A History of the Diocese of Easton
How the First Parishes, Geography and Urbanization Shaped the Diocese

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Submitted in partial fulfillment

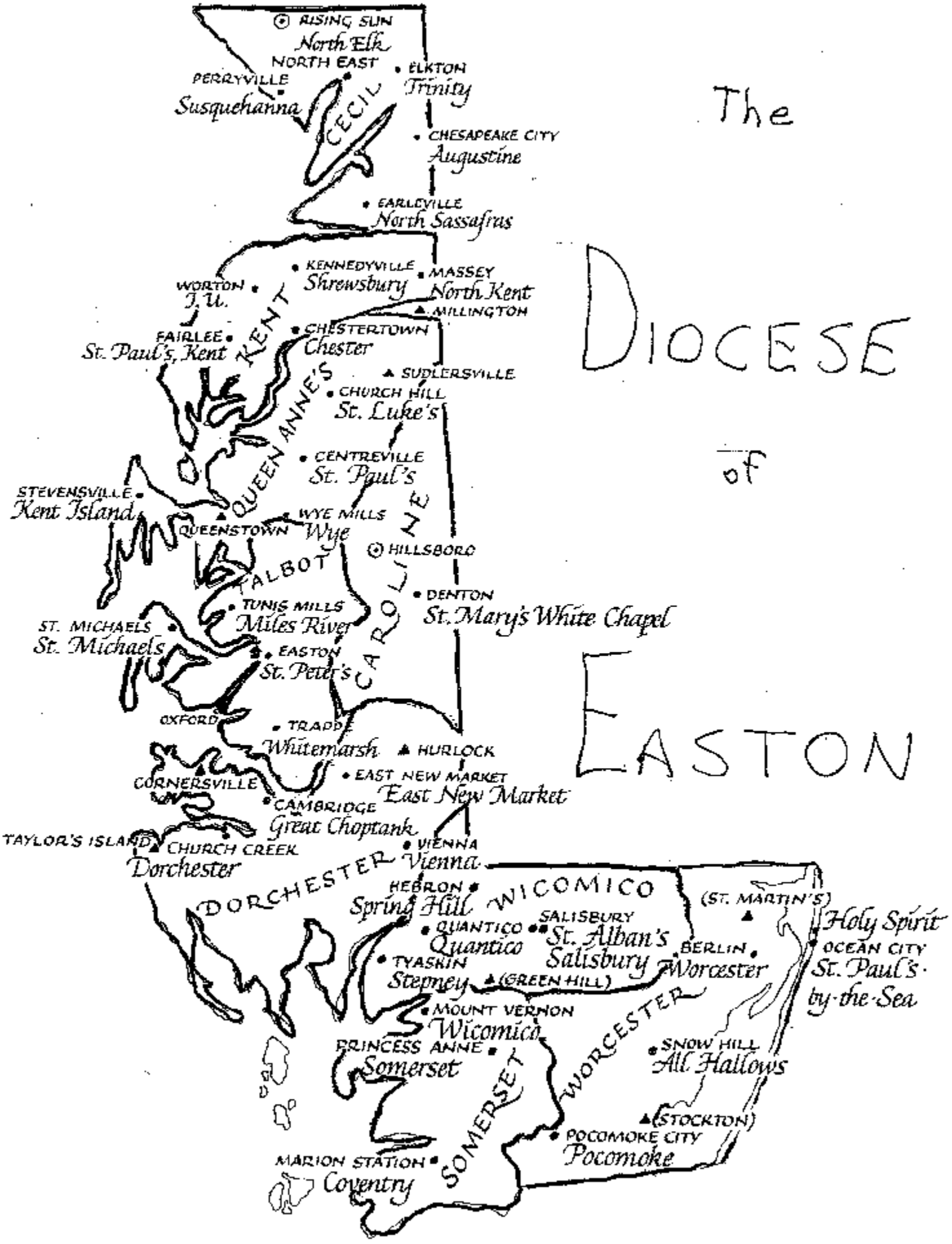
of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Divinity

The General Theological Seminary

New York

April 16, 2007


The
DIOCESE
of
EASTON
RISING SUN
North Elk
NORTH EAST
ELKTON
Trinity
PERRYVILLE
Susquehanna
CECIL
CHESAPEAKE CITY
Augustine
EARLEVILLE
North Sassafras
KENNEDYVILLE
Shrewsbury
MASSEY
North Kent
MILLINGTON
WORTON
J. U.
FAIRLEE
St. Paul's, Kent
KENT
CHESTERTOWN
Chester
SUDLERSVILLE
CHURCH HILL
St. Luke's
QUEEN ANNE'S
CENTREVILLE
St. Paul's
STEVENSVILLE
Kent Island
QUEENSTOWN
WYE MILLS
Wye
HILLSBORO
TALBOT
CAROLINE
DENTON
St. Mary's White Chapel
TUNIS MILLS
Miles River
ST. MICHAELS
St. Michaels
EASTON
St. Peter's
OXFORD
TRAPPE
Whitemarsh
HURLOCK
EAST NEW MARKET
East New Market
CORNERSVILLE
CAMBRIDGE
Great Choptank
TAYLOR'S ISLAND
CHURCH CREEK
Dorchester
VIENNA
Vienna
DORCHESTER
HEBRON
Spring Hill
WICOMICO
SALISBURY
QUANTICO
Quantico
St. Alban's
Salisbury
(ST. MARTIN'S)
Holy Spirit
BERLIN
Worcester
OCEAN CITY
St. Paul's
by the Sea
TYASKIN
Stepney
(GREEN HILL)
MOUNT VERNON
Wicomico
WORCESTER
PRINCESS ANNE
Somerset
SNOW HILL
All Hallows
(STOCKTON)
POCOMOKE CITY
Pocomoke
SOMERSET
MARION STATION
Coventry

Abstract

This Thesis examines the origins of the Diocese of Easton, a diocese in the Episcopal Church. The Diocese of Easton is located in Eastern Maryland, encompassing the Maryland counties east of the Chesapeake Bay in a region known as the Eastern Shore of Maryland. The Diocese of Easton was born as a result of a division of the Diocese of Maryland in 1868. The history of the Episcopal Church and its antecedent in colonial times, the Church of England, however, reaches back as far as 1631 on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. This Thesis encompasses the history of the church on the Eastern Shore from colonial times, through the establishment of the Diocese of Maryland after American Independence, and the division of the Diocese and the building of the Diocese of Easton to the year 1931, by which time its major institutions had been established.

This Thesis argues that three main factors are responsible for the character of the Diocese of Easton today: the way the original parishes were established, geography, and urbanization. Each one of these factors is discussed at the time in which they came to have the greatest influence in the development of the Diocese: the origin of the first parishes in the colonial period, geography in the post revolutionary period until the division of the Diocese, and urbanization in the late 19th and early 20th centuries as the Diocese of Easton sought to establish itself. By understanding the role these factors played in the origins of the Diocese of Easton, the reader is better able to see how the Diocese developed as it did. The Thesis concludes with some observations as to the challenges the Diocese faces in the early 21st Century, based on how it developed as a Diocese.

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ALLEN, ETHAN. *THE HISTORY OF MARYLAND.* PHILADELPHIA: EH BUTLER & CO, 1866. 89

I. Introduction

The Diocese of Easton stands as one of the unique dioceses in the Episcopal Church today, and its history, especially how it was founded and established itself in its early years, has had a profound impact on its character and culture. I will argue that there are three main factors which together have molded the Diocese of Easton into what it is today: how the original parishes were established; geography; and urbanization.

The Diocese of Easton, located in the region of Maryland known as the Eastern Shore (the land east of the Chesapeake Bay), is a study in contrasts: it is both very old and relatively new; close to many major metropolitan areas on the Eastern Seaboard yet lacking even a midsized city of its own; rich in natural resources yet lacking any centers of wealth; in the midst of a high percentage of church going population, yet its share of the churched population is very minor. In some ways it is influenced by the land, in other ways by the nature of the Episcopal Church. It has been consistent in one respect: since the Episcopal Church on the Eastern Shore was organized it has been a rural diocese. But with the recent trend in immigration to the Eastern Shore by urban commuters and retirees even that rural character is now being contrasted with the needs of the urban and suburban refugees.

In this Thesis I will examine the beginnings of the Episcopal Church on the Eastern Shore before the Diocese of Easton was founded in 1868, and then examine the first 60 years of the Diocese's separate existence, keeping in mind the influences of early establishment, geography and urbanization on its history. I hope to demonstrate to the reader that what happened in the 175 years before the founding of the diocese and the 60 years after the founding formed not only the institution of the Diocese but a culture and behavior that remains with the

church today. Finally, I would like to offer some reflections on the challenges the Diocese faces with the population influx onto the Eastern Shore in the first decade of the 21st Century.

For this Thesis I have made extensive use of the records of the annual conventions of the Diocese of Easton and the Diocese of Maryland preserved at St. Mark's Library in the General Theological Seminary in New York City and the Diocese of Easton Archives at the Diocese's Bray House in Easton. In addition, I have made use of letters and original documents from the Archives of the Diocese of Maryland in Baltimore and the Archives of the Diocese of Easton. A series of essays published as part of the Tercentenary celebration of the Anglican Church in Maryland by Arthur Pierce Middleton was very helpful in examining the colonial period, and the seminal work on the history of the State of Maryland by Robert Brugger, *Maryland: A Middle Temperament,* helped to provide historical context for telling the story of the Diocese.

I have been unable to discover any comprehensive, written history of the Diocese aside from short essays written at both the 50th and 100th anniversaries of the Diocese of Easton respectively in 1938 by the first Chancellor of the Diocese, James A. Pearce a year before his death, and in 1968 by Polly White Burnett, a former Historiographer of the Diocese. These two essays are tucked into the Convention Journals and have not been widely available. The resources and documents in Archives of the Diocese of Easton are limited, dating only from the founding of the Diocese in 1868. All prior historical documents are stored at the Diocese of Maryland Archives. It is curious that there has been no prior comprehensive examination of the origins of the Diocese of Easton. I would speculate that the lack of a major education and research institution in the Diocese and the Diocese's limited historical resources may have hindered this effort. In this light, I believe this Thesis will move forward and contribute to the study of the Diocese's history.

II. The Colonial and Early Independence Period: 1631-1783

The Diocese of Easton occupies the nine counties of Maryland that lie east of the Chesapeake Bay. The Diocese forms a rough L shape, stretched out along a north-south axis. The Chesapeake Bay forms its western boundary, in the north from the mouth of the Susquehanna to Pocomoke Sound in the south. The land is relatively flat coastal plain composed of farmland, forests and tidal wetlands, with numerous tributaries of the Chesapeake carving its interior and forming distinctive peninsulas. The Diocese's northern and eastern boundaries are demarcated by the Mason-Dixon Line, separating Maryland from Pennsylvania on the north and Delaware on the east. The Diocese is bound on the southeast by the Atlantic Ocean and on the south by the Eastern Shore of Virginia.

The Diocese was formed through a division of the Diocese of Maryland in 1867 which was accepted and approved by the General Convention in October of 1868. Since under the constitution of the national church a diocese is only recognized as such by action of General Convention, it can be reasonably said that the birthday of the Diocese is the day in which the General Convention approved of the diocese: October 12, 1868. However, the history of the church on the Eastern Shore goes back more than two hundred years before the founding of the Diocese of Easton. No understanding of the Diocese of Easton is complete without an examination of the church in colonial, revolutionary, and antebellum times. Here the two factors of the nature of the establishment of parishes and geography play a major role. It is to this time period that we now turn.

The Church before Establishment: 1631-1692

The colony of Maryland was founded in 1632 under a royal charter given to Cecil Calvert, Lord Baltimore, which gave extensive power to Calvert as sole proprietor of the

province. Settlers were considered tenants of Lord Baltimore. His power was limited only by the rights of his tenants as Englishmen and, in particular, by the necessity of securing their consent, or that or their representatives, to all laws proposed by the propriety.[1] Calvert was a Roman Catholic, but since he found it difficult to convince many Roman Catholics to emigrate to his colony, he declined to establish any church in the colony. Thus, Maryland essentially became a place of religious toleration, so that most of the first settlers were actually practicing Anglicans, from High-Church Laudians to Puritans and even some Separatists. The downside of religious toleration however was that unlike Virginia to the south in which the government erected churches and saw to the payment of tithes for the Church of England in the colony, Marylanders had to establish their own churches and entice clergy to come. A handful of Anglican churches were built and a few priests did venture across the Atlantic to tend to them, but little is known about these early churches, especially on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. What is known is that the first Anglican service in Maryland was conducted on Kent Island in 1631. William Claiborne sailed up the Chesapeake from Virginia and founded a settlement on the Island which included a stockade, store and a church. He didn't take kindly to the charter given Lord Baltimore the following year. This Virginia outpost was eventually taken over by Maryland.

Settlement of the Eastern Shore came from both the south and the north. The colony enticed settlers in Virginia with promises of land patents if they would travel north from the Eastern Shore of Virginia to settle in the Eastern Shore of Maryland. Also, settlers from Pennsylvania and the lower counties which would later become Delaware moved into the northern county of Cecil. As Europeans continued to arrive in the colony of Maryland they made use of the Chesapeake Bay as the main means of transportation in the state, and its many

[1] Arthur Pierce Middleton, Tercentenary *Essays Commemorating Anglican Maryland*, p. 9.

tributaries on both its eastern and western shores. While the Chesapeake provided Maryland with its main avenue for transportation and commerce, it also marked a boundary between Eastern and Western Shores. During winters and storms it was more difficult to navigate between shores, and both sides took on regional differences as time went on.

Maryland, like its neighbors to the south, first became profitable as a tobacco state. Tobacco farms proliferated in the state, especially in the tidewater regions which included the entire Eastern Shore, Southern Maryland, and the coastal plain area west of the Bay. However, tobacco played itself out in the sandy soils of the Eastern Shore and the economy by the mid 1700s on the Eastern Shore had switched to more grain crops – wheat and corn. Tobacco is a labor intensive crop, and Maryland planters imported slaves from the Caribbean and then directly from Africa to raise tobacco. As farmers and planters on the Eastern Shore planted less tobacco, many sold or manumitted their slaves so that the Eastern Shore in the 18th and early 19th centuries had a higher percentage of freed blacks in the population than any other region of the state. The economy of the Eastern Shore remained agricultural through the Revolutionary War with grain crops and timber accounting for most of the produce, and a budding shipbuilding industry in such towns as Chestertown in Kent County. A small number of landowning planters accounted for most of the power in the area; there were also smaller farms farther up the tributaries owned by whites and many poorer classes of whites, freed blacks and slaves which accounted for the rest of the population.

On the Eastern Shore, there is evidence of a variety of religious beliefs from the beginning of European settlement. Not only were there settlers on the Eastern Shore from the

Anglican Church but also the Presbyterian Church and the Quaker Societies, and other religions.[2] All were able to worship under the religious toleration of the proprietor, Lord Baltimore, and if they were able, to build structures and call ministers. But, since there was no established church, many settlers in Maryland opted to practice no religion, and so initially there were few churches built and few congregations assembled in Maryland. The way the colony was settled also discouraged the establishment of churches. Farms and plantations were established miles away from one another. Because so many waterways allowed access to remote areas of land, few towns were established early in the colony's history outside the capital of St. Mary's City. Towns would typically be where churches would be located, and fewer towns resulted in fewer churches.

Still, 15 – 20 Anglican churches were built during that time using voluntary subscriptions. Also, some 16 priests did venture across the Atlantic during this time but they had to obtain land grants and support themselves by growing tobacco.[3] Many churches had to do with the absence of a priest; in these instances a lay member may have led divine services.

The Established Church in Colonial Maryland: 1692-1776

The lack of resources for churches, the sizeable population of non-practicing settlers, and the disorganized nature of religion in Maryland became a great issue for some of Maryland's leading gentry. These Englishmen were concerned not only with the lack of the presence of the Church of England in Maryland but also the favoritism shown by the proprietor and his governor in the colony to Roman Catholics for land and positions, even though they made up a slim

[2] The oldest Presbyterian meeting house in continuous use was established by the Reverend Francis Makemie (the founder of American Presbyterianism) in Rehobeth and the 3rd Quaker meeting house was established in Easton, both on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, and both still standing and in use today.
[3] Middleton, p. 11.

minority in the colony. By 1688 King James II who was Roman Catholic was ushered out of England and William and Mary invited to claim the throne in the Glorious Revolution. In Maryland, these concerned Protestants saw this as an opportunity. Calling themselves the Protestant Association, in 1689 they stormed the capital, St. Mary's City, took over the government by force and appealed to William and Mary to convert Maryland into a royal colony and provide support for the Church of England in the colony.

The sovereigns obliged and sent Maryland's first royal governor, Lionel Copley, to the colony in 1692. He brought instructions from the Crown to "take special care" that God "be devoutly and duly served," and that the Book of Common Prayer be regularly used and the "Blessed Sacrament administered according the Rites of the Church of England," and that churches be built and a "competent maintenance" be provided for all parish priests.[4] The legislature, the General Assembly, attempted in that year to establish the English Church in the colony, and after sparring on the wording with the King's Privy Council, the Vestry Act was finally enacted in 1704, which united church and state and made the Church of England the official religion of Maryland. The Act in 1692 first determined the boundaries for 30 parishes and provided funding mechanisms and glebe lands for churches and clergy. Of the 30 original parishes, 13 of these founding parishes are listed below as they were in 1692 in what is now the Diocese of Easton[5]:

North Sassafras (St. Stephen's)	Cecil Co.
South Sassafras (Shrewsbury)	Cecil (now Kent) Co.
Great Choptank	Dorchester Co.
Dorchester	Dorchester Co.
Kent Is. (Christ Church)	Kent (now Queen Anne's) Co.
St. Paul's	Kent Co.
Somerset	Somerset Co.
Stepney	Somerset (now Wicomico) Co.

[4] Middleton, p. 13.
[5] Middleton, p. 63.

Coventry	Somerset Co.
Snow Hill (All Hallows)	Somerset (now Worcester) Co.
St. Paul's	Talbot Co.
St. Peter's	Talbot Co.
St. Michael's	Talbot Co.

The Vestry Act authorized Justices of the Peace to enforce the division of counties into these parishes and then to hold parish elections for six vestrymen. The Act stipulated that these laymen on the Vestries would oversee construction of churches or chapels where necessary, and sheriffs were to collect an annual poll of forty pounds of tobacco per taxable person in the parish. Turned over to vestrymen, that tax went toward building churches and paying the salaries of the parish clergy.[6]

The second royal governor of Maryland, Francis Nicholson, took a special interest in establishing the Anglican Church in Maryland. He arrived in the colony in 1694 and moved the capital from the Catholic stronghold of St. Mary's to Annapolis, and supervised the laying out of the town in which the two most prominent structures were the capitol building and St. Anne's Anglican Church. Annapolis was to be a decidedly Anglican town. He also offered five pounds sterling to every congregation who built a rectory and surveyed glebe lands for the support of a priest. In 1694 22 parishes had churches erected and nine had priests.

Governor Nicholson petitioned the Bishop of London, the Right Reverend Henry Compton, for aid in filling clergy positions. Under the original Charter of 1632 given to Lord Baltimore, the proprietor alone had the unqualified right – known as advowson – to appoint priests to parishes without consulting the wishes of the congregations.[7] The royal governors once Maryland was made a royal colony were granted all the political rights of the proprietor

[6] Robert J. Brugger, *Maryland: A Middle Temperament*, p. 52.
[7] Middleton, p. 21.

under the royal charter, but the ecclesiastical authority rested not with the governor but with the Bishop of London.

Bishop Compton named the Reverend Thomas Bray as his commissary for the Maryland Church, to focus attention on the newly established church in Maryland. Bray did not immediately travel to Maryland, but when he did, he had put together and brought with him an impressive collection of books and provided almost all parishes in Maryland with books to begin libraries, which today is the antecedent to many of Maryland's public libraries. He was frustrated in his attempts to recruit high caliber priests to travel from England to Maryland, due to questions of compensation and lack of resources. When Bray finally traveled to Maryland he had established the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts to in part help raise funds for clergy compensation. He worked while in England to have the King's Privy Council finally approve the Vestry Act. And he hoped his work in establishing parochial libraries would help entice priests to immigrate to Maryland. He crossed the Atlantic in 1699 and in 1700 he convened Maryland's first clerical convocation in the State House in Annapolis, addressing issues of education and frequent communion. Upon his return to England after 10 months in the colony, he urged greater supervision of the church and clergy in Maryland and the other royal colonies by the appointment by the Bishop of London of a Suffragan Bishop for America. This request was not acted upon.

In 1716 the new Bishop of London, the Right Reverend John Robinson, appointed two commissaries for Maryland: Jacob Henderson for the Western Shore and Christopher Wilkinson for the Eastern Shore (even then there was a recognized division of Maryland by way of the Chesapeake Bay). Although both wanted to exercise their authority by conducting a visitation in Maryland, that was rejected by the Maryland Governor at that time, John Hart, and by many

parish priests. Times had changed. Because George I had given Maryland back to the proprietor when he had ascended the throne in 1715, the proprietor under the Charter of 1623 once again had advowson and was once again the ecclesiastical authority in Maryland and not the Bishop of London. Governor Hart was not a royal governor but rather the proprietor's representative, and he protested to the Bishop of London the commissaries attempts to take charge over the clergy and churches in Maryland. The Bishop apologized and said he would not interfere in the future, and the two commissaries were not heard from again.

This right of advowson meant that until American Independence it would be the last two Lords Baltimore who would be appointing priests to parishes in Maryland without the approval of the vestries. This resulted in the appointment of some questionable clergy to parochial posts. The proprietors who lived in England often chose friends or relatives of families in England that might prove useful to them rather than make the selection on the basis of the candidate's personal, intellectual, and moral qualifications. And because canon law forbade laymen to sit in judgment of priests accused of offenses or to deprive incumbents of their parson's freehold, no one in the colony could legally discipline or punish priests who had been formally instituted as rectors of parishes.[8]

Some parishes went without clergy for years, in which case a layman would officiate at divine services. But parishes were beholden first to the Bishop of London and then to the Lords Baltimore for the appointment of clergy and had to take what was given to them. Priests in this era could show up at any time and the vestry would be obligated to accept their appointment, having no redress for bad behavior or incompetence. There is a story of the Reverend Philip Hughes who was appointed as rector of Coventry Parish in 1767. The Vestry had protested to the governor that since the parishioners paid taxes for the salary of the rector, they should have

[8] Middleton, pp. 21-22.

say over who should be appointed. To make their point they had stood before their bolted church and refused Hughes entry. He later faced an angry mob of 200 who opposed his preaching at St. Stephen's Chapel at Dividing Creek. He declared that he would preach "with a Bible and two pistols in Coventry Parish." He was assaulted by a parishioner, his wife threatened, and he then jailed by a Vestryman. It took armed intervention of Governor Sharpe to restore order. Hughes soon quit his post for a more tranquil sinecure in Chester Parish.[9]

Some parishes had larger benefices than others and so clerical appointees would petition the proprietor to move from a smaller to larger parish, which was about the only way to rid oneself of a problem priest. Because the priest was only accountable to the proprietor in England, there was a great deal of latitude and unchecked authority given to clergy in colonial Maryland. When the General Assembly voted to decrease the clergy compensation one year, the priests complained to Lord Baltimore who rejected that law. Needless to say, although the majority of priests were hard working, virtuous men, there were enough problem priests to frustrate and anger Marylanders whether or not they attended the Anglican Church.

With the exception of clergy, however, Vestries did possess certain authority and autonomy. Because the Church of England was not established in Maryland until 1692, there were congregations and priests preceding this establishment who had even more control over their affairs. Establishment however brought order and the resources of the government to bear on the Anglican Church in Maryland, and laymen elected to Vestries found they had money to spend for churches, clergy, and almsgiving, and the arm of the law to enforce church attendance and tax payments for church revenues. Only white male owners of substantial property were eligible to vote for vestrymen, and those elected to vestries tended to be the landed gentry and many of those, including on the Eastern Shore, were owners of plantations and thus slave

[9] John R. Wennersten, *Maryland's Eastern Shore: A Journey in Time and Place,* pp. 94-95.

owners. By the early 1700's, Eastern Shore land had been pretty much claimed and with no new land to be purchased, the population of landless tenants increased. But the landless whites and blacks did not share in the decision making of the church. Churches were built in every county seat, and because the chief means of transportation was water, along rivers at points at or near centers of trade. Everyone in the parish boundaries was by law expected to attend the church or churches in the parish and support it financially. It evolved that the people came to the church, rather than the church coming to the people.

What the church in Maryland did not have in its entire colonial history was any experience of episcopal authority in their midst. No bishop ever visited the churches of colonial Maryland. The only way for one to be confirmed or to be ordained clergy was to make the trip to England to the Bishop of London. Few did, and so generations of Marylanders grew up in colonial churches that, especially on the Eastern Shore, became more autonomous and isolated. Besides the convocation called by Thomas Bray, there were no colony wide assemblies of clergy or laity. Because it was the established church, and because lawmakers and government appointees had to take a religious oath, Anglicans dominated the government and the leaders of the vestries tended to be the lawmakers and appointees as well, so they did come together as politicians and it was the General Assembly that passed laws governing churches. Canon law in Maryland was colonial law and changes to the canons affecting the Maryland church went through the General Assembly and not some separate ecclesiastical body.

Some Observations about the Colonial Church

From examining the way the Anglican Church was established on the Eastern Shore, the site of the present-day Diocese of Easton, a number of characteristics can be observed. First, Maryland did not begin as a colony with an established church; the proprietor of the colony, the

Lords Baltimore, by not establishing a religion, allowed on the Eastern Shore such denominations as the Quakers and the Presbyterians to establish footholds along with the Anglican Church. Also, many Marylanders liked the idea of not having to go to an established church. As such, the establishment of the Anglican Church in an area used to toleration made the Church of England be seen by some on the Eastern Shore and elsewhere in Maryland as an imposition. Thus while the colony in 1692 was divided into parishes and every resident was a member of a particular parish, the church also had other denominations in its midst and detractors from the church from the beginning.

Second, the church in colonial Maryland was parish centered. Churches were established in population centers and people from the surrounding countryside were expected to travel to the parish church; the church did not come out to the countryside. People were compelled to attend church under the law and so little persuasion was needed to encourage people to come to church. There was an assumption that everyone would come to "the church." Because there was no bishop in the colony, there was no cathedral nor reason for the church in the colony to assemble in one place. Thus rather than one church center there were more than 45 centers in different parishes in Maryland by the eve of the Revolutionary War.

Third, parishes and clergy did not develop local means to provide for the parish. As the established church, the government provided through its power of the purse for the purchase of land and buildings and for the compensation of clergy. People contributed to the church through taxes. The Vestry was more of a manager of funds and overseer of properties. While non-established churches like the Quakers and Presbyterians and the Methodists and Baptists in later centuries had to raise funds through their congregations, the Anglican churches had no such burden.

Fourth, Vestries and many Marylanders chafed under the system of choosing clergy and were frustrated by the lack of qualified clergy they were many times given. There was suspicion of clergy who seemed more beholden to the absentee proprietor than to their own flocks. Some churches found it easier to have a lay person leading divine services than the political appointee sent from England. Most clergy were not local, and did not have as much loyalty to the colony. Many priests did not want to move to the American colonies so the quality of men sent to Maryland was not often the best. In the strict class structure of the 18th century, the clergy also were well educated and found it more in their station to socialize with the planter elite, giving little contact to the poor and less educated. Because of these developments, priest then were given to more skepticism by church members. Parishes were not always distressed if priests did not stay long or if the church was without a priest.

The way the English Church was established in Maryland gave it these four characteristics: the competition and presence of other denominations and the option of not joining a church during the 17th century kept the church from being universally accepted, especially in the lower classes; the fact that parishes were the center of the Maryland church and the episcopacy was not a factor; the lack of experience relying on congregational monetary support; and the love-hate relationship with clergy.

The Church in the State of Maryland

The coming of American Independence demonstrated how much of a role these characteristics played. On November 3, 1776, the General Assembly of the new State of Maryland adopted a Declaration of Rights which, among other things, guaranteed religious liberty to citizens of the state and freed them from being taxed to support any particular church

or ministry.[10] Those other denominations that had chafed under the established church were now free to operate without restrictions. They were increasing in numbers from the lower classes who were leaving the Anglican Church and from elites who had been shut out by religious restrictions on voting and holding office. Gone was the requirement that to serve in Maryland government you had to be a member of the Church of England. Gone was the revenue source for Vestries to pay for church buildings and grounds and for the salary of the priest. Those parishes with glebe lands were able to keep them to provide some income, but with no experience in raising funds from congregations, many parishes were unable to provide the funds necessary to operate. Other churches, such as the Quakers, Presbyterians, Methodists and Baptists on the Eastern Shore had been funding themselves all along and on the whole were in better financial situations than the Anglican churches, and continued to grow.

The situation with clergy was also a great concern. Their lack of loyalty to Maryland and the fact that they had pledged their loyalty to the King caused many clergy to flee the state as the Revolutionary War continued. Others were not getting paid and left. After the Revolutionary War, the number of priests in Maryland declined from 62 to 15, although the number of parishes had grown to 47, with 20 of those parishes on the Eastern Shore.[11] Many parishes were trying to make due without any clergy.

Finally, with no central ecclesiastical authority, the parishes were all left to their own devices and found no mutual support. The model that disestablishment left the church, that of the parishes as many scattered centers with little resources, was fast undermining the Anglican Church in the state.

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[10] Middleton, p. 29.

[11] Ethan Allen, *Protestant Episcopal Church Conventions in Maryland 1780-1783*, appendix to Journal of the Proceedings of the Convention of the Diocese of Maryland - 1878, pp. 142-143.

I would argue that the rest of the history of the church on the Eastern Shore is its coming to terms with these characteristics, at times having to overcome them, at other times making peace with them. The way the original parishes were established and operated in colonial Maryland continued to be a major factor in the character of the Diocese of Easton throughout its history and even today.

III. Separating from the Diocese of Maryland: 1783-1868

The second factor I would argue shapes the character of the Diocese of Easton is geography. This can be explained by first looking at how geography shaped the new state of Maryland and see how that also played a role in the shaping of the Diocese of Easton. As stated before, The Chesapeake Bay is the most dominant geographic feature in the State of Maryland. Running north-south from the mouth of the Susquehanna River on the Pennsylvania border to the mouths of the Potomac River on its west bank and the Pocomoke River on its east bank that form the Virginia border, the Chesapeake Bay divides Maryland into east and west. The Bay until the late 19th century was the chief means of transportation and commerce in Maryland, and Baltimore, its largest city, grew as an international port, using the Bay as the main thoroughfare of commerce for its growing number of factories and commercial establishments. Population was centered around the Bay. Maryland's earliest churches and communities were built along the many tidal tributaries of the Bay.

The Bay also divided state politics. Until the 20th Century, by tradition Maryland's two U.S. Senators would be appointed by the state legislature: one from the Eastern Shore and one from the Western Shore. The Maryland Constitution of 1776 provided for two state treasurers and land office registrars, one per shore, and alternating general court sessions on each side of the Bay. The general court would meet in Annapolis, and then would meet in the Talbot County Courthouse, located in Easton. A large courthouse built in Easton in 1794 at state expense fostered a lingering hope that occasionally the assembly might also convene in the Eastern Shore capital.[12] This designation of Easton as the capital of the Eastern Shore and the fact that it grew to be the Shore's most populous town at the mid 19th century played heavily in the location of the See of the Diocese in Easton.

[12] Brugger, p. 160.

American Independence and the Revolutionary War had taken their toll on the church in Maryland. At the close of the war attempts to organize the church in Maryland were undertaken. This was new, because the colonial government had previously been the uniting force of the parishes. Now, with disestablishment, the church would have to put together an ecclesiastical structure. The Diocese of Maryland was organized through a series of conferences beginning in 1780, and led initially by the Reverend William Smith from the Eastern Shore town of Chestertown.[13] In an account of the first "Convention or Meeting of the Clergy" in Annapolis on August 13, 1783, it was noted that

> the convention proceeded to take into consideration the present state of the church and great distress of many parishes and congregation from the want of clergy or proper instructors in the principles of religion: and it was agreed until a regular ordination of clergy could be obtained, there should be three clergymen appointed on each shore, in order to examine any young gentlemen as may offer themselves for Holy Orders in our church…and to recommend such candidates as upon examination may be thought worthy to serve as readers in any parish that may think proper to employ them.[14]

Here we see in the earliest organization of the Diocese the deliberate setting up of an even number of "overseeing clergy" -- three on each shore -- using the Chesapeake Bay as the dividing line. In 1788 at the Fifth Convention of the Diocese, a Standing Committee was approved to oversee the administration of the diocese. There were to be ten members elected annually: five from the western shore and five from the eastern shore of the Chesapeake Bay.[15] This practice of defining seats geographically from both sides of the bay continued until the establishment of the diocese of Easton, although at some point the western shore received one more Standing Committee seat than the Eastern Shore. Hence there was at the beginnings of the

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[13] Kingsley Smith, *Diocese of Maryland History – Past to Present Day*. Episcopal Diocese of Maryland 2005 www.ang-md.org (accessed April 24, 2006).
[14] The Reverend Ethan Allen, *Notices and Journals, and Remains of Journals of the Two Preliminary Conventions of the Clergy and of the First Annual Conventions…in the Diocese of Maryland* from an appendix to the Journal of the Proceedings of the Convention of the Diocese of Maryland – 1855, p 7.
[15] Ibid, pp.38-39.

Diocese of Maryland in the Episcopal Church an east-west division because of the geographic barrier of the Chesapeake Bay.

With the See of the Diocese of Maryland established in Baltimore though, the episcopal center of the diocese was west of the Chesapeake Bay. While not as great a distance as the distance of the Bishop of London to the colonial church in Maryland, having the Bishop of Maryland on the Western Shore made it more difficult geographically to benefit from the episcopal office. During colonial times the colonial government network could be tapped to respond to parish concerns and every county had a government presence. Now, parishes on the Eastern Shore needed to contact the bishop and he was much more distant and a less frequent presence.

Compounding locating the See in Baltimore was the cultural and political tensions emerging between the Eastern Shore and Baltimore. Baltimore was benefiting from the greater resources of the Western Shore and had rerouted the overland commerce road from Philadelphia to Annapolis and points south. The land route used to be by way of Talbot County crossing the Bay around Kent Island, but now the overland route was nearly bypassing the entire Eastern Shore by crossing the Susquehanna River in the north and proceeding through Baltimore. Baltimore strenuously opposed a canal linking the Chesapeake and Delaware Bays which was favored by Philadelphia and the Eastern Shore. And the state incorporated so many Baltimore banks that Eastern Shore residents complained that they could obtain a loan only with a Baltimorean's co-signature.[16] The Eastern Shore was seen as Maryland of the past; Baltimore as Maryland of the future. Eastern Shore residents eyed Baltimore suspiciously. Placing the see of Maryland in Baltimore added to this suspicion.

We find indications that the churches on the Eastern Shore felt somewhat separate from

[16] Brugger, p. 160.

the diocesan activities in the correspondence of the Second Bishop of Maryland, James Kemp. In a letter the Bishop received in 1819, a clergy member from the Eastern Shore reports that the churches on the Eastern Shore are being neglected. The writer notes the struggles of the Diocese of Delaware and proposes that the Diocese of Delaware merge with the Eastern Shore of Maryland churches and the Eastern Shore of Virginia churches to form a Peninsula Diocese.[17] This proposal, as evidenced from additional letters to the Bishop, was a much discussed topic but not acted upon. The idea of a Peninsula Diocese does indicate the frustrations of the geographic isolation felt by those churches separated by the Chesapeake Bay and the orientation east for many to Delaware or south to Virginia. It made sense to this clergy person and others at the time to use the water boundaries of the Chesapeake Bay, the Delaware Bay and the Atlantic Ocean to create a Peninsula Diocese that forms one geographic unit.

Geography then in both the secular and church life of members of the Episcopal Church on the Eastern Shore was a major factor in the growing interest to separate from the Diocese of Maryland. By the 1830's railroads were beginning to be built from Baltimore, uniting it to many parts of the Western Shore and to cities on the Eastern Seaboard and in the Ohio Valley and further west. Yet aside from the Baltimore and Philadelphia Railroad running through Cecil County no rail service was extended to the Eastern Shore until the Civil War. Land routes were unreliable – transportation continued to be under sail and steamship. The Bishop of Maryland had a much more arduous time reaching parish churches up Eastern Shore creeks than he did riding the rails to parishes on the Western Shore. Population also started taking off on the Western Shore while the Eastern Shore saw modest population growth. All this helped to spark further talk about the division of the Diocese of Maryland, and it was helped along by the work of the Fourth Bishop of Maryland and the Rector of an Eastern Shore parish that was one of the

[17] *Letter to Bishop Kemp from an Eastern Shore Clergyman, 1819,* Diocese of Maryland Archives.

farthest removed from the city of Baltimore.

A Bishop and a Rector

In 1838, the Professor of Ecclesiastic History and the Librarian of the General Theological Seminary in New York City, the Reverend William Whittingham, spoke out on the floor of the Convention of the Diocese of New York in favor of a division of that diocese into east and west. Before this, no diocese had been divided in the U.S. Whittingham, who was born and raised in New York City, made the case that with the great increase in population both in the city and in upstate New York the Bishop of New York was scarcely able to fulfill his Episcopal visitation functions. In a letter to a clergyman in western New York later that year, Whittingham wrote about the effect increased population had on the effectiveness of the bishop:

> [The Church] teaches that his charge, as a *bishop*, is eminently a cure of souls; that *as a bishop*, he is set over the whole flock, to watch over their souls, as one who must give account; that *as a bishop*, he is not merely to furnish pastors, and see that the flock is fed, but *himself* to feed them, giving each his portion of meat in due season. Yet this character may be destroyed, by the enlargement of his diocese. It is the tendency of such enlargement to destroy it. Beyond a given limit, every addition to the number of parishes, every enlargement of the extent of territory, assigned to a bishop, must tend to falsify the description of his office in the ordinal, and to nullify the vows he took on admission to that office…The bishop, then, of such a diocese as ours, is constrained to confine himself, in a great measure, to the mere routine of functional duty. Ordinations, confirmations, consecrations, and such other public services as can be huddled into immediate connexion with these, consume a proportion of time, and demand a degree of physical and intellectual energy which few beside our present beloved diocesan would be found able and willing to afford. Even he can now barely accomplish his triennial visitation, and meet the extraordinary demands for occasional service. One less active and robust must of necessity form some plan of concentration, to bring together engagements now multiplied and scattered. The result would be the English system of visitations, in which the clergy are convened at designated points, there receive the bishop's charge, fill up their answers to his printed queries, and disperse to their distant flocks. If this is not saying to the "destitute of daily food, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled," I am at a loss to know how

the apostle's rebuke is to be incurred.[18]

Whittingham believed that the division of the diocese of New York was required to allow more personal interactions with each diocesan bishop, which he asserted was more the practice of the Early Church. His opinion prevailed, because in 1838 the Diocese of New York became the first diocese in the American Episcopal Church to divide into two separate dioceses with separate diocesan bishops and conventions.

In 1840, the Reverend Whittingham was called to be the Bishop of Maryland. Whittingham was consecrated bishop September 17 of that year in St. Paul's Cathedral in Baltimore. He has been hailed by contemporaries and biographers as one of Maryland's greatest bishops.[19] He revived the diocese during his tenure of 39 years and oversaw the construction of 70 new churches in the diocese. He also came to understand the geography of Maryland and especially the challenges caused by traversing the Chesapeake for visitations to Eastern Shore churches. At the time, Baltimore was rapidly growing, and much of the growth in the diocese was occurring in and around that city. Urbanization proved to be a fertile ground for growth in the diocese. The Bishop founded a school in Baltimore and an order of deaconesses there. His work in Baltimore took up his attention and time.

In December 1843 Bishop Whittingham ordained to the priesthood a young native from Baltimore, the Reverend John Crosdale, who as deacon had been elected the year before as Rector of Coventry Parish in Rehobeth, a small farming town along the Pocomoke River on the southern end of Maryland's Eastern Shore. In 1854 Crosdale accepted a call as Rector of the new Pocomoke Parish in Pocomoke, a few miles upstream from Rehobeth. At that time

[18] *A Letter from the Rev. Professor Whittingham of the General Theological Seminary, to a Clergyman of Western New-York, in Relation to the Division of the Diocese of New-York.* Diocese of Maryland Archives, June 1838.
[19]One glowing account is penned by Thomas Richey, in his *Review of the "Life of William Rollinson Whittingham, Fourth Bishop of Maryland," By William Francis Brand.* American Church Review, 1883, pp 439-460.

Pocomoke was one of the farthest parishes from the See of Baltimore on the Eastern Shore.

John Crosdale was Pocomoke's first rector, and presided at both St. Mary's Church in Pocomoke Parish and for a number of years until a rector could be secured at St. Stephens in Coventry parish. Crosdale went on to become active in the Diocese of Maryland and was elected by Convention 20 times to serve on the Standing Committee, beginning in 1847. Crosdale was in a unique position both personally to understand how distance and water along with the demands of the growing city of Baltimore were keeping attention from being paid to Eastern Shore churches, while also taking part in the Diocese's decision making institutions and working closely with the Bishop on the Standing Committee. One wonders if Bishop Whittingham and the Reverend Crosdale talked at length about the limitations geography and urbanization placed on the episcopacy. I would suspect that the topic of solving this problem by dividing the diocese along the Chesapeake Bay did come up when these two men talked.

The Cambridge Convention and the Eastern Shore Memorialists

By the mid 1850's, a number of factors came into play which brought the issue of division of the diocese into serious focus. First, it was becoming a concern for many that with the diocese growing the Bishop's responsibilities were multiplying and his visitations were becoming less frequent. Discussions ensued about the merits of providing help to the Bishop in the carrying out of his episcopal responsibilities with the addition of an assistant bishop. Pennsylvania to the north and Virginia to the south had both taken on assistant bishops. Another bishop of course meant finding the resources to pay for the episcopal office, and increased parochial assessments to the diocese were not very popular in parishes in Maryland, who were still trying to manage raising funds for parish expenditures, which was especially true on the Eastern Shore. There was also the issue of where the assistant would reside. Whittingham

assumed the assistant bishop would also reside in the See of Baltimore. This was of concern to churches on the Eastern Shore, who felt an assistant bishop would still be too far away and would be prevented in the winter months with ice on the Bay in traveling much to the Eastern Shore. They favored having the assistant bishop residing on the Eastern Shore.

However, that ran into the concerns of the churches in and around Washington, DC, which at the time were part of the Diocese of Maryland. Many of these churches would rather have had the assistant bishop in residence in Washington, since Baltimore was growing at a much faster rate than Washington and there was concern that Baltimore would overshadow the nation's capital and the Washington churches would be secondary to the Baltimore churches. Both areas felt that additional funds needed to be sent to the diocese to pay for an assistant bishop should be used for an assistant bishop dedicated to ministry outside Baltimore. The clashing views on the role of the assisting bishop kept the concept from being seriously considered for more than twenty years.

Second was the fact that Maryland is a border state and was the site of clashes of cultures. The mid and lower Eastern Shore, as well as Washington and the counties of Southern Maryland were more southern in character and practices. Baltimore, Western Maryland and the northern counties near the Pennsylvania border, including the northern Eastern Shore counties of Queen Anne's, Kent and Cecil, had a more northern orientation. The northern Eastern Shore counties identified more with the northern industrial cities of Baltimore, Wilmington and Philadelphia, in which they were in closer proximity, than did Maryland's southern counties. The southern counties contained plantations and farms worked by slaves and held to more southern customs. In many senses the mid and southern Eastern Shore had more in common with Washington, DC and the surrounding counties than it did with Baltimore. In this period of American history,

issues of states rights and slavery were being debated on the national level, and one of the battlegrounds of this debate was Maryland, where the northern and southern cultures existed and were intertwined. Maryland at its founding had been a southern state and the majority of the population considered themselves as such, but northern influences such as the industrialization of Baltimore and migration in the 19th century had brought more northern thinking to the state. In fact, Bishop Whittingham, as a native New Yorker, did not hide the fact that he supported the Union and did not draw away from arguments with southern separatists.

In was in this environment that the first serious movement toward the Eastern Shore churches separating from the Diocese of Maryland was announced by the Reverend Crosdale at the Maryland Diocesan Convention of 1855, saying on the floor of convention that it was his intent to bring before the convention in the following year a resolution to divide the diocese, with the Eastern Shore churches forming their own diocese. In the year that followed, Bishop Whittingham made an especially aggressive visitation circuit, visiting every church on the Eastern Shore. At the Convention of 1856, the Reverend Crosdale announced that he had decided to withdraw his intent to offer an amendment of division. Was there something that had happened in the intervening year to change Crosdale's mind about this issue, or had he decided to pursue another tack?

Perhaps his position as a member of the diocesan Standing Committee led him to believe through conversations and observations that a division of the diocese along the lines of the Chesapeake Bay would be opposed by quite a number of delegates. He most likely had conversations with a number of churches from the southern and middle portions of the Eastern Shore about this topic. Perhaps too he noted that Bishop Whittingham, in the House of Bishops at the 1856 General Convention in October in Philadelphia, proposed a change to the national

church Constitution that would require any new diocese formed from an original diocese be first approved by the bishop and then approved at two consecutive diocesan conventions by a two-thirds vote.[20] Whittingham's proposed amendment would be voted on at the 1859 General Convention, and given misgivings about division, the two-thirds vote required for division would prove a high hurdle to clear in Maryland. At the time, a simple majority was needed in one convention to affect division. Crosdale needed to rally support for a new diocese, and he did not have that much time before the national rules on diocesan division might change.

By early 1858, an invitation was sent out to all "Clergy and Laity of the Protestant Episcopal Church on the Eastern Shore of Maryland" by Crosdale, the Reverend Dr. Joseph Spencer (Rector of St. Michael's in Talbot County and colleague of Crosdale's on the Standing Committee) and representatives from 11 parishes from the mid and lower Eastern Shore to attend a convention at Christ Church in the Eastern Shore town of Cambridge, on April 14, 1858. The invitation for this proposed convention stated that its purpose was to "ascertain the sense of the Church on the Eastern Shore on the question [of] the division of the Diocese of Maryland, as a measure calculated to promote the interest of the Church, having been brought before the convention and since received the respectful consideration of a large number of the Clergy and Laity."[21]

The Cambridge Convention was chaired by the Reverend Dr. Henry Mason, rector of Christ Church in Easton. It followed the rules of the regular Maryland diocesan conventions. First were adopted resolutions affirming the participants' trust and respect for Bishop Whittingham and expressing reluctance at separating "with our brethren on the Western shore." Then the resolution on division was proposed by the Reverend Crosdale: "Resolved, as the sense

[20] *Journal of the General Convention, 1856*, p. 205. Whittingham decided at the 1859 Convention not to go through with this amendment and withdrew it.
[21] *Invitation entitled: "Proposed Convention," 1868,* Diocese of Maryland Archives.

of convention, that it is expedient to divide the diocese of Maryland, and to organize a new diocese to be composed of the several counties of the Eastern Shore." This resolution became known as the Eastern Shore Memorial. According to an account of the Cambridge Convention,

> Mr. Crosdale opened the debate in a very clear, distinct, and able exposition of the present condition of the diocese generally, and of the Eastern Shore in particular: in respect of members, pecuniary ability, and the wishes of the Church; and closed with a review and answer to anticipated objections. The address, which was listened to with profound attention, produced a very deep impression.[22]

After Crosdale and others spoke, the Memorial came up for a vote. It was approved and signed by 23 delegates from Eastern Shore churches, 13 clergy and 10 lay, of which 45% were from the lower shore counties of Somerset and Worcester,[23] 36% from the mid shore counties of Dorchester and Talbot, and 18% from the upper shore counties of Queen Anne's and Cecil. There was lopsided support from the southern Eastern Shore churches. In fact, the vestry of Chester Parish in Kent County on the upper Eastern Shore sent their delegate to the Cambridge Convention to deliver the following message condemning the proposed action by the Eastern Shore delegates:

> That if there be other parts of the Eastern Shore desirous to constitute a separate Diocese, we prefer remaining in union with that portion of the Diocese, which lies on the Western side of the Chesapeake, and if our Western Shore brethren should prefer being without us—of which we have not the most remote conception—then it may become expedient for the upper portion of the Eastern Shore to propose terms of annexation to the Diocese of Delaware.[24]

Needless to say, Chester Parish was not a signatory to the Memorial. The Chester Parish vestry's declaration highlighted a lack of unanimous support on the Eastern Shore, and its language echoed that of Unionists in the country at that time arguing against southern secession. Politics

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[22] *ES Convention 1858 April 14 in Christ Church Cambridge*, Diocese of Maryland Archives.
[23] A third lower shore county, Wicomico, was not created until 1867.
[24] *At a Meeting of the Vestry and Wardens of Chester Parish, Kent County, on the 19th March, 1858*, a copy of a document given to Bishop Whittingham by Judge E.F. Chambers, a member of the Chester Parish Vestry, Diocese of Maryland Archives.

and the impending war complicated the quest for a separate diocese.

The Convention of 1858

With the Memorial slated to be introduced into convention the next month, Bishop Whittingham in his address at the start of the 1858 Convention harkened back to his speech on the floor of the New York Diocesan Convention twenty years before when on the morning of May 26, 1858 he addressed the Maryland Convention delegates on the issue of division:

> A question of importance is expected to come before you in the proposition for a division of the diocese. At this stage of the procedure, it is not for me to interpose my comments…The importance of the question lies far more in the general principles involved, than in the details of their application. It may be the turning point of life as from the dead, or of dying decay in growth, for the Church in these United States, whether its Diocese shall be reduced and kept somewhat near the primitive and apostolic model of a pastoral headship, or allowed to grow into the medieval hypertrophy of ecclesiastical principalities.[25]

The Bishop in his address laid out the issues involved in a diocesan division but refused to take a definitive position on whether or not the Eastern Shore counties should form their own diocese. Could it be that his strong pro-Union political tendencies and the uneasiness of many in the diocese about the division in this politically charged pre-Civil War environment tempered his remarks from his strident call for division 20 years ago? Perhaps he was concerned that John Crosdale and his associates in the mid and lower Eastern Shore did not speak for the entire Eastern Shore. That the Chester Parish vestry couched this action by the Eastern Shore Memorialists as "a measure altogether disastrous in its influences upon the Church, under ordinary circumstances, but in the present disturbed political condition of the community, would be eminently so,"[26] may have given the Bishop pause.

In any event, the Memorial was presented May 27, 1858 on the floor of the Maryland

[25] *Journal of the Proceedings of the Convention of the Diocese of Maryland*, pp. 26-27.
[26] *At a Meeting of the Vestry and Wardens of Chester Parish, et. al.*, Diocese of Maryland Archives.

Diocesan Convention in Baltimore. Dr. H.D. Evans, lay delegate from St. Paul's Church in Baltimore, "moved that the petition from the Eastern Shore, praying for a division of the diocese, be referred to a committee of Eastern Shore delegates," and instructed them to come back to the same convention with a report on how many Eastern Shore delegates were for and against the petition. That motion was substituted for another put forth by the Rector of the College of St. James in Washington County, the Reverend Dr. John Kerfoot, which passed 90 to 5 and called for the creation of "a committee of nine clergy and laity to 1) ascertain the wishes of the clergy and parishes of the diocese and 2) if desired, to draw up lines of division. The committee was to report back one year later to the 1959 Convention. The Bishop appointed Kerfoot to chair the committee. One of the members appointed was John Crosdale, who made no secret in the report that was issued a year later of his determination to see the formation of a new diocese on the Eastern Shore.

The Committee issued two surveys to aid it in its work: the first went to all rectors and vestries of Eastern Shore churches a month after convention and asked them their opinions on the proposed division and their opinion on whether or not a bishop could be supported by the Eastern Shore churches; a second survey went out the fall of 1868 to all rectors and vestries asking if they favored a division of the diocese along the lines of the Chesapeake Bay, or a different division which would include the northern counties of the Eastern Shore, Baltimore and its surrounding counties, and the counties of Western Maryland in one diocese with its See in Baltimore and another diocese composed of the mid and lower Eastern Shore Counties, Washington and surrounding counties and the counties of Southern Maryland with Washington as its See. The second division neatly divided the state into those of northern and southern sympathies.

The question of division was put to the churches of Maryland on the eve of the Civil War, when the question of secession was on the minds of most Americans. Reactions captured by these surveys fell along three lines. One sentiment was: no division at this time. It would be "inexpedient and imprudent" read many of the comments; Robert Rout, rector of Durham Parish on the Western Shore, wrote: "I think it inexpedient at this time to divide the Diocese of Maryland. By referring to the Journals of the last convention I find that the clerical and lay members from the Eastern Shore are far from being unanimous in their opinion as to the propriety of the division."[27] A second sentiments expressed by a few others felt a north south division with Baltimore and Washington as Sees was a better alternative.

The third sentiment was to erect a Diocese on the Eastern Shore. The responses from the Eastern Shore, especially the lower parishes, brought home for many the isolation and need they felt for more Episcopal oversight. The Reverend Charles Parkman, Rector of All Hallows Parish in Snow Hill in Worcester County wrote at length to the committee. Here is an excerpt:

> In my view, the Episcopate being essential, not only to the present existence, growth and vigor, but to the future of the church on the Eastern Shore, the Shore must have it or continue to languish or fail to affect its ends. None will pretend that is it in the power of any on man to give the present Diocese of Maryland that oversight which is the essential feature of the Episcopal office. On principle therefore I ask for a division of the Diocese as a <u>necessity</u>.[28]

The Committee on the Division of the Diocese worked throughout the summer and fall of 1858 and spring of 1859 sending out, receiving and compiling the surveys from every church in the diocese. Their work provides a rare glimpse of the thinking at the parish level on this issue. The results were presented in a report to the 1859 Convention.

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[27] *Letter from Robert Rout, Rector of Durham Parish, CC on March 7, 1859,* Diocese of Maryland Archives.
[28] *Letter to Committee on Division of the Diocese from C. Parkinson, July 13, 1858,* Diocese of Maryland Archives.

The Convention of 1859

John Crosdale may have been satisfied with the work of the Committee. After sifting through and compiling the surveys, the committee issued a thorough report, presenting it to delegates at Convention and putting forth two main recommendations. The first was that "clearly the diocese should be divided." The second recommendation, of how to divide the diocese, was not so clear. The committee first recommended a division using the Chesapeake Bay and placing the Eastern Shore churches in a new diocese. If that was not the wish of Convention, the Committee recommended a second division of the upper Eastern Shore, Baltimore and surrounding counties and Western Maryland in one diocese and the mid and lower Eastern Shore, Southern Maryland and Washington and surrounding counties in the other diocese. John Crosdale made it known that he favored only the former division and not the latter.[29]

The Convention on May 27, 1859 took up the recommendation of the committee. A series of amendments to stop or delay the vote were made and all were voted down. Then the question to divide the diocese and create a new diocese on the Eastern Shore was called. The tellers announced the results: clergy: 68 ayes, 28 nays; laity: 41 ayes, 40 nays. Bishop Whittingham announced that the resolution passed.

Then it was pointed out that one lay delegate had not had his vote heard and another had stepped out momentarily during the call of the roll, and those votes were added to the count. Both were in the negative. With those votes counted, the lay delegates failed to approve the resolution. The resolution failed to pass, and the Convention considered the matter dead. There was no more discussion. The efforts of John Crosdale and the other Eastern Shore Memorialists

[29] *Report of the Committee on the Proposed Division of the Diocese of Maryland, Made to the 76th Annual Convention of Said Diocese—1859, from the Journal of the Diocese of Maryland Convention,* Appendix, pp. 3-20.

had amounted to nothing.[30]

Later, it was learned that four delegates from the Eastern Shore had been detained and did not make the Convention in time to vote. Had they arrived in time, the Diocese of Easton most likely would have been organized on the eve of the Civil War. As it was, the Diocese was through talking about division. With Maryland under martial law in the next year and the Civil War begun, there was not even a Convention in 1860.

Eastern Shore Memorial, Reconsidered

The Civil War devastated many parishes and Bishop Whittingham's strong Union support alienated many of the churches in the diocese. Nevertheless, there was no strong effort to divide, but rather the mindset in the diocese was to survive. After the cessation of hostilities in 1865, an event occurred in the Episcopal Church that hadn't since 1838: a diocese divided. The Diocese of Pennsylvania divided the western third of its counties to form the Diocese of Pittsburgh, with the approval of the General Convention of that year. And pent up thoughts of division came once again to the forefront on the Eastern Shore.

An additional factor was the ill health of Bishop Whittingham. A fall had left him almost incapacitated a few years earlier and he had to curtail his visitation activities and attendance at conventions. Some parishes had not received a visit from the Bishop since before the war, especially on the Eastern Shore. The physical disability of the Bishop helped to raise the issue of division of the diocese once more.

Another invitation was made for Eastern Shore delegates to assemble once again in Christ Church, Cambridge on October 1866.[31] There a new more elaborate Memorial was drawn up and signed by 39 Eastern Shore delegates from all counties. The first signature was that of

[30] *Journal of the Diocese of Maryland Convention of 1859,* pp. 8-12.
[31] Date of Cambridge Convention referenced in a *Letter to Bishop Whittingham from Rev. Curtis, Oct. 24, 1866,* Diocese of Maryland Archives..

the Reverend Henry Mason, Rector of Christ Church, Easton, which came to be the site of the first Diocese of Easton Convention. The second signature was that of the longtime proponent of a separate diocese, the Reverend John Crosdale. The Memorial of 1866 said in part:

> In the progress of human events, it is unavoidable, that changes in the existing state of things will be required; and it then becomes a duty to contemplate the proposed change in the twofold relations of its legitimacy on the one hand, and its expediency, if legitimate, on the other. The episcopate, or sacerdotal office in its plenitude as ordained by Christ our Lord himself, is of divine; Dioceses are of human institution, and therefore subject to whatever changes the Church determines as meet, according to times and circumstances. But where necessity did not otherwise oblige, the multiplication of Diocese has been the law, as it has always resulted for the benefit of the church….It is not without appreciation of the importance of the subject, that the undersigned, present to this convention, their desire for the division of the Diocese of Maryland, by the creation of the Eastern Shore into a separate and distinct Diocese.[32]

The Eastern Shore delegates had learned from past mistakes. For the signatories to the Memorial they had good representation from the upper Eastern Shore as well as the mid and lower Shore. They provided more measured reasons for their actions which were similar to the speech given by Bishop Whittingham on the 1838 Diocese of New York division. And they alluded to the poor health of the Bishop and how they were prepared to undertake the task of building a diocese. This is what they took and distributed at the Convention of 1867.

<u>The Convention of 1867</u>

At the Convention of 1867, Bishop Whittingham was too ill to attend. He sent an address to the convention which was read to the delegates the first afternoon of Convention. In it, he addressed the topic of division of the diocese:

> Since the first year of my experience in office, I have been thoroughly satisfied that the Diocese of Maryland would never thrive as it might and ought to do, until divided into three or more. You can all bear me witness that such has been my talk with you, on all fit occasions, at any time within the last quarter of a century…Nothing could more gratify me that such action of the Convention as

[32] *Memorial: The Convention of the Prot. Ep. Church in Maryland, anno 1867,* Diocese of Maryland Archives.

> should divide the present jurisdiction and income of the Diocese into three, and set off, each with its equal share of the Diocesan Fund and its proper proportional allotment of territorial jurisdiction, two new Sees of Washington and Easton.[33]

It is interesting to note that Whittingham referred to the "See of Easton," which appears to be one of the first times that the name "Easton" was used for the Diocese. Easton was at the time the largest town on the Eastern Shore and was designated as the Eastern Shore capital in Maryland's 1776 Constitution, which is probably why Whittingham chose to speak of it as such. But the memorial only spoke of "the creation of the Eastern Shore into a separate and distinct Diocese," with no mention of Easton. Consideration of the actual name of the Diocese would come later.

On the second day of convention, May 30, 1867, the order of the day was the consideration of the memorial from the Eastern Shore. The memorial was read before the delegates by the Secretary of Convention. After the reading, the tellers interrupted to announce the results of the election of the Standing Committee. The top four vote getters from the Western Shore were announced and then the top three vote getters for the Eastern Shore were announced. On the Western Shore, the Reverend Doctor William Pinckney received the largest number of votes -- 142. On the Eastern Shore, the Reverend John Crosdale received the largest number -- 149. This was to be the last such election where the candidates for the Diocese of Maryland's Standing Committee were separated between the Western and Eastern Shores.

Then the Reverend Doctor Cleland Nelson, President of St. John's College in Annapolis, rose to move that "the consent of the Convention is hereby given to the erection of a new See, to consist of the Eastern Shore of the present Diocese of Maryland." A substitute motion was then made by Daniel Clarke, a lay delegate from St. Barnabas Church in Prince George's County, that the entire matter of dividing the diocese along the be referred to committee, which was defeated

[33] *Journal of the 84th Annual Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Maryland.* Baltimore: Diocese of Maryland Convention: 1867, pp. 42-44.

by voice vote.

Then the Convention floor was hushed at the suggestion of the Reverend W. G. Jackson who called for time for silent prayer. After all, what the delegates were called to do was to divide what had always been together, and after a civil war had been fought to preserve the union, they were asked to split their union into two. Only the Dioceses of New York and Pennsylvania had done such a thing. No doubt many called upon the Almighty to be with them in this momentous vote. The measure had been defeated once before – was the diocese as divided as it was in 1859? The signal was given and the ballots were cast by orders. The clergy vote was 79 to 16. The laity vote was 53 to 37. The motion carried and the convention recessed.[34] That evening, a motion was approved that "a committee be appointed to communicate to the Bishop of the Diocese the action of this morning of this House on the separation of the Eastern Shore of Maryland as a distinct Diocese, Ascension Day, 1867." One of those who went to the Bishop's residence to inform Whittingham of the division was John Crosdale. The Reverends Crosdale and Mason and lay delegates Barnet and Adkins were appointed as a committee to put together the organizing convention for the Diocese.[35] Thus, geography and how it had separated Marylanders on both shores of the Chesapeake, now separated the Diocese of Maryland and through this geographic factor the Diocese of Easton was born.

[34] The Convention decided to continue studying Whittingham's suggestion for a separate Diocese of Washington, and did not act on that division until the turn of the century.
[35] Ibid, p.16.

IV. Organizing the New Diocese: 1868-1885

What did it take to establish the Diocese of Easton? Not much. First, it took an act of the General Convention. John Crosdale, as a deputy from the Diocese of Maryland, introduced at the General Convention meeting in New York City the resolution for division before the House of Deputies on October 9, 1868. On October 12, the Committee on New Dioceses favorably reported out the resolution to the House of Deputies, urging adoption of the resolution "recognizing the union with the General Convention of the new Diocese…to take effect [upon the calling of a Convention for the purpose of establishing the diocese by the Bishop of the Diocese of Maryland] – the name of the said new Diocese to be determined by its Convention with the concurrence of the Bishop and Standing Committee of the Diocese of Maryland."[36] The House of Deputies promptly approved the resolution. Bishop Whittingham presented the resolution in the House of Bishops that same day and it was concurred with quickly. Thus the Diocese of Easton was recognized as a diocese in the Episcopal Church on October 12, 1868.

Besides the approval of General Convention, the Diocese received from the Diocese of Maryland a proportional share of the Maryland Episcopal Fund: $7,630. And Bishop Whittingham called for the Primary Convention of the Diocese of Easton to be held November 19 and 20, 1868 at Christ Church in Easton for the purpose of electing a Bishop and writing its constitution. After that, the Diocese of Easton was on its own.

At the Primary Convention in November 1868, the Reverend John Crosdale was elected President of the Convention. After the preliminary election of officers, the first motion was to name the Diocese. The Reverend Meyer Lewin, Rector of St. Peter's Church in Salisbury, moved that "…the Protestant Episcopal Church in this Diocese be known as the Diocese of Easton." Easton, which was designated as Maryland's Eastern Shore capital and was mentioned

[36] *Journal of the General Convention, 1868,* p. 38.

as the See by Bishop Whittingham a few months before, seemed the logical choice.

Immediately, the Reverend John Barton, Rector of St. Andrew's, Princess Anne, moved a substitute motion to name the diocese instead the Diocese of Princess Anne, providing a letter from St. Andrew's vestry offering St. Andrew's church as the cathedral and offering to provide a residence for the Bishop at their expense. The Convention voted down the substitute and approved the original name of the Diocese of Easton.[37] The word traveled fast, because on the beginning of the second day of convention a statement from Bishop Whittingham who was home in Baltimore was read before the delegates in which he acknowledged the new Diocese of Easton and wished it well.

On the second day of convention the delegates were tasked with the election of their first bishop. There were two candidates: William Pinckney, Rector of the Church of the Ascension in Washington and longtime member of the Diocese of Maryland Standing Committee. He was considered the leading cleric in Washington at the time and was well known by many on the Eastern Shore. The other candidate was Henry Lay, Missionary Bishop of Arkansas. Lay had been a chaplain in the Confederate Army. On the fourth ballot cast by the clergy Bishop Lay received the required 2/3 vote. But the laity could not muster the 2/3 needed to confirm Lay.[38] Later that day, the clergy again elected Bishop Lay with 14 out of 20 votes, the minimum needed. The laity voted 20 out of 28, which was enough to confirm the election. Bishop Lay was elected the first Bishop of Easton.[39] William Pinckney went on in 1870 to be elected the Diocese of Maryland's first Assistant Bishop and, with the failing health of Bishop Whittingham, took over most of his ecclesiastical responsibilities and assumed the diocesan bishopric upon

[37] *Journal of the Primary Convention of the Diocese of Easton*, 1868, pp. 18-19.
[38] At this Convention, a bishop was elected by clergy and then confirmed by the lay delegates. At the 1869 Convention the Constitution was changed so that both lay and clerical orders had to *concurrently* elect the bishop by 2/3 vote. That has been the case for all subsequent episcopal elections.
[39] *Journal of the Primary Convention of the Diocese of Easton*, pp. 24-27.

Whittingham's death in 1879.

What awaited Bishop Lay when he arrived in the Diocese of Easton? The statistics are startling. The parochial reports of 1869 listed total communicants at 1,357. There were only three parishes in which the number of communicants was over 100: Christ Church, Cambridge (152), St. Andrew's, Princess Anne (187), and Christ Church, Easton (110).[40] Half the churches had less than 50 communicants. Christ Church, Kent Island did not provide a number – in its place was written "woeful." The total population on the Eastern Shore in the 1870 census was 157,254; the total number of communicants in the Dioceses of Easton was less than one per cent of the population. West of the Chesapeake, the number of communicants was much larger, at 9,773, but that was still just 1.5% of the state population, excluding the Eastern Shore.

The Eastern Shore of Maryland was emerging from the hard times of the Civil War. It remained agricultural, with some large but many smaller farms, growing mostly grains. Lumbering continued to be a key industry, and Pocomoke in the south was a major port of departure for logging products. Some landowners had moved into towns and had become absentee landlords for farms in the country. At the beginning of the war the Black population was evenly split between slave and free. There had been some migration by blacks off the Eastern Shore, but there remained a significant unskilled labor class of blacks and whites living in poor conditions. Transportation was mainly by boat, with some steamship service. The Delaware Railroad had been constructed before the war and stretched from Wilmington south to Salisbury, six miles south of the Delaware-Maryland border. Local railroad companies were beginning to construct spurs from the Delaware Railroad into Eastern Shore towns.

[40] *Journal of the Diocese of Easton First Convention 1869*, appendix. Sum of number of communicants reported on parochial reports. For the two reports that were absent, Christ Church, K.I. and I.U., I used numbers from their 1870 reports to arrive at the total.

The Missionary Approach

The Bishop had an Episcopal Fund to draw his salary and living expenses, but some parishes were in arrears in their pledges to that fund. He had no residence (he rented lodgings in Easton for his entire episcopacy), no cathedral, no office, no staff. There was no money for missions or any programs. Of the 28 parishes, 22 had rectors. The Bishop in his first report to Convention identified four major problems that needed to be addressed: 1) the church is in decay: "temples in ruins," influence lost, and members are leaving for other churches; 2) elitism in the church – "the church has lost its hold on the workingman"; 3) Inadequate support of clergy; and 4) some clergy overworked.[41] All four problems I would argue stem from the factor of how the parishes were founded. First, since the parishes originally did not have to raise money, so they continued to have difficulty finding the funds for upkeep of buildings and payment of clergy. Second, they were controlled by the planter elite, and when the church was disenfranchised, working classes abandoned the churches for Methodism and Baptist churches, both of which made aggressive inroads in becoming the dominant denominations on the Eastern Shore by the beginning of the 19th Century. The Episcopal colonial churches had been *the* church and people had to come to them. There was no history of the churches going out to the people, and so the church membership continued to decline on average. Third, colonial churches were skeptical of clergy and did not feel obligated to raise pay, a trend which continued as the Diocese of Maryland developed. Thus, we can see the factor of how parishes were originally founded continue to exert influence almost 200 years later.

Until his election as Easton's first Bishop, Bishop Lay spent his entire Episcopal career as a missionary bishop. A Virginia native, he was elected Missionary Bishop of the Southwest in 1859 at General Convention. His territory included Arkansas, Oklahoma (known as the Indian

[41] From the Bishop's Address to Convention, *Journal of the First Convention of the Diocese of Easton, 1869,* p. 24.

Territory) and the territories of New Mexico and Arizona. When the Civil War broke out, his jurisdiction was included as an independent church of the Confederate dioceses. During the Civil War he was captured by Union troops in Huntsville, made civilian bishop of the Confederate Army defending Atlanta, and traveled back to Arkansas and then in a circuitous route through enemy lines to General Grant's headquarters, then to Petersburg where he reunited with his family and traveled to North Carolina. In the sacristy of St. Luke's Church in Lincolnton in the summer of 1865 he was arrested by Federal government detectives and taken to Washington where he was questioned and then exonerated. Then he went to Philadelphia for the 1865 General Convention, where he was renowned as one of the Confederacy's most famous wartime bishops. He and the Bishop of North Carolina not only rejoined the House of Bishops but were instrumental in encouraging the rest of the southern bishops to rejoin.[42]

The first convention of the Diocese of Easton was held in Christ Church, Easton on June 9 and 10, 1869, a little more than two years after the Maryland Convention that created the diocese. Bishop Lay used his missionary experience to organize the diocese. Perhaps he saw the Diocese of Easton in a similar state as his previous missionary diocese. It is ironic that one of the first places in America where Anglican services were conducted was now considered missionary territory. The Bishop announced that he would establish three convocations in the northern, middle and southern portions of the diocese. The use of the term "convocations" is telling, since it is the term used for clergy and lay delegates coming together in a missionary diocese.[43] Once a missionary diocese becomes a standard diocese, those delegates come together in convention, not convocation. In addition, many missionary dioceses divided up territory into

[42] *Civil War Veteran, Church Peacemaker: the Eastern Shore's First Episcopal Bishop*, Diocese of Easton Archives.
[43] See Article V, Section I of the Constitution of the Episcopal Church.

convocations.[44] While the Diocese of Easton never was modified by General Convention to be a missionary diocese, it appears that Bishop Lay decided to organize the diocese that way. He proposed that the convocations be led by a president (later changed to a Dean) from among the clergy in that convocation, and that they meet to encourage learning, support mission work, and collect money for missions. He also proposed and the convention approved the creation of a Missions Board which originally consisted of the chair, the Bishop, and the three Convocation presidents. Later a treasurer and two lay members were added. When the Missions Board met in December 2, 1869, it decided to establish one mission station in each convocation: Port Deposit in the north, Denton in the middle, and Coventry in the south.

The fact that Coventry was named a mission set an interesting precedent. Coventry had been one of the original parishes established in 1692. However, it had for many years been without a rector, and Crosdale, whose Pocomoke Parish bordered Coventry, had been assisting at worship services. The Missions Board, by naming a struggling parish as a mission was able to secure an additional stipend for Crosdale and name him as missionary clergy for a pre-existing parish. Thus the missionary strategy was employed not only to start new churches but also to assist those which had been struggling.

Blacks in the Diocese of Easton

The Board of Missions had also discussed but decided not to organize a mission to the black population on the Eastern Shore, Bishop Lay commenting, "Were it within our power we should establish without delay a mission to the colored people." The 1869 parochial reports listed a total of 4 colored communicants, which spoke to the image of the church as a more

[44] The Missionary Diocese of Texas for example organized itself in this manner.

white, elitist institution.[45] Blacks on the Eastern Shore averaged between 31 to 45% of the population in 1870, and many were unchurched. But in a deeply rooted racially-divided culture, Episcopal churches were unable to bring more than a handful of blacks into the church. Some churches had constructed slave balconies which continued to be the place for blacks in the church. Some isolated efforts were undertaken to educate black children,[46] but no diocesan-wide efforts ensued. Blacks tended to affiliate with black Methodist congregations or black Baptist churches. In 1870 the Bishop devoted more of his address to the "outreach to colored people," asking what "shall we do to extend the blessing of the church to this class of our population? Hold a service for them, now and then." A committee, formed at the Convention to respond to this question, reported that "the matter is hidden in the wisdom of God, and the church can only watch and await His good time to unfold the opportunity."[47] Bishop Lay again raised the issue in his 1876 Address at convention when he commented on confirming Blacks in his visitation:

> It has afforded me great pleasure on four of these occasions to confirm colored people. I note, also, whenever I officiate at St. Michael's, that the gallery is filled with such, as also when I have officiated at Wye and other places. My heart is greatly set upon making special efforts to reach this class of our population by services especially arranged for them. Our chief difficulty is in this, that every clergyman has his Sunday so fully occupied by the established parochial ministrations that it is difficult to add another service. Let us be careful to provide sittings for them in every church. Let us baptize their children in the congregation, and give them every encouragement to come with us to the Holy Communion. Let us give them every assurance, that while social distinctions are ordained of Providence and may not be abrogated, we acknowledge them to the full as brethren beloved in the Lord.[48]

Bishop Lay reflected the understanding and social norms of the day: of the need to reach blacks, but in a society where they are reached separately and not mixed with the white population.

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[45] *1869 Journal of the Convention of the Diocese of Easton,* p. 58. The practice of distinguishing black members from white members lingered in the parochial reports for a few more years.
[46] Pocomoke Parish in its 1887 parochial report indicated that "the first school for colored girls opened in Pocomoke at the initiation of a woman in the parish."
[47] *1870 Journal of the Convention of the Diocese of Easton,* p. 35.
[48] From the Bishop's Address, *1876 Journal of the Convention of the Diocese of Easton,* p. 21.

Such actions as restricting them to separate galleries and having separate services did not encourage blacks to join churches in the diocese, and the churches remained predominantly white.

Home for Friendless Children

In his 1870 Address to the Convention, the Bishop noted that he had been working with a Miss Anna M.L. Earle to establish the "Home for the Friendless Children of the Eastern Shore," an orphanage for boys and girls. The home was started with a $5,000 grant from the state. A farmhouse and farm just outside of Easton were acquired in 1871 with the hope that income from the farm would help support the home. Originally there were seven boys and girls in the home which became the first diocesan institution. The Bishop's role was as its patron and chaplain, and he encouraged parishes to donate goods and money to help support the home. By 1875 the farm had been sold and a building purchased in the town of Easton. At that time there were 18 girls; the one boy remaining had been adopted earlier in that year. The Home continued to grow and to receive appropriations from the state as well as contributions from many parishes in the diocese. The state recognized its purpose as "to provide a home for friendless white girls of the diocese of Easton. It gives a plain English education and instructions in sewing and housework. It is under the management of the P. E. Bishop of the diocese."[49] Although it received some sponsorship from parishes, it was the continued state appropriation and not diocesan support which enabled the Home to continue operating.

Economic Difficulties

It was becoming clear to Bishop Lay that it was up to him to create both structure and institutions to make the diocese more than just a collection of parishes. He relied upon his charismatic personality to bring many things into being, but he ran up against some structural

[49] *Maryland Manual, 1904*, Maryland Archives Online, p. 281.

and economic realities. While the country was rebounding economically from the Civil War, the Panic of 1873 combined with drought conditions on the Eastern Shore dealt a blow to his efforts to bring about new institutions in the Diocese. Financial problems were many. A report in 1874 from the Diocesan Committee on the State of the Church stated that "in many receipts we observe a falling off of several thousand dollars, owing, doubtless to the peculiar financial experiences of the past year."[50] In 1875 that same committee reported "this year has been one of severe trial to the farming community, if not of absolute disaster, and the total money contribution of the Diocese must be expected to reflect the general financial pressures."[51] Besides providing for the bishop's salary and housing, and providing for meeting expenses for an annual convention, no other financial obligations had been contemplated. Lay discovered in his visitations that many clergy were receiving such substandard payments that clergy with family were discouraged from coming to the Diocese. There was no fund to help retired or chronically ill clergy or the widows and orphans of deceased clergy. He established a Clergy Relief Fund, but it remained for many years woefully underfunded.

Many clergy were receiving payments once or twice a year – reminiscent of an agricultural economy in which one was paid once the harvest was in, and if the harvest was bad the money was less. Clergy compensation came in a lump sum from annual pew rents. That meant for many times of the year clergy were in debt and sometimes destitute. In 1871 the Bishop said that with the coming of a cash economy parishes needed to switch to more regular payments to their clergy. With the lack of adequate revenues in many churches to take care of obligations, the clergy and lay delegates to convention were in no mood to be generous to new diocesan initiatives. If a priest was hounded by debts, he was not as motivated to advocate for

[50] *1874 Journal of the Convention of the Diocese of Easton,* p. 54.
[51] *1875 Journal of the Convention of the Diocese of Easton,* p. 48.

his parish funding diocesan programs. In fact, for many the motivation behind having a Bishop of Easton was to help benefit parishes by regular visitations and attention to parish needs, not to drain them of their meager resources. So we see early on the tension between the many centers of the parishes and the one center of the Bishop.

Establishment of the Cathedral

In 1871the Bishop first advocated acquiring real estate in Easton for a Bishop residence, a Bishop's seat, and a school. A committee was formed to study the issue and was not heard from again.[52] In 1874, clearly impatient at the lack of action, the Bishop asked specifically for the construction of a Cathedral "as the Bishop's seat, the gathering place for clergy, the repository for a Diocesan library, and a place for theological examination of candidates for Holy Orders."[53] Once again, the Convention set up a committee to study the issue.

The Bishop in 1874 also had conversations with the Vestry of Christ Church, St. Peter's Parish, Easton about the establishment there of a Bishop's Chapel. Christ Church had considered itself the "mother church," the location of the first Convention and the church in the See of Easton. Yet a Cathedral was the Bishop's church and for Christ Church to play the role of Cathedral in the Diocese, Lay asserted that it would have to cede control to the Bishop. The Reverend Henry Davies, a Rector of Christ Church, in his recollections of the Bishop's dealings with the Vestry of Christ Church in a letter written for the 50th anniversary celebration of the Diocese, recalled that when it was explained to the Vestry that for Christ Church to become the cathedral "their organization must necessarily be dissolved, and that no compromise was possible, the idea was promptly and unanimously abandoned." Christ Church would not be the cathedral under those terms.

[52] *1871 Journal of the Convention of the Diocese of Easton,* p. 50.
[53] *1874 Journal of the Convention of the Diocese of Easton,* p. 42.

In 1875 the tension between parishes and the Bishop on the issue of the Cathedral reached an impasse. At the 1875 Convention, the Cathedral Committee, chaired by probably the most influential clergyman in the Diocese, John Crosdale, reported to the Diocesan Convention that the Committee did recommend the establishment of a Cathedral "as a good idea," but not now because of the "present condition of the Diocese, growing out of financial depression, renders it inexpedient at this time to carry it out." The delegates of Convention refused to take any action on the Bishop's request.

Bishop Lay was clearly not happy with this rebuke. The Diocese had once again refused to establish an episcopal center. And so, the Bishop took matters into his own hands. In the months after the June 1875 convention, Bishop Lay personally took up a collection for the establishment of a Cathedral, raising $1000, securing a site near the railroad tracks in Easton next to the Home for Friendless Children and putting the $1,000 toward the construction of a chapel on that site. He preached in the Easton railroad depot and signed up neighbors as the first members of the Cathedral chapter. In the June 1876 Convention, he reported these actions to the delegates and presented the names of the first members to the convention in a petition to establish the cathedral chapter as part of the Diocese of Easton. He told the Diocese that he would raise another $2,000 to go toward the construction of a chapel for the Cathedral chapter. The Convention gave its blessing (but no money) to the Bishop's work on the Cathedral.[54] At the 1877 Convention, "Trinity Cathedral" was formally admitted into union with the Convention. The first Cathedral Trustees were appointed by the Bishop and approved by the Convention delegates.

The Bishop organized the Cathedral as more of a second parish church in Easton, with its own congregation drawn from Easton residents, and brought in a priest as an Assistant Minister

[54] *1876 Journal of the Convention of the Diocese of Easton,* p. 23.

to care for the day to day needs of the Cathedral and nurture its growth. The Chapel for Trinity Cathedral – "Trinity Chapel" – was completed and opened for worship September 24, 1877. The Bishop saw this chapel as a mission, taking that chapel and also the chapels of Easton Point Mission and All Saints in St. Michael's Parish under his care By 1877 there were two Assistant Ministers listed with the Cathedral: the Rev. John V. Stryker and the Rev. W.Y. Beaven (Stryker is listed in the cathedral's 1878 parochial report as the Assistant Minister and Beaven as the 2nd Assistant Minister). The Cathedral chapter was set up to not rely on the Diocese for support. Its free pews relied upon faith offerings to support its work. In fact, it began to operate like other parishes, providing an annual parochial report and sending in payments for mission, convention, the Children's Home, and the clergy relief fund. Thus, the Bishop had his Cathedral, but rather than being one diocesan center funded by the Diocese for diocesan purposes, it became more like one of the various parish centers.

Better Times

At Bishop Lay's Address in 1876, the centennial anniversary of the United States, he seemed ready to move into better times. Commenting on the liturgy for the upcoming July 4th celebration given to all dioceses by the Presiding Bishop, Bishop Lay remarked:

> I hereby authorize for use on this extraordinary the Form of Service put forth by the agreement of the Presiding Bishop and others, or such portions of it as each clergyman may find convenient. This license does not include the specific 'Office or Service of Te Deum,' for the reason that I think it unnecessary to make mention of the wars and fightings of the days gone by. There is little satisfaction in the memories of ancient strifes. In the Church, at least, we may be content to revive no sad memories of the sad days when brethren, speaking the same language, had need to slaughter each other.

A former Confederate Bishop, he was content to leave the Civil War behind him. But he looked forward to the future, continuing, "The material improvement, the rare inventions, the progress

of intellectual culture on this Continent, is indeed something without a parallel in the history of the world. Thanks and adoration are due to Him who has given us all this wealth."[55]

Ten years after the founding of the Diocese saw the deaths in 1877-78 of some of the founding clergy of the Diocese, none more prominent than the Reverend John Crosdale. In his tribute to Crosdale, Bishop Lay called him the "Father of the Diocese," remarking that "John Crosdale loved the Diocese and believed in the Diocese and worked for the Diocese." The ranks of those clergy who were around before the establishment of the Diocese were growing thin. Fewer people remembered the past. Bishop Lay and the Diocese looked to the future. The late 19th century marked a period of better times economically on the Eastern Shore, as railroads enabled the Diocese to be better connected on land than ever before, and trains became an easier way to get around. On the Eastern Shore, orchards, fruit and vegetable production began to take off, and seafood packing plants began to be built. The railroads allowed shipment of produce and seafood to major markets in Philadelphia, Baltimore and beyond. As a result, congregations were finding the means by the 1880s to fix, refurbish and add adornments to their churches. St. Andrew's in Princess Anne, for example, had its colonial interior replaced with a more Anglo-Catholic design. Christ Church, Easton was rebuilt into a much larger, adorned structure during that time. Many churches reported donations of vestments, erection of steeples, and construction of new altars. Bishop Lay encouraged the abandonment of pew rentals and adoption of an envelope system for more regular collections.

Bishop Lay also used his office to condemn practices in the Diocese. Most notable is 1880 address where he attacked three issues of polity: 1)congregationalism; 2)mournful neglect of the poor, the ignorant, and the vicious; and 3)usurping of authority by vestries. On the first issue, he charged that congregationalism, while it is denied, is the practical rule of the church –

[55] Ibid, p. 22.

the sovereign unit is the parish, not the diocese. "The parish begrudges any expenditure outside of its own limits, and resists such levies as those for the Convention Fund, Missions General and Diocesan, Clergy Relief, church schools and the like as oppressive and unreasonable." On the second issue of neglect he observed that practically a few families of the better sort club together their pew rents and their contributions to "hire a clergyman for their proper needs. His time and talents belong to these who hire him. To them he must officiate morning and evening, however great the needs of the outlying parish." On the third issue he charged that "vestries are tempted to usurp the spiritual function which the law of Christ, his church, expressly confides to clergy."[56]

The Bishop was frustrated by the seeming autonomy of the parishes and their lack of obligation to supporting the Diocese. In his 1873 Address to Convention he decried the "spirit of narrow congregationalism," in which "the benefits of the church are confined within the limits of those who defray the expenses and claim all the services." He blamed the pew rent system: "pews and pew rent none than anything else fix the caste character upon us – the evil is chronic."[57]

He offered the example of the Methodists as a contrast: "Compare our church to the Methodists who do pay conference dues. I asked a Methodist what would happen if you don't pay? That would reduce a church's standing in the list of appointments, which affects who they get as a minister. As a consequence they have a great incentive to pay their dues."[58] No doubt the Bishop was impressed by the resources his Methodist counterparts had at their disposal. But the Methodist Churches on the Eastern Shore were founded by Francis Asbury and others who

[56] Bishop's Address, *1880 Journal of the Convention of the Diocese of Easton*, pp. 32-33.
[57] Bishop's Address, *1873 Journal of the Convention of the Diocese of Easton*, p. 32.
[58] Bishop's Address, *1880 Journal*, p. 40.

from the beginning exerted influence and authority from above.[59] The fact that the Episcopal parishes had been established and had operated for almost 200 years without a bishop on the Eastern Shore made their experience with church obligations different.

Bishop Lay also spoke out on many church issues of the day. In 1881 he reported that he denied licenses to marry people who were divorced and was distressed that they decided to leave the church. He opposed a system of Provinces for the Episcopal Church. He announced in 1881 that he had accepted the position of Vice President in the Church Temperance Society (he was against prohibition and sought this as a way of promoting moderation of drink). He spoke against "popular religion," arguing that as its main deficiency was its "comparative neglect of the post resurrection gospel," since it ended with the cross and resurrection and not the actions of the early church.[60] On the topic of science he put forth a lengthy address in 1884, taking into account the scientific discoveries of the day and concluding that "these speculations are not at war with the principles of our holy religion, but that they do rather illustrate and confirm them."[61]

During this period the Convention authorized the first Standing Committee on Christian Education in 1878 to begin to address the emerging Sunday School movement in the country; the Diocese received authority from the state to hold gifts and bequests in 1879; and the office of Chancellor of the Diocese was created in 1882. A resolution was adopted in 1884 to encourage the General Convention that year to consider advocating for the formation of one American Church in which all the denominations would come together under one national church. There was more of a sense of optimism in the church. The number of communicants in the Diocese in

[59] Delaware and the Eastern Shore of Maryland have been referred to as the "Garden of Methodism" and some of the earliest Methodist congregations are found there. For more information, see Frederick Norwood's *The Story of American Methodism,* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1974).
[60] From Bishop's Address, *1882 Journal of the Convention of the Diocese of Easton,* p. 24.
[61] From Bishop's Address, *1884 Journal of the Convention of the Diocese of Easton,* pp. 7-32.

1885 had risen to 2,186, a 60% increase since the founding of the diocese almost 20 years prior.

Bishop Lay had gained some fame in the church as a lecturer and writer, having written three books and many articles. In the spring of 1885 he traveled to New York City to give the Annual Paddock Lecture at the General Theological Seminary. It was during that trip that he was "stricken with angina pectoris" and came back to the diocese where he was never able to recover and died in Baltimore on September 17, 1885. He was 62 years old.

The Right Reverend Henry Champlain Lay is remembered as the Diocese's first Bishop and one who provided the first organization of the Diocese. He based his organizational model on that of a missionary diocese. This made sense given the geographic challenges, a small number of communicants and limited resources. But he also had to contend with the factor of independent parochial centers which challenged his ability to establish one center in the Diocese. He did establish a Cathedral, but it was limited in its influence and contribution to the Diocese. It was perhaps his personality, intellect and caring for his flock that more than anything united the parishes in the Diocese.

V. The Struggle with Urbanization: 1885-1920

While conditions were improving on the Eastern Shore, it still remained a place of small towns and farms, almost forgotten in time. The real growth in the state was in and around Baltimore. The Civil War had brought more manufacturing contracts to Baltimore and after the war increased industrialization brought a massive influx of population into Baltimore and other American cities. Between 1870 and 1900, the population of metropolitan Baltimore doubled to 900,000. The entire population of the Eastern Shore in 1900 stood at 196,000 – Baltimore by 1900 had 2 ½ times the population of the entire Eastern Shore. What is remarkable is that of the 126,000 newcomers to Baltimore, only 12,000 were not native. And of the remaining 124,000 that came to Baltimore, 70% were from other parts of Maryland. Rather alone among American cities in the late 19th century, Baltimore increased its population at the expense of its state.[62]

The Episcopal Church by the late 19th Century was also becoming known as an urban church. Episcopalians by 1880 favored the city three to one.[63] That meant for every three Episcopalians in the city, there was one in the country. In fact, the Diocese of Maryland had seen tremendous growth in the Baltimore area. The U.S. Census in 1880 reported the population in Baltimore itself was 332,313. The largest town on the Eastern Shore in 1880 by comparison was Easton at 3,005 – less than 1% of the population of Baltimore. The only other Eastern Shore towns with populations above 2,000 were Chestertown, Cambridge and Salisbury. None of these towns qualified as urban areas in the 1880 census.[64] For dioceses in the Episcopal Church in the late 19th century, growth had come in their urban centers. The Diocese of Easton had no urban centers and as such experienced no such growth. Urbanization was benefiting most dioceses, but the Diocese of Easton experienced adverse effects upon membership and resources.

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[62] Brugger, p. 313.
[63] Frederick Norwood, *The Story of American Methodism*, p. 254.
[64] Bureau of the Census, *Statistics of the Population of the United States at the Tenth Census, Table III*, p. 205.

Urbanization of the Episcopal Church did affect the Diocese in other aspects however. What it did bring to the Diocese were the challenges of new issues and ways of organizing that were being worked out in the urban churches of American cities.

Finding a Bishop

The death of Bishop Lay brought forth to the fore some issues that had been languishing through benign neglect: the lack of a Bishop's Residence, the state of the Cathedral, and the financial situation of some weak parishes and low balances of some diocesan funds. On November 18 a special memorial service was held for Bishop Lay in Christ Church, Easton. Immediately afterwards a Special Convention was convened in the church. Its first order of business was to move ahead with plans to raise money and purchase a Bishop's Residence. It was hoped that having this underway would be an inducement to attract a candidate for the episcopacy. Second, the Convention turned to electing the second bishop of Easton. The Reverend George Williamson Smith, the President of Trinity College, Hartford, was elected on the third ballot. He telegrammed and asked for two weeks to consider the offer. He then declined.

The electors gathered again on December 16, 1885 in the courthouse in Cambridge for an "Adjourned Session" and after 11 ballots well into the evening had no election. The Convention decided to appoint a 12 member Nominating Committee, six lay and six clergy, to decide. However, the committee could not decide on any of the candidates put forth at the Adjourned Session and so agreed on a new name, the Reverend Chauncey C. Williams, Rector of St. Paul's, Augusta, Georgia, who was elected on the first ballot. On February 17, 1886 he sent a letter to the Standing Committee, refusing the position.

At the annual Convention on June 2 and 3, 1886 at Trinity Church, Elkton, the

Convention elected the Reverend Kinlock Neslon bishop on the second ballot. On June 16 the Standing Committee received a letter from Nelson turning down the position. The Convention then held another "Adjourned Session" at St. Peter's Church in Salisbury on August 26, 1886. At that session, the Reverend Alexander I. Drysdale, Rector of Christ Church, New Orleans, was elected on the third ballot. But before Drysdale could receive and respond to his election, he was tragically struck dead. So then at another Special Convention at St. Paul's Church in Centerville on September 29, 1886, the Right Reverend John Wingfield, Missionary Bishop of Northern California, was nominated after the second ballot and elected on the fifth ballot. After the Convention had returned home, the Standing Committee received a letter from Bishop Wingfield on October 19 declining the position. And so it went. The Standing Committee was wearying of being the ecclesiastical authority in the Diocese and the Diocese was concerned about the absence of a bishop. Bishops from neighboring dioceses were assisting with visitations but diocesan work was suffering.

At the annual Convention of 1887 held at Emmanuel Church in Chestertown on June 1, the Convention elected a Reverend Lindsay, Rector of St. John's Church, Georgetown, on the second ballot. On June 2 while the Convention was still in session, Lindsay telegrammed the convention declining the offer. It was then that the name of the Reverend William Forbes Adams, the Retired Missionary Bishop of New Mexico and Arizona, was placed before the convention. He was elected on the first ballot, and to the joy and relief of the Convention and the Diocese, he accepted the position.

Why did it take seven elections and six Convention meetings to elect the Second Bishop of Easton? Perhaps it lies partly in the lack of the Diocese's episcopal resources and also the fact that the Diocese of Easton, without any urban areas, held less promise for growth. Even though

Bishop Lay had organized the Diocese of Easton as a missionary diocese, in fact, most missionary dioceses in the West were gaining population and establishing at least one urban area. The Diocese of Easton was not. Perhaps this struggle to find a Chief Pastor for their Diocese was a sobering experience for the lay and clergy leaders of the Diocese.

William Forbes Adams was born in Enniskillen, Ireland on January 3, 1833 and immigrated to the United States with his family, growing up in Kentucky and Mississippi. He studied law and was admitted to the Mississippi Bar in 1854, but then turned his attention to the church and studied theology under the Bishop of Louisiana. Ordained a priest in the Diocese of Louisiana where he served for many years, he was elected and consecrated the Second Missionary Bishop of the Missionary Diocese of New Mexico and Arizona on January 17, 1875. He resigned from that position in 1877, due to a battle with yellow fever. In 1879 he was made rector of Holy Trinity Church, Vicksburg, where he served until being elected Bishop of Easton.[65]

Bishop Adams, in his first Address to Convention on June 6, 1888, expressed deep concern about the low pay of clergy and the high rate of clergy vacancies, and asserted that the two were linked, and adding that such clergy vacancies are a burden to the bishop. He expressed some befuddlement at the convocation system, and noted that turnouts at the convocation meetings could be improved by more advanced publication. While all the money had been raised for a Bishop's Residence and Library, one had not yet been secured. By 1891 the residence was completed and ready for the Bishop, but the library was put on hold. Finally, the Bishop found that the cathedral chapel was 12 years old and in disrepair. It was noted that "the

[65] Compiled from: a transcription of an article in the Salisbury Advertiser, *Bishop Adams Funeral Was Largely Attended*, March 13, 1920 and a transcription of an article in the Baltimore Evening Sun, *Bishop W.F. Adams, of Easton, Dead*, March 5, 1920, from the Archives of the Diocese of Easton; and from *Historical Facts of the Episcopal Church in Arizona*, Website of the Episcopal Diocese of Arizona (www.episcopal-az.org), accessed 3/30/07.

congregation" of the cathedral wanted to erect a "Lay Memorial Church" in memory of the First Bishop of Easton. What was not noted in his first Address but what confronted him throughout his episcopacy from 1887 to 1920 were two trends born of urbanization: the depopulation of the Eastern Shore toward Baltimore and other cities; and the importation of civic-inspired groups, associations, and causes into the church.

Depopulation

The statistics are telling. From 1880 to 1920, the population of Maryland grew by a rate of 55%, from 934,000 to 1.45 million. Baltimore alone grew by 120%. Population in the Eastern Shore Counties grew by just 8.6% in that period, and by the 1910s all counties with the exception of Wicomico were experiencing declining populations. By 1920, Baltimore City contained half the population of the State of Maryland. The Eastern Shore by 1920 contained just 6.7% of Maryland's population. With the exception of Salisbury, which saw modest growth throughout this period, all other Eastern Shore towns were either at a standstill or were losing population.

This was reflected in church growth in the Diocese. The number of communicants continued to rise from 1880 to 1910, at a rate during this period of 35% to a peak of 3,265. However, by 1920, the number of communicants had declined by 13% to 2,895. There is a lag time in this decline from the population, owing perhaps to older church members who did not emigrate off the Eastern Shore. The church population loss however was seen most strikingly in the loss of younger members of the parish.

Parochial reports of this period describe the exodus. Here is a typical description of the situation from the 1892 report from Somerset Parish:

> We are losing heavily from our number by removals from the parish. Young men who should be the future strength and helpers of this Parish are forced to seek

> employment elsewhere. Because of this we find ourselves barely able to hold our own. There is no immigration to make up for the heavy emigration.[66]

The financial Panic of 1893 affected the stock market and the banking system and sent agricultural markets into a downturn. Such financial woes affected contributions as well as membership. Here is a description from the 1893 report from St. Michael's Parish:

> The great losses by removals and the depression in the price of farm products have greatly reduced the finances of our Parish. There is abundant material for future growth, and this should be one of the strongest parishes in the Diocese, and doubtless will be, as soon as "times get better."[67]

By the turn of the century, there was the realization that this emigration to urban areas was a fact of life. The Diocese of Easton, which had been established in a more agricultural era in which it shared many similarities with other dioceses, now found itself without an urban center, without growth experienced in other dioceses. It was decidedly different from most other dioceses. Bishop Adams, in his 1898 Address to Convention, sought to bring out this difference:

> Ours is a strictly agricultural diocese. We have here no great and populous cities, no stupendous fortunes, no large factories, none of the eager rush and mad turmoil of the world's traffic and insane race for wealth, for pleasure and for power. A quiet home life is ours, in the midst of fields, of woods, and of glad abounding waters. No foul and sodden smoke, vomiting from countless chimneys, dims the splendor of our rising sun, nor hides the mild effulgent glory of its going down.[68]

In response to urbanization outside the boundaries of the Diocese, there evolved a view in the Diocese concerning the role it played in the larger church. In the 1908 Report of the Committee on the State of the Church, the Committee noted that the increase in the number of communicants over the previous ten years had been about 15%, which was modest at best. However, the Committee defended this by explaining:

> We would suggest that, when it is remembered that we are the feeders of the Church in the cities all over this country, to which so many of our best members

[66] *Parish Report/Somerset Parish, 1892 Journal of the Convention of the Diocese of Easton,* p. 64.
[67] *Parish Report/St. Michael's Parish, 1893 Journal of the Convention of the Diocese of Easton,* p. 79.
[68] *Bishop's Address, 1898 Journal of the Convention of the Diocese of Easton,* pp. 26-27.

> emigrate, we may be thankful that we are working for the Holy Catholic Church, and that whether our local growth seems small or great makes no real difference.[69]

The urbanization of America and the toll it took on membership in the Diocese of Easton has not only been accepted but the role of the Diocese in this has been rationalized. As part of the larger church, many in the Diocese came to see its role as raising and educating Episcopalians who leave the Eastern Shore, and who become participating members of other churches in other Dioceses. It is contributing to the vitality of the Church, even though it is struggling as a Diocese.

As second decade of the 1900s went on, this explanation was little comfort to some. As the Southern Convocation Report of 1915 stated, "It was deplored that the Diocese is not making progress that might be expected of it; that while the church generally in this country has doubled the number of its communicants in the last 25 years, the Diocese of Easton shows little if any increase in this direction in the same time period."[70] That same year in the Committee on the State of the Church admitted that "this Diocese loses more from its membership than any other diocese in the land. Our parishes are sending to other parishes remote from us large numbers of communicants." But the Committee is upbeat: "We have no cause for depression. Our parishes are doing their God-given work, although the result of that work is not all evident at home."[71]

Urbanization denied growth to the Diocese, especially compared to dioceses with urban areas. Of course not all dioceses with urban areas experienced phenomenal growth, but the potential was there, compared to the Diocese of Easton, where the potential was siphoned off to neighboring dioceses. But it also caused the Diocese to reflect upon itself as an "agricultural diocese," and to come to terms with that characterization. Its churches could be seen as "country

[69] *1908 Journal of the Convention of the Diocese of Easton,* p. 51.
[70] *1915 Journal of the Convention of the Diocese of Easton,* p. 44.
[71] Ibid., p. 47.

churches" or "rural churches" even if they were in the center of towns – towns that could be argued were themselves urban centers in colonial times. Because there was no dominant town on the Eastern Shore like Baltimore or Washington on the Western Shore, the many centers model rather than the one center model continued to hold. Easton was not a metropolis that other towns on the Eastern Shore, like Elkton, Chestertown, Cambridge or Salisbury would orbit. If anything, it was one town among many. This demographic played out in parishes as well, where no one parish dominated others but larger and smaller parishes existed in each convocation. All paled in comparison to the large churches in nearby Baltimore, Washington, and Philadelphia.

Urban organizations

Another aspect that urbanization brought to the Diocese of Easton which had a lasting impact were the challenges of new issues and ways of organizing that were being worked out in the urban churches of American cities. The phenomenon of urbanization in America in the late 19th and early 20th centuries was a period of demographic destabilization. The need for labor in America's growing industrial cities, including Baltimore, resulting in mass migrations from Europe and Asia and also from the South and other rural areas of the country. People who had never lived in a city before confronted housing, sanitary, and safety issues. The old models of gathering at the familiar country church or town hall meeting did not exist in these industrial cities. Robert Putnam, in his book *Bowling Alone*, points out that many new civic organizations came into existence to create order and better conditions in America's cities. The Episcopal Church as well saw the creation of associations and groups to both promote fellowship and to offer service.

In 1872 the Woman's Auxiliary to the Board of Missions was created and grew through efforts of the Emery sisters in New York City: Mary Abbot Emery Twing, Julia Chester Emery

and Margaret Theresa Emery. This was the precursor to today's Episcopal Church Women (ECW). Their philosophy was to organize women in parishes to help support the church's Board of Missions. Julie Emery herself visited the Diocese of Easton. As a result, many Women's Auxiliary groups were established in parishes in the Diocese and they were successful in raising funds for mission. So successful were they that Bishop Adams commented that with clergy compensation so low and parishes in arrears that the parish should turn to their woman's auxiliary group for leadership to raise funds.

In addition, a women's organization, started in New York City to help raise funds for the Clergy Relief Fund called the Church League of the Baptized, by the 1900s had several chapters and a diocesan coordinator in Easton. The Daughters of the King, a women's lay order established in 1885 as an outgrowth from a young women's Sunday school class in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in New York City also counted many chapters in the Diocese. Two other organizations for women were also created in the 1880's and soon after had a presence in the Diocese: the Girls Friendly Society and the Church Periodical Club.[72] Not to be outdone by the women, by the early 1900s a number of parishes also had local chapters of the Brotherhood of St. Andrew.

Besides helping to carry out the missionary work of the church, these organizations, although originating in the cities, were adapted by the rural parishes of the Diocese of Easton and became ways to organize the laity. In an era where clubs of various sizes and causes were springing up on the American landscape, belonging to one or more of these groups seemed a natural ambition. The preponderance of these groups set up an interesting dynamic. Until the early 1900s, the authority and power in the church rested with the clergy and the vestry. A clergy person was an ordained man, most likely white, under the authority of the bishop and

[72] Robert Prichard, *A History of the Episcopal Church*, pp. 175-178.

canons of the church. A vestry person was defined under the Maryland State Vestry Act. During these times you could run for election in the vestry if you were a white male citizen of the State of Maryland, above 21 years, residing in the parish for at least 6 months, on the books of the church for at least one month, and baptized and confirmed or subscribing to a declaration of belief.[73] In addition, tradition in many parishes had vestry seats reserved for members of certain longstanding families. But through these new organizations, new voices were heard.

Clericalism was characteristic of the Diocese as it emerged into the 20th Century. Certain areas of authority were off limits to the laity. But efforts in urban areas to allow more lay involvement permeated into the Diocese. For example, the Diocese of Easton in 1900 had the distinction of being one of only three dioceses in the country who did not allow lay members on the Standing Committee.[74] In 1908 the issue of lay representation on the Standing Committee was raised at Convention and the lay members of the Constitutions and Canons Committee were asked to investigate. In 1909 Henry L.D. Stanford of St. Andrews, Princess Anne, gave the report in which he stated "he has been unable to discover any general demand among the laity in the Diocese for such [lay] representation and therefore reports the said resolution unfavorably."[75] But that did not end the matter. A resolution for lay representation was presented at the 1910 Convention, but was laid on the table and not acted upon. In 1911 another resolution was put forward and voted on. The results in orders were Clergy: 10aye, 11nay; Lay: 10aye, 12 nay. The motion lost, but the vote showed considerable division. In 1912 the resolution to allow lay representation was again offered and this time it passed with a solid margin. Because the resolution would change the constitution it required another vote a year later. At the 1913 Convention the resolution again passed with the results: Clergy: 17 aye, 4 nay; Lay 19 aye, 3

[73] *1895 Journal of the Convention of the Diocese of Easton,* p. 35.
[74] The Dioceses of Connecticut and Maryland were the other two.
[75] *1909 Journal of the Convention of the Diocese of Easton,* p 21.

nay. So after 45 years the Diocese allowed 3 lay members along with 3 clergy members on the Standing Committee.

A lay leader who emerged through these lay organizations was Elizabeth Whaley Keas, who became the President of the Diocese's chapter of Women's Auxiliary in 1912. Keas worked tirelessly to build up the chapter and start groups in every parish at a time when women's suffrage was being debated across the country. She was also instrumental in having the Diocese of Easton to join what was then known as the Province of Washington and what is now Province III of the Episcopal Church. Although she held no authority in the Diocese itself, because of her organization and leadership skills, she wielded considerable power. Her role in the Diocese joining Province III is instructive.

The Province system was set up with the proviso that each diocese would decide whether or not to join. The Diocese of Easton, after considerable debate in Convention in 1914 decided to take no action on the question and so did not become a member. Later that year, Elizabeth Whaley Keas was denied seating at the Province III meeting of the Women's Auxiliary. The following year at the Diocesan Convention held at St. Paul's, Centerville on June 1, 1915, a resolution to join Province III was again introduced. Because women were not allowed to be delegates to the Diocesan Convention in 1915 and Keas was unable to speak before the delegates on the resolution, she delivered a "Memorial from the Women's Auxiliary" which was approved at the Women's Auxiliary's annual meeting at St. Andrew's, Princess Anne, the previous October, and asked that it be read during debate on the resolution. It said in part:

> It is a humiliation to be disbarred from taking our rightful place among the other diocesan branches of the Woman's Auxiliary of the Province of Washington. We desire and we respectfully and earnestly petition your honorable body to give us, women of the Diocese of Easton, the privilege of cooperation in this added opportunity for service in the Church of God.

After the reading of the Memorial on the floor of Convention, the motion was approved and the Diocese joined Province III.

In 1916 Keas was allowed to address the Convention and she complained that the women's group was being locked out of some parishes. She argued for a group in every parish, saying "the Rector is naturally the leader and often the determining factor in enlisting the interest of the women of the parish in the missionary motive. We ask your help therefore to arouse the unawakened element in the Diocese." The Convention "heartily endorsed" the suggestion of a group in every parish. Keas continued to lead the organization into the 1920s and under her leadership it now had a voice that was listened to at the diocesan level.

The laity of the Diocese of Easton through involvement in the various groups and causes was linking with laity in other dioceses that had similar concerns. The Diocese was no longer just connected to the larger church through its bishop and deputies to General Convention, but through these other organizations as well. They brought new ways of organizing, raising money, and viewing issues. They also provided leadership opportunities to lay members in an unprecedented fashion. I would argue that the changes brought about by urbanization helped spawn these groups, which affected various parishes and the Diocese itself. Thus urbanization, while it adversely affected membership and resources also ushered in more lay involvement and more organizations into the church.

War and Attrition

The Convention of 1918 was the second time that the Diocese of Easton had met in its short history during war. In 1898 during the Spanish-American War the Convention passed a resolution which said "While we regret the failure of those [diplomatic] efforts …we now pray that this government may be victorious in all its battles and prosperous in all its undertakings for

the advancement of civilization and the amelioration of the race."[76] It was a resolution in the imperialistic spirit of the day, when America was prosperous and knew no bounds.

In 1918, which marked the 50th Anniversary of the Diocese, Bishop Adams, now elderly and in failing health, remarked in his Address to Convention, "We meet today under circumstances of peculiar stress and trial…The present moments, with their dread apprehension, kindle a flame of recollection, and all the graves of memory give up their dead," referring to "the almost forgotten experience of 57 years ago" – the Civil War. The Diocese was experiencing many challenges during World War I – the loss of loved ones on the battlefield and worry over the safety of others, the arrival back of the wounded, the unpredictability of the outcome, and the emptying out of towns and the countryside by people drawn to wartime production in the cities. This was a war that affected Episcopalians on the Eastern Shore more than any other war since the Civil War. Bishop Adams's had experienced both. The Diocese of Easton had been born in the aftermath of the Civil War. What awaited it after World War I?

By 1920 the total number of communicants declined by 13% from ten years before, to 2,895. This would be the worst 10 year loss suffered by the Diocese in its entire history from its founding until the present day, much of it happening under the shadow of the war. A resolution passed in 1918 recognized the insufficient supply of clergy, the lack of candidates for Holy Orders and the insufficient funds to pay clergy due to the war effort and suggested yoking parishes and finding ways to support those churches in dire distress.

The Diocese was also very concerned about the drop off in attendance by youth in Sunday school and at worship services. The Committee on the State of the Church in 1915 urged "our rectors to emphasize in their parishes the duty of parents to require their children to accompany them to church…We note with sorrow and increasing alarm that many of our

[76] *1898 Journal of the Diocese of Easton*, pp. 25-26.

children are becoming alien to the church because of the neglect of this duty on the part of many parents."[77] The Dean of the Northern Convocation in 1919 expressed his concern about the fate of colonial churches:

> One of the grave questions before this and future conventions is to decide what to do with and for our old colonial churches (especially those that are located in the country), where they are far removed from our own people and surrounded by a people who have no interest in them and whose attitude toward them is that of perfect indifference or positive antagonism. They are rapidly becoming mere relics of antiquity. Their glory is departing from them.[78]

Was the crumbling state of colonial churches an apt metaphor to the fate faced by the Diocese of Easton?

On March 5, 1920, Bishop Adams died at the Bishop's Residence in Easton. At that time he was the oldest active Bishop in the Episcopal Church. During his tenure, the Diocese had both grown and suffered. The Eastern Shore when he began his episcopacy was connected by railroads and steamships; it now had modern highways and bridges running up and down the counties and connecting all the parishes. Horses had been replaced by automobiles. Some churches once brimming with members and activities were shells of their former selves. A few churches were growing, but a majority of the Diocesan churches were considered "missions" and receiving some support from the Diocesan Board of Missions. The war was over and prosperity was returning. But would that reach the Diocese of Easton as well?

The Standing Committee was faced with a critical decision. A letter had been received on March 22, 1920 from the Bishop of Delaware, extending an invitation from the Standing Committee of the Diocese of Delaware to Easton's Standing Committee "to confer with him, and possibly Bishop Gailor, president of the Executive Council, on the question of a merger of the two dioceses, Delaware and Easton." The Standing Committee considered the request and

[77] *1915 Journal of the Convention of the Diocese of Easton,* p. 48.
[78] *1919 Journal of the Convention of the Diocese of Easton,* p.32.

decided by majority vote to respond negatively to the request, writing in part, "there has no such sentiment developed in this diocese looking to a merger as would justify our taking part in such a conference as has been so courteously suggested in advance of a meeting of the convention in this diocese."[79] The Committee thought that would end the matter. But it didn't.

A Special Convention was called on April 20, 1920 for the election of the Third Bishop of Easton. It was to be held at Trinity Cathedral, the first time the electing convention would meet in the Cathedral. At the Convention, before the vote on the next bishop could be held however, a resolution was brought forward to require the Standing Committee to meet with the Standing Committee of the Diocese of Delaware to discuss the union of the two dioceses prior to the May Convention of the Diocese of Delaware and to report to the Diocese the results of that meeting prior to the annual Diocesan Convention in June. The resolution passed with a vote of 21 to 14. A meeting of the two dioceses would have to take place after all.

The Convention then proceeded to the election. But after 16 ballots, there was no election, and the Convention adjourned. The Standing Committee was then obliged to meet with its counterpart in Delaware with no Bishop of Easton.

On May 6, 1920 at Christ Church, Easton, both Standing Committees met. The Delaware position was laid out and discussion ensued. A proposal to have the question of union studied by a joint commission was voted down. In the end, both Standing Committees issued a statement which concluded:

> We…have given careful consideration to the arguments urged in favor of said merger and acknowledged their force from the economic standpoint. Certain obstacles of a nature not easily defined, however, seem to be at present insurmountable, and we can not feel that we are justified, under existing conditions, in making definite recommendations to our respective conventions on the subject."[80]

[79] *1920 Journal of the Convention of the Diocese of Easton,* p. 28.
[80] Ibid, p. 29.

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The phrase “acknowledged their force from the economic standpoint” is telling. The financial condition of the Diocese of Easton was such that merging with Delaware which had a thriving urban area of Wilmington and vibrant war-rich industries such as the DuPont Corporation (and the DuPont family were Episcopalian and supportive of the diocese) could help the struggling Diocese. But what was the price? Would they have to become part of the Diocese of Delaware and lose their identification as the Diocese of Easton, for which such leaders as the Reverend John Crosdale had fought for many years to give the Diocese? How different would Wilmington be from the battles they had with the See in Baltimore? Perhaps these were some of the questions in the minds of the Standing Committee The record does not tell us what they were thinking, only how they acted.

Both Standing Committees reported to their Conventions. Delaware took no further action. Neither did Easton’s Convention. Instead, the Convention met in June in St. Andrew’s Sudlersville where on the 12th ballot the members elected the Reverend George William Davenport of the Third Bishop of Easton.

VI. The Diocese of Easton Comes into Its Own: 1920-1931

George Davenport revitalized the Diocese of Easton. From the beginning, he did things differently. He was the first bishop consecrated in the Diocese; the two prior bishops having already been consecrated missionary bishops before being called to the Diocese. He was also the first bishop installed in Trinity Cathedral, the structure – "the Lay Memorial Church" – having been completed in 1891, a few years after the installation of Bishop Adams. Thus, Davenport's consecration and installation at the Cathedral on September 15, 1920 was a new thing, and was attended by clergy and laity from every parish in the Diocese. He however was not new to the Diocese, being the son of a former rector of St. Luke's, Church Hill, and spending many years of his childhood growing up in Queen Anne's County. Davenport came to the position knowing a thing or two about the Eastern Shore.

Bishop Davenport understood well how the factors of the establishment of parishes, geography and urbanization formed the Diocese of Easton. He knew that to take the Diocese from many centers to one diocesan center was going to take some reorganization, restructuring, and the introduction of new diocesan institutions. He was helped by a growing economy and a rising population on the Eastern Shore in the 1920s and Davenport wasted no time in getting to work.

Diocesan Executive Council

Davenport was greatly concerned about the proliferation of various committees, boards and groups, which had grown organically and had been operating in the Diocese in a loose and often independent manner. Taking his cue from the national church, which had brought many of the church's functions under an Executive Council chaired by the Presiding Bishop, Davenport argued that the same should be done in the Diocese of Easton. At the May 1921 Convention

meeting at St. Paul's in Berlin,[81] the Convention approved his plan for a Diocesan Executive Council. Under this system, diocesan functions would come under various departments. The Board of Missions for example would be the Department of Missions. Other Departments in the original Executive Council were the Department of Religious Education, the Department of Christian Social Services, the Department of Finance and the Department of Publications. The Council would have four members, two lay and two clergy, appointed by the Bishop and four members, two lay and two clergy, elected at Convention. The Bishop would chair the Council. This move by Davenport helped to professionalize these functions, aided in communication between the various diocesan functions, and made it easier and more efficient to fund these efforts. Rather than each area having to beg for funds, the Bishop consolidated these programs into one diocesan budget, requiring a single assessment from the parishes and a central way of accounting for expenses. He was bringing sensible corporate management practices to the Diocese for the first time.

Davenport by the Convention of 1921 had also hired the Reverend Alward Chamberlain, who was previously the Dean of the Cathedral in Boise, to be the Diocesan Missionary. He would be responsible for coordinating the diocesan mission churches and to look at evangelism in the Diocese to help increase membership. The idea of such a position was raised six years before but Bishop Adams did not pursue it.

Astutely, Davenport looked for opportunities to soothe relations between his Diocese and the Diocese of Delaware. His efforts paid off with the establishment beginning in the summer of 1921 of a Peninsula Summer School in Ocean City. It was a highly successful one week course for teachers and clergy on religious education prepared by a joint committee of both dioceses. It

[81] The Convention had agreed the year before to change the time of its conventions to the first week of May rather than the first week in June.

continued for many years in both Ocean City and Rehobeth Beach, Delaware.

Cathedral Reform

The Cathedral was of special concern to Davenport. His vision for the Cathedral was one where "the center of our Diocesan life may be more and more a sanctuary of prayer, life and service." He was concerned with the parochial character of the institution and advocated a new direction. Upon his request the Convention approved a change in the preamble of the Cathedral Constitution. It now defined the threefold purposes of the Cathedral as: 1) a house of prayer for all people; 2) the Bishop's Church; and 3) the people's church of the Diocese, maintaining and developing under the pastoral direction of the Bishop the fourfold fields of worship, missions, education and service. The preamble also spelled out that "the work of the Cathedral is not to be that of a Parish Church, because its sphere is above and beyond that of a parish. So, far from interfering with parochial life, it must be a help and inspiration to all the parishes of the Diocese." Further, the new preamble claimed that "any member of the Diocese, by virtue of membership in the parish, should be a member of the Cathedral."[82] Bishop Davenport at the 1921 Convention also proposed construction of a Diocesan House containing a library, offices and committee rooms on the Cathedral property.

Finally, in his first year he also redefined the convocation system. He said that each of the three convocations would consist of every clergyman in the area plus lay representatives of the various organizations of each parish that each parish might elect to send. This is testimony to the importance such lay organizations had gained in the church that Davenport felt moved to make them part of this system. Previously the meetings had been primarily for clergy, with some events open to lay participation. Davenport's reorganization was a clever way to bring forth the

[82] *1921 Journal of the Convention of the Diocese of Easton,* p. 141.

ordained and lay leaders of a parish with others in the area. He required two meetings a year, as scheduled by each convocation dean.

These changes had an exhilarating effect on the Diocese. The 1922 report of the Committee on the State of the Church was gushing in its enthusiasm:

> From every source of information and record a study of the State of the Church reveals a parochial and diocesan development such as the Diocese of Easton has never experienced. Under the able and inspiring leadership of our Diocesan the past year has been one of constant and progressive achievement on the part of the parishes to such an extent that there can be found no unhealthy spot in the Diocese, while from every parish the report is one of increased efficiency, financial security, material prosperity, and a spiritual force that is looking beyond the things accomplished in the past year to the golden promise of the future.[83]

With momentum behind him, Bishop Davenport continued to make changes. At the 1922 Convention he received approval for the construction of a Diocesan House on the Cathedral grounds. Until that time, all Diocesan business conducted by the Bishop was done out of the Bishop's Residence. Davenport had argued for the need for more office and filing space, and for conference rooms for committees to meet. The building would house the headquarters of the Women's Auxiliary and the offices of the new Diocesan newspaper that he initiated, *The Eastern Shore Churchman*. On September 15, 1923, the first Diocesan House was open for business.

Children's Home

Davenport turned his attention to the Children's Home, which had been allowed to operate in recent years somewhat autonomously. A Board of Directors which had been established during Bishop Lay's tenure was composed under its bylaws entirely of women elected by Diocesan Convention. Bishop Adams had expanded the Board to require representation of women from parishes in every county of the Diocese, while having the

[83] *1922 Journal of the Convention of the Diocese of Easton,* pp.52-53.

Executive Committee composed of women from Talbot County. Davenport with the approval of the 1922 Convention restructured the Home's governance so that the Bishop was in the role of "general supervisor over the institution." The election of chaplains, matrons and other officers would now be subject to the Bishop's confirmation, and his written consent would be needed "prior to the purchase of property, erection of buildings and the sale of any real estate belonging to the institution."[84] After inserting himself into a more active role in the institution, he came to the conclusion that the Home was falling apart. In 1923 he reported that a new building was needed. There was overcrowding, extensive repairs were needed, and their financial sources were not as self-sufficient as he was led to believe. A new building was soon constructed.

Davenport was making other discoveries as well. He had found many parishes still paying their clergy inadequate compensation. In 1921 he established the first compensation standard on record, informing parishes that the minimum compensation for a rector would be $1,500 a year, $1,800 and a rectory for a priest with a family. In 1922 the Executive Council was presented with a gift of a house and property in Ocean City. The Council and the Bishop promptly turned it into a clergy and family vacation house – the first such benefit given to clergy by the Diocese.

Davenport was interested in accountability and proper stewardship of resources. His newly created Finance Department was finding problems with land titles that needed correction. In 1922 the Bishop appointed the first auditor of the Diocese, Mr. Philmon K. Wright. In noting the state of some parish edifices in 1922 he said that all churches beyond repair "should be torn down and the places marked."

He encouraged parishes to look for ways to increase membership. In his 1922 Address to Convention he encouraged churches to advertise their services in local newspapers and to erect

[84] Ibid., p. 46.

"notice boards" in front of their churches so people would know what the church is, when it services take place and what activities are occurring. "The day of isolation is past," he decreed. "Let us not hesitate to keep the church before the public."

Women's Vote

No doubt, one of the more gratifying actions to the President of the Women's Auxiliary, Elizabeth Whaley Keas, was the Bishop's appointment of a committee in 1921 to meet with counterparts in the Dioceses of Maryland and Washington to confer and take action on the 19th Amendment giving women the right to vote. As a result, a change was made in 1922 to Maryland's Vestry Act. Previously only white male citizens could vote for Vestry members and lay delegates to Convention. As of June 1, 1922, the Vestry Act allowed women to vote in elections (however they still could not run for Vestry or delegate). There was a catch: Parishes had to petition the Convention to be granted this extension of the franchise. At the 1922 Convention the first parishes to petition and be granted the right of women to vote were: Holy Trinity, Oxford, Trinity Cathedral, St. Michael's, All Saints, Salisbury, St. Luke's and Pocomoke parishes. Other parishes joined the ranks over the next few Conventions.

The Bishop responded to concerns about the state of Sunday schools in the parishes by not only initiating the Summer Conference with the Diocese of Delaware for clergy and Sunday School teachers, but by also hiring a Sunday School trainer, Helen Jennings, to go from church to church helping education committees to reform their programs and providing training to teachers. Jennings spent a year working in the Diocese until she was tragically killed in a train accident and mourned extensively by a grateful Diocese. The Bishop also instituted an annual Diocesan Church School Service in the Cathedral in which representatives from Sunday Schools in each church in the Diocese would travel to the Cathedral each May and take part in a service

specifically for Christian education. The first service turned out to be wildly successful and helped the Bishop in two ways: by lifting up and encouraging communication among the churches' Sunday School programs and by using the Cathedral for a Diocesan function.

Summer Camp

Perhaps one of Bishop Davenport's greatest legacies was the creation of a Diocesan youth camp. In his first Bishop's Address in 1921, he said if there was a summer camp in Ocean City for Sunday School teachers, "why not a summer camp for boys and girls in the Diocese?" In the summer of 1922 the first camp was held on a rented farm on the Choptank River. The first camp director was the Rector of St. Bartholomew's Parish in Crisfield, the Reverend Frederick Virgin. In the summer of 1923 Virgin was again the camp director at the same location, but the camp was expanded. The first week was devoted to the girls from the Children's Home in Easton. The second week was reserved for boys from the diocese, the third week for girls from the diocese and the final week students from the University of Maryland used the facilities for extension work. This was the first time the summer camp was referred to as "Camp Davenport."

Camp Davenport continued to be held every summer on the rented farm on the Choptank, with improvements being made such as wells drilled and structures constructed to augment the farmhouse on the property. One year the camp director discovered that a thief had run off with all the equipment and parishes in the Diocese rallied to replace equipment. Church members also volunteered time and resources to improve the camp. However, by 1927 the Bishop announced that it was time to look for a permanent camp location. In 1929 the Diocese was given a 150 acre waterfront farm on Kent Island, "almost directly opposite Annapolis" by DeCourey W. Thom, described as a "sometimes Vestryman of Wye Parish." The Bishop proposed to the 1929 Convention that the 110 acres of tillable land be used as a working farm,

with the revenue being used to help support the camp. The Convention gave its unqualified support. The Executive Council had earlier in the year accepted the gift with the understanding from Thom that it be used "for the establishment of a permanent summer camp for the children of the Dioceses of Easton and the adjoining Dioceses of Maryland and Washington, the same to be known as 'Camp Wright.'"[85] Wright was the name of the farmer who lived on the land. Bishop Davenport was proud of Camp Wright, and took special interest in its construction and operation. It opened the summer of 1930, and Davenport delighted in making visits to the camp.

As the years went on, some of Davenport's initial changes had to be reworked. His appointment of the Reverend Chamberlain as Canon Missionary lasted two years, until Chamberlain resigned and accepted a Rectorship of a yoked parish in Caroline County. Life on the road had taken its toll. Rather than hire someone else for this position, he instead gave the work of looking after the mission churches to two priests associated with the Cathedral. This was in line with his efforts to reform the Cathedral as an institution more diocesan in focus than parochial. In his 1923 Address to Convention he reiterated this desire, saying, "It has been my aim, with the approval of the Executive Council, to make the Cathedral as it should be, the center of our Diocesan work."[86]

Also, in 1923 he reoriented how the Cathedral received its support. Since its founding by Bishop Lay the Cathedral had been supported not by the Diocese but by the contributions of the members of the Cathedral Chapter. In this way it operated like every other parish. Bishop Davenport advocated for and the Convention of 1923 approved a different funding mechanism. Now all revenues for the Cathedral would go into the Diocesan budget, and the Cathedral would be a part of that Budget. Expenses would now be approved by Convention. This could benefit

[85] *1929 Journal of the Convention of the Diocese of Easton,* pp. 24 and 34.
[86] *Bishop's Address, 1923 Journal of the Convention of the Diocese of Easton,* p. 23.

the Cathedral by opening it up to more sources of revenue. But it also meant that it was now beholden to the Bishop and the Convention for its operations. Through this action, Davenport was making the Convention take ownership over the Cathedral and trying to pull it away from its tendency to be more of a parish to people in Easton.

Merger

At the 1928 Convention the Bishop called for the Diocese's Executive Council to meet with its counterpart in the Diocese of Delaware about a possible merger of the two Dioceses. This had been the first time this topic had been mentioned since the Electing Convention of 1920. Back then there had been considerable support of the Convention to explore that possibility, given the economic and structural difficulties the Diocese was having. A resolution then had been approved urging action by the Standing Committee. But in the eight years of Bishop Davenport's episcopate the structure and vitality of the Diocese of Easton was much changed. In fact, most all of the structure and the institutions that the Diocese of Easton is familiar with today were in place because of the efforts of the Bishop. Davenport I would argue was successfully able to form a central structure in the Diocese. Before his episcopacy it could be said that the Bishop was one of many centers in the Diocese. Now, he had asserted through the institutions and structures created and reorganized during his tenure that a Diocesan center existed in fact. There was a central place to come together, to pool resources, to exchange information, to benefit the parishes and the wider church. More than relying on the personality of the Bishop, Davenport had created ways for clergy and laity to take leadership roles in the growing complexity of church administration. Certainly improvements needed to be made and additional systems set up and corrected, but Davenport provided the Diocese with some "good bones" to move forward. A resolution calling for a conversation about merging with the Diocese

of Delaware was introduced in the 1928 Convention to follow Davenport's suggestion, but the Convention voted to lay it on the table, because there was no longer interest in any merger talk. The Diocese of Easton had now come into its own.

By 1931 those Diocesan institutions that are familiar to member of the Diocese today were in place: the office of the bishop with his residence and diocesan offices, the cathedral, the Diocesan Council and its various departments, the Children's Home, the diocesan newspaper, and Camp Wright. There is much more history of the Diocese in the 1930's and beyond, but it is a history of building upon and maintaining these basic diocesan structures. This is outside the scope of this Thesis, which has sought to examine the origins of the Diocese. By 1931 the Diocese had grown up and become in fact what its founders dreamed it could be: an independent, functioning Diocese of the Protestant Episcopal Church in America.

VII. Conclusion

How do you tell the story of the Diocese of Easton? It is not a simple one. It began in 1868 but it began before 1692. It was part of the Maryland Church yet it was separate. It missed out on the urban movement yet it benefited from it. The Diocese of Easton's history is a complex one. It is tied to how those first parishes were founded and how they survived and thrived. It is tied to geography, to waters that separate it from other Dioceses and from itself; to its place between North and South; to the bounty of its land and waters and the fierce devotion and pride of its people to their heritage. It is tied to its struggle with urbanization, and a church that looked to the cities and the Diocese that became a forgotten mission.

That this Diocese has been formed and then has answered the challenges posed by these formidable factors is a testimony of the spirit of the people and the Divine blessings it has received. I have attempted in this paper to show that by understanding the role the founding parishes, geography and urbanization play in the history of the Diocese one can understand how the Diocese came to be as it is today. People like Thomas Bray, William Smith, John Crosdale, William Whittingham, Henry Lay, William Adams, Elizabeth Whaley Keas, and George Davenport all had to deal with these factors in their leadership roles, as did so many others whose names are not recorded. They have all helped to shape its identity.

In the 21st Century, that identity is challenged. Demographic trends argue for a great increase in population on the Eastern Shore in the next decades. People are moving to the Eastern Shore as extensions of the surrounding urban areas and as a retirement destination. Urbanization which has eluded this Diocese for its history is now coming to it in force. The Chesapeake Bay, that once divider of Dioceses, is now being breached with bridges and possible ferries. And small colonial churches now have websites inviting conversations from people

world wide. Will the Diocese be welcoming to these new populations? It may be difficult. The Diocese of Easton is used to being isolated, in having close-knit, historical congregations, in working through its tried and true organizations. It could, as it has in times previous, leave the evangelism to other denominations. But it has also rallied and reinvented itself when given opportunities. How will it respond this time? That chapter of history has yet to be written.

Afterword

It is my hope that this Thesis provides for the first time a more comprehensive look at how the Diocese of Easton came to be. There have been books written on the history of the Diocese of Maryland and the history of the colonial church, but no history has been written uniquely for and about the Diocese of Easton. I have found in my research that while the Eastern Shore is a unique region, it has very few histories that focus only on this region. There are many books written that retell stories and legends of the Eastern Shore and other popular books that provide travelogues for the region, but few serious works that treat the history of this region exclusively and comprehensively – and no books on the region's Episcopal diocese.

What history that does exist about the church on the Eastern Shore stops at the end of the 18th Century, or is held in the parochial histories of a few older parishes on the Eastern Shore. My research has uncovered that the idea of dividing the diocese and starting a new diocese energized the parishes on the Eastern Shore in the 19th century. I discovered the names of many leaders who built the Diocese but whose names are not known to us today, being all but forgotten in the mists of history. My research also showed how the depopulation of the Eastern Shore in the late 19th and early 20th centuries almost spelled the end of the Diocese of Easton as an independent diocese. In short, through investigations of many dusty books, file cabinets and documents I have discovered much about where we as a Diocese have come from, and I hope that my research and analysis will be of use to future historians who will continue to refine the story of the origins of the Diocese of Easton.

-David Michaud
Chelsea Square, New York City
St. Mark's Day, 2007

Table of Number of Communicants in Parishes in Diocese

Parish in the Diocese of Easton	1869	1870	1875	1880	1885	1890	1895	1900
(Augustine) Good Shepherd, Chesapeake City	14		9		22	28	57	53
(N. Elk,) St. Mary Anne's, Northeast	56	59	67	85	95	104	108	101
(N. Sassafras) St. Stephen's, Cecilton	25	32	45	47	50	63	73	71
Trinity, (Cecil) Elkton	55	55	83	82	87	83	109	109
St. Mark's, Susquehanna, Aikin								
St. James'			63	65		64	56	78
Chester	50	74	90	74	104	114	103	116
I.U.	34	34	27	24	28	38	56	50
N. Kent	33	34	35	48	57	44	44	42
St. Paul's, Kent	44	52	73	69	62	81	85	143
Shrewsbury	38	60	71	100	89	80	96	65
Christ Church, Kent Is.	16	16	19	22	40	47	22	34
St. Luke's, Q.A., Church Hill	14	18	34	75	92	119	106	122
St. Paul's, Q.A., Centreville	96	92	99	131	142	162	151	157
(St. John's) St. Paul's, Hillsborough	30	30	59	54	50	43	52	53
Christ Church, Denton (St. Mary's W.Ch.)			12	14	29	62	47	37
Holy Trinity, Greensboro						29	48	50
Epiphany, Preston								
Dorchester	10	10	19	22	28	23	27	
E.N.Market	17	20	40	38	40	65	35	60
St. Andrew's, Hurlock								
Great Choptank	152	151	178	190	179	176	208	239
Vienna	13	12	11	16	17	38	41	39
Cathedral				59	43	83	101	121
St. Michael's	94	92	122	165	84	97	100	97
St. Peter's	110	130	254	232	125	151	198	214
Holy Trinity, Oxford								66
White Marsh	68	75	89	110	120	104	93	60
All Saints			43		71	103	96	87
Miles River, Tunis Mills					46	65	66	29
Wye	44	41	62	63	78	46	75	47
Coventry	68	68	76	70	90	122	159	
St. Bartholomew's								86

Somerset	187	185	198	191	190	212	156	181
Wicomico				25	28	51	56	
Salisbury				127	175	135	181	194
Spring Hill	180	199	191	136	122	111	127	134
Stepney					9	19	29	33
All Hallows	48	48	45	54	89	113	82	73
St. Paul's by the Sea							2	
Worcester	61	65	62	63	63	62	90	153
Total Communicants:	**1357**	**1432**	**1819**	**2098**	**2186**	**2481**	**2629**	**2666**
% Increase/Decrease over previous period:		5.24%	21.28%	13.30%	4.03%	11.89%	5.63%	1.39%

Parish in the Diocese of Easton	1905	1910	1916	1920	1925	1930	1935
(Augustine) Good Shepherd, Chesapeake City		31	33	33	55	35	36
(N. Elk,) St. Mary Anne's, Northeast	103	108	20	9	31	92	75
(N. Sassafras) St. Stephen's, Cecilton	89	96	81	57	76	80	54
Trinity, (Cecil) Elkton	130	146	112	120	190	170	262
St. Mark's, Susquehanna, Aikin			42	63	62	48	102
St. James'	73	84	37	36	38	55	58
Chester	164	152	200	138	151	173	189
I.U.	54	56	54	60	61	46	92
N. Kent	44	70	65	51	140	90	83
St. Paul's, Kent	156	159	136	135	60	69	74
Shrewsbury	52	60	45	28	70	34	54
Christ Church, Kent Is.	40	74	81	82	72	28	30
St. Luke's, Q.A., Church Hill	138	139	153	133	158	161	117
St. Paul's, Q.A., Centreville	166	187	204	226	204	230	211
(St. John's) St. Paul's, Hillsborough	56	61	55	41	45	32	20
Christ Church, Denton (St. Mary's W.Ch.)	50	83	89	68	79	81	82
Holy Trinity, Greensboro	35	26	14		32	38	38
Epiphany, Preston					20	36	40
Dorchester					26	38	38
E.N.Market	60	68	25		33	45	52
St. Andrew's, Hurlock						40	47
Great Choptank	328	366	269	270	306	299	207
Vienna	39	29	25		30	33	40
Cathedral	145	147	127	142	137	190	130
St. Michael's	143	156	72	78	150	188	211
St. Peter's	210	250	296	301	203	190	230
Holy Trinity, Oxford	86	105	100	93	94	97	96
White Marsh	59	64	60	61	70	83	72
All Saints	95	95	87	87	44	39	40
Miles River, Tunis Mills	41	40	27	27	39	40	40
Wye	63	75	76	93	51	67	44
Coventry		39	73	35	30	30	46
St. Bartholomew's	80	82	72	55	50	64	108

Somerset	147	156	126	113	115	130	104
Wicomico	40	58	57	33	22	40	32
Salisbury	214	227	226	233	290	378	393
Spring Hill	138	140	121	127	40	82	83
Stepney	32	33	35	30	41	37	32
All Hallows	79	82	83	90	72	82	82
St. Paul's by the Sea				68	37	55	80
Worcester	143	138	185	135	144	195	140
Total Communicants:	**2933**	**3265**	**3038**	**2895**	**2965**	**3287**	**3188**
% Increase/Decrease over previous period:	9.10%	10.17%	-7.47%	-4.94%	2.36%	9.80%	-3.11%

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