

TRINITY CHURCH

HUNTINGTON, WEST VIRGINIA

Something of Its Story



By

JAMES R. HAWORTH

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*We love the place, O God,
Wherein thine honor dwells;
The joy of thine abode
All other joy excels*

Hymn 398

1 9 6 4

JAMES R. HAWORTH

The author of this book certainly needs no tribute, since that is provided by the book itself. But Trinity Parish is in his debt both now and in the years to come for his work in researching the records, interviewing older members of the congregation, and compiling this history. Those of us who have had the pleasure of knowing him can certify to later readers that his delightful personality is accurately reflected on every page.

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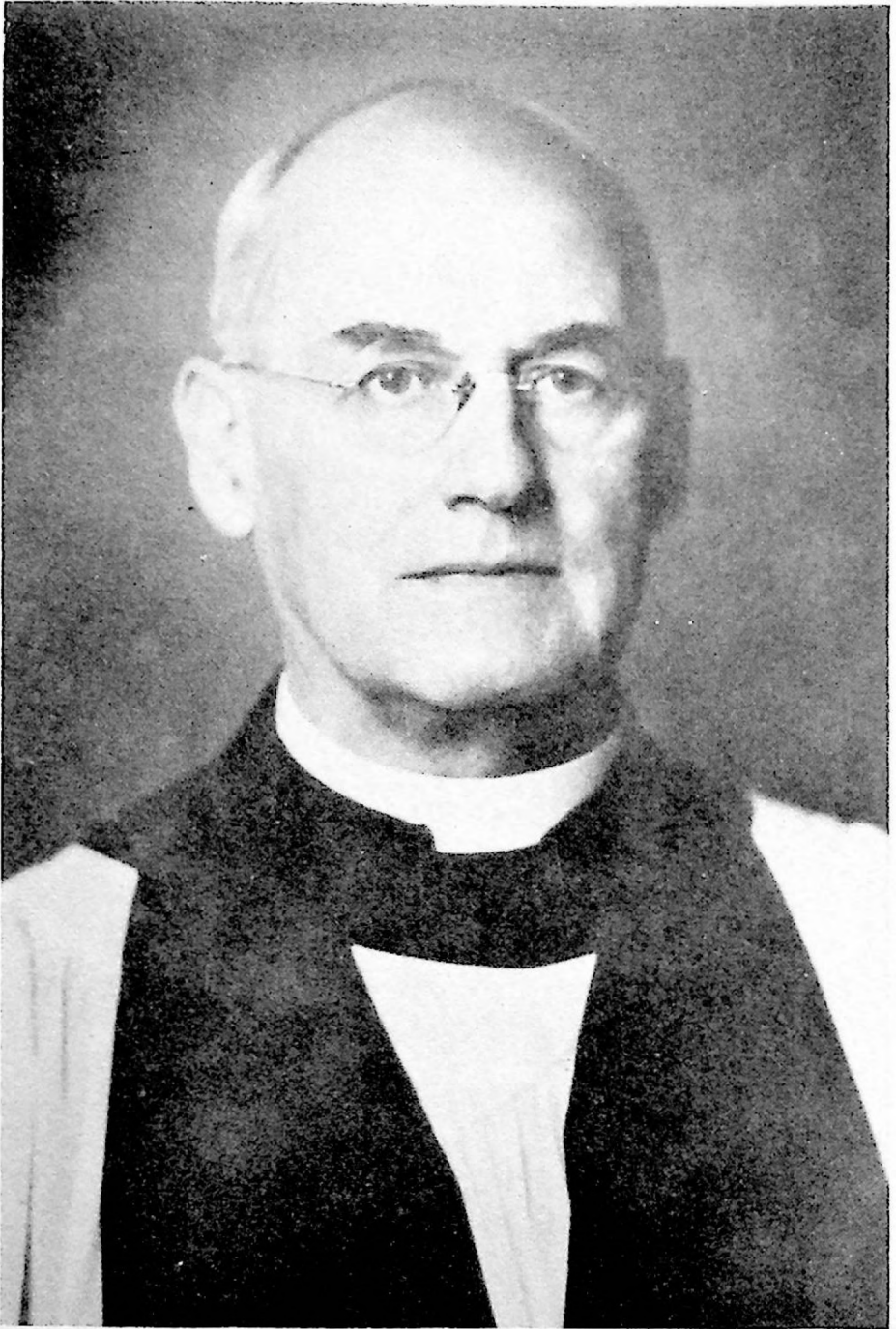
THANK YOU

The help of a number of persons, certainly including those older members of the congregation who read the manuscript of this book, is gratefully acknowledged.

Special thanks are offered to the Rector, Rev. Robert P. Atkinson, for sympathetic encouragement; to the Rev. Robert B. Hall for help and advice; to A. Hallam Christian, senior warden, and Miss Mary Fish for preparing much of the chapter on the Sunday School; to William W. Jones, parish registrar; to John W. Lea of Huntington for information about his grandfather, Rev. John W. Lea; to Colonel John W. Lea, United States Army, retired, of Scottsdale, Arizona, for permission to examine and copy portions of the diary of the Rev. Mr. Lea; to Mrs. George R. Snider for help in assembling facts for the chapter concerning the work of the women of the church; to Mrs. William F. Hite for permission to read the scrapbook of her mother, Mrs. Ely Ensign; to William N. Matthews, attorney, for research among courthouse records; to Mrs. William T. Smythe for personal recollections of Grace Church, Kenova; to Mrs. Helen Holt Connor for assistance in searching records in the Huntington Public Library, and to Mr. Abbot Low Moffat of 3317 Dent Place, N. W., Washington, D. C., for genealogical and other information concerning the Low and Pierrepont families.

Without their help this book might still have been possible, but its imperfections would have been more numerous.

James R. Haworth



Rev. Samuel Roger Tyler

CHAPTER XI

REV. SAMUEL ROGER TYLER

*With long life will I satisfy him, and show him
my salvation.* Psalm 91

Minutes of the vestry October 9, 1916,
read:

"The committee consisting of W. R. Thompson and H. S. Washington, who, at the request of the vestry, visited Richmond, Virginia, reported that they had heard the Rev'd. S. Roger Tyler preach and conduct services of the church, and they strongly recommend that he be called to fill the vacancy of this church. The senior warden was requested to extend a call at a salary of \$2,400 per year and free use of the rectory."

When Mr. Tyler accepted the call, there began a thirty-seven year pastor - and - flock relationship. He preached his first sermon in Trinity Church on Thanksgiving Day, 1916, and became rector emeritus in 1953. Until his death February 9, 1963, he continued constantly to serve the church actively as preacher and pastor. In all that time the affection in which he was held by the people of Trinity Church was undiminished, and his memory remains as a benign blessing after his passing into the larger life in his Master's service.

He was a son of George Thomas and Mark Thacker Tyler, born at Easton, Maryland, April 19, 1878. His father was a Methodist minister and he

was one of eight children, two of whom became Methodist ministers and three priests of the Episcopal Church. After receiving a Bachelor of Arts degree at Randolph-Macon College, he attended Vanderbilt University for a year and then was graduated from Virginia Theological Seminary at Alexandria. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1905 and served parishes at Ware, Hamilton, Abingdon and Richmond, where he was Rector of St. Mark's Church when he accepted the call to Trinity in Huntington.

There was much to be done. Among the first tasks was to get the rector and his family properly housed. Trinity's original rectory had served well since 1890, but had become so badly in need of repair that the vestry decided it would be best to abandon it. Accordingly, James A. Garner, who owned and lived in a handsome brick home just to the east of the church, was approached with a proposal to buy it as a home for the new rector. Mr. Garner set his price at \$11,000, of which \$1,000 was to be paid in cash and the balance at \$500. a year. The offer was accepted December 28, 1916, and the transaction was closed.

Frank Bliss Enslow, one of Huntington's foremost businessmen and capitalists, died February 17, 1917. He had been a vestryman of Trinity Church for 35 years, a member of the building committee when the church edifice was built, and for many years a trustee. Harry Chambers was elected vestryman and trustee to succeed him.

Otherwise the affairs of the church were going well. On March 1, 1917, Mr. Tyler addressed the

vestry, according to the minutes of that day's meeting, and congratulated its members and all the congregation on the success of the annual canvass just completed.

Much of the thought and attention of the rector and vestry during the early 1920s was given to the important problem of establishment of a mission church in West Huntington. This is told of in a chapter of its own under the heading "Trinity's Children."

Another project was the building of the parish house. The need for such a building became more and more urgent. The old rectory was inadequate for the Sunday School, and there was no proper place for meetings of the various organizations and societies of the church. Building of a parish house had been discussed in Dr. Douglas's time, and now this began to crystalize into definite plans and action. On April 16, 1917, E. N. Alger, the architect who had submitted a plan for a comprehensive building program in the previous year, was instructed to take bids on the work. Just what was done does not appear in the minutes of the vestry. John W. Ensign had become chairman of the building committee in 1920, and on April 30 of that year he proposed to the vestry a plan suggested by Lieutenant Wetzel of the United States Army Engineers for temporary relief by building a permanent foundation and basement to be covered by a temporary roof, all at the cost of from \$9,000 to \$10,000.

Meanwhile, Mr. Alger had died, and his business was taken over by William F. Diehl. Mr. Ensign

proposed that Mr. Diehl be engaged as architect for the parish house and that he be instructed to prepare plans according to Lieutenant Wetzel's recommendation. For this Lieutenant Wetzel had drawn sketches of his own. The plans were presented by Mr. Deihl to the vestry on May 7, and were referred back to the building committee for further study.

The committee presented new plans at a meeting held January 1, 1921. Mr. Ensign pressed for vigorous action. He admitted that the time was, indeed, not auspicious for undertaking such a costly venture, and that, as several members of the vestry had been insisting, business men were not realizing on their investments and that ready money was lacking, but nevertheless added:

"We should wait no longer, but proceed at once in the certain faith that it is not only our enterprise as men and women, but is the enterprise of God entrusted to us as His stewards."

The registrar, when he wrote the minutes of the meeting, quoted Mr. Ensign's bold words to be remembered by those who should follow him in other ventures in faith.

The building committee appointed by the vestry February 6, 1923, consisted of John W. Ensign, chairman, Robert L. Archer, D. Byrd Gwinn, Harry A. Zeller and Mrs. Clara Honshell. Mr. Gwinn was secretary. Members of this committee and Dr. Tyler, the rector, visited churches in Cincinnati, Circleville and Columbus, Ohio. And on February 12, 1923, approved a detailed and comprehensive report of its findings. The final recommendation of the

committee was that "we are convinced that we must ourselves work out our own plans, as it is evident that buildings of each church differ more or less to suit local conditions, especially as to whether the Sunday School is the predominating line of work or social service work."

The committee recommended that an architect be employed to "commence working out the necessary details, especially if the old plans are to be discarded, which seems to us advisable at least so far as the exterior is concerned."

The committee proposed a building two stories high with a basement.

"The ladies", its report stated, "want the banquet room and main kitchen on the first floor, also Ladies Aid Society and reception rooms."

There would be a gymnasium in the basement. These recommendations were considerably altered by the time the plans were finally drawn and adopted.

At a meeting July 6, 1923, the vestry "approved the contract with Mr. Diehl for the parish house plans submitted by the building committee and authorized him to submit them to contractors."

Bids were asked and received, and at the vestry meeting of November 30, 1923, the estimate of \$80,500 submitted by A. F. Fideli & Company of Baltimore was approved and accepted and some additions were made. A cloister to connect the parish house with the church was added at a cost of \$3,500, iron railings were to be provided for \$440., pointed windows were selected at an additional cost of \$150., oak finish was specified at \$750., and window glass

of amber color was chosen at \$900. additional, and a tile floor was selected for the lavatory at \$200. The total additions amounted to \$6,000.

No sooners had the vestry congratulated itself on a hard task well finished than it suddenly and unexpectedly turned out that it all had to be done over. A special meeting was called on March 18, 1924, to hear Mr. Ensign's report.

"The building committee submitted a letter from Mr. Fideli," the minutes read, "stating that an error had been made in calculating the estimates and submitting amended estimates."

Not much could be done. Vestryman Cary N. Davis, a lawyer, was directed to communicate with Mr. Fideli, but the building committee was directed to get further bids and "let a contract to any contractor, who, in its judgment, could do the work at a reasonable figure."

What followed is not set out in detail in the minutes, but on May 3, 1924, Mr. Ensign reported to the vestry that progress was being made satisfactorily on the construction. The contractor was C. Harrison Smith of Huntington.

Ceremonies of laying of the cornerstone were held June 24, 1924, at 3:30 P. M. They began with a procession of the choir, clergy and the Bishop from the church to the cornerstone's site. The processional hymn was "Ancient of Days", responsive reading of selections from the Psalms, reading of the Lesson (Ephesians 4:1-16 and 30-32), singing of the hymn, "How Firm a Foundation", recitation of the Apostles' Creed, the Lord's Prayer, singing of

“O God Our Help in Ages Past”, lowering of the cornerstone, reading by Edmund Sehon, senior warden, of the list of articles sealed in the stone, and laying of the first trowel of mortar by Mrs. Willis E. Parsons. Mrs. Parsons, then Miss Hattie Stoddard, was one of four persons confirmed by Bishop John Johns in the Chapel of Marshall College June 18, 1872, the first such service ever held in Cabell county.

When Mrs. Parsons had spread the first mortar, the stone was blessed by Bishop Gravatt. Following singing of the Doxology there were short talks by John W. Ensign, chairman of the building committee; Charles P. Snow, president of the Huntington Chamber of Commerce; the Rev. William H. Sheffer, representing the Huntington Ministerial Association, and Bishop Gravatt. The ceremonies concluded with singing of “The Church’s One Foundation” and the Bishop’s benediction.

Less than a year afterward, Edmund Sehon died. Resolutions of sorrow adopted March 6, 1925, noted that he had been for twenty years a vestryman of Christ Church, Point Pleasant, and a vestryman of Trinity Church, Huntington, for thirty-three years. He had come to Huntington in 1891 and had been elected to the vestry the following year and served until his death. At that time he was senior warden. Mr. Sehon had been a delegate from Trinity Church to many of the councils of the West Virginia Diocese.

While these events were transpiring, the congregation and vestry were by no means neglectful

of other matters. For example, a random sampling from minutes of the vestry:

June 7, 1918. The salary of the rector was increased to \$250. a month, and the vestry voted to pay the cost of his vacation trip to Geneva, Switzerland.

June 1 and 2, 1919. There was a happy occasion when anniversary services were held with two former rectors of Trinity Church present and taking part. The Rev. Norman F. Marshall, rector from May 1887 to March, 1892, presided at the morning service June 1, and the Rev. John S. Douglas, rector from December 2, 1911, to October 16, 1916, presided at the evening service.

March 17, 1920. Miss Grace Carver was employed as church secretary at \$80. a month.

November 30, 1923. Congratulations were offered to the Right Reverend Robert E. L. Strider upon his election as Bishop Coadjutor.

April 6, 1923. The vestry voted thanks to Mrs. Cameron Thompson for "a gift of \$2,000 to the church for a memorial tablet to the memory of her husband, the late senior warden, and for the new parish house." The tablet now hangs in the west transept at the cloister entrance.

April 1, 1926. A question of interpretation of the church canons came before the vestry, and Bishop Gravatt was asked for an answer:

"Dear Bishop Gravatt:

"At a meeting of the vestry on this date, a resolution was unanimously adopted to request you

to allow us to use the method of intinction in administering the Holy Communion in this parish. We feel that the time has come when it is no longer safe to use the common chalice, and many of our people are strongly opposed to it. If, however, there are some of our communicants who desire to receive their Communion by the present custom, we will use both methods so that each may act according to his convictions."

The letter was signed by S. Roger Tyler, rector, G. A. Northcott and C. D. Emmons, wardens, and Robert L. Archer, registrar.

Bishop Gravatt replied on April 30 denying permission to make the change to intinction, explaining that a change in the Prayer Book would first be necessary.

Meanwhile, the vestry had authorized payment of a bill of H. J. Homrich, jeweler, amounting to \$43.75 for Holy Vessels especially designed for intinction. These vessels, handsomely made of silver, consisted of two chalices and a paten with a device for fastening it to the cup so that the communicant might conveniently take a wafer from it and dip it into the wine. When Bishop Gravatt ruled against intinction, one of the chalices was presented to St. Peter's Mission. The other remains at Trinity.

Services of Evening Prayer were held in Trinity Church from its beginning, and often the late service was attended by more people than Morning Prayer. Attendance at Evening Prayer dwindled, however, until, on May 22, 1931, Mr. Tyler was authorized

by the vestry to discontinue it, and it has been held only rarely since that time.

Minutes of the vestry's meeting of January 7, 1927, tell of an interesting incident when J. M. Washington, a leader of the Negro community in vicinity of Eighth avenue and Sixteenth street, appeared before the vestry and stated that a mission called St. Mary's had been organized in that vicinity. He said there were thirty-two adult communicants and twenty children in the Sunday School, and that a class of twenty-five adults was ready to be presented for confirmation in February.

The entry is frustrating in its omissions. It is not stated what, if anything, Mr. Washington asked of the vestry, or whether St. Mary's Mission had been organized under authority of the Episcopal Church, or what instruction had been given the proposed confirmands. Neither is it disclosed what happened after the conference. The vestry "voted to extend congratulations to the mission and wish it God-speed."

When the parish house was planned and built, a gymnasium for use of the youth of the parish and its neighbors was included in the basement. For a time it was much in use, not alone as a gymnasium but as a community center for gatherings of various groups within and without the church. However, the Y.M.C.A. building at Sixth avenue and Eleventh street, was erected not long afterward, with a full-time director of athletics and a fine gymnasium of its own. The Y.M.C.A. became the community

center and the Church gym was used less often. In 1937 the parish house was put to good use in a humanitarian activity when the Ohio Valley was swept by the greatest and most destructive flood ever recorded there. The water reached a stage of sixty-seven feet, nine inches in Huntington, and many families were driven from their homes. Trinity's gymnasium housed a large number of these unfortunate refugees until the danger was over and they could return to their homes.

The church was growing steadily in membership, and the need for more space for the Sunday School became increasingly pressing. On February 23, 1934, Darcy P. Morton of the vestry presented a plan for converting the basement of the parish house, including the gymnasium, into two chapels and sixteen Sunday school rooms. The idea was discussed with interest, but laid aside for several years. One reason was the period of financial difficulty now known in history as the Great Depression, which laid a heavy hand on business and industry throughout the nation for almost a decade. The effect on Trinity Church was reflected in the budget estimates. In 1932 estimated income was \$23,983. and in 1933 only \$17,351. Raising these sums under adverse conditions was a hard task, but it was accomplished and the vestry and congregation continued to look forward with hope and faith.

In April, 1935, a reception was held in honor of Gustavus A. Northcott, who had been a member of the vestry for fifty years. Harry Scherr, Darcy P. Morton and Charles H. Hagan were the committee

on arrangements. Mr. Northcott died December 23, 1938.

Mr. Tyler had, for several years, been holding outdoor services on Sunday evenings in Ritter Park. On May 24, 1935, he announced to the vestry that Edwin P. May had made a gift of an Esty organ for the park services.

From the time of completion of the parish house until recent years the annual meetings of the congregation were held in the third-floor auditorium. Until the early 1940s many of these meetings were but lightly attended. On January 15, 1941, a feature of the annual meeting was presented by Colonel William H. Waldron, one of the vestrymen, of a church flag. The flag is still in constant use and promises to be so for many years to come.

Dr. Tyler, in his report had good tidings for the congregation. He spoke of the good work being done by the Rev. R. N. D. Yoak, the new minister at St. Peter's Mission; of \$1,000 having been contributed by the ladies of Trinity Church to the Bishop's fund to support the missionary work of Miss Barbara Stone in the West Virginia mountain regions, and praised the children of the Sunday School for having presented \$350. for their Easter Offering and \$400. at Christmas.

He reported that a fine red carpet had been presented to the primary department by Mrs. Harvey and Miss Betty Harvey.

He was also happy to announce that the every-member canvass had been very successful, with 442 pledges toward the annual budget totaling \$15,-

480.70. The canvass had been conducted by mail. Colonel Waldron, its chairman, thought the personal solicitation plan would be more effective, and recommended that it be used in the future.

On August 7, 1941, the West Virginia State Board of Education conferred the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws upon Mr. Tyler in a formal ceremony at Marshall College. Thereafter he was Dr. Tyler.

Meanwhile another subject had arisen in the vestry that marked a new step in church policy.



CHAPTER XII

WE ARE TO HAVE AN ASSISTANT

And they chose . . . a man full of faith and the Holy Ghost Acts 7:5

The congregation was large and growing. The work of the rector became more demanding and time-consuming. It began to appear more and more necessary to provide Dr. Tyler with help.

When the vestry met June 27, 1941, Dr. F. C. Hodges presented a motion that a resolution be adopted providing for appointment of a committee to inquire into the advisability of employing an assistant to Dr. Tyler, "and that the findings of the committee be communicated to the vestry at the earliest feasible time."

It was a drastic proposal for the times. Trinity had never had an assistant rector nor aspired to have one. The resolution was adopted and the committee appointed to carry out its terms consisted of Edwin P. May and A. H. Christian, for the vestry; D. P. Morton and W. D. McDaniel for the congregation, and Mrs. J. E. Uhl, Mrs. F. D. Calley and Mrs. Arthur S. Jones for the Woman's Auxiliary. The committee went to work at once and by September

28 was ready with its report to the vestry. The report stated that the committee had examined the qualifications of twelve possible candidates for appointment to the assistant rectorship, and had extended tentative invitations to all of them. Five declined, two were non-committal, two were described as receptive and three did not reply at all. The committee recommended that serious consideration be given to the possibility of obtaining the services of the Rev. Philip Steinmetz, the Rev. Cotesworth P. Lewis, the Rev. Frank G. Ireland, or the Rev. Richard B. Langhorst.

The report was read to the vestry by Mr. May and was ordered filed. The committee was released with thanks.

Dr. Tyler agreed that help was desirable, but did not believe that employment of an assistant rector was necessarily the best way to go about getting it. The vestry's minutes of the meeting of September 26 outline the divergence of view.

"After the reading of the report," the minutes read, "Dr. Tyler announced that it was his conviction that a trained woman director of religious education would fill the bill at Trinity, and that that had been his idea all along. He had conferred with Presiding Bishop Sherrill, and he seemed to feel that an assistant rector didn't always work out satisfactorily. The rector felt that an able woman director could be had, and that was his preference, although he would abide by the decision of the vestry and cooperate fully in whatever they decided upon."

After some discussion, Dr. Hodges moved that the committee's report be tabled and its corresponding secretary be directed "to write to the four men whom they have corresponded and tell them that, for the present, everything was off so as to release them for further calls." The motion carried, and there, for a time, the matter rested.

As it eventually turned out, Trinity Parish got both an Assistant Rector and a woman Director of Education.

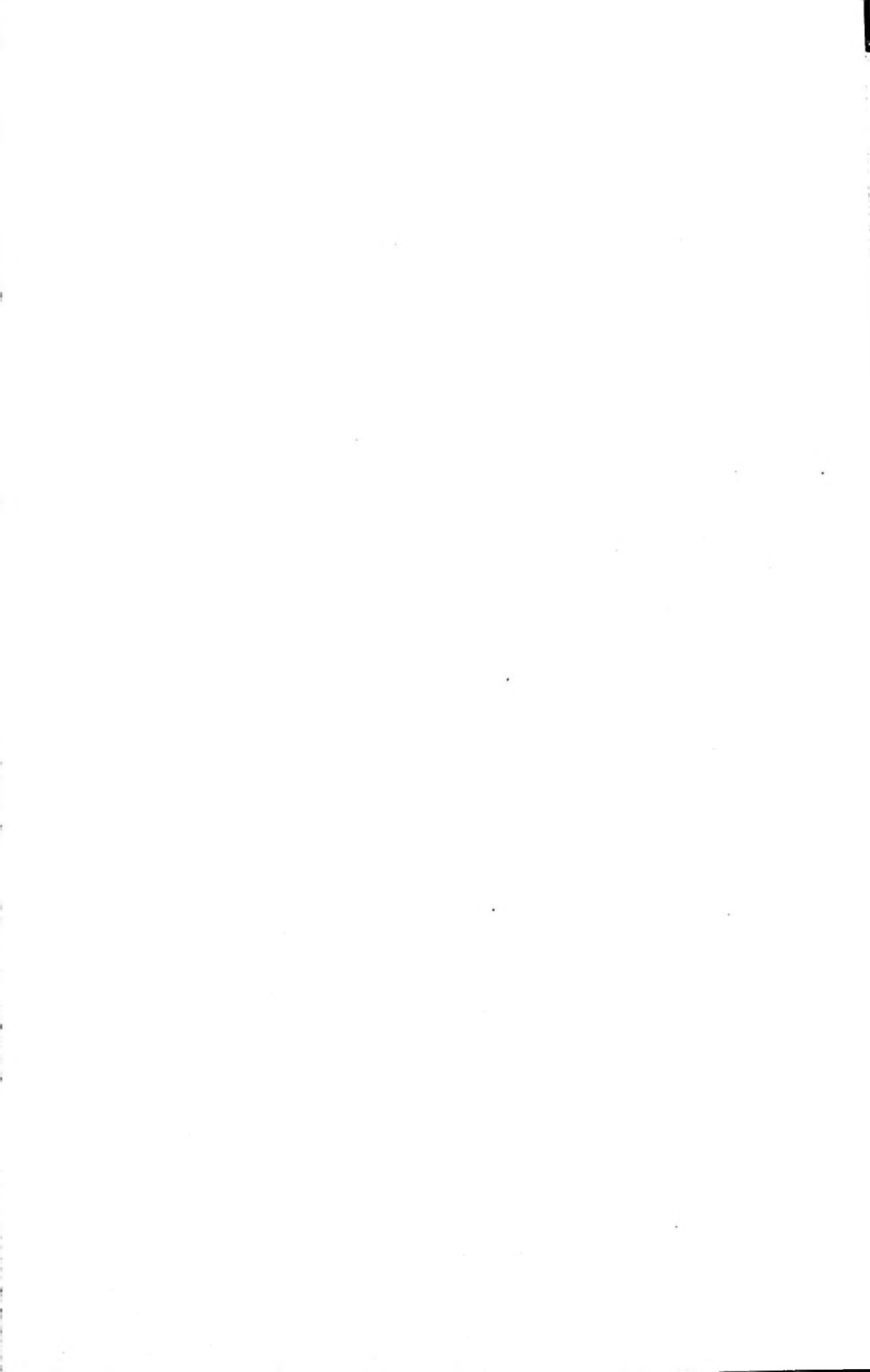
On December 27, 1946, the Long Range Planning Committee presented a four-point resolution. One point recommended employment of an assistant rector at a salary of not less than \$3,000 a year. The resolution preceded by one month a decision by the vestry to take definite steps toward the same objective. On November 22, 1945, Mr. Gohen presented to the vestry a motion declaring that "it is the sense of the vestry that an assistant rector should be employed, and Dr. Tyler be instructed to get in touch with the Bishop for a suggestion as to an available man, and that the budget committee make arrangements in the next budget for the salary of an assistant." The motion carried unanimously.

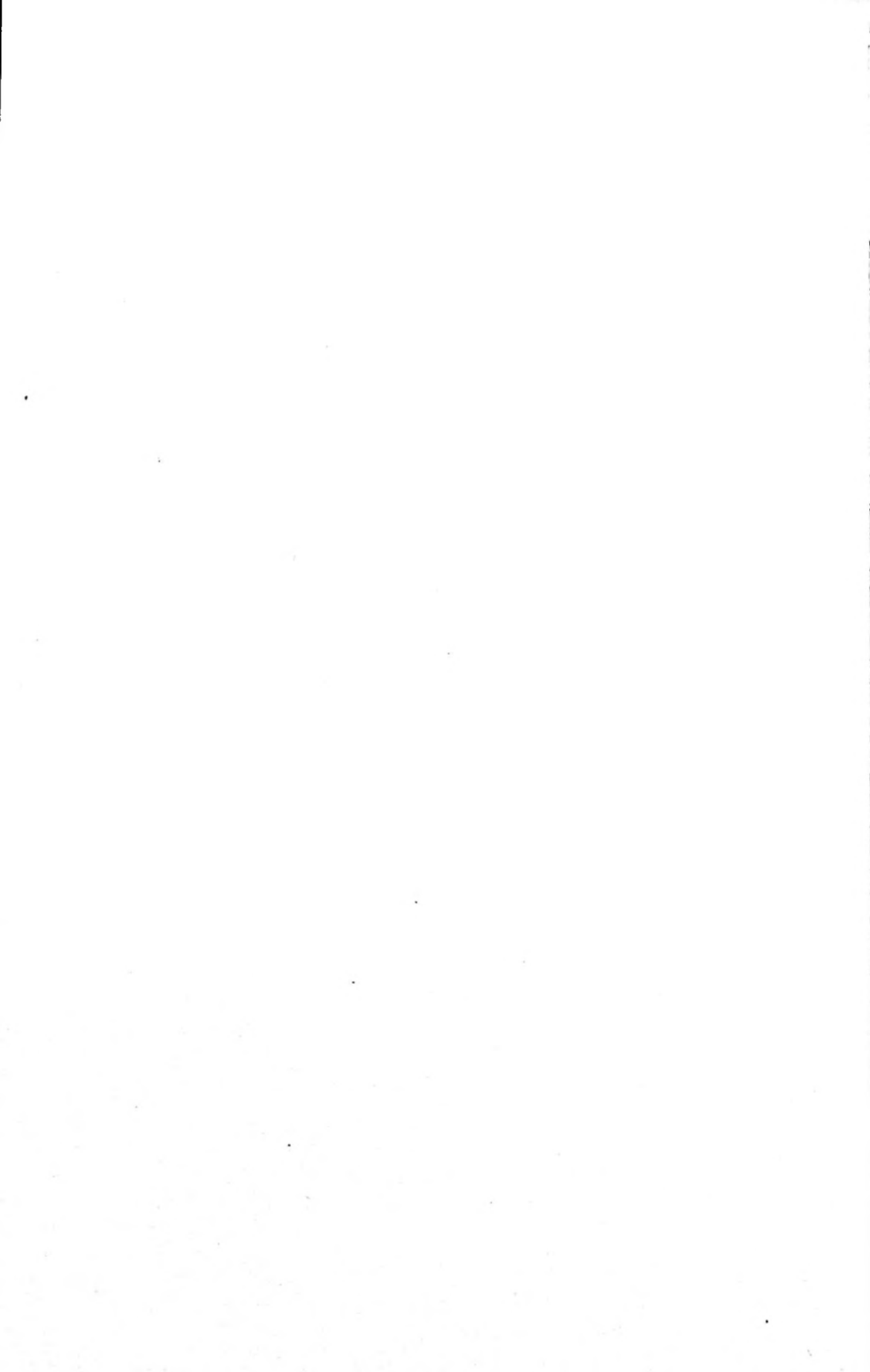
Almost another year passed before another step was taken. On October 27, 1947, a committee was appointed to investigate and explore the possibilities of securing an assistant for Dr. Tyler. Members were J. H. Marcum, chairman; John H. Christian, A. H. Christian and Taylor Vinson. A salary of \$4,200.00. a year was tentatively agreed upon.

The committee proposed early in 1948 that the

Rev. Sidney P. Swann of Richmond, Virginia, be invited to accept the assistant rectorship, but he declined. In July the committee submitted to the vestry a detailed report of its activities and the vestry decided that a call be extended to the Rev. Griffin C. Callahan, then at White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia. He also declined. In September the committee resigned and the rector and wardens were authorized to appoint a new one.

At the annual parish meeting that followed a dinner in the parish house January 19, 1949, it was announced that a young seminarian, Robert B. Hall, would visit the parish with his bride on January 27, with a view of becoming assistant rector of Trinity Church. The visit was made to the mutual satisfaction of the visitors and their hosts, and, in February, 1949, it was announced to the vestry that Mr. Hall had been appointed.





CHAPTER XIII

THE LONG AND FAITHFUL MINISTRY

*And we know that all things work together for
good to them that love God.* Romans 8:28

It is necessary to go back in history for several years in order to make the story of Trinity's growth and progress and of an important period in Dr. Tyler's ministry more nearly complete.

At the meeting of the vestry November 28, 1941, Dr. Tyler made a short speech. He reminded the body that he had preached his first sermon as Trinity's Rector on Thanksgiving Day, 1916, and pointed out that the meeting of the vestry was the 300th he had attended as rector and presiding officers. He recalled the names of the vestrymen when he had arrived in Huntington thirty-five years before. They were Frank B. Enslow, Frank D. Fuller, Charles N. Anderson, Robert H. Armstrong, John W. Ensign, Cameron L. Thompson, Edmund Sehon, Carleton D. Emmons, Dr. Thomas W. Moore, Gustavus A. Northcott, Robert L. Archer and Charles M. Gohen. The occasion was one of congratulation and felicitation, but he had a saddening announcement to follow. It was of the death of Harry Chambers, long senior warden of the parish. The vestry adopted

resolutions of sorrow. Mr. Gohen was elected senior warden and trustee to succeed Mr. Chambers and John H. Christian was elected vestryman to fill the vacancy left by Mr. Chambers.

At the next meeting of the vestry held December 19, 1941, A. Hallam Christian was elected junior warden, a position he filled with a devoted zeal that can best be described as inspirational.

Soon afterward Mr. Christian was appointed superintendent of the Sunday School, and Dr. Tyler told of his great pleasure in making the announcement. One of Mr. Christian's first reports to the vestry following his appointment to the superintendency was that J. R. Marcum had become a teacher in the Sunday School. This resulted in creation of the J. R. Marcum Bible Class which attracted and maintained a large and devoted membership until Mr. Marcum's resignation in 1962 because of ill health. In recognition of his devoted service as teacher of the Bible Class that bore his name, was honored in a unique and impressive manner. At a Service of Morning Prayer, his favorite hymns were sung, his nephew, the Rev. Llewellyn Wells of Charleston, preached the sermon, and a reception was held for him in the parish house. Afterward his photograph was placed on a wall in the second-floor hallway of the parish house with a suitable inscription.

Mr. Marcum did not recover his health, and he died December 4, 1962.

In 1942 the fiery visage of the Second World War glared angrily upon the people of America.

There were few communities this iron fist left unhurt. When the vestry met on June 22, 1942, Dr. Tyler told the group that fifty-one of Trinity's young men had left for service in the Armed Forces. On October 23, John C. Ensign of the vestry sent in his resignation to be an officer in the United States Navy. Taylor Vinson resigned at the same time to engage in war work away from the city, and, at the next meeting October 30, T. A. Strader and W. S. Ranson were elected to fill the vacancies. At the annual meeting of the congregation on January 13, 1943, the entire vestry was re-elected, and at its first meeting of the new year, Dr. Tyler announced that the number of Trinity's young men in the Armed Forces had grown to 96. By June the list had risen to 116. An Honor Roll, bearing the names of all of these men was placed in the hallway of the parish house.

The parish house had been finished and in use for almost twenty years by that time, but the debt had not yet been liquidated. John H. Christian was appointed June 15 as chairman of a committee to solicit gifts for retirement of the debt, and on September 10 reported substantial progress. He told the vestry he had collected \$4,852.05 in cash and pledges, and that only \$748. more was needed to pay it all. Before the year was out Mr. Christian's committee reported that it had raised a total of \$6,000., a sum exceeding the amount required.

But the building went on. In 1942, Mrs. Walker Long offered to give a new Sacristy to the church in memory of her parents, Judge and Mrs. Charles

W. Campbell. Henry Persun, contractor, offered to do the work for \$998., and soon the Altar Guild had a properly equipped room and suitable facilities to carry on their work. A bronze tablet was placed in the Sacristy in recognition of Mrs. Long's gift.

Other needed improvement and alterations were being given attention. At the annual meeting of January, 1944, A. H. Christian revived a former proposal, that the basement of the parish house formerly used as a gymnasium, be converted into classrooms for the Sunday School. Eventually this was done.

On March 24, 1944, the vestry met and Dr. Tyler had some interesting observations to make. First, he stated that, during his ministry at Trinity Church, he had presented 1,027 persons for confirmation, and, second, that the average annual contribution by the congregation for the church budget had risen to \$40.60.

A special meeting of the vestry was held January 12, 1945, when Dr. Tyler announced that Grace Rardin Doherty, one of the Rardin family long affiliated with Trinity Church, had given \$500. to the church building fund, and had agreed to give \$2,000. more when it should be needed. He reminded the vestry that addition of a chapel had been theretofore proposed to be included in the repair and remodeling program for the parish house, to be called Bethlehem Chapel. E. H. Handloser, Huntington architect, had prepared plans for the alterations, Dr. Tyler said, and gifts for the purpose up to that time amounted to \$7,809.15. The total cost had been estimated at

\$10,000. The actual bid made by N. W. Stedman, contractor, was only \$8,887.40. The vestry approved the name of Bethlehem for the chapel, and when it was built, a bronze tablet in appreciation of Mrs. Doherty's gift was placed at its entrance. The chapel was dedicated on Christmas Day, 1947.

Further beautification of the church's already surpassingly lovely interior was also made possible by Mrs. Doherty's generosity. On September 27, 1945, Dr. Tyler told the vestry that she desired to place a memorial window in the west transept. The vestry agreed with appropriate thanks, and the memorial window was installed, replacing the stained glass window of conventional design that had served since erection of the building in 1884. Along with the matching War Memorial Window in the east transept, it is a delight alike to the senses and the spirit.

The death of Robert L. Archer was announced to the vestry by Dr. Tyler November 22, 1945. Dr. Tyler commented that Mr. Archer had been a member of Trinity's congregation when the Church was formed in 1872. He was first elected to the vestry March 6, 1904, and had served at different times as treasurer and registrar.

On February 22, 1946, John H. Christian reported to the vestry that the Rardin memorial window had cost less than had been expected by its donor, and it was agreed to ask Mrs. Doherty to permit transfer of \$1,033.76 left in her window fund to the proposed new War Memorial window. This she readily agreed to. Lansing G. Brisbin was named chairman of a committee to raise additional money

for the War Memorial window, and on December 27, 1946, reported that \$2,700. had been obtained, of which \$1,100. had been given in the Thanksgiving service and \$1,600 had been collected from other sources by Mr. Brisbin's committee.

This window honors members of Trinity Church who served in the Armed Forces in the Second World War. Two other fine stained glass windows were placed in the chancel in memory of two who did not return. They were given by the families of Lieutenant John Hamilton Christian and George Simms Keller who had died in defense of their country.

Women of the church are willing to bear heavy burdens, but there has to be a limit. In substance, this is what the vestry heard when Mrs. A. B. Rawn appeared before it February 23, 1945. She added that the Women's Auxiliary had been talking things over and had decided the time was at hand when a parish hostess should be employed to be responsible for the kitchen and dining room. They had spoken to Mrs. Maude Smith about this and Mrs. Smith had agreed to take the job for \$50. a month for ten months each year. Finally, she said that St. Genevieve's Guild of the Auxiliary would pay the salary. The vestry agreed, and Mrs. Smith became Trinity's first parish hostess.

On March 23, 1945, the vestry received an offer from Stanley Burke to buy Trinity's interest in some property in Guyandotte that had been given to the church years before by Mrs. Anna M. Andrews. He offered \$4,031.68. The offer was accepted by the

vestry, but later Mr. Burke withdrew it. Subsequently the church's interest in the property was disposed of for \$3,000, and this sum was placed in the Anna M. Andrews Memorial Fund.

Impending arrival of an important newcomer to Trinity Parish was announced by Dr. Tyler in October, 1945, when he told the vestry that Miss Ruth Simon of Lock Haven, Pennsylvania, and secretary of the Lock Haven Chamber of Commerce, was desirous of finding a suitable position as a secretary in an Episcopal parish and to make a career in that field of work. Dr. Tyler said he had invited Miss Simon to come to Huntington for an interview. The vestry approved and agreed to pay her salary. Miss Simon arrived in December. More about her is told in a later chapter concerning the music of the Church.

At the close of 1947 — on December 27, to be exact — the vestry adopted a four-point program by resolution:

1. That land be purchased in the southeast section of the city for building and establishing an Episcopal Church; that the lot be approximately 100 by 200 feet in area.

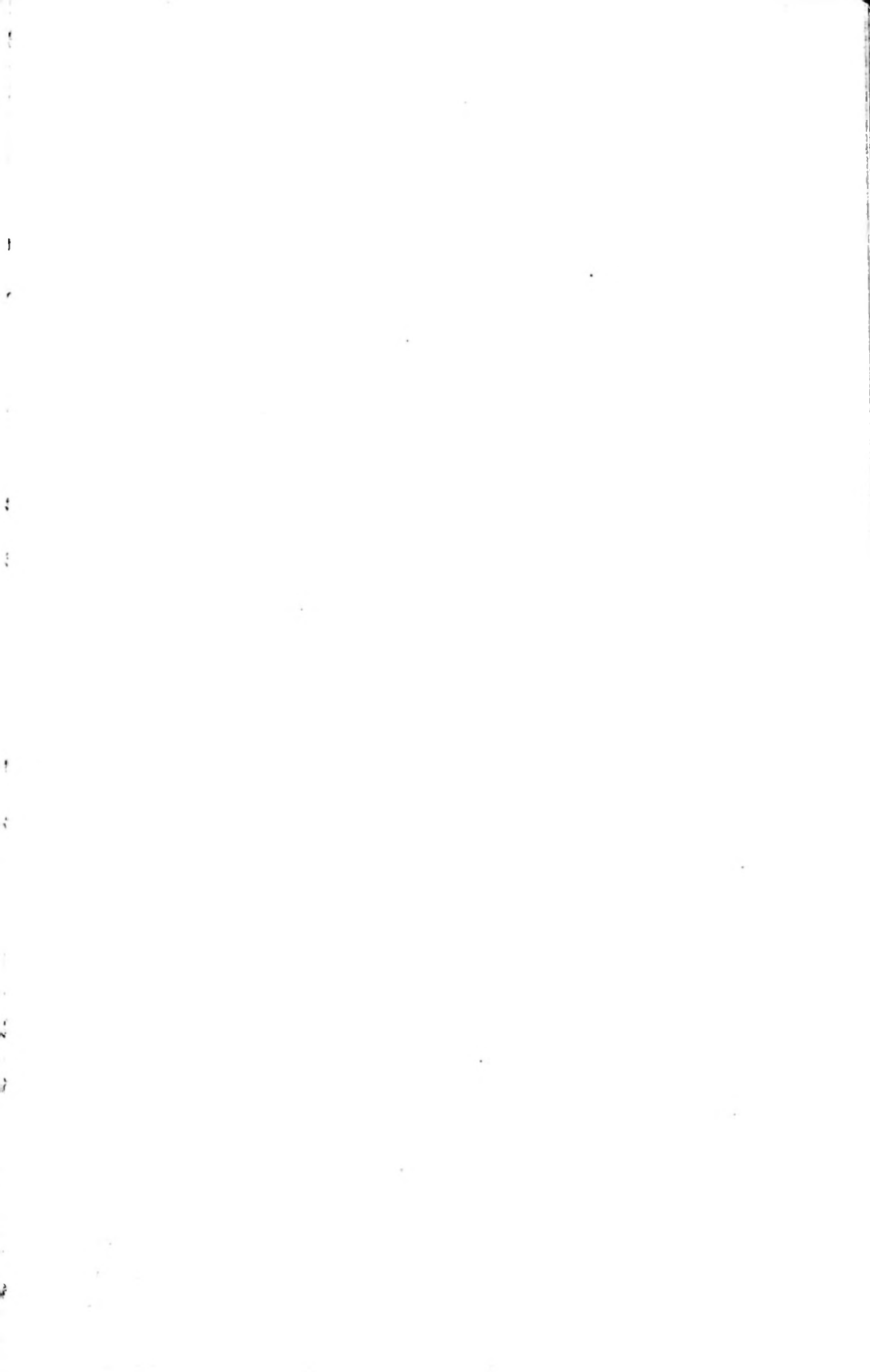
2. That an architect be employed to prepare and submit plans for extending Trinity Church northward and for fire-proofing the floor of the entire building.

3. That an assistant to the Rector be employed at a salary of not less than \$5,000 a year.

4. That the Rector be directed to look into the

advisability of extending the church among the Negro population of the city.

The first three of these ideas were carried to completion, with one or two minor modifications.





CHAPTER XIV

REV. S. R. TYLER RECTOR EMERITUS

*I Have been Young but Now am Old, Yet
Have I Not Seen the Righteous Forsaken . . .*

Psalm 37

Dr. Tyler announced his resignation when he met with the vestry on October 22, 1948. Minutes of the meeting go into some detail in recording the event. They read:

"He stated that he was over 70 years old and feels that he should step out for a younger man. He has been here thirty-two years, and no other minister, priest or rabbi has ever been in Huntington so long. He can go to Shepherdstown, West Virginia, and be a rector there and can also conduct services at Harper's Ferry. He feels that he can keep his hand in, even though seventy years old, in a small church. His sisters and three brothers live nearby.

"During the time he has been in Huntington he has christened 1,200 persons and has presented for confirmation 1,150. He has thought about resigning for some time, and feels that it is his duty to resign now when the parish is in fine physical and financial condition."

Dr. Tyler retired from the meeting and Mr. Gohen took the chair. Dr. Tyler's resignation was

discussed and rejected, and the wardens and registrar were directed to draft a resolution and a letter to Bishop Sprider, the letter to "express the sentiment of the congregation and Vestry that they are eminently satisfied with Dr. Tyler as rector and do not want him to leave us at this time." The Bishop was also to be requested to help the vestry find a suitable person to be assistant rector.

The vestry's reaction to his resignation resulted in its modification by Dr. Tyler, announced at the next meeting held November 27.

"Mr. Tyler has reconsidered his resignation tendered in October," the minutes read, "but has come to the conclusion that he will still resign. Mr. Gohen, as senior warden, is now in charge of the parish and vestry. Mr. Tyler advised that he will stay with us for the next several months and would do anything he could for us. He suggested that the vestry apply to the Bishop for a temporary man to fill the position of Rector until a permanent man can be found. Mr. Gohen will write or call Bishop Strider to come for a conference with the vestry in regard to securing a new rector."

At the same meeting the annual budget of \$40,000, of which \$33,000 was to be raised by pledges, was approved by the vestry.

At the next meeting, December 17, Dr. Tyler told the vestry he had reconsidered and would stay on. The vestry, individually and collectively, expressed pleasure in hearing the announcement.

At the annual meeting of the congregation January 19, 1949, that the parish had 1,133 com-

municants and there were 305 in the Sunday School. He added that during the past year there had been 53 baptisms and 48 confirmations.

Dr. Tyler again brought up the subject of his resignation before the vestry at its meeting June 22, 1950. He said he had decided, after mature consideration, to retire from the active ministry and to resign as rector of Trinity Church effective June 30, 1953. He requested the vestry to act on his resignation at once. The resignation was regretfully accepted and Dr. Tyler was requested to become rector emeritus on July 1, 1953. A. H. Christian and J. R. Marcum were appointed a committee to prepare resolutions setting out "the desire of the vestry to make Dr. Tyler a practical demonstration of the love and gratitude of the people of Trinity Church for long and faithful and effective service as their Rector."

The resolution continued:

"That, as of July 1, 1953, Dr. Tyler shall become rector emeritus, and upon his becoming such rector emeritus, this church shall make provision for the payment to him, so long as he may live and continue to be such rector emeritus, of such honorarium as, when added to the retirement allowance, will amount to the annual sum of \$5,000.

"That as of July 1, 1951, the Rev. Robert Bruce Hall shall become associate rector of this church with the right of succession to the rectorship upon the retirement of Dr. Tyler as herein provided."

The resolution was adopted unanimously, but at its meeting January 22, 1954, the second paragraph was altered:

“Resolved, that Paragraph 2 of the resolution of this vestry adopted at its meeting of June 22, 1951, be stricken from the records of the vestry, and that the following language be substituted in its place:

“That, as of July 1, 1953, Dr. Tyler shall retire from the service of this church, and that the church shall make provision for giving to him, so long as he may live, a gift of money in such amount as, when added to his retirement allowance, will amount to the annual sum of \$5,000.”

That change was unanimously approved by the vestry.

The work of the church, meanwhile, was being carried on, and the time came when, after Dr. Tyler had resigned, his associate, the Rev. Robert Bruce Hall, would need an assistant also. Dr. Tyler was authorized to appoint a committee to look for such a man and enter into correspondence concerning the assistant rectorship. On December 26, 1952, he told the Vestry about Robert P. Atkinson, a senior at Virginia Theological Seminary.

“He paid us a visit some weeks ago,” Dr. Tyler said. “He is 26 years old and a graduate of the University of Virginia, and his home is in Martinsburg, West Virginia.”

The registrar added an explanatory note that “Mr. Atkinson was being considered as a prospective assistant to Mr. Hall after Dr. Tyler retires.”

The time for Dr. Tyler to retire had come. Under date of July 24, 1953, the registrar of the vestry carefully wrote down his farewell address:

"The time has come, when, on account of age, I must bow to the inevitable and resign as rector of this great parish. For thirty-seven years it has been my happy privilege to be the rector of Trinity Church. No rabbi, priest or pastor has ever served a church in Huntington so long as I have done, and this is our farewell meeting. This is also the 376th time that you and I have come together. Of the original vestry, only one remains, and that is our dear Senior Warden, Charles M. Gohen. I cannot leave you tonight without telling you that my gratitude toward you is very deep because of your kindness and patience toward me during these long years. No man has ever had a happier ministry than mine has been, and I feel like Theodore Roosevelt who, when he left the White House, said, 'Boys, I have had one bully good time.'

"The greatest sorrow I have in leaving you is that I feel in my heart that I could have done much better. This is my memory grievous and this is my burden intolerable. I recall the well-known words of Whittier, 'Of all sad words of tongue or pen, the saddest are these — It might have been.' As I look back over these thirty-seven years, that is my feeling of regret — I could have done very much better than I have done.

"And now, in leaving you tonight, let me commend warmly my successor, Mr. Robert B. Hall. He is a young man with a good background and a sound education with much charm of personality. I trust that, under God, you and he together will accomplish a great and lasting work for Christ and His Church, and for God and His Kingdom.

“Good bye, and God bless, preserve and keep you every one.”

He continued to be rector emeritus of Trinity Church. When he had founded St. John's he was its vicar, and, after his retirement there, became a missionary priest, serving congregations at Ironton and Gates Mills, Ohio, Logan, Williamson and St. Albans, West Virginia, and elsewhere as he was needed, and so continued, with unflagging zeal, to the end of his life to be dilligently about his Master's business.

He died February 9, 1963. It is both comforting and pleasant to consider that he is as active as ever about God's business in the Goodly Fellowship of the Prophets in heaven.

At its meeting on April 26, 1963, the vestry voted to make a gift to Virginia Theological Seminary and to institute the Tyler Memorial Education Fund in honor of its former rector. The announcement of the gift was made to the congregation by Mr. Atkinson in the following language:

“During his retirement years, Dr. S. Roger Tyler, beloved rector of Trinity Church for thirty-seven years, received a supplemental income from the operating budget of Trinity to be added to the income which he received from the Church Pension Fund. The decision was made by the vestry in 1953 to continue the supplemental income until his death. He has now departed his life for the greater life with our Lord, and therefore this particular expenditure in the operating budget, regretfully, no longer exists.

“For the remainder of the calendar year of 1963 the vestry has authorized that the balance which would have been given to Dr. Tyler will be disbursed as follows:

“\$1,000.00 will be given to the Virginia Theological Seminary in monthly installments until December 31.

“\$1,000.00 will be disbursed to the Tyler Memorial Education Fund set up for the theological education of men for the Ministry from Trinity Church.”

The good that S. Roger Tyler did lives long after him, and long will live.

