

William F. M Army. *An Address on Church Organization and Discipline Delivered at Lexington, Missouri, March 13, 1848*. St. Louis: S.B. Aden, 1848.

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Introduction and Commentary by Christopher R. Hutson (2015)

Introduction

Physical Description: Measurement: 5 ½ x 8 ¾ inches (14 x 22.2 cm). This is a pamphlet of 20 pages, of which the first two are the title page and preface. It is printed on rag paper that shows some wear at the edges but the pages are in good, readable condition with no stains or tears. It is wrapped in a yellow paper cover with some discoloration and bound with thread on the spine. The pamphlet was previously in the library of the Presbyterian Historical Society in Philadelphia, whose address is typed in the bottom margin of p. 7, and their catalogue number appears in the upper, right corner of the title page.

Summary of Contents: This pamphlet is the text of a discourse delivered at the Christian meetinghouse in Lexington, Missouri on March 13, 1848. The preface on p. 2 consists of three letters. The first two are from two different groups of men, both dated March 14, 1848, and both requesting printed copies of Army's discourse from the previous day. The third letter is Army's reply, dated March 20, agreeing to have the discourse printed "as delivered," with no corrections. The text of the discourse takes up pages 3-19. Page 20 is blank.

The front cover identifies the title of the pamphlet and the author. It also lists the publisher as S. B. Aden of St. Louis, Missouri; the printers as Chambers & Knapp; the date; and the price of 10¢ per copy. The back cover carries an advertisement for a monthly periodical, *The Bible Advocate*, edited by S. B. Aden of St. Louis.

About the Author. William Fredrick Milton Army (1813-1881) was born in Georgetown, Maryland, where he received his early education. From his father, a Swiss confectioner, he learned something about business, but he did not aspire to continue his father's craft. In 1831, at



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age 18, he left home for Norfolk, Virginia.¹ In November 1833 Alexander Campbell preached in Norfolk in support of recent efforts to plant a Restorationist church in that city,² and there he met the young Army. Soon thereafter, Army moved to Bethany to work for Campbell as a print setter while studying for the ministry. Army entered Campbell's employment possibly as early as December 1833, or more likely sometime early in 1834; but the first mention of him is 1835.³ Until 1850 he continued as Campbell's "clerk,"⁴ assisting with voluminous correspondence⁵ and functioning as business manager for the *Millennial Harbinger*.⁶ Campbell had expected that he would also contribute occasional articles,⁷ but only one article appears over his byline, a reply to a letter on the question of paying an evangelist.⁸

Army must have gained a reputation for efficient, accurate record keeping. It seems he could hardly attend any meeting without being appointed secretary. In 1840, he was appointed the first secretary to the board of trustees of Bethany College,⁹ and by 1849, he was handling accounts as the "General Agent" for the college.¹⁰ He routinely served as secretary for annual co-operation meetings of church leaders in the vicinity of eastern Ohio, western Pennsylvania, and western Virginia.¹¹ In 1848 he agreed to act as the subscription agent for Isaac Errett's committee to publish Sunday School literature.¹² But after a series of unfortunate events in 1849, described below, Army left Bethany and moved to Illinois in 1850.

¹ Lawrence R. Murphy, *Frontier Crusader: William F. M. Army* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1972, 3-8.

² Alexander Campbell, "Notes on a Tour to New York---No. 3," *Millennial Harbinger* (1833) 600. The *Millennial Harbinger* is hereafter abbreviated *MH*.

³ James Henshall, "Baltimore, Maryland, May 20, 1835," *MH* (1835) 375.

⁴ W.F.M. Army, "Bethany, Va., Nov. 26, 1843," *MH* (1844) 205; Alexander Campbell, "Retaliatory Discipline: Alexander Hall and W. F. M. Army," *MH* (1849) 630.

⁵ Alexander Campbell, "Our Arrangements and Future Intentions," *MH* (1838) 479; Alexander Campbell, "Notice of the Rev. R. W. Landis," *MH* (1840) 357; Alexander Campbell, "Dr. Thomas," *MH* (1844) 205.

⁶ Alexander Campbell, "Our Tour of the North-East," *MH* (1836) 239; *idem*, "Notice of the Rev. R. W. Landis," (1840) 357.

⁷ Alexander Campbell, "Our Arrangements and Future Intentions," *MH* (1838) 479.

⁸ W.F.M. Army, "W. F. M. Army to C. Bosworth," *MH* (1840) 88-89.

⁹ Alexander Campbell, "Bethany College," *MH* (1840) 508-510; (1842) 526-526.

¹⁰ W.F.M. Army, "Bethany College," *MH* (1848) 472-5; *idem*, "Bethany College," *MH* (1849) 468-9.

¹¹ "Meeting at Wellsburg," *MH* (1840) 188; "General Meeting," *MH* (1842) 570; "Dr. J. H. Lamphear," *MH* (1843) 428-429; "Co-operation Meeting," *MH* (1843) 476; "Our Own Co-operation," *MH* (1844) 528; "News from the Churches," *MH* (1848) 655-656.

¹² Isaac Errett, "Notice," *MH* (1848) 600.

Historical Context. In 1847-48, W.F.M. Army made a seven-month tour of the west, mainly to Illinois and Missouri.¹³ He was acting primarily as a collections agent for the *Millennial Harbinger* and for Bethany College,¹⁴ though he also preached some along the way.

At the time, the church of Christ in Lexington, Missouri was mired in a controversy over some matter of church government and discipline, though the precise issue is uncertain. Leaders on both sides were avid readers of the *Millennial Harbinger*, so they arranged for Army to come and address them on the topic of church organization and discipline. The present pamphlet contains the contents of that address. Whatever the Lexington leaders may have hoped, Army's address would not settle the issue between them. By 1850, the church would split.¹⁵

After Army's departure, the Lexington debate continued by proxy in the pages of the *Millennial Harbinger*. As it happened, W.K. Pendleton had begun a series on "Church Discipline" in 1847 that would run through 1850, eventually amounting to twenty-one numbered installments and four additional items.¹⁶ In 1849, J.G. Chinn¹⁷ wrote from Lexington, Missouri to challenge Pendleton regarding the scriptural procedure for a congregation to follow when investigating a public charge of immorality against one of its members. For a while, Pendleton's series turned into a running debate with Chinn on the question of whether final authority in a disciplinary action lay with the elders who "ruled" a congregation, as Pendleton argued, or with the congregation as a whole, as Chinn saw it.¹⁸ Chinn's letters may indicate something of the level of discussion in Lexington, and help us understand the context Army had addressed in his 1848 discourse. Since the matter of discipline takes up pages 15-19 of Army's pamphlet, it seems likely that this was a (the?) primary point of dispute in Lexington in 1848 and that Army was ineffective in settling the question.

¹³ W.F.M. Army, "Knox County, Illinois, December 24, 1847," *MH* (1848) 167-168; "Paris, Monroe county, Missouri, January 13, 1848," 171; "Madison, Indiana, May, 1848," 413-415.

¹⁴ *MH* (1849) 395.

¹⁵ "News from the Churches," *MH* (1850) 478. The Main Street church would also be known as the North Street Church, *MH* (1851) 353.

¹⁶ W.K. Pendleton, "Discipline," *MH* (1847) 366-372, 649-652; 675-679; (1848) 92-96, 161-167, 197-205, 280-295, 320-327, 462-466, 589-593, 634-642; (1849) 36-43, 113-115, 209-215, 319-330, 565-577, 709-715; (1850) [23-24, 35-36], 98-102, 133-143, [287-290, 349-355], 321-329, 603-610.

¹⁷ Many Christians had migrated to Missouri from Kentucky, according to Alexander Campbell, "Our Tour of the West," *MH* (1846) 68. Chinn was among those.

¹⁸ W.K. Pendleton, "Discipline," numbers XVI-XVII and XIX-XXI, *MH* (1849) 565-577, 709-715; (1850) 133-143, 321-329, and 603-610; cf. *idem*, "A Query on Discipline," *MH* (1850) 23-24; D.G.L****, "Shall We Receive the Testimony of the World, In Cases of Discipline in the Christian Church?" *MH* (1850) 35-36; Robert Milligan, "Discipline," *MH* (1850) 287-290; W.K. Pendleton, "Reply to Brother Milligan," *MH* (1850), 349-355.

The exchange between Chinn and Pendleton began to resemble a Möbius strip that inverted on itself as it circled around Army. Both men wrote as if the questions were hypothetical and the answers were matters of unbiased examination, but in fact, each had an ulterior motive. As it turned out, Chinn was a leader of one of the factions in Lexington,¹⁹ so he may have been seeking support for his own position in the ongoing controversy there. At the same time, when Pendleton wrote in June 1849 that he, “actually had experience of cases, which, though primarily *private*, have become also public, and required the direct interference of the eldership,”²⁰ he was speaking from immediate experience. As an elder of the church in Bethany, Pendleton had just completed a four-month-long investigation of public charges against a member of the Bethany church for immoral behavior. The accused was none other than W.F.M. Army. Thus, Pendleton had to be careful in his responses to Chinn, for if he took any position that contradicted the procedure he had followed in the Army affair, he would have been open to a charge of bias or incompetence.

Here is what happened: After Army returned from his tour of the west in 1848, he became embroiled in a dispute with Alexander Hall of Loydsville, Ohio. Hall, publisher of the *Christian Proclamation*, had invited Army to become his business partner. Army declined but agreed to assist Hall in the publication of a “Christian Register,” the first directory of all the churches, preachers and elders in the growing movement. Army agreed to check Hall’s data against his own statistics gathered during his recent tour of the west. But Hall rushed his Register into publication without Army’s corrections, and Alexander Campbell pilloried him for his sloppy work and many errors in names and locations of preachers and elders as well as for not using Army’s statistics for Missouri and Illinois.²¹ In the November 1848 *Christian Proclamation*, Hall defended his statistics and maligned Army.²² Campbell invited Army to defend himself in the *Harbinger*, which he did with vigor in January 1849.²³ In the February *Proclamation*, Hall escalated the spat with a number of allegations and insinuations against both Army and Campbell.²⁴ As the two journals exchanged salvos, a private disagreement became very public.

¹⁹ “News from the Churches,” *MH* (1850) 478.

²⁰ W.K. Pendleton, “Remarks” [in response to “An Inquirer after the Truth”], *MH* (1849): 325.

²¹ Alexander Campbell, “The Christian Register,” *MH* (1848) 599-600.

²² Alexander Campbell, “The Christian Register,” *MH* (1849) 51-52.

²³ *Ibid.* 52-54; Alexander Campbell, “Retaliatory Discipline,” 632.

²⁴ W.K. Pendleton, “A Case of Discipline in the Church at Bethany,” *MH* (1849) 385.

The Bethany church felt they could not ignore Hall's public allegations against two of its members. So a committee chaired by Elder W.K. Pendleton opened an investigation in February 1849, which dragged on through late May, as Hall refused repeated overtures to come to Bethany and testify. The committee found all allegations against Campbell to be groundless, but they censured Arny for some imprudent remarks, spoken in irony, that were misconstrued as derogatory to Campbell. Arny offered a public apology to the Bethany church.²⁵ The whole affair caused sufficient stir in Ohio as to draw expressions of regret from William Hayden and Benjamin Franklin.²⁶ Campbell added his own regrets but refrained initially from expressing how he felt about Arny.²⁷ Meanwhile, the elders of the church in Stillwater, Ohio conducted their own investigation of the charges. This time Arny was the one who did not attend, but Hall introduced plenty of additional evidence of Arny being two-faced in badmouthing both Hall and Campbell.²⁸

In the summer of 1849, Hall published a 73-page extra issue of the *Christian Proclamation*, rehearsing the whole affair in a way that was partisan to Hall. That elicited detailed responses from both Campbell and Pendleton in November.²⁹ In the end, the only charge that stuck in Bethany was that Arny had made some "imprudent" remarks (see comments on p. 16 of Arny's pamphlet), but Hall had published so much evidence that even Pendleton acquiesced on the facts, standing only on the principle that Hall had not followed proper procedure. He wrote, "Had this testimony been presented before a proper tribunal, and with the parties face to face, then there could have been a final decision of the matter at once."³⁰

In August 1850, Alexander Campbell reported that Hall had visited him in Bethany and that, "the breach of good feeling which has, for sometime, existed between us, has been healed, and all difficulties satisfactorily adjusted, so that we again stand as we once stood—on terms of Christian communion and friendship."³¹

²⁵ Pendleton, "Report on the Proceedings," *MH* (1849) 398.

²⁶ Quoted in Alexander Campbell, "Remarks on the Above," *MH* (1849) 403-404.

²⁷ Alexander Campbell, "Remarks on the Above," *MH* (1849) 399-405.

²⁸ Quoted in W.K. Pendleton, "Retaliatory Discipline," *MH* (1849) 627-629.

²⁹ Alexander Campbell, "Retaliatory Discipline," *MH* (1849) 626-633; W.K. Pendleton, "Remarks of the Committee," *MH* (1849) 633-643.

³⁰ Pendleton, "Final Account," *MH* (1849) 687; cf. Murphy, *Frontier Crusader*, 18-19.

³¹ Alexander Campbell, "Brother Alexander Hall," *MH* (1850), 480. But see a more negative remark in Alexander Campbell, "Memorabilia for June," *MH* (1852) 350.

As for Arny's address, we should expect it to reflect the views of Arny's spiritual mentors, Alexander Campbell and W.K. Pendleton. Campbell had established his views on church order and discipline in his series of thirty-two articles on "The Restoration of the Ancient Order of Things" in the *Christian Baptist* between 1825 and 1827, and he recapitulated those views in the *Millennial Harbinger* in an extra issue on "Order."³² Campbell regarded those essays as definitive statements.³³ But, instead of drawing directly from Campbell, Arny built his arguments from the writings of the previous generation who had influenced Campbell, namely, Thomas Campbell and the Scottish Baptist pastor Archibald McLean.

Commentary on the Text

Preface.

Letter A.

The two prefatory letters represent the two different camps in the controversy. Vancamp, Bledsoe, and Muse would become three of the five-member "Committee of the Main street congregation," while Gains, along with J.G. Chinn, would sit on the five-member "Committee of the South St. congregation."³⁴ Though they were on opposite sides in the controversy of 1848-50, T.N. Gaines, Levi Vancamp and H.M. Bledsoe had been close allies in advancing the movement in Missouri.³⁵

Levi Vancamp was an elder in the Lexington church of Christ³⁶ and a "preaching brother."³⁷

When he moved (from Kentucky?³⁸) to Missouri in 1835, he promptly established the first congregation in Lexington and invited Alexander Campbell to come preach in the area.³⁹ Campbell did eventually travel to Missouri in 1845, and Vancamp accompanied

³² Alexander Campbell, "Order," *MH* (1835) 483-528.

³³ Alexander Campbell, "Organization," *MH* (1844) 44.

³⁴ "News from the Churches," *MH* 1850: 477-478.

³⁵ T.M. Allen, "Boon County, Missouri, June 25, 1840," *MH* (1840) 422; T.N. Gaines, "Lexington [*sic*], La Fayette county, Mo, September 7, 1840," *MH* (1840) 515.

³⁶ H.L. Boon & T.M. Allen, "State Meeting in Missouri," *Christian Messenger* 12.1 (1841) 29; "State Meeting in Missouri," *MH* (1841) 528; A. Campbell, "The Church at Washington City," *MH* (1851) 353; cf. A. Campbell, "Our Tour in Missouri," *MH* (1860) 110. The *Christian Messenger* is hereafter abbreviated *CM*.

³⁷ H.L. Boon & T.M. Allen, "State Meeting in Missouri," *CM* 12.1 (1841) 30.

³⁸ Asa R. Runyon, letter, *CM* 9.1 (1835) 21.

³⁹ "News from the Churches," *MH* (1837) 141-142.

him from Lexington to Independence⁴⁰ and donated \$10.00 to Bethany College.⁴¹ After Army's visit, he would send another \$10.00 in the summer of 1848.⁴² In 1861, he would join 13 other church leaders as signatories of a circular urging Christians not to take up arms in the war.⁴³

H.M. Bledsoe was from Paris (Bourbon County), Kentucky, where he first became dedicated to "the ancient order of things."⁴⁴ He was an elder of the church in Lexington, Missouri.⁴⁵ He also had helped transport Alexander Campbell on a leg of his tour through Missouri in 1845⁴⁶ and pledged \$100.00 to Bethany College.⁴⁷

James S. Muse —I have not been able to identify Muse.

P.R. Whittlesy —Philander Rathbone (preferred spelling, "Whittlesey") Whittlesy (1804-1893) had migrated to Lafayette County, Missouri from New York.⁴⁸

Letter B.

T.N. Gaines was an elder of the church in Richmond, Missouri,⁴⁹ who preached for the churches in Richmond, Lexington, and Dover.⁵⁰

M. Slaughter —I have not been able to identify Slaughter.

Flavel Vivion had been a trustee of Mt. Zion Baptist Church in Fayette County, Kentucky. But when the Boone Creek Baptist Association dissolved in 1829⁵¹ under the influence of Jacob Creath and "Raccoon" John Smith, that congregation changed their name to Mt. Zion Christian Church.⁵² Later, Vivion migrated to Lafayette County, Missouri, along

⁴⁰ Alexander Campbell, "Our Tour of the West," *MH* (1846) 68.

⁴¹ W.F.M. Army, "Bethany College," *MH* (1846) 379.

⁴² W.F.M. Army, "Bethany College," *MH* (1848) 474.

⁴³ J.W. McGarvey, "Circular from Preachers in Missouri," *MH* (1861) 584.

⁴⁴ H.M. Bledsoe, "Paris, Bourbon co., Sept. 5th, 1834," *CM* 8.10 (1834) 303-305.

⁴⁵ H.L. Boon & T.M. Allen, "State Meeting in Missouri," *CM* 12 (1841) 29; T.M. Allen, "State Meeting in Missouri," *MH* (1841) 528; A. Campbell, "The Church at Washington City," (1851) 353; cf. A. Campbell, "Our Tour in Missouri," *MH* (1860) 110.

⁴⁶ Alexander Campbell, "Our Tour of the West," *MH* (1846) 70.

⁴⁷ "Bethany College," *MH* (1846) 379.

⁴⁸ www.familycentral.net

⁴⁹ H.L. Boon & T.M. Allen, "State Meeting in Missouri," *CM* 12.1 (1841) 29; T.M. Allen, "State Meeting in Missouri," *MH* (1841) 528.

⁵⁰ "Religious News," *CM* 11.4 (1841) 142-143; "Religious News," *CM* 11.5 (1841) 179; "Religious News," *CM* 12.3 (1842) 95; "News from the Churches," *MH* (1840) 515.

⁵¹ B.W. Stone, "Extract from the Minutes of the Boone Creek Association of Baptists in Kentucky, for the Present Year," *CM* 3.4 (1829) 79-80.

⁵² Harry Enoch, "The History of Mt. Zion Baptist Church" *Winchester Sun* (January 28, 2012), online at: http://articles.centralkynews.com/2012-01-28/winchestersun/30675055_1_baptist-history-richard-morton-preachers.

with his family and slaves. He had a “delightful residence,” where Alexander Campbell dined and “spent some two or three very agreeable hours” in 1845.⁵³ When he died in 1850 at the age of 69, T.N. Gaines wrote his obituary.⁵⁴

Letter C.

constant travelling and pressing engagements —On his 1847-48 tour, Arny covered by his estimation some 4,475 miles and visited 359 churches in Illinois and Missouri alone.⁵⁵

furnished to you as delivered —Arny’s claim suggests that he had not spoken extemporaneously in Lexington but from a prepared manuscript. Cf. the opening paragraph of the address, which says that his address was “by previous arrangement.”

Address.

page 3.

according to previous arrangements... —This opening paragraph explains why, according to his prefatory letter, Arny had a manuscript that he could easily publish. Arny does not say how far in advance the “several brethren” had sent their request.

by the special request of several brethren, the portion of the word of the Lord just read —The portion “just read,” quoted at the top of the page, was Matthew 28:18-20. It seems unlikely that the Lexington leaders invited Arny to speak on the particular topic of the Great Commission. It is more likely that they requested that he speak on the topic of “Church Organization and Discipline,” which is the title of the address. In choosing Matthew 28:18-20 as his beginning point, Arny was influenced by Archibald McLean, *The Commission Given by Jesus Christ to His Apostles: Illustrated* (2nd edition; Glasgow, 1797). For McLean, the Great Commission served as a springboard for a wide-ranging exploration of Christian doctrine, framed as the supposedly pristine doctrine of the New Testament, before centuries of human tradition obscured Jesus’ message. Among the

⁵³ Alexander Campbell, “Our Tour of the West,” *MH* (1846) 70.

⁵⁴ *MH* (1851) 420.

⁵⁵ W.F.M. Arny, “Madison, Indiana, May, 1848,” *MH* (1848) 413-415; cf. “Knox County, Illinois, December 24, 1847,” 167-168; and “Paris, Monroe county, Missouri, January 13, 1848,” 171.

many topics he discussed was church discipline. Like McLean, Arny used the Great Commission as his springboard for discussing the topic at hand.

In his address Arny copied liberally from McLean. Assuming he found McLean's book in Alexander Campbell's library, he must have prepared his manuscript before he left Bethany in 1847. In that case, it is conceivable that the Christians in Lexington had invited Campbell himself to come and that Campbell sent Arny in his stead.

As a member of a church of Christ in another state, we feel that we have no right to take either side... —Because of their radical congregationalist polity and their emphasis on the right of private interpretation (Thomas Campbell, *Declaration and Address*, Proposition 6, on which, see p. 9 of the present pamphlet), followers of the Campbells were sensitive that elders in one congregation should not interfere with the authority of the elders in another congregation. So, for example, when he investigated Alexander Hall's allegations against Arny, W.K. Pendleton invited Hall to come to Bethany and testify, but he scrupulously maintained that he had no authority to compel him to come, nor to render any judgment against him.⁵⁶

the unfortunate division that exists here —The prefatory letters indicate that two different groups of men wrote to Arny asking for printed copies of his address. It is likely that they represented the two different camps in the dispute.

arising from our age and inexperience —Arny was 35 years old when he delivered this address and had been working for Alexander Campbell for at least 13 years (see above, "About the Author"). Here he is showing deference to the senior local leaders.

We would remark, that... —What Arny offered as his own "remark" was not his at all.

...among those who...institutions of succeeding ages. —Arny lifted this paragraph almost verbatim from McLean, *Commission*, pp. ix-x, with a few minor changes to McLean's punctuation, spelling, and wording.

⁵⁶ W.K. Pendleton, "A Case of Discipline in the Church at Bethany," *MH* (1849) 388, 391; *idem*, "Final Action of the Church at Bethany, in the Case of Brother Arny," *MH* (1849), 686.

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Those who would be thought liberal...distinguished from the world. —Arny lifted this entire paragraph almost verbatim, with some minor alterations in punctuation, from McLean, *Commission*, p. x.

Those who profess the christian religion...1 John iv.6. —Arny lifted this entire paragraph almost verbatim from McLean, *Commission*, preface, pp. viii-ix, with a few, minor changes in wording.

The words of our text, were spoken...— Arny lifted all of the text from this point through the end of the last full paragraph at the bottom of p. 5 (**...glorious majesty of his kingdom**) almost verbatim from the opening chapter of McLean, *Commission*, 1-5, with a few minor changes in spelling and punctuation and a few minor deletions.

page 5.

The next matter in order to the perfect understanding of our subject,... —Arny skipped over two and a half pages of McLean to get to the point that was at issue in Lexington.

...is to consider the office and qualifications of those to whom... —Arny lifted all the text from here through the words, **set them apart to that work** (near bottom of p. 7) from McLean, *Commission*, 8-14, with some variation in spelling, punctuation, and superficial changes in wording.

page 6.

Though this commission was first and primarily given to the Apostles, who have no successors in their office, —Arny (or rather, McLean!) labored to distance himself from any suggestion of a Catholic idea of apostolic succession.

But when the gospel revelation, with all its evidence, was completed by their ministry, and committed to writing, there was no further use for these extraordinary gifts, because the Scriptures of the New Testament answer all the ends for which such gifts were originally given; and, accordingly, they have ceased, as was foretold. —1 Cor. xiii.8, 11. —Arny (McLean!) argued that “that which is perfect” (1 Cor 13:8, 11) refers to the New Testament. The idea is that the Holy Spirit inspired the Apostles, who wrote as the Spirit guided them, and gifted them to perform miracles in order to confirm

that their teachings were from the Spirit. But once the New Testament was completed, there remained no more need for either inspiration or miracles in succeeding generations.

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The Apostles, personally and by Evangelists, performed... —Here Arny offered his own expansion on McLean's point. He interpreted familiar passages from Acts and the Pastoral Epistles to say that, even though there was no apostolic succession of bishops as found in Catholic polity, there was, nevertheless, an apostolic succession of authority in the leadership of local congregations in the form of elders and deacons.

page 9.

Christians must not only be separated from the world, but also united together in a visible church state, in order to their observing all things whatsoever Christ hath commanded. —Arny lifted this sentence verbatim from McLean, *Commission*, 231-232.

In the language of the venerable Elder Thomas Campbell, we would say... —The quotation is Proposition 6 from the *Declaration and Address* (1809), p. 17.

...signifies a particular congregation of visible believers... —Arny skipped over McLean's discussion of the first connotation of the word "church" as referring to the church universal in order to focus on McLean's second connotation as referring to a local congregation. Arny lifted this entire paragraph down to the words, **all things whatsoever Christ hath commanded** (p. 10) from McLean, *Commission*, 232-234, almost verbatim, with some changes and a few minor alterations.

page 10.

The first, for the sinner, is baptism... —In his discussion of baptism, Arny cribbed heavily from McLean, *Commission*, 137-138.

When the Apostle says, "as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup," —Arny lifted his discussion of the Lord's Supper, down through the end of the following paragraph, **to observe it every Lord's day**, from McLean, *Commission*, 290-291, almost verbatim.

page 11.

The union of members in a church of Christ,... —Arny lifted this lengthy paragraph on elders, ending with, **for the good of the whole** (p. 13) almost verbatim from McLean, *Commission*, 249-255, with some deletions and minor alterations.

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Christian discipline is essential... —Arny lifted his discussion of private and public offenses, from this point down to **confirming their love towards him** (p. 17) directly from McLean, *Commission*, 262-271, with a number of minor alterations.

page 14.

The word Church, is no where used for an assembly of Bishops or elders, in distinction from the people; but is frequently used to distinguish the body of the people from their officers. Acts xl.26; xiv.22, 23; xv.4. 22; xx.17, 28. — In this case it includes both elders and people; the elders are to preside in conducting discipline; and the people are to concur both in binding and loosing, so that it is the deed of the whole Church, or “the punishment inflicted of many”—2 Cor. ii.6. —This sentence is actually a footnote from McLean, *Commission*, 265 (with minor changes in punctuation), which Arny incorporated into the body of the text.

But what did it mean to say that, “the people are to concur”? It is likely that this sentence touched upon but did not relieve a sore spot in the Lexington disagreement. When Chinn and Pendleton debated church discipline in the *Millennial Harbinger* the following year, Chinn would argue that the elders should recommend a disciplinary action, and the congregation should act as the final authority to ratify the decision; whereas Pendleton would argue that the elders should render a decision, and the congregation should accept the elders’ authority and act in accordance with their decision.

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A public offense is such... —It is likely that the Lexington congregation was especially interested in the section on proper procedure for discipline in cases of a public offense. At any rate, this is the issue that Chinn would take up in his serial debate with Pendleton in

1849. If they had known that Arny was merely reading to them from McLean, they would likely have sought out McLean's book instead of requesting copies of Arny's address.

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If the offense be IMMORALITY in PRACTICE, we must distinguish the case of one who, through temptation, seduction or surprise, has fallen in to such sins, from the case of him who lives and walks in them. —We can see these categories in play in the spat between Alexander Hall and W.F.M. Arny in 1849. Alexander Campbell gave credence to a rather serious charge that Arny was “guilty of a breach of trust, in giving to anyone, without my knowledge or permission, a list of my subscribers,”⁵⁷ but he went on to say that Hall was, “equally at fault in receiving them, not only when he knew that they had been surreptitiously copied from my books..., but more especially after he was informed that I would not allow it.”⁵⁸ Campbell went on to accuse Hall of “purloining” and “robbery” and “tampering with my clerk,” thus implying that Hall had manipulated a younger and less experienced Arny.⁵⁹ Pendleton's committee investigating charges against Arny would find him guilty only of the minor offense of “imprudent use of his tongue” and of “imprudent, unwarranted and injurious tattling, in his travels among the brethren.”⁶⁰ Campbell came to think of Hall as a habitually unsavory character. On this affair, see above, the summary account in “Historical Context.”

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“This is one of the happiest privileges of Christians, as well as a bounden duty.” — I have not identified the source of this quotation.

An eminent and pious Christian writer says: —The quotation is from Alexander Campbell's comments on Acts 3:1 in the *Millennial Harbinger* (1846), 227.

with the assistance we have been able to derive from writers of the past and present age, and in light of the volume of Inspiration, in our feeble way, presented what we

⁵⁷ Alexander Campbell, “Retaliatory Discipline,” *MH* (1849) 630.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ W.K. Pendleton, “Final Action,” *MH* (1849), 687. Arny confessed that, “I have imprudently made remarks which have been perverted to his [Alexander Campbell's] injury I am bound to admit, and I am now deeply sensible of my fault, and most sincerely ask both him and the church to forgive me” (*MH* [1849] 688).

believe... —The “writers of the past and present age” included primarily Archibald McLean of Edinburgh, Scotland (from whom Arny cribbed the majority of his address), along with Thomas and Alexander Campbell, as indicated in the notations above. Passages not attributed in this commentary to any of those three writers may come from some other, as yet unidentified source(s). The “volume of Inspiration” was, of course, the Bible. Arny’s own “feeble way” consisted of the way he wove extracts from his sources into a single presentation, as well as a few paragraphs that he probably wrote himself.

Afterward

After the feud with Alexander Hall, it is likely that the relationship between Arny and Alexander Campbell was strained. Campbell insisted that Arny serve out his contract through February 1850.⁶¹ But after that, with his reputation damaged in that region, Arny surely felt it was time to move on. Still, he also had positive reasons for leaving. From his travels in the west he had witnessed how rapidly Christianity was spreading over the frontier, and he had acquired a new vision of the need for trained ministers.⁶² So in 1850 Arny decamped to Illinois. His last appearance in the *Harbinger* was a brief report from the church in Bloomington, Illinois.⁶³

While in Bloomington, Arny took an interest in public education. As a member of the State Board of Education, he was the inaugural editor of a new journal, *Illinois Teacher*, launched in 1855.⁶⁴ Although Charles Hovey, the President of the Board, soon replaced him as editor, Arny was elected Vice President from the third congressional district.⁶⁵ Meanwhile, he began working with a group of citizens from North Bloomington to have their town designated as the site of a new public university, a proposal designed to enhance their own real estate development plans.⁶⁶ They were successful, and the Board hired Abraham Lincoln to draft necessary legal documents.

⁶¹ Arny’s testimony, as reported in W.K. Pendleton, “A Case of Discipline in the Church at Bethany,” *MH* (1849) 395.

⁶² Murphy, *Frontier Crusader*, 13-14.

⁶³ *MH* (1851) 176.

⁶⁴ *Journal of Proceedings of the Illinois State Teachers’ Association at its Fifteenth Annual Meeting, held in Peoria, Dec. 29, 1868, with the Constitution and a Historical Sketch of the Association, and Biographical Notices of its Presidents* (Peoria, IL: Illinois Teacher, 1869). 13.

⁶⁵ W.L. Pillsbury, “Early Education in Illinois,” *The Sixteenth Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Illinois, July 1, 1884 – June 30, 1886* (Springfield: n.p., 1886), 194-196.

⁶⁶ Murphy, *Frontier Crusader*, 31-33.

Illinois State Normal University (now Illinois State University) opened in Bloomington in 1857 and moved to Army's town of North Bloomington in 1860. In 1865, the citizens of North Bloomington renamed their town Normal after the university.

During this time also, Army became active in anti-slavery efforts in "bleeding Kansas." Letters and papers dated between 1856 and 1861 show him traveling around Illinois, Missouri and Kansas as an agent of the National Kansas Committee. That committee recruited and supported anti-slavery advocates to settle in Kansas and help swing the vote to make the territory into a free state. Among the more infamous of Army's anti-slavery associates was John Brown.⁶⁷ In 1857, Army helped settlers organize the new town of Hyatt, Kansas. Contemporary records identified him as "Esquire," which suggests that he had studied law and been admitted to the bar sometime along the way. The citizens of Hyatt elected him both mayor of Hyatt and county judge of Anderson County.⁶⁸ Army was also a delegate to the 1858 Kansas State Constitutional Convention, where he took conservative positions. He voted in favor of inserting the word "white" into Article 7 on Education (the motion failed the next day), and he voted against granting suffrage to women.⁶⁹ By 1860, Army was back in Mendota, Illinois raising funds for the National Kansas Committee.⁷⁰

The anti-slavery cause was noble, but as early as 1856 we hear complaints about Army's high-handed behavior and abuse of funds.⁷¹ Furthermore, Theodore Hyatt, the president of the Kansas National Committee, had ulterior motives in Kansas as a land speculator. From New York he wrote to Army, worrying about Army's report on the financial prospects of some of their investments.⁷² Not only does this clarify how the new town came to be called Hyatt, it also suggests that Army's involvement in the anti-slavery crusade was tied up with another real estate venture. Later, there were allegations of mismanagement of funds by agents of the National Kansas Committee.⁷³ The allegations did not stick, but Army moved on again.

After Kansas became a state in 1861, the work of the National Kansas Committee ended, and Army used his connections with the newly elected President Lincoln to procure a federal appointment in 1862 as an Indian agent in the New Mexico territory, a convenient distance from

⁶⁷ "Letter, W.F.M. Army to Capt. [John] Brown, March 11, 1857," www.territorialkansasonline.org.

⁶⁸ "Town Organization of Hyatt, Kansas," www.territorialkansasonline.org.

⁶⁹ "Journal, Leavenworth Constitutional Convention," www.territorialkansasonline.org.

⁷⁰ "Circular, To the Friends of Humanity," www.territorialkansasonline.org.

⁷¹ "Letter, A. Curtis to William Hutchinson, December 21, 1856," www.territorialkansasonline.org.

⁷² "Letter, Theodore Hyatt to My Good Friend [W. F. M. Army], October 5, 1860," www.territorialkansasonline.org.

⁷³ "Letter, H. B. Hurd to James Blood, March 27, 1861," www.territorialkansasonline.org.

his critics in Illinois and Kansas. From then until 1875, he held several federal appointments in New Mexico, mostly as agent of Indian affairs, but also including a five-year stint as Territorial Secretary.⁷⁴ Army died in New Mexico in 1881, having made significant contributions to the development of Illinois, Kansas, and New Mexico.

⁷⁴ Murphy, *Frontier Crusader*; Lawrence R. Murphy, ed., *Indian Agent in New Mexico: The Journal of Special Agent W. F. M. Army, 1870* (Santa Fe: Stagecoach Press, 1967); Tom Todd, "W.F.M. Army." New Mexico History, online at: <http://newmexicohistory.org/people/w-f-m-army>.

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CM — *Christian Messenger*

MH — *Millennial Harbinger*

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