

**THE GRANITE MONTHLY, A NEW  
HAMPSHIRE MAGAZINE,  
DEVOTED TO LITERATURE,  
HISTORY, AND STATE PROGRESS,  
VOL. XLIX, NEW SERIES VOL. XII**

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# THE GRANITE MONTHLY

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JANUARY, 1917

NEW SERIES, VOL. XII, No. 1

## SAINT PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, CONCORD

One Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary Observed—Historical  
Address

*By Burns P. Hodgman*

The one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of St. Paul's Protestant Episcopal Church of Concord, originally organized as a mission church, under the name of "Saint Thomas' Chapel," January 5, 1817, was duly observed the present month, the principal event being a banquet at the Memorial Parish House, holden on the evening of Wednesday, January 3, for convenience sake, with Hon. Edward C. Niles as toastmaster; while appropriate religious services in the church were held on Friday and Sunday evenings, January 5 and 7, with sermons by Rev. Brian C. Roberts and Rev. William Porter Niles, respectively.

The speakers at the centennial banquet included Burns P. Hodgman, Esq., who gave an historical sketch of the church; Rev. Howard

F. Hill, who spoke of the late Dr. J. H. Eames, a former well-known rector, and the city and parish in his time; Edward K. Woodworth, Esq.,

who spoke of the late Dr. Daniel C. Roberts, the first vice-rector; Hon. Samuel Eastman, whose subject was "Bishop Niles as a Rector"; Rev. Samuel S. Drury, D. D., who spoke of "The Daughters of the Parish"; Gen. H. H. Dudley, who discussed "Parish Finances"; Rev. W. Stanley Emery, present vice-rector, whose subject was "The Present Parish" and, last, but not least, Rt. Rev. Edward M. Parker, D. D., Bishop of the New Hampshire diocese.

The historical address by Mr. Hodgman is of general interest, not only to members of the denomination, but the people at large, and is presented, in full, as follows:



Saint Paul's Church

## HISTORICAL ADDRESS

The student of the ecclesiastical history of Concord finds, of record, little to specially characterize or otherwise distinguish its early days from other New Hampshire townships of the same period.

As in all other colonial towns, I assume that, among the earliest settlers of Concord, there were those, if the truth were known, who were inclined to regard religious questions from a worldly point of view, still I have no doubt that, with rare exceptions, they were religious people, and, if not actively associated with some religious body, nevertheless were reasonably tolerant of the views of others and treated religious matters with becoming reverence.

When it is remembered that the Protestant Episcopal Church, or the English Church, as then styled, was the first to arrive and be established on this continent, and in particular along the coast from the Kennebec southward; when we have in mind that in 1605, on the coast of Maine, at the time of the Weymouth Expedition, the Indians met with the English at their daily prayers, and that, as early as 1607, at Sagadahoc, in that state, the first church building erected by the English on the North American continent was established within the walls of Fort St. George, where the Rev. Richard Seymour, a priest of the English Church, ministered thirteen years before the landing of the Pilgrims at Plymouth Rock; when we recall that the first church edifice erected in Portsmouth for religious worship as early as 1638, was an Episcopal Church; when we recall the close alliance between the English Church and the royal government in its efforts at colonization; and when we bear in mind that the Episcopal Church organization at West Claremont was complete as early as 1770; at Cornish in 1793; at Holderness in 1788; and at Hopkinton as early as 1803, it is not remarkable if the inquiry be made why the church

was not organized in Concord until 1817.

But when we look further, and remember that the Merrimack Valley was settled largely by Massachusetts families; that the Puritanical ideas of the Massachusetts brethren were not conducive to the further extension of the English Church in the territory coming under the jurisdiction of Massachusetts Bay; and when we ponder over the recorded instances of bigotry, cruelty and spiritual blindness of the Massachusetts authorities, and the Puritanical defiance, intolerance, and failure to treat kindly those who differed from them in religious beliefs and practices; and when we learn of the treatment accorded the ministers and members of the English Church at Portsmouth, it is, indeed, not difficult to realize why the Church was so long in gaining a footing in this particular section of New Hampshire. If there were, among the early settlers of Concord, those inclined to believe in the doctrines of the established church of their native land, it is little wonder that temerity, and perhaps reasonable satisfaction with religious conditions as they found them, may have had a restraining influence until they had so increased in numbers, both within and without the confines of this township, as to give them courage, both spiritually and financially, to publicly declare their allegiance to the principles enunciated in the Book of Common Prayer.

Then, too, it must be remembered that the nominal supervision of the colonial church by the Bishop of London was a very unsatisfactory arrangement. The long and perilous voyage of 6,000 miles on the part of candidates for Holy Orders kept many from applying at all, and of the few whose zeal impelled them forward, some perished by shipwreck, or died abroad, with the result that it was practically impossible to obtain an adequate staff of native-born clergymen, so the Church was therefore de-

pendent upon English recruits. And, unfortunately, of the few who came, many were ill-adapted for the purpose. It is true that the clergy in the New England colonies, generally speaking, were of the most exemplary character, but they were few and suffered much persecution from the Puritans, "who assumed the right of taxing all for the support of their ministers and meeting-houses; and, wherever they could gain over the local governor to their persuasion, proceeded to enforce their claims with signal violence."

And again, it must be remembered that when the Revolutionary War commenced, there were not more than eighty clergymen of the Church to the northward and eastward of Maryland, so that the comparatively small number of churchmen may be in part attributable to this fact. And again, after emerging from the troublous period of the Revolutionary War, in many instances, small groups, faithful to the Church, were financially unable to support a clergyman, if indeed he could be found. Then, too, after the War, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel withdrew its support and, followed as it was by the long drawn out controversy over the Episcopate, conditions must have been such as to practically postpone for the time being any special activity in church work.

However far the Puritanical doctrines of Massachusetts were carried, so far as Concord is concerned, its church history demonstrates that greater toleration in religious matters prevailed than was, perhaps, manifest elsewhere. But in those days when the titles to the lands of the early settlers were at stake, as exemplified in the Bow controversy, when a unity of interests was necessary for the advancement of economic pursuits, when it was essential that the number of factions of any sort should be reduced to the smallest degree, it is now easy to perceive that there might well have been opposition, not

only to denominational churches, but to the Church of England.

In studying the history of the parish, it has occurred to me that there are certain periods into which it is logically divided, the first embracing the organization period, when we were known as St. Thomas' Chapel, extending from January 5, 1817, to 1835; the second, extending from July 13, 1835, when St. Paul's Parish was definitely established, to 1857; the third, commencing with the pastorate of Dr. Eames, and embracing the ministrations of Bishop Niles, and Dr. Roberts, and the last commencing with the accession of Edward Melville Parker to the Bishopric, and running to the present.

I shall present the earlier periods for your consideration in greater detail than the more modern history, as others will consider the historical facts of the present day parish and the story of those great prelates who have been more recently associated with St. Paul's.

I have mentioned some of the handicaps under which the churchmen of this early period labored, but eventually they did actively assert their religious beliefs, and steps were taken whereby a meeting for organization purposes was held January 5, 1817, at the home of Albe Cady (probably Albemarle Cady) then standing where the Phenix Hotel is now located, at which time the basis of an association was presented by a committee which had been appointed for that purpose, and which was subscribed by the following persons: Albe Cady, Samuel Green, Arthur Rogers, Isaac Eastman, Issac Hill, John D. Bailey, Arveen Blanchard, Walter R. Hill, Augustus H. Odlin, John West, Jr., Daniel Greenleaf, Jeremiah Blanchard, and Artemas Blanchard. St. Thomas' Chapel was the name selected for the association. In 1821, the names of Sampson Bullard, Thomas Waterman, Eben LeBosquet, Hosea Fessenden and William Kent were added, thus making eighteen names, eleven of