

Christ Church Looks Back

by Joseph A. Tomberlin



"[M]ost things are going along quite smoothly, but we are faced with one problem---adequate Sunday School room." The foregoing sentence sounds familiar and contemporary, but it actually is from a letter to Bishop Myddleton S. Barnwell written by Vestry Clerk Robert G. Macks and dated August 18, 1951. Shown as September's historical document, the message raises the possibility of applying for large enough a loan from the American Church Building Fund Commission to pay the existing mortgage and to construct an addition to the Parish Hall to provide four or five Sunday School rooms.

The Bishop replied to Macks on September 27, 1951, with the suggestion of a letter to the Building Fund Commission, laying "your problem before them, sending me a copy of your letter." Barnwell was quite accurate in his prediction of the course of events. He wrote, "They will probably send you an application blank and write you that they have no money to lend but if we get an application on file and continue to bring pressure to bear we will ultimately get the money I think."

Bob Macks was not in town when the Bishop's response arrived. As his secretary informed Barnwell on

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August Eighteenth, 1951

Rt. Rev. Myddleton S. Barnwell
Bishop of Georgia
7. East St. Julian St.,
Savannah, Ga.

Dear Bishop:

You will remember a conversation we had, on the occasion of your last visit in Valdosta, in reference to the American Church Building Fund, and the possibility of our securing a loan from them, covering the amount of our mortgage due, on terms somewhat more favorable to our Church. You later said you thought it better if you were to check on the situation before you wrote to them, and that you would let us know the "lay of the land" . . . has anything happened in this connection? We would be most happy to hear.

As things stand, most things are going along quite smoothly, but we are faced with one problem---adequate Sunday School room. And, we are of the thought that perhaps we could secure sufficient funds from the Building Fund to pay off our mortgage and still give us enough additional to build an addition to house four or five additional school rooms---and also, if we are lucky, to have a bit longer time in which to pay off our obligation. As you know, the load is a bit heavy---too much so to permit our building an addition on our own.

We would be happy indeed to hear from you.

Kindest regards and all good wishes from all of the Vestry.

Sincerely yours,
Robert G. Macks, Secy.

October 1, 1951, Macks and his wife had departed Valdosta on September 24th for a trip of six weeks to England. After their return, he read the letter to the Vestry in the meeting of November 18, 1951. Thereupon, the Vestry approved a motion that "the Secretary and the Vicar plan a letter to the Fund, outlining our position and asking such aid as might be available to us."

The resulting communication

was ready for Vestry action at the next meeting on December 2, 1951. With some revisions, the draft document received approval, and Mr. Macks was directed to sign and to mail the resulting missive. Before sending the letter to the Church Fund, Macks again wrote Bishop Barnwell and mailed both pieces of correspondence at the same time.

This story will continue in the October issue of *The Vineyard*. Stay tuned.