

Library Company of Philadelphia

McA MSS 029

EPISCOPAL CLERGY MANUSCRIPTS COLLECTION

1765-1867

.21 linear feet, 1 box

Series I. Letter Groups (1834-1867)

Series II. Miscellaneous Letters and Documents (1765-1864)

March 2007

Descriptive Summary**Repository**

Library Company of Philadelphia
1314 Locust Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107-5698

Call Number

McA MSS 029

Creator

McAllister, John A. (John Allister), 1822-1896.

Title

Episcopal Clergy Manuscripts Collection

Inclusive Dates

1765-1867 (bulk 1829-1861)

Quantity

.21 linear feet (1 box)

Language of Materials

Materials are in English.

Abstract

The Episcopal Clergy Manuscripts Collection primarily contains letters written by ordained leaders of the Episcopal Church to their peers. Nearly all of the authors of the letters and documents were then, or became, bishops in the church. Some letters hold notable content, while others simply make, or reply to, a request. Several of the correspondents wrote from or of the American Midwest, chiefly Ohio, and describe conditions in their dioceses, churches, and communities. Most of the letters are unrelated to each other and were most likely acquired for their signatures. The collection also holds two eighteenth-century autograph manuscript sermons by Rev. Edward Bass (1726-1803), the rector of St. Paul's Church in Newburyport, MA.

Administrative Information**Restrictions to Access**

The collection is open to researchers. It is on deposit at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, and should be accessed through the Society's reading room at 1300 Locust Street, Philadelphia, PA. Visit their website, <http://www.hsp.org/>, for reading room hours.

Acquisition Information

Gift of John A. McAllister; forms part of the McAllister Collection.

Processing Information

The Episcopal Clergy Manuscripts Collection was formerly interfiled within the large and chronologically arranged McAllister Manuscript Collection. The papers were extracted, arranged, and described as a single collection in 2007, under grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the William Penn Foundation. The collection was processed by Sandra Markham. Any views, findings,

conclusions or recommendations expressed in this finding aid do not necessarily represent those of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Preferred Citation

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Online Catalog Headings**Subject Names**

Anthon, Henry, 1795-1861
Atkinson, Thomas, 1807-1881
Bass, Edward, 1726-1803
Bowen, Nathaniel, 1779-1839
Bullions, Peter, 1791-1864
Burgess, George, 1809-1866
Butler, C. M. (Clement Moore), 1810-1890
Chase, Philander, 1775-1852
Claggett, Thomas John
Claxton, R. Bethell (Robert Bethell), 1814-1882
Cobbs, Nicholas H. (Nicholas Hamner), 1796-1861
Ducachet, Henry William, 1796-1865
Eastburn, Manton, 1801-1872
Ely, Alfred, 1815-1892
Fairchild, Thomas B., 1811-1879
Freeman, George W. (George Washington), 1789-1858
Griswold, Alexander V. (Alexander Viets), 1766-1843
Hawks, Cicero Stephens, 1812-1868
Hobart, John Henry, 1775-1830
Lee, Henry W. (Henry Washington), 1815-1874
McCoskry, Samuel Allen, 1804-1886
McIlvaine, Charles Pettit, 1799-1873
Moore, Benjamin, 1748-1816
Norton, John N. (John Nicholas), 1820-1881
Onderdonk, Benjamin T. (Benjamin Tredwell), 1791-1861
Onderdonk, Henry U. (Henry Ustick), 1789-1858
Otey, James Hervey, 1800-1863
Perry, William Stevens, 1832-1898
Polk, Leonidas, 1806-1864

Potter, Alonzo, 1800-1865
Ravenscroft, John Stark, 1772-1830
Schenck, Noah Hunt, 1825-1885
Seabury, Samuel, 1729-1796
Smith, B. B. (Benjamin Bosworth), 1794-1884
Sparrow, William, 1801-1874
Stevens, William Bacon, 1815-1887
Wainwright, Jonathan Mayhew, 1792-1854
Wharton, Charles Henry, 1748-1833
Williams, J. (John), 1817-1899
Whittingham, William Rollinson, 1805-1879
Wylie, Andrew, 1789-1851

Subject Topics

Episcopal Church--Middle West--History--19th century--Sources
Episcopal Church--Southern States--History--19th century--Sources
Episcopal Church--Clergy--United States
Clergy, Writings of

Document Types

Letters
Sermons--18th century

Related Collections

The Library Company's Print Department holds portraits of American clergymen in both prints and photographs. The John A. McAllister Papers (McA MSS 001) contain many letters to McAllister from clergymen of all denominations.

Biographical/Historical Notes

The material in this small collection was isolated from the McAllister Manuscript Collection based on content and association with leaders of the Episcopal Church, also known as the Protestant Episcopal Church. Nearly all of the authors of the letters and documents were at the time, or later became, bishops in the church, including the first American bishop, the Right Reverend Samuel Seabury (1729-1796). Collecting the autographs of the divines was a popular pastime in the nineteenth century, as was the collecting of their small portrait photographs, or cartes de visite, which were published and distributed by the Brady, Gurney, and Anthony studios in New York, as well as by McAllister and Brother in Philadelphia.

In addition to retailing portraits of clergymen, the McAllister firm commissioned and sold photographs of Philadelphia churches, and it is likely that John A. McAllister's collecting conduit included men who made contact with him or the company for that reason. McAllister's own papers (Library Company collection McA MSS 001) include letters from several clergymen, who wrote to acknowledge the receipt of a photograph. He developed further relationships

with some: most notably William Stevens Perry (1832-1898), who became Episcopal Bishop of Iowa in 1876. Prior to that appointment, Rev. Perry led parishes in Nashua, NH, Portland, ME, Litchfield, CT, and Geneva, NY, and from those places corresponded with McAllister about each of their collecting interests. Rev. Perry was at the time writing and publishing a series of papers on the early American bishops, and was seeking portraits and other material on his topic. McAllister shopped for him, and in return Perry sent gifts such as, in March 1862, a letter by Bishop Thomas J. Claggett "for your collection" (now in folder 10) and, he continued, "I do not despair of adding others from time to time." By his labors for Rev. Perry and others, McAllister managed to acquire correspondence to or from most of the men profiled in the first half of Rev. Perry's chronologically arranged compendium *The Episcopate in America* (1895). McAllister annotated several of the letters in his collection, including the verso of one from Rev. Henry W. Ducachet (1796-1865) of St. Stephen's Church in Philadelphia to Rev. George Boyd: "Clergy autograph to be saved."

Many libraries and archives hold collections with autographs of clergymen that were assembled by contemporaries of John A. McAllister, including, at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, the George M. Conarroe Autograph Collection, the Ferdinand Julius Dreer Collection (with a full section of autographs of clergymen featuring American Protestant Episcopal bishops), and the Frank M. Etting Collection. The William L. Clements Library at the University of Michigan has the Episcopal Bishops Collection of clerical correspondence and signed documents by bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church in America. As a one of his earliest collecting efforts, Pierpont Morgan (1837-1913) acquired clerical material; his Episcopal Bishops Collection is now held in the Morgan Library's division of Literary & Historical Manuscripts.

Collection Overview

The Episcopal Clergy Manuscripts Collection primarily contains some seventy letters written by ordained leaders of the Episcopal Church to their peers. Some hold notable content, while others simply ask for, or reply to, a request. Several of the correspondents wrote from or about the American Midwest, chiefly Ohio, and describe conditions in their dioceses, churches, and communities. The collection is arranged in two series: Series I, Letter Groups, and Series II, Miscellaneous Letters and Documents.

Series I, Letter Groups (1834-1867) holds small caches of letters written to six particular clergymen: Robert Bethel Claxton, John B. Colhoun, Thomas B. Fairchild, John Hall, John N. Norton, and William B. Stevens, and are arranged alphabetically by the recipient. The letters are random and nearly all unrelated in topic with the exception of those sent to Rev. Norton.

Robert B. Claxton (1814-1882) was for many years rector of St. Luke's Church in Rochester, NY. His file contains one of the few letters in the collection that is from a layperson: Alfred Ely (1815-1892), a lawyer from Rochester serving in the House of Representatives, who wrote to Claxton about employing women in the federal post office. In a letter to John A. McAllister

(McA MSS 001), Claxton enclosed the Ely letter, saying "His capture after the battle (or rout) of Bull Run & his long imprisonment in Richmond give interest to his signature." Claxton suggested that if McAllister didn't wish to keep it for his collection, he might give it to the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

The letters to Rev. John B. Colhoun are from four men who became bishops: Chase (Ohio), Cobbs (Alabama), Onderdonk (New York), and Whittingham (Maryland); the verso of Bishop Chase's letter has additional inscriptions made by Jackson Kemper (1789-1870), Bishop of Wisconsin (as identified and labeled by McAllister), the first missionary bishop to work in the far Western regions of the United States.

The largest group of letters in the collection came to Rev. Thomas B. Fairchild (1811-1879), the rector of St. John's Church in Cuyahoga Falls, OH, from 1840 to 1844, and again from 1872 until his death. He was also rector of Christ Church in Hudson, OH, and like Rev. William Stevens Perry, purchased photographs from McAllister (McA MSS 001). There are two lengthy letters to Fairchild from Philander Chase (1775-1852), bishop of Ohio and founder of Kenyon College, and one from Chase's wife Sophia (1792-1864), all dated 1842. A letter from Manton Eastburn (1801-1872) in Boston advises Fairchild on church architecture: "I think your best way, if you could spare the money, would be to get a plan from Mr. Upjohn of New York, through the medium of some friend visiting that city, who might perhaps induce him to furnish one at a lower price than he usually requires." A letter from Thomas Atkinson (1807-1881) thanks Fairchild for urging him to accept an appointment as bishop of Indiana, and outlines the reasons why he is declining the post for the second time. Two of the three letters that Fairchild received in 1858 and 1859 from the first bishop of Iowa, Henry W. Lee (1815-1874), are printed appeals for financial assistance for his diocese, which had been severely affected by the depression of 1857 and the failure of the wheat crop the next year; his letters unwittingly provide context for a personal letter also in the file from the forlorn Rev. John Ufford (b. 1810) of Muscatine, who wrote in 1858 that he was long-suffering from poverty, illness, and the death of his wife. Ufford left Iowa three years later to serve as a chaplain in the Union Army, and did not return to the state: following his discharge he spent nearly twenty years as the rector of the Episcopal Church in Delaware, OH. In a November 18, 1867, letter to his friend Benson Lossing, John A. McAllister mentioned that he had had a recent visit from Rev. Fairchild (Lossing Papers (Coll. 1807) Historical Society of Pennsylvania).

Rev. John Hall (1788-1869) was rector of St. Peter's Church, Ashtabula, OH, one of the early Episcopal churches on the Western Reserve; two of the letters sent to him regard shipments of prayer books and other liturgical literature.

The Reverend John N. Norton (1820-1881) was born and raised in upstate New York, but spent most of his career in Kentucky. Aside from his liturgical work, Norton was also a writer and historian who published a series of biographies of the bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church. The letters in his file primarily contain reminiscences of John Stark Ravenscroft (1772-

1830), the first bishop of North Carolina. Norton had collected the material in preparation for his volume *The Life of Bishop Ravenscroft*, which was published by the General Protestant Episcopal Sunday School Union and Church Book Society in 1859. The most extensive response, four full pages worth of reflection, came from Bishop James H. Otey (1800-1863) of Tennessee. Norton's folder contains one of the other lay letters in the collection, an introduction written for him by Kentucky senator John J. Crittenden (1786-1863) to be presented to the American consul in Liverpool.

William Bacon Stevens (1815-1887) was rector of St. Andrew's Church in Philadelphia, and became bishop of Pennsylvania in 1862 upon the death of Alonzo Potter.

Series II, Miscellaneous Letters and Documents (1765-1864) holds a number of single letters, and the earliest material in the collection: two sermons by Bishop Edward Bass that appear at the end of the series. The letters are filed first, in alphabetical order by writer, followed by the sermons. Not every letter present is described below.

Among the material is a letter from Carlton Chase (1794-1870), bishop of New Hampshire, to William Stevens Perry (1832-1898), welcoming him as rector of St. Luke's Church in Nashua, NH. Rev. Perry, who later became bishop of Iowa, also sent McAllister the collection's single letter from Bishop Thomas John Claggett (1743-1816); his March 24, 1862, cover letter to McAllister was kept in McAllister's papers (McA MSS 001). Bishop Claggett was the first bishop consecrated on American soil when, in 1792, he became the first bishop of Maryland.

One printed piece in the collection is a printed circular letter/announcement from Philander Chase to the clergy and churches announcing the suspension of the Right Reverend Benjamin Tredwell Onderdonk (1791-1861) from "all exercise of his Episcopal and Ministerial functions" following politically motivated charges of "immorality and impurity." Onderdonk retained his title as bishop of the Diocese of New York, as well as his position as a faculty member at the General Theological Seminary, but was not allowed to perform any official functions. Jonathan M. Wainwright (1792-1854) was appointed as Provisional Bishop to carry out Onderdonk's responsibilities; his signature appears on the circular as a testimony of the accuracy of its contents. The letter was mailed to Rev. Sheldon Davis, a minister in rural Delaware County, NY.

Rev. George W. Freeman (1789-1858) wrote from Warrenton, NC, to John Stark Ravenscroft, the bishop of North Carolina, to give one of the reasons why he could not accept a position in Salisbury, NC: his wife's disinterest in living in such a remote place. Freeman later became the first bishop of Arkansas.

In an 1830 letter to Rev. John Bristed, Alexander Viets Griswold (1776-1843) discusses the situation of the church at Warren, RI. Griswold was elected bishop of Eastern Diocese, a jurisdiction that included all of New England (except Connecticut) in 1811, and held the position until he became the Episcopal Church's fifth Presiding Bishop in 1836.

There are two letters written by John Henry Hobart (1775-1830), the bishop of New York, in 1829. The first, to Odgen (otherwise unidentified), is the only letter in the collection with a price (\$2) written on it; the second letter was written the same year to Charles Henry Wharton (1748-1833), the rector of St. Mary's Church, in Burlington, NJ.

Benjamin Moore (1748-1816), the bishop of New York, wrote one of the more substantive letters in the series to Nathaniel Bowen (1779-1839). Rev. Bowen was at the time a missionary preacher in Charleston, an Episcopal diocese then without a bishop, and Moore wrote a letter of moral support for Bowen's labors and to express his concern about the situation in South Carolina. Several years later, after having become exhausted by his work and taken a position in New York, Bowen became the bishop of South Carolina and held the appointment until his death.

In a letter to Rev. Alonzo Potter, then at Union College in upstate New York, Peter Bullions (1791-1864), author of books on Greek, Latin, and English grammar, asks for endorsements for his publications. Potter became bishop of Pennsylvania in 1845.

The Right Reverend Samuel Seabury (1729-1796) wrote to Samuel Parker (1744-1804) of Trinity Church, Boston, to describe the troubles he continued to encounter with the revisions to the *Book of Common Prayer*. Under Seabury's direction, Parker had taken a leading role in adapting the text for use in the American church. Seabury was the first American Episcopal bishop, the second Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church, and the first Bishop of Connecticut.

Benjamin Bosworth Smith (1794-1884), the first bishop of Kentucky, wrote to an unknown recipient the circumstances of vacant positions in his state.

The collection holds two short documents relating to the Church of the Nativity in Philadelphia: William Suddards (b. 1805) and Thomas M. Clark (1812-1903, who became the bishop of Rhode Island) both wrote short notes supporting the church, which was built on Mt. Vernon Street to the designs of Napoleon Le Brun (1821-1901) in the 1840s. Their two documents were glued back-to-back on a third sheet of paper, upon which John A. McAllister inscribed: "Autographs/Rev T M Clark/Rev Wm Suddards."

Another substantive letter in the collection is from Andrew Wylie (1789-1851) to H. H. Hunington, written in 1842. In it, Wylie discusses his conversion from the Presbyterian to Episcopalian faith, writes of reviewing tracts and publications, and of Robert Hamilton Bishop (1777-1855), the first and former president of Miami University of Ohio.

Series II ends with two autograph manuscripts of sermons by Rev. Edward Bass (1726-1803), the Harvard-educated rector of St. Paul's Church in Newburyport, MA, from 1753 to 1803, and also bishop of Massachusetts after 1797. Though ordained in London, Bass remained neutral during the American Revolution, and kept his church open during the war. The sermons are unsigned but are written in his distinctive hand, using specific symbols in place of certain words, and

composed in duodecimo-format booklets of folded paper. On both his essays, one on verses from Matthew and the other from Corinthians, the texts were dated by Bass to record that they were presented on several occasions between 1765 and 1802. Other examples of Rev. Bass's sermons exist in the collections of the Boston Athenaeum and the Morgan Library in New York.

Box Folder

SERIES I. LETTER GROUPS

1834-1867

Arranged alphabetically by recipient.

1	1	Claxton, Robert Bethell, letters to, from: Butler, Clement Moore De Lancey, William Heathcote Ely, Alfred	1857 Oct 19 1862 Feb 13 1862 Mar 27
	2	Colhoun, John B., letters to, from: Chase, Philander Cobbs, Nicholas Hamner Onderdonk, Henry Ustick Whittingham, William Rollinson	1850 Mar 4 1859 Nov 13 1856 Jan 7 1857, 1863
	3	Fairchild, Thomas B., letters from: Anthon, Henry Atkinson, Thomas Burgess, George Chase, Philander Chase, Sophia De Lancey, William Heathcote Eastburn, Manton Henshaw, John Prentiss Kewley Lee, Henry Washington McCoskry, Samuel Allen McIlvaine, Charles Pettit Schenck, Noah Hunt Smith, E. K. Sparrow, William Ufford, John	1858 May 19 1846 Jul 27 1854 Oct 25 1842 1842 Aug 2 1857 Nov 6 1846 Mar 24 1842 Nov 15 1858, 1859 1842 Jul 7 1841 May 16 1859 Feb 10 1861 Jul 20 1850 Jun 26 1858 Jun 28
	4	Hall, John, letters from: Ashurst, Lewis R. Hallam, Robert A. James, John W.	1834 Nov 7 1836 Jul 22 1834 Aug 27
	5	Norton, John N., letters from: Brownell, T. C. Crittenden, John J. Hawks, Cicero Stephens Lay, Henry C. Meade, William Onderdonk, Benjamin Treadwell Otey, James Hervey	1857 May 22 1860 Mar 18 1857 Jan 22 1848 Jan 9 1858 Jan 29 1858 Jun 29 1857 Oct 7

Box Folder

SERIES I. LETTER GROUPS, cont.

Norton, John N., letters from: cont.

[1]	[5]	Polk, Leonidas	1857 Aug 4
		Ufford, John	1857 Sep 29
	6	Stevens, William Bacon, letters from:	
		Burgess, George	1854 Oct 9
		Johns, John	1847 Sep 28
		Kip, William Ingraham	1853 Jun 18
		McIlvaine, Charles Pettit	1852 Apr 14

Box Folder

Series II. MISCELLANEOUS LETTERS AND DOCUMENTS

1765-1864

Arranged in two subseries: Letters and Sermons; letters are filed alphabetically.

Letters

[1]	7	Allen, Thomas G., to "H.S."	1845 Apr 11
	8	Chase, Carlton, to William S. Perry	1858 Nov 22
	9	Chase, Philander, and Jonathan M. Wainwright, circular letter	1845 Jan 18
	10	Claggett, Thomas John, to William Duke	1804 Oct 13
	11	Coxe, A. Cleveland, to J.C. Smith Jr.	1864 Jan 4
	12	Ducachet, Henry William, to George Boyd	1844 Aug 16
	13	Freeman, George W., to John Stark Ravenscroft	1823 Sep 27
	14	Griswold, Alexander V., to John Bristed	1830 Feb 25
		Hobart, John Henry	
	15	To Odgen	1829 Jan 24
	16	To Charles Henry Wharton	1829 Mar 21
	17	Holmes, Daniel, to William H. Benade	1857 Mar 8
	18	Lee, Alfred, to M. A. De Wolfe Howe	undated
	19	Lee, Henry Washington, to unknown recipient, on letter to him from John Hart Willard of Troy, NY	1858
	20	McIlvaine, Charles Pettit	
		To James Bonnar	1842 Jan 20
		To unidentified bishop	1861 Jul 11
	21	Moore, Benjamin, to Nathaniel Bowen	1807 Jan 23
	22	Onderdonk, Henry Ustick, to R. Penn Smith	undated

Box Folder

Series II. MISCELLANEOUS LETTERS AND DOCUMENTS, cont.

Potter, Alonzo

[1]	23	From Peter Bullions	1843 Jul 10
	24	To Rev. George A. Duborow	1861 Dec 31
	25	Notes to unknown recipients	undated
	26	Seabury, Samuel, to Samuel Parker	1790 Nov 28
	27	Smith, Benjamin Bosworth, to unknown recipient	1850 Nov 19
	28	Suddards, William and Thomas M. Clark, notes re: Church of the Nativity	1845
	29	Whipple, Henry Benjamin, to Howe	1860 Sep 26
	30	Whitehouse, Henry J., to J. Pratt	1861 Mar 5
	31	Williams, John, two letters to unknown recipients	1857, 1861
	32	Wylie, Andrew, to H. H. Hunington	1842 Feb 16

Sermons by Edward Bass

	33	On verses from Matthew, delivered 1765-1802	1765
	34	On verses from Corinthians, delivered 1775-1802	1775 Sep 5