and vestry of Christ Church had for the most part supported the Revolution. Following the Revolution, Alexander Balmain took over as rector, followed by William Meade (1789-1862). These long serving rectors ensured the continued operation of the Church and promoted overseas missions. Both were also involved in the American Colonization Society to encourage free African Americans to migrate to Liberia. Meade was an active evangelist and later became the third Bishop of Virginia.

The Civil War years caused significant disruption to Winchester and the surrounding area. The Christ Church building survived the conflict with little damage but considerable disruption to religious services. It was used as both a jail and a hospital. There was also some controversy among residents who supported the Confederacy when the Church's wardens allowed the church to be used by Union chaplains.

Following the Civil War, the church continued to serve the parishioners of Winchester and Frederick County and its members established the Episcopal Female Institute in 1874.

EXISTENCE AND LOCATION OF COPIES: Collection digitized in 2020 with the exception of the volumes of the *Angelus*. A photostat of Alexander Balmain's journal is available as a bound volume in the Archives oversized rare books collection, call number 975.55 B21. An abstract of marriages in this journal is also available in the Dola Tyler Collection, 63 WFCHS, Box 3.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Brown, Katharine, et al. *The History of Christ Church, Frederick Parish, Winchester, 1745-2000*. Staunton, VA: Lot's Wife Pub., 2001; Meade, Everard Kidder. *Frederick Parish, Virginia, 1744-1780*. Cunningham Chapel Parish, 1947; Victor Dunn, "Frederick Parish, Frederick County, Vestry Book 1764-1818 (Overseers of the Poor) abstracted," *Magazine of Virginia Genealogy*, beginning with Vol. 45.

CITE AS: Christ Episcopal Church Records, 684 THL, Stewart Bell Jr. Archives, Handley Regional Library, Winchester, VA.

IMMEDIATE SOURCE OF ACQUISITION: Official records and journals are on long term loan from Christ Episcopal Church. Other items acquired as a gift.

CONTAINER LIST:

BOX 1

Journal of Dr. Alexander Balmain, Rector 1782-1821, 1787-1817, 1 volume
Guide to the Contents of the Journal of Alexander Balmain, 10 pages, printed

BOX 2 – Parish Registers

Note: The parish registers are divided by type of record (marriage, baptism, etc.) as indicated by the page numbers below. Registers had several different rectors entering records and, as a result, listings for a particular type of record may not be on consecutive pages.

Christ Church Frederick Parish Register, 1826-1865, 1 volume

Marriages listed by year on the following pages:

1825-1842, pages 2-8

1848-1852, pages 33-34

1843-1865, pages 117-123

1864, page 193

Communicants listed by year on the following pages:

1842-1845, pages 10-14

1848-1856, pages 35-46

1856-1860, pages 49-54

1861, 55-67

1864, pages 171-184

Baptisms listed by year on the following pages:

1848-1856, pages 15-20

1826-1842, pages 144-158

1843-1861, pages 160-170

1864-1865, pages 187-188

Funerals listed by year on the following pages:

1848-1861, pages 21-24

1864-1865, page 196

1826-1842, pages 318-326

1843-1865, pages 328-330

Confirmations listed by year on the following pages:

1848-1860, pages 27-30

1861, page 371

Contributions listed by year on the following pages:

1848, pages 47-48

Parish Register, Christ Church Frederick Parish, 1876-1887, 1 volume

Families, 1876, pages 13-54

Baptisms, 1876-1887, pages 78-125

Confirmations, 1877-1887, pages 150-156

Communicants, 1886, pages 162-166

Marriages, 1876-1887, pages 194-199

Burials, 1876-1887, pages 217-228
Offerings/convention reports, 1877-1886, pages 231-233

Parish Register, St. Stephens Church, Stephens City, Va., 1900-1956, 1 volume
History, 1905-1940, pages 2-9
Baptisms, 1905-1949, pages 30-33
Confirmations, 1910-1946, pages 63-64
Communicants, 1915-1946, pages 100-101
Marriages, 1941-1942, pages 134-135
Burials, 1913-1956, pages 144-145
Offerings, 1911-1912, page 165

BOX 3 Vestry Records

Vestry Records, Minutes to Vestry for the Parish of Frederick, January 4, 1764 – February 16, 1772 (photocopy)
Physical Location: Oversize Box 3

Vestry Records, 1869 – 1877, 1 volume

Vestry Records, 1877 – 1924, 1 volume

Vestry Records, 1924 – 1939, 1 volume

BOX 4 Vestry Records

Vestry Records, 1940-1949, 1 volume

BOX 5 Journals and Registers

Journal of J. H. Hubbard, 1875-1895, commences with the Rectorship of the Parish of the Incarnation, Washington, DC, 1 volume

Record of services, 1871-1896, pages 7-291
Baptisms, 1871-1893, pages 315-345
Confirmations, 1872-1896, pages 385-399
Marriages, 1871-1895, pages 415-423
Burials, 1871-1895, pages 455-467
Financial records, 1876-1896, pages 546-568

Journal of William D. Smith, 1891-1892, 1 volume

Texts, pages 1-14
Accounts, pages 32-39, 86 -89
Baptisms, page 101
Funerals, page 109
Marriages, page 115
Confirmations, page 125

William D. Smith – correspondence and notes found in journal

Treasurer's records, 1904-1908, 1 volume

Communicants, 1911, 1 volume

Marriages, 1920-1954, 1 volume

BOX 6 Registers of Church Services

Register of church services, 3 volumes for the years 1946-1951; 1952-1958; 1959-1964

Cash book, Henry Baetjer & Company, 1865-1867, 1 volume

BOX 7 – Misc. Files

Auxiliary Colonization Society (folder contains the following):

Account book, 1818-1842

List of subscribers

Receipts

Building account, 1833

Book, John Bruce's account of charges for building the edifice corner Water and Washington streets, he having charge of same and furnishing design, 1829-1833, 1 volume

CDs – Adult Forum, Christ Episcopal Church, 4 items:

January 13, 2008, Teresa Massie

January 16, 2008, Mike Foreman

January 27, 2008, Teresa Massie

February 3, 2008, Gene and June Babb

Church Tour – “Artifacts, Facts, and Treasures,” Christ Episcopal Church, April, 2007

Committee of Clergy Placement, c. 1939

Correspondence – Charles Covell

Directory of Christ Episcopal Church, 1922, 1965

Directory of Christ Episcopal Church, 1982, 1987, 1996, 2001

Easements, 1970

FDR's request for counsel and help, September 23, 1935

Favorite recipes, Woman's Auxiliary, 1948

Journal of the Convention of the Protestant, December 9 (no year given)

Marker for site of original church, includes letter from Church re; marker; copy of written text; image of public lots of Winchester

Miscellaneous historical notes

Music Programs, "The Crucifixion," c. 1918; Organ Recital by Howard R. Thatcher, assisted by Joan C. Van Hulsteyn (July 23, 1912)

News Articles

Newsletters – *Our Assistant*

Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Virginia, May 19, 1847

Lawsuit - John Gordon's salary, 1747-1762

Lawsuit, Vestry vs. Nevill – construction of Cunningham's Chapel, 1774-1789

Lord Fairfax Crypt – Invitation to Dedication

Volume V, No. 7, no date

Volume VI, No. 8, December 1895

Parish Profile 2006

St. Thomas Church – transfer, 1967

Sermon – "The Duty of Spreading the Gospel," January 6, 1820

Vestry and early history of Frederick Parish, including rectors, 1738-1886

BOX 8 *The Angelus*

The Angelus, newsletter, 6 volumes, printed, bound for the following years:

September 15, 1946 – December 29, 1946, & 1947, incomplete

1948 & 1949

1950 & 1951

1952 & 1953

1954 & 1955

1956 & 1957

BOX 9 *The Angelus*

The Angelus, newsletter, 6 volumes, printed, bound for the following years:

1958 & 1959

1960 & 1961

1962 & 1963

1964 & 1965

1966 & 1967

1968 & 1969

BOX 10 *The Angelus*

The Angelus, newsletter, 6 volumes, printed, bound for the following years:

1970 & 1971

1972 & 1973