



Christ Church Looks Back

by Joseph A. Tomberlin

The purpose of November's article is to complete the account [that began in October's *Vineyard*] of Christ Church's insurance problems in 1951 with the Diocese of Georgia, as well as to begin to tie together certain other aspects of the aftermath of the construction of the new church and parish hall on North Patterson Street. To repeat a point made in October, the Vestry's response to what the minutes of June 3, 1951, described as "a suggestion for a rather complete revamping of the Church insurance program" appeared in a letter of July 15th from the Clerk, Robert G. Macks, to Zoë Coburn. Two statements in the Macks letter contained the core of the Vestry's answer. First, "it was decided not to increase insurance coverage on the Church property, other than the Rectory." Second, "the Vestry of Christ Church has no objection to the Diocese taking out . . . additional [coverage] . . . provided we are not obligated for any part of the premium."

Miss Coburn's answer, which provided an acceptable end to the issue, came in a letter to Macks on August 21, 1951. She thanked Macks for his correspondence of July 15th "containing information for our files in connection with your insurance there." In light of what seems to have been an effort by the Diocese to require both missions and parishes to place insurance coverage with the Church Fire Insurance Corporation, Miss Coburn wrote, "It is perfectly *The Vineyard*, p. 10, November 2012

all right about the policies, and I should have remembered. There are many who are with you regarding doing business at home and I understand this perfectly for any policy which we have with the Carswell Company here [in Savannah] I could not conscientiously take from them and place even with the Church Fire Insurance Corporation." She said that she had made the same statement to representatives of the C.F.I.C. "and they tried to argue me out of it." Then, she ended by writing, "Mr. Carswell, on the vestry of Christ Church [Savannah] is a large contributor and grand churchman in every sense and has been a wonderful help to us in checking our policies and other details."

At this juncture, with the insurance story behind us, we can turn to another facet of business left over after the building of the new Christ Church. On May 1, 1949, Vestry held a joint meeting with the officers of the Men's Club and of the various guilds. One item noted in the minutes of this gathering was a bill for \$156.00 from Mixer Electric Company for wiring the stove and oven in the kitchen, which then was located in the so-called "parish house" that is now the south wing of the church proper. Vestry voted, without discussion, to pay the bill "as part of the Church installation." Subsequently, the amount of the charge became a source of controversy that went on until at least September 1950, and it is not clear that it was ever resolved satisfactorily.

At the Vestry's session of July 3, 1949, according to the minutes, ". . . bills were offered for payment and passed, excepting that of Mixer Electric Company covering wiring of the stove." Jamie Carroll agreed to "consult with Mr. Mixer concerning the seeming overcharge." In the September 5, 1949, Vestry meeting the bill from Mixer, still outstanding, "was finally approved for payment when, as, and if the job is completed." Mr. Macks, the Clerk, "was instructed" to write Mr. Mixer to remind him of the situation, which he did two weeks later. In his September 19, 1949, letter, Macks declared, "your bill" will "be paid as soon as the work called for by the contract is completed by you. We would ask you to complete the installation at your earliest convenience."

The Macks missive apparently had no effect, so the matter continued to be discussed by the Vestry. In the December 4th meeting, Marion Tucker agreed to talk with Mr. H.G. Tinker, the contractor who built the church, to seek his advice about the charges from Mixer Electric. At the session on January 6, 1950, discussion persisted, Vestry heard a report on Mr. Tinker's views, and the minutes stated that "Mr. Tillman [the Senior Warden] will finally settle the matter. However, on February 5, Jerome Tillman informed Vestry that "he had been unable to contact Mixer re the long outstanding bill but would endeavor to take care of the matter."

This story will continue in the December *Vineyard*.