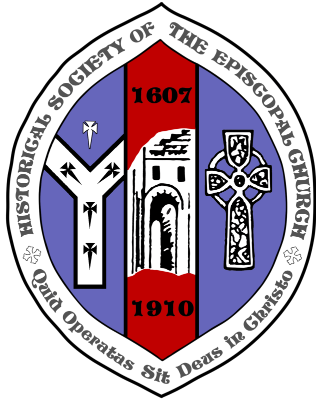

Three Episcopal Ministers, Black Communicants, and the Civil War Era

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Three Episcopal Ministers, Black Communicants, and the Civil War Era[1]

Loren B. Mead and J. Michael Martinez

Race was the central question confronting nineteenth-century Protestant churches in the United States, although the contours of the question evolved. During the antebellum era, the question was whether scripture condoned race-based slavery. Following the Civil War and the emancipation, Christian clergy, especially those in the South, faced three choices: (1) Should the newly freed people (formerly enslaved persons) be welcomed into a segregated church and afforded the opportunity to choose their own leaders as well as make decisions about their congregations? (2) Should the freed

[1] Acknowledgements: Thank you to the anonymous peer reviewers as well as the talented archivists and librarians who assisted in compiling the research for this article (in alphabetical order): Mandi D. Johnson, director, William R. Laurie University Archives and Special Collections, the University of the South; Brad Steinecke, assistant director of local history, Spartanburg County (SC) Public Libraries; Karen Stokes, processing archivist, the South Carolina Historical Society; Matthew Turi, research and instruction librarian, Wilson Special Collections Library, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; and Tessa Updike, archivist and assistant professor, Daniel Library, the Citadel.

Loren B. Mead (1930–2018), Episcopal priest, educator, founder of the Alban Institute, and author of numerous works on congregations, was always interested in the role of race and the church. Aside from marching with a delegation of white pastors supporting Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. following the death of Medgar Evers, Mead played a leading role in desegregating Chapel Hill, North Carolina. Late in life, he began researching a book on Stevens, Porter, and DuBose. Suffering his final illness, he handed off the project to his nephew, J. Michael Martinez. Mead died on May 5, 2018. This article is published posthumously.
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people be allowed to join a segregated church governed by white clergy and lay leaders? Or (3) Should the freed people be denied admission altogether?[2]

To better understand how churches evaluated these choices in postwar nineteenth-century America, this article examines the lives and careers of three white Episcopal clergy from South Carolina: Peter Fayssoux Stevens (1830–1910), A. Toomer Porter (1828–1902), and William Porcher DuBose (1836–1918). These men present excellent case studies because they were contemporaries and while their early lives were remarkably similar, their responses to the tumult of race during the nineteenth century diverged following the Civil War.

Each man was born in the antebellum age, schooled in the Protestant Episcopal Church, and called to enter the ministry. Two of the men, Porter and DuBose, hailed from families made wealthy by the labor of enslaved persons. All three men accepted the proposition that whites were naturally superior to Blacks. Few whites in the South – or anywhere in the United States during the nineteenth century – questioned this assumption.[3] When war erupted in 1861, each man stepped forward to perform his duty on behalf of the Confederate States of America (CSA) and all three came under fire during the ensuing years. Stevens and DuBose attended the South Carolina Military Academy, commonly called the Citadel, excelled in their studies, and served the CSA in the Holcombe Legion in the Eastern Theater of the Civil War. Stevens and

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[2] A fourth option would be to allow freed people to join the church as full members sans segregation. Owing to the racial discrimination of the time, this option was never seriously considered. Social mores would not permit such considerations.

[3] Even some abolitionists did not question the underlying assumptions of white supremacy. They believed that Blacks should be afforded social and political rights as a matter of paternalistic fairness, but they did not favor social equality of the races. See, for example, Aileen S. Kraditor, *Means and Ends in American Abolitionism: Garrison and His Critics on Strategy and Tactics, 1834–1850* (New York: Vintage Books, 1969). The literature on nineteenth century ideas about race is voluminous. See, for example, Ibram X. Kendi, *Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America* (New York: Nation Books, 2016), 178-79; J. Michael Martinez, *Coming For to Carry Me Home: Race in America from Abolitionism to Jim Crow* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2012); J. Michael Martinez, *A Long Dark Night: Race in America from Jim Crow to World War II* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016).

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DuBose suffered multiple wounds. DuBose was captured, dispatched to a prison camp, and exchanged. Serving as an army chaplain, Porter emerged physically unscathed, but, as he noted, "I do not know why I escaped death."[4]

The three men shared a common understanding of the church's duties before the war, but their responses to Emancipation, Reconstruction, and the Jim Crow (segregation) era demonstrate a range of reactions. Peter F. Stevens left the Episcopal Church for the Reformed Episcopal Church (REC) when Blacks were not afforded an opportunity to choose their own leadership. A. Toomer Porter advocated on behalf of Black leadership in Black Episcopal churches, but he continued working within the church even after white leaders rejected his entreaties. William Porcher DuBose was a white supremacist who advocated denying Black communicants a place within the postwar Episcopal Church.[5]

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[4] The quote is from A. Toomer Porter, *Led On! Step by Step Scenes from Clerical, Military, Educational, and Plantation Life in the South, 1828–1898* (New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons, the Knickerbocker Press, 1898), 140.

[5] For background information on Stevens, see especially Marion Stevens Eberly, "Our Stevens Family," unpublished manuscript, December 1979, typescript copy, Citadel Archives, and Peter Fayssoux Stevens, Autobiography, unpublished manuscript, n.d., handwritten copy, DuPre-Moseley Family Collection, the Kennedy Room of Local History and Genealogy, Spartanburg County Public Libraries, Spartanburg, South Carolina. Of the three men, Stevens was perhaps the most obscure figure. Little is known of his early life part from his handwritten autobiography, his descendant Marion Stevens Eberly's typewritten family history, and bits and pieces of Stevens's correspondence in the DuPre-Moseley Family Collection, the Kennedy Room of Local History and Genealogy, Spartanburg County Public Libraries. The dearth of unbiased primary source data creates challenges for the historian. Accordingly, the written sources on Stevens's early life must be consulted with a healthy dose of skepticism. As with Stevens, much of the information on Porter's early life is found in his own writings, which can be self-serving. Information on Porter can be found in A. Toomer Porter, *The History of a Work of Faith and Love in Charleston, South Carolina* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1882); Porter, *Led On!*; "Rev. Dr. Anthony Toomer Porter," in *Cyclopedia of Eminent and Representative Men of the Carolinas of the Nineteenth Century, with a Brief Historical Introduction on South Carolina by General Edward McCrady, Jr., and on North Carolina by Hon. Samuel A. Ashe*, Vol. I (Madison, WS: Brant & Fuller, 1892), 493. For more on DuBose's background, see, for example, William Porcher DuBose, "Reminiscences, 1836–1878," typescript copy transcribed by William Haskell DuBose, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; William Porcher DuBose, *Turning Points in My Life* (New York: Longmans, Green, & Company, 1912). Secondary sources on DuBose are more plentiful. See, for example, Ralph E. Luker, "The Crucible of Civil War and Reconstruction in the

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Their divergent reactions to Reconstruction reflect different experiences within the church as well as the timing of those experiences. Stevens was ordained a priest on the eve of the war and Porter during the antebellum era (the period between the end of the War of 1812 and the start of the Civil War in 1861). By contrast, DuBose was ordained a priest in 1866, during Reconstruction, when the fear of marauding freed people was at a fever pitch in some areas of the South. Unlike Stevens and Porter, who ministered to Blacks in the South Carolina Low Country and witnessed their tribulations firsthand for decades, DuBose was insulated from people of color. As the rector of Trinity Episcopal Church in Abbeville, a town where Ku Klux Klan activity was rampant during his tenure, and later as a chaplain and professor of moral science at the University of the South in Sewanee, Tennessee, DuBose surrounded himself with unreconstructed rebels, many of whom had served as high-ranking Confederate political and military leaders. DuBose unabashedly embraced their values. Based on their experiences, Stevens and Porter viewed African Americans as deserving of Christian charity and kindness. DuBose embraced the culture and traditions of the white antebellum South; with little or no sustained contact with African Americans, he considered them a dangerous "other" that must be controlled lest they menace the white population.

The evolution of these attitudes can be understood within the context of each man's life and career. That three white South Carolinian Episcopalians born within a decade of each other would commence their journey from the same starting point but pursue divergent paths in subsequent years highlights the contradictions and complexities of race in the nineteenth-century Episcopal Church.

Experience of William Porcher DuBose," *The South Carolina Historical Magazine* 83, no. 1 (January 1982): 50–71; Robert B. Slocum, "A Soldier's Faith: The Civil War Experiences and Reflections of William Porcher DuBose," *Journal of Anglican Studies* 16, no. 2 (November 2018): 170-87; Robert Boak Slocum, *The Theology of William Porcher DuBose: Life, Movement, and Being* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2000).

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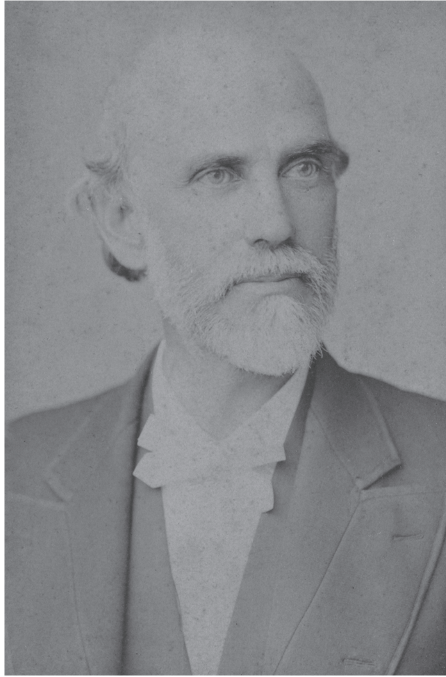

Peter Fayssoux Stevens. Courtesy of the Kennedy Room of Local History and Genealogy, Spartanburg County Public Libraries, Spartanburg, South Carolina. Used with permission.

PETER FAYSSOUX STEVENS

Peter Fayssoux Stevens was born on his father's sugarcane plantation near Tallahassee, Florida, on June 22, 1830. His family moved to upstate South Carolina when he was a boy. Soon thereafter, his father, who had remained in Florida, died. Reared in modest circumstances – at least compared with Porter and DuBose – Stevens attended the Citadel, excelled in his classes, and became the institution's superintendent at the relatively young age of twenty-nine. At one time, it was his life's ambition to reach that lofty post. Despite his desire for a high-ranking position in the secular world, however, Stevens felt "called to the ministry of the Gospel" in the Episcopal Church.[6]

[6] Eberly, "Our Stevens Family," 5.

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Before he pursued the ministry, Stevens completed his military duties, joining the army when the Yankees assaulted South Carolina. He led a group of Citadel cadets to Morris Island to fire on the *Star of the West*, a ship dispatched by the United States government to reprovision troops stationed at Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor. Later, he organized the Holcombe Legion and fought in the Eastern Theater during some of the bloodiest battles of 1862, including the First Battle of Rappahannock Station, the Second Battle of Manassas (Bull Run), the Battle of Boonsboro Gap (South Mountain), and Sharpsburg (Antietam).[7] As superintendent of the Citadel and later as a defender of Charleston, South Carolina, he was repelling a homeland invasion. In the days leading to the Sharpsburg battle, Confederate troops marched into Maryland to assail northern troops. General Lee's decision to take the war to the enemy was more than Stevens, now a colonel, had bargained for when he enlisted.[8]

Wounded twice, Stevens resigned his commission and returned to South Carolina. He was offered a promotion to brigadier general if he would remain in the army, but he declined the honor. Instead, he became a parish priest in the St. John's Berkeley area outside of Charleston until war's end. During these years, he ministered to white plantation owners as well as enslaved persons. A bystander recalled seeing Stevens as he rode his horse to conduct church services, where Stevens "was always entertained at the various plantations and was always welcomed most warmly."[9]

Following the collapse of the Confederacy, Stevens exhibited a level of empathy for freed people surprising in a former

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[7] Ibid., 6–10. See also Gary L. Baker, *Cadets in Gray: The Story of the Cadets of the South Carolina Military Academy and the Cadet Rangers in the Civil War* (Columbia, SC: Palmetto Bookworks, 1989), 12–27; Colonel O. J. Bond, *The Story of the Citadel* (Richmond, VA: Garrett and Massie, 1936), 49–52; John Peyre Thomas, *The History of the South Carolina Military Academy, with Appendices* (Charleston, SC: Walker, Evans & Cogswell Co., 1893), 106–7.

[8] Peter Fayssoux Stevens to Nell [his daughter, Helen Capers DuPre], April 14, 1902, Correspondence 1902 file, DuPre-Moseley Family Collection, the Kennedy Room of Local History and Genealogy, Spartanburg County Public Libraries, Spartanburg, South Carolina. See also Eberly, "Our Stevens Family," 8. C. Eugene Scruggs, *Tramping with the Legion: A Carolina Rebel's Story* (Victoria, BC: Trafford Publishing, 2006), 147.

[9] The quote is found in Eberly, "Our Stevens Family," 8.

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Confederate officer. He took seriously the Episcopal Church's responsibility to Black communicants. "With them we stand or fall, and God will not permit us to be separated in interest or in fortune," the bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the CSA had observed in a pastoral letter on November 22, 1862. Stevens agreed.[10] He was determined to continue the spiritual mission of educating young Black men to become Episcopal ministers in their own churches. As a Stevens descendant later wrote, the "focus of his life's work. . . .was the educating of young negro men to become ministers of the Gospel to their own people. Also, he encouraged the colored people to organize their own congregations, to be ready to receive their own ministers."[11]

Stevens grew disillusioned with the church over racial issues. Following emancipation, even as Black communicants left the church, he urged freed people to organize congregations and prepare to receive their own ministers.[12] According to Stevens's own account, he was naïve. He soon recognized the extent of the racism among white southern Episcopalians.[13] Stevens eventually joined the

[10] The pastoral letter is quoted in J. Carleton Hayden, "After the War: The Mission and Growth of the Episcopal Church Among Blacks in the South, 1865-1877," *Historical Magazine of the Protestant Episcopal Church* 42, no. 4 (December 1973): 403. See also Eberly, "Our Stevens Family," 10–11.

[11] Eberly, "Our Stevens Family," 11.

[12] Approximately 90 percent of Blacks left the Protestant Episcopal Church of South Carolina in 1865. From a high of almost 3,000 members five years earlier, by the end of 1865 the South Carolina Protestant Episcopal Church found less than 300 Blacks in two Charleston churches, Cavalry and St. Marks, as well as a smattering of communicants in rural missions. See, for example, Ronald James Caldwell, *A History of the Episcopal Church Schism in South Carolina* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2017), 16–17. See also George Freeman Bragg, D.D., *The Episcopal Church and the Black Man* (Baltimore, MD: Self Published, 1918); George Freeman Bragg, D.D., *History of the Afro-American Group of the Episcopal Church* (Baltimore, MD: Church Advocate Press, 1922), 128; Albert Sidney Thomas, *A Historical Account of the Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina, 1820–1957* (Columbia, SC: R. L. Bryan Company, 1957), 385. One source reported, "The Diocese of South Carolina counted 2,973 Black Episcopalians in 1860—but by 1876, there were only 262 Black Episcopalians left in the diocese." John Gary Eichelberger Jr., "Caught in an 'Evil Infection': Postbellum Conflict in the Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina over the Role of African Americans in the Life of the Church" (master's thesis, University of the South, 2020), 28.

[13] Peter Fayssoux Stevens to editors of *The Record*, August 23, 1875, Correspondence 1875 file, DuPre-Moseley Family Collection, the Kennedy Room of Local History and Genealogy, Spartanburg County Public Libraries, Spartanburg, South Carolina. See also Caldwell, *A History of the Episcopal Church Schism*

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Reformed Episcopal Church, an Anglican church of evangelical heritage created in New York City in 1873, because the Episcopal Church rejected his repeated pleas to establish Black congregations under Black church leaders. Leaving the Episcopal Church was an agonizing decision, but he believed he had no other option. As he explained in his correspondence, "Upon the formation of the first congregation at Nazareth Chapel [a Black church], I drew up a letter of application to the Bishop for recognition. I do not now remember the distinct application for representation in the Convention but I endeavored to make the letter strictly accord with the Canon, and expected it to be laid before the Convention, as any other similar application would have been. The Bishop replied very kindly to that letter but did not lay it before the Convention for action."[14]

Stevens also submitted the application for a Black churchman to the convention for ordination, but church leaders rejected the petition. The applicant supposedly was not educated enough to serve. "I was well-nigh disheartened, and so was he, feeling that Race more than want of education was the cause of his rejection," Stevens complained.[15] When he realized that the convention would remain unresponsive, Stevens reached his fateful decision to depart, and he assumed his new position within the Reformed Episcopal Church in July 1875. Shortly thereafter, he was pleased to see that three Black men, Frank C. Ferguson, Lawrence Dawson, and Edward A. Forrest, were ordained deacons in the Reformed Episcopal Church.[16]

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in South Carolina, 17; Eberly, "Our Stevens Family," 11–12; Gardiner H. Shattuck Jr., *Episcopalians and Race: Civil War to Civil Rights* (Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky, 2000), 12–13.

[14] Stevens is quoted in Eberly, "Our Stevens Family," 12. For more on the Reformed Episcopal Church, see, for example, Allen C. Guelzo, *For the Union of Evangelical Christendom: The Irony of the Reformed Episcopalians* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994), and Allen C. Guelzo, "A Sufficiently Republican Church: George David Cummins and the Reformed Episcopalians in 1873," *The Filson Club History Quarterly* 69, no. 2 (April 1995): 115–39.

[15] Stevens is quoted in Eberly, "Our Stevens Family," 12.

[16] *Journal of the Proceedings of the Fifth General Counsel of the Reformed Episcopal Church, Held in the Chapel of the Second Reformed Episcopal Church, Philadelphia, PA, Commencing Wednesday, May 9, and Ending Tuesday, May 15, 1877, Published by*

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Reformed Episcopal Church clergy who visited South Carolina praised Stevens's work. "I found the Churches under the care of Rev. P. F. Stevens enjoying marked prosperity," reported Bishop Samuel Fallows following an 1877 visit. "Nearly all of the fourteen parishes and congregations of which he has the oversight have church edifices, erected by the means or labor of their own communicants." The buildings were important, but they were not as important as Stevens's efforts to increase church membership. "Under the competent leadership of our honored brother," Fallows continued, "these Churches, with their own ordained Deacons and Presbyters, will increase in number and usefulness, without imposing any additional burden upon the Missionary Treasury of the Church."[17]

Not everyone responded positively to Stevens's work on behalf of the church. He lived in a time when efforts to improve the conditions of African Americans infuriated rural whites. Accordingly, Stevens became an outcast among a segment of the white population. According to one report, Stevens "was refused lodging at an inn, but his friend, the Governor of South Carolina, ordered his entrance."[18] The Low Country witnessed relatively little racial violence during the 1860s and 1870s compared with many other areas of the state. By contrast, interior portions of the state, especially Upstate South Carolina, experienced numerous Ku Klux Klan attacks. Because the Low Country had a large African American

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Order of the Council (Philadelphia: James A. Moore, 1876), 22, 31. See also Guelzo, *For the Union of Evangelical Christendom*, 223; Herbert Geer McCarriar Jr., "A History of the Missionary Jurisdiction of the South of the Reformed Episcopal Church 1874-1970," *Historical Magazine of the Protestant Episcopal Church* 41, no. 2 (June 1972): 203–4.

[17] Fallows's report is found in *Journal of the Proceedings of the Sixth General Counsel of the Reformed Episcopal Church, Held in Emmanuel Church, Newark, New Jersey, Commencing Wednesday, May 8, and Ending Monday, May 13, 1878, Published by Order of the Council* (Philadelphia: James A. Moore, 1878), 45. For more information on the high regard that many persons of color felt for Stevens, see, for example, *Journal of the Proceedings of the Seventh General Counsel of the Reformed Episcopal Church, Held in Christ Church, Chicago, Illinois, Commencing Wednesday, May 28th, and Ending Wednesday, June 4th, 1879, Published by Order of the Council* (Philadelphia: James A. Moore, 1879), 36.

[18] McCarriar, "A History of the Missionary Jurisdiction of the South of the Reformed Episcopal Church 1874-1970," 205.

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population, Stevens regularly worked among people of color. Whites outside the church seldom interfered with his work.[19]

Stevens became a Reformed Episcopal Church bishop in 1879. For the rest of his life, until shortly before his death in 1910, he promoted Black communicants and nurtured Black congregations. Most notably, he founded the Bishop Cummins Training School to prepare Black communicants for the priesthood.[20] As a reporter noted in December 1909, Stevens "started out thirty-five years ago with absolutely nothing. Not a single member, nor preacher, nor church building, but today he has a well-organized denomination, with a Convocation that meets annually. Last year they reported 39 church buildings; members, 2,374; Sunday Schools, 80, with enrollment of 1,145. Each church has a pastor, and in nearly every case, the pastor is a man educated by Bishop Stevens himself."[21]

A. TOOMER PORTER

Anthony Toomer Porter was born in Georgetown, South Carolina, on January 31, 1828. His father, John Porter Jr., became a prominent lawyer and South Carolina state legislator. On December 16, 1819, John Porter married Esther Ann Toomer, and the couple produced five children – two sons and three daughters – three of whom survived into adulthood.[22] After losing his father at

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[19] Luker, "The Crucible of Civil War and Reconstruction," 66–68; McCarriar, "A History of the Missionary Jurisdiction of the South of the Reformed Episcopal Church 1874-1970," 199-203; Allen W. Trelease, *White Terror: The Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy and Southern Reconstruction* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1999 [1971]), 72, 115-17, 349, 353; Richard Zuczek, *State of Rebellion: Reconstruction in South Carolina* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1996), 55–59.

[20] "Colored Ministers Will Act at Rev. P. F. Stevens Burial; Body of Leader in Reformed Episcopal Church, Who Died Sunday, Will Sleep in Magnolia," *The State* [Columbia, South Carolina], January 11, 1910, n.p.

[21] The quote is found in McCarriar, "A History of the Missionary Jurisdiction of the South of the Reformed Episcopal Church 1874-1970," 219. See also Hurley E. Badders, *Remembering South Carolina's Old Pendleton District* (Charleston, SC: History Press, 2006), 119.

[22] The information in this section is derived primarily from Porter, *Led On!* Few secondary sources delve into Porter's early life apart from the cursory sketch found in "Rev. Dr. Anthony Toomer Porter," in *Cyclopedia of Eminent and Representative Men of the Carolinas of the Nineteenth Century,* 493.

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an early age, young Porter attended school at Mount Zion College in Winnsborough (Winnsboro), South Carolina, before laboring in the counting house of Robertson & Blacklock in Charleston. When his mother's health declined, he left Robertson & Blacklock to manage his family's rice plantation.

By the early 1850s, Porter had achieved everything that a man of his station could hope for. He was affluent, well-respected, ambitious, and by all accounts, an up-and-comer in his community. But Porter was satisfied with none of these things. For many young men, becoming an elite planter would have fulfilled their wildest ambitions, but Porter felt spiritually hollow. He experienced "an overwhelming sense of misery," which caused him to question the choices he had made. Once upon a time he had considered becoming an Episcopal priest, but had rejected the option. At age twenty-three, he regretted the road not taken. Anxious to change his life, Porter sold his enslaved persons and arranged to study for the ministry.[23]

As Porter explained many years later, he was uneasy with chattel slavery, but saw no practical alternative. The institution was too entrenched in southern society. "I think I was born opposed to slavery," he wrote in his memoirs. "I do not remember the time when I did not hate it. Yet what could I do to abolish it?" Aside from the economic self-interest of the planter elite, emancipation was detrimental to Blacks, in Porter's view. Enslaved persons suddenly set free without resources or assistance could not fend for themselves in southern society because racism was too prevalent. He believed no one would hire freed people as laborers and, as a result, unable to eke out a living, they would starve or be enslaved by a far less enlightened master than he.[24]

These self-serving rationalizations meant that Porter did not liberate enslaved persons when he disposed of his rice plantation. After he abandoned his life as a planter, he sold his enslaved persons to a man who promised not to break up Black families. It was the best Porter believed he could do given his views on African Americans. "I believe they are an inferior type of men, and the

[23] Porter, *Led On*, 75–80.
[24] Ibid., 71.

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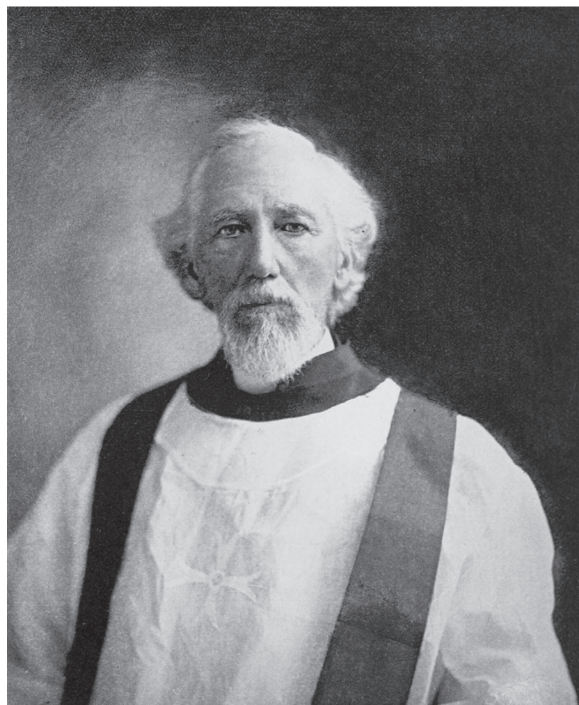

A. Toomer Porter. Reprinted from A. Toomer Porter, *Led On! Step by Step Scenes from Clerical, Military, Educational, and Plantation Life in the South, 1828-1898* (New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons, the Knickerbocker Press, 1898), frontispiece. Courtesy of Reading Room 2020, Alamy Stock Photos. Used with permission.

mass of them will be hewers of wood and drawers of water till the end of time – at the least, to the end of many generations," he wrote, reflecting a widespread belief among whites of his day. "Do for them as we will, a Black man will never be a white man."[25]

Freed from the encumbrances of his former life, Toomer Porter was ordained in the Episcopal Church on May 16, 1854. He spent the 1850s getting married, raising a family, and building up the Church of the Holy Communion in Charleston. In keeping with his paternalistic views of Blacks, he welcomed all races into his church, but did not allow whites and Blacks to worship together in the same pews. He also demonstrated an early interest in

[25] Ibid.

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education, establishing the first industrial school for girls in South Carolina.[26] Toward the end of the decade, Porter realized that talk of secession was in the air, but he initially ignored such ideas as ill-advised. Despite his initial reluctance to countenance secession, Porter became a firm supporter of the southern cause. During the Civil War, he served as a chaplain for the Washington Light Infantry.

Although he was not a combatant, Porter came under fire several times. His first taste of battle occurred during the Battle of Secessionville on June 16, 1862. The gunfire and cannon shot were intense, and he was astounded that he lived through the encounter. Porter spent the rest of the war shuttling between battlefields, ministering to the sick and wounded. He occasionally assisted in procuring soldiers' uniforms and other supplies. He was on hand to witness the burning of Columbia, South Carolina, in February 1865 and encountered General Joseph E. Johnston shortly before the general surrendered his forces at Bennett Place near Durham Station, North Carolina, on April 26, 1865.[27]

After the war was over, Porter believed that providing new educational opportunities for the freed people would aid the South in recovering. His efforts to establish schools in Charleston were described as "Herculean." Not long after Appomattox, Porter traveled to the North and solicited funds to educate freed people. As a result of his appeals, he gathered the funds necessary to create a school for more than 1,800 Black children, most of whom were the offspring of freed people.[28]

Porter is best remembered for creating the forerunner of what became the Porter-Gaud School. As Porter told the story, the idea came as he was visiting the grave of his son, who had died from yellow fever during the Civil War, at Magnolia Cemetery in

[26] Ibid., 106-17. See also Thomas, *A Historical Account of the Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina, 1820–1957*, 213–16.

[27] Porter detailed his war experiences at length in Porter, *Led On*, 130-90. See also Porter, *The History of a Work of Faith and Love in Charleston, South Carolina*, 5–6; Ron Field, "Clothing the Confederate Soldiers of South Carolina, 1861-1865," *Military Collector & Historian* 70, no. 1 (Spring 2018): 93.

[28] Porter, *Led On*, 220-25. See also Porter, *The History of a Work of Faith and Love in Charleston, South Carolina*, 6; Thomas, *A Historical Account of the Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina, 1820–1957*, 215.

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Charleston on October 25, 1867. During the four hours he was there, he heard a voice say, "Stop grieving for the dead, and do something for the living." If he had successfully created a school for freed people and their children, could he not also create a school for white children? By December 1867, he had formed the Holy Communion Church Institute, which was attached to his church.[29]

The school had modest beginnings. For fifty cents a month, or whatever farm produce a student could offer, the white children of Charleston could attend the institute and gain an "academic, moral, and spiritual education" regardless of their family's means. The school eventually moved onto the grounds of a former federal arsenal in Charleston. In 1886, the Holy Communion Church Institute became the Porter Academy (later changed to the Porter Military Academy). In 1964, long after Porter's death, the school moved to its present location, joined with the Gaud School and Watt School, and became the Porter-Gaud School.[30]

Porter also spent almost a decade as the rector at St. Mark's, a Black Episcopal church in Charleston, beginning in 1878. His tenure occurred at precisely the time that southern states were implementing restrictive segregation laws, supported by conservative courts and other federal institutions. He became a passionate champion of Blacks joining the Episcopal Church. When a biracial church proved to be an impossibility, Porter supported the establishment of separate white and Black churches. Looking back on his long campaign to bring more African Americans into the church, Porter confessed that "that dreadful contest waged in this diocese" was enervating, and "it almost killed me."[31]

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[29] Porter, *Led On*, 231-35. The quote is found on page 231. See also Thomas, *A Historical Account of the Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina, 1820–1957*, 763.

[30] Karen Greene, *Porter-Gaud School: The Next Step* (Easley, SC: Southern Historical Press, 1982), 11–12; Porter, *Led On*, 388–89.

[31] Porter, *Led On*, 308-9, 332-33. The quote is on page 337. See also Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution: 1863–1877* (New York: Francis Parkman Prize Edition, History Book Club, 2005 [1988]), 588-601; George Brown Tindall, *South Carolina Negroes, 1877-1900* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2003 [1952]), 195. St. Mark's Episcopal Church applied for admission as a full member of the South Carolina diocese in 1875, but the application was rejected. Guelzo, *For the Union of Evangelical Christendom*,

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Porter's most direct statement on African Americans in the postwar Episcopal Church came in a speech delivered in October 1883. Three months earlier, in July 1883, Episcopal bishops, priests, and lay people assembled at the University of the South in Sewanee, Tennessee, to discuss the relationship between races within the church.[32] Some white church leaders sought to keep Blacks accountable to white clergy. Whether Blacks and whites should worship together in a biracial church was an unresolved issue. Conference attendees were familiar with the example of the Methodist Episcopal Church, which had created the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church with their own clergy. Although Black Methodists were not considered equal to whites Methodists, they achieved a level of autonomy over their own local affairs. Despite this precedent, Episcopal Church leadership rejected the Methodist model, as well as a plan proposed by Alexander Gregg, the first bishop of Texas, to create a new position – a suffragan, or assistant bishop – to evangelize African Americans. After several days of debate, the conference approved a plan to create a "special Missionary organization" for each diocese that contained large numbers of African Americans. Blacks would still worship separately from whites but would fall under the authority of a white diocesan bishop.[33]

Black Episcopalians argued vehemently against the Sewanee plan. When the General Convention assembled in Philadelphia in October 1883, it was the topic of much debate. The House of

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220; Gardiner H. Shattuck Jr., "'One Fold and One Chief Shepherd': The Sewanee Conference of 1883 and the Beginnings of Racial Segregation in the Episcopal Church," in *Vale of Tears: New Essays on Religion and Reconstruction*, eds. Edward J. Blum and W. Scott Poole (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2005), 59–60; Thomas, *A Historical Account of the Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina, 1820–1957*, 89.

[32] Shattuck, "'One Fold and One Chief Shepherd,'" 61–65.

[33] Shattuck, *Episcopalians and Race*, 12–14; Thomas, *A Historical Account of the Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina, 1820–1957*, 449-50. See also Rt. Rev. W. B. W. Howe, "Paper," in *Authorized Report of the Proceedings of the Eighth Church Congress in the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, Held in the City of Richmond, Virginia, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, October 24th, 25th, 26th, and 27th, 1882*, ed. by the Committee on the Publication Appointed by the Executive Committee (New York: Thomas Whittaker, Publisher, Nos. 2 and 3, Bible House, 1882), 83–90.

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Bishops adopted the plan, but the proposal did not gain sufficient support within the House of Deputies. Against this backdrop, Toomer Porter delivered his speech.[34] Referring to African Americans in the Episcopal Church, he observed, "We will grant on average that their religious knowledge was not very much; that their moral standard was and is not very high." Nonetheless, believed Porter, this acknowledgement did not relieve ministers from their duty. Based on the experiences of white rectors working in Black churches, "some of us know there are to be found among these people in our midst as fine specimens of Christian character – men and women – possessed of the finest traits which adorn the human family."[35] Because African Americans could act as good Christians – a controversial position among some whites in the 1880s – a devoted Episcopal clergyman had one clear duty: "Just exactly what we would do to any other men anywhere in the world – preach the gospel to them – the old, old story unimproved by modern criticisms. Tell them of the Jesus who loved them and died for them: who loves them and now intercedes for them."[36]

Like Peter Fayssoux Stevens, A. Toomer Porter demonstrated a degree of empathy for African American Episcopalians. During the Civil War, Porter supported the Confederacy and believed in the southern cause. After the Confederate surrender, he accepted the reality of a defeated southern government. Porter also believed in the mission of the Episcopal Church and thought that unity could be achieved if Black clergymen were permitted to attend diocesan conventions and participate in decision-making within the church. He never saw Blacks as equal to whites in all respects, but he did advocate that all should have access to an education and enjoy the freedom to worship. Jim Crow ruled the land,

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[34] Shattuck, "'One-Fold and One Chief Shepherd,'" 65–66; Lyon G. Tyler, "Drawing the Color Line in the Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina, 1876–1890: The Role of Edward McCrady, Father and Son," *The South Carolina History Magazine* 91, no. 2 (April 1990): 112–13.

[35] A. Toomer Porter, *Speech of Rev. A. Toomer Porter, D.D., of Charleston, S.C., before the General Convention of the P.E. Church in Philadelphia, October 1883, on the Action of the Conference Held at Sewanee, Tenn., August, 1883, relative to the Work of the Church Among the Colored People of the United States* (Charleston, SC: The News and Courier Book Presses, 1883), 7.

[36] Ibid., 9. See also Shattuck, "'One Fold and One Chief Shepherd,'" 70.

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however, spreading an anti-egalitarian message through every institution in American life, including the church. When Porter lost the battle for a united Episcopal Church in South Carolina, he accepted the reality of racially divided congregations, and the lack of Black participation in white diocesan conventions. Unlike Peter Fayssoux Stevens, who left the church over the issue, A. Toomer Porter worked inside the Episcopal Church until his death in 1902.[37]

WILLIAM PORCHER DUBOSE

William Porcher DuBose was the most prominent of the three Episcopal clergy profiled in this article. DuBose was once described as "the only important creative theologian that the Episcopal Church in the United States has produced." His long association with the University of the South and his prolific scholarly writings ensured that he gained a level of prominence beyond Peter Fayssoux Stevens and A. Toomer Porter.[38]

DuBose was born in Winnsboro, South Carolina, on April 11, 1836. Almost immediately, his family moved to a plantation, Farmington, nine miles north of Winnsboro. After his grandfather and uncle bought adjacent plantations, the family formed a tight-knit community that offered advantages unavailable to most rural inhabitants. DuBose's nephew observed that Farmington became an idyllic plantation community consisting of "a patriarchal family and an agricultural and mechanical community and school."[39] At the age of fifteen, DuBose entered the Citadel and, like Stevens before him, excelled in his studies, ranking first in his class for two of his three years there. He also had a conversion experience while he was a cadet. "I was born and bred in the Church and brought up religiously in what St. Paul calls the nurture and admonition of

[37] Tyler, "Drawing the Color Line in the Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina, 1876-1890," 122.

[38] The quote is found in Luker, "The Crucible of Civil War and Reconstruction," 50.

[39] The quote is found in Ibid., 51. See also W. Eric Emerson and Karen Stokes, "Introduction," in William Porcher DuBose, *Faith, Valor, and Devotion: The Civil War Letters of William Porcher DuBose*, eds. W. Eric Emerson and Karen Stokes (Columbia, SC: The University of South Carolina Press, 2010), xiv-xv.

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the Lord," DuBose wrote. Nonetheless, by the time he was studying at the Citadel, he had begun to neglect his religious life.[40]

One evening, he and two other cadets were returning from a grueling series of marches. Exhausted from their travails, the young men occupied a single hotel room. As the other cadets slumbered, DuBose, though weary, could not sleep. He said his prayers. As he recalled six decades later, "I knelt to go through the form, when all of a sudden there swept over me a feeling of the emptiness and unmeaningness of the act and of my whole life and self. I leapt to my feet trembling, and then that happened which I can only describe by saying that a light shone about me and a Presence filled the room." He viewed this as a conversion experience, and thereafter resolved to serve the Lord in whatever capacities that he could.[41] After graduating with honors from the Citadel in December 1855, DuBose earned a Master of Arts from the University of Virginia before entering the diocesan seminary in Camden, South Carolina. Health problems forced him to leave the seminary in the spring of 1860. He returned in the fall, but national events required that he depart to defend the South Carolina coastline from Federal gunboats.[42]

The Civil War was raging, and DuBose felt conflicted. He was studying for the ministry, but southern men were compelled to take up arms. The Citadel had trained him to do his part, and he was anxious to fulfill his duty as he saw it. After obtaining the consent of his bishop, DuBose joined the Holcombe Legion as an adjutant under the command of Peter Fayssoux Stevens. The legion spent the fall of 1861 and winter of 1862 protecting rail lines near Charleston. Later, the troops marched off to Virginia and participated in some of the worst fighting in the Eastern Theater of the Civil War.[43] DuBose was injured at the Second Battle of

[40] DuBose, *Turning Points in My Life*, 17.

[41] Ibid., 18. DuBose also recounts the experience in DuBose, "Reminiscences," 30.

[42] Emerson and Stokes, "Introduction," xvi; Luker, "The Crucible of Civil War and Reconstruction in the Experience of William Porcher DuBose," 52–53. For information on the Camden seminary, see especially Thomas, *A Historical Account of the Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina, 1820–1957*, 687–89.

[43] Scruggs, *Tramping with the Legion*, 115–84.

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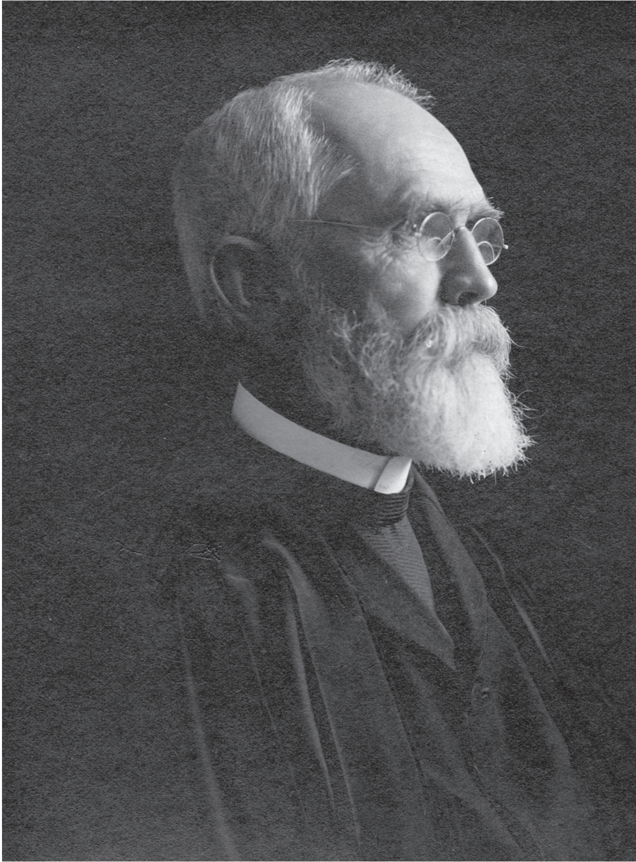

William Porcher DuBose. Courtesy of the William R. Laurie University Archives and Special Collections, the University of the South, Sewanee, Tennessee. Used with permission.

Manassas, and later taken prisoner. After languishing in the Union prison at Fort Delaware for a few months, he was exchanged in 1862. On December 13, 1863, DuBose was commissioned as a chaplain in the army. He was assigned to the brigade of General Joseph B. Kershaw.[44] Anticipating that Union General William T. Sherman would attack Charleston after he captured Savannah, Georgia, in December 1864, Kershaw's Brigade returned to South Carolina. They found Sherman heading toward Columbia. Too small to arrest Sherman's advance, the brigade joined Confederate

[44] DuBose, "Reminiscences," 85–125.

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General Joseph E. Johnston's troops in North Carolina.[45]After General Johnston surrendered his army on April 26, 1865, William Porcher DuBose, newly discharged from Confederate service, set out for Winnsboro. He resolved to check on his family's plantations and find his wife. Beyond that, his plans were uncertain. He had, by his own accounting, $1.50 to his name. The war had left him destitute.[46]

DuBose remained true to the social mores of the Old South during the postwar years. Despite his many virtues as a profound thinker – he became the chaplain and a professor at the University of the South beginning in the 1870s and eventually became a well-regarded Christian theologian – DuBose was not interested in ministering to African Americans. He became an apologist for slavery and the Southern Confederacy, accepting the Lost Cause mythology, which romanticized the antebellum South as a virtuous white supremacist regime.[47]

DuBose unambiguously defended white supremacy throughout his life. In a letter dated March 5, 1898, he promoted his views on slavery: "It ought to be remembered that at the formation of our

[45] DuBose's wartime experiences are recounted in DuBose, "Reminiscences," 69–136; DuBose, *Turning Points in My Life*, 33–52.

[46] DuBose, "Reminiscences," 136-39; Emerson and Stokes, "Introduction," xvii-xxvi; Luker, "The Crucible of Civil War and Reconstruction in the Experience of William Porcher DuBose," 63–64.

[47] W. Eric Emerson and Karen Stokes, "Epilogue," in William Porcher DuBose, *Faith, Valor, and Devotion: The Civil War Letters of William Porcher DuBose*, eds. W. Eric Emerson and Karen Stokes (Columbia, SC: The University of South Carolina Press, 2010), 334-35. The literature on the Lost Cause is voluminous. See, for example, Gaines M. Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy: Defeat, the Lost Cause, and the Emergence of the New South, 1865 to 1913* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987); Charles Reagan Wilson, *Baptized in Blood: The Religion of the Lost Cause, 1865–1920*, 2d. ed. (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2009); Paul M. Gaston, *The New South Creed* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1970); William C. Davis, *The Lost Cause: Myths and Realities of the Confederacy* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1996); Gary W. Gallagher and Alan T. Nolan, eds., *The Myth of the Lost Cause and Civil War History* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2000); J. Michael Martinez and Robert M. Harris, "Graves, Worms, and Epitaphs: Confederate Monuments in the Southern Landscape," in *Confederate Symbols in the Contemporary South*, eds. J. Michael Martinez, William D. Richardson, and Ron McNinch-Su (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2000), 144-47. A classic articulation of the Lost Cause mythology can be found in Edward A. Pollard, *The Lost Cause: A New Southern History of the Confederacy* (New York: E. B. Treat and Company, 1866).

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government no one questioned the propriety of an institution of slavery. The sentiment against it grew up after," he insisted. He repeated the classic defense of southern secession. Southerners, DuBose argued, "might or might not be willing to reform themselves" when it came to abolishing slavery – a dubious proposition at best – but no matter, for "the South naturally resented this invasion of their rights and the interference with their conscience." As DuBose saw it, the federal government, controlled by vexatious northerners appealing to a "higher" law than the United States Constitution, sought to undermine southern rights. These transgressions clearly were unconstitutional because "the Government which had been adopted by a compact between the sections was not going to abide by its own compact & was going to subordinate the law to which they had agreed to another 'higher' law to which they had not agreed." These northern illegalities left the South with few options. Southerners "thought they had the right, & that it was time, to withdraw from the compact and dissolve the common government. And so they withdrew from the Union." In an audacious statement of revisionist history, DuBose concluded that "No one questions now that slavery had to be abolished, but in the immediate quarrel the South was legally and constitutionally right. . . ."[48]

Four years later, DuBose penned a retrospective account of Wade Hampton, the legendary former Confederate general officer and South Carolina governor. In his testimonial, DuBose rhapsodized over the "great and beautiful" virtues of slavery. Acknowledging that outlawing slavery was "a necessary step in the moral progress of the world," he lamented the characterization of the institution as a sin without "loving the good that was in it." DuBose did not believe that slavery was an evil, immoral, dehumanizing, corrupt and corrupting form of state-sanctioned torture. The concept of human bondage remained viable; it was the practice that had fallen short. In DuBose's view, slavery, properly employed, had a place within a modern constitutional republic.[49]

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[48] Letter from W. P. DuBose to Mrs. Joseph Huger, March 5, 1898, Habersham Elliott Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

[49] William Porcher DuBose, "Wade Hampton," *The Sewanee Review* 10, no. 3 (July 1902): 365.

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DuBose did not question the notion that African Americans were inferior beings who presented a danger to whites. With slavery outlawed after 1865, white leaders desired a form of social control to take its place. DuBose believed that freed people, left to their own devices, would be lawless, promiscuous, and undisciplined. A well-ordered government must not allow freed people to run wild in the streets. In the name of order, stability, consistency, and predictability in society, whites must control and direct Black folks precisely as enslavers had controlled and directed enslaved peoples before emancipation. Like other segregationists, DuBose believed that the most effective means of accomplishing this goal was to establish a color line. With emancipation, Blacks were free to enjoy private lives within carefully prescribed limits on their side of that line. When whites needed manual laborers or domestic servants, they would call on Blacks to cross the line and perform the necessary tasks. Afterward, they were expected to return to their proper station.[50] On those occasions when African Americans forgot their place – most notably, during the Reconstruction era – whites developed a mechanism for social and political control. "The condition of things just compelled some such organization as the Ku Klux Klan," DuBose observed. "It was an inspiration of genius – the most discreet and successful management of the situation that could have been devised."[51]

DuBose donned a Confederate uniform during the Civil War and fought unsuccessfully to create a slaveholding government. He was left embittered by his experiences, distrustful of Union soldiers, demoralized by the northern-led Reconstruction regime, and desperate to ensure that law and order prevailed throughout

[50] DuBose, "Reminiscences," 140. See also Walter Edgar, *South Carolina: A History* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1998), 448-52; A. J. Langguth, *After Lincoln: How the North Won the Civil War and Lost the Peace* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2014), 360–63.

[51] DuBose, "Reminiscences," 140. See also Ralph Luker, *A Southern Tradition in Theology and Social Criticism 1830–1930: The Religious Liberalism and Social Conservatism of James Warley Miles, William Porcher DuBose and Edgar Gardner Murphy,* Studies in American Religion 11 (New York and Toronto: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1984), 166.

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the postwar South.[52] "When at the close of the war I returned home and as soon as possible entered upon my permanent ministry, conditions with us were for some years no better than in war," he wrote in his memoir, *Turning Points in My Life*. "My family had been a wealthy one before the war, but that was now utterly impoverished." Aside from his diminished personal circumstances, "the country was stript of the barest means of subsistence; our social and political condition was unendurable and hopeless."[53] As he surveyed his family's homestead in April 1865, DuBose was dispirited. "At last we arrived at Winnsboro. The town had been pretty well burnt. There were not only Yankee troops, but *negro* troops, encamped near our home. These men seemed to be under very little discipline because they ranged and roamed through the country, more and more demoralizing the native negroes."[54]

Worse than the demoralization of the "native negroes" was the possibility that the attitudes of the African American Federal troops might influence southern freed people and undermine social relations between the races. "The negroes, who up to that time had been with ourselves, were gradually alienated, and even those who were profoundly faithful, for safety to themselves were forced to be silent and secretive with us, so that we never knew what was going on," DuBose wrote. It was an untenable situation. "There were nights when at the negro quarters, a quarter of a mile from the house, we could hear the noisy carryings on of negro soldiers from Winnsboro. It might have been very dangerous."[55]

In his memoirs, DuBose explained that his attitude toward Reconstruction was shaped by the lawlessness that he witnessed beginning in 1865. "The carpet-bag regime was at its height and its worst," he recalled. "The negroes were influenced and became for a time very dangerous." Like many white southerners, he longed for the day when Federal troops departed and southern leaders

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[52] Emerson and Stokes, "Introduction,", xvii-xxv; Luker, "The Crucible of Civil War and Reconstruction in the Experience of William Porcher Dubose," 53–64.

[53] DuBose, *Turning Points in My Life*, 51.

[54] DuBose, "Reminiscences," 139-40. Emphasis in the original. See also Luker, *A Southern Tradition*, 162–63.

[55] DuBose, "Reminiscences," 140.

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could restore political, economic, and social order, replacing "roaming" Blacks with white southerners who would not tolerate the permissiveness of freed people, carpetbaggers (transplanted northerners), and scalawags (white southerners with northern sensibilities).[56]

DuBose was determined to persevere despite daunting personal circumstances. Following his ordination as a priest on September 9, 1866, DuBose served in St. John's Parish in Fairfield, which included St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, as well as St. John's Church in Winnsboro. Because Union troops under General Sherman had burned the Winnsboro Church, DuBose and the congregation worshipped inside the local courthouse.[57]

In 1868, DuBose moved on to Trinity Episcopal Church in Abbeville. There he observed numerous episodes of crime and destruction, which he attributed to Black soldiers and freed people running amok. Three years later, he was elected chaplain and professor of moral science at the University of the South in Sewanee, Tennessee. He left South Carolina permanently. DuBose eventually helped to establish the School of Theology there. In the words of a report from the Roberson Project on Slavery, Race, and Reconciliation, the University of the South was the "only institution of higher education designed from the start to represent, protect, and promote the South's civilization of bondage; and launched expressly for the slaveholding society of the South." Moreover, in "Sewanee's first several decades after the Civil War, its identity as 'a child of the Confederacy' emerged in many ways: Those who held key leadership roles typically had been slave owners, defenders of slavery and secession, and Confederate military leaders; and some of the most consequential donors had been the owners or beneficiaries of some of the largest slavery-based plantations in the antebellum South." DuBose was a part of this southern tradition, and he never seriously questioned it.[58] He was associated with the

[56] Ibid., 144. See also Zuczek, *State of Rebellion*, 59.

[57] Emerson and Stokes, "Epilogue," 334; Luker, *A Southern Tradition*, 163–64.

[58] The University of the South, "A Research Summary on Slavery and Race at the University of the South and in the Community of Sewanee," the Roberson Project on Slavery, Race, and Reconciliation, accessed January 11, 2023,

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university until he retired in 1908. He died a decade later, on August 18, 1918.[59]

For decades, the School of Theology at the University of the South honored DuBose's international reputation as a groundbreaking theologian with a series of annual lectures on August 18, the anniversary of his death. The tradition extended back 97 years to 1924. By 2021, however, the university recognized that "DuBose is not the name that best represents our context and what the School of Theology and our alumni have to offer the 21st-century church." Accordingly, the university changed the name to the "Alumni Lectures" in repudiation of the pro-slavery views of the lectures' original namesake.[60]

DuBose viewed his duty through the eyes of a white supremacist. Clearly, he was a Lost Cause apologist. He felt the pain of former Confederates who, in his view, were brought low by Federal troops and their allies. During their hour of need in an uncertain, dangerous world, the white communicants in his church sought solace. DuBose intended to provide that solace. In the words of one commentator, DuBose accepted that "the peculiar function of priests in their human qualities" was "to bear the burdens of a defeated people – a disenfranchised and impoverished elite, beset by carpetbagging enemies, traitorous scalawags, ungrateful and dangerous Negroes in their midst."[61]

THREE DIVERGENT PATHS

The lives and ministries of Peter Fayssoux Stevens, A. Toomer Porter, and William Porcher DuBose illustrate the range of choices

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https://new.sewanee.edu/roberson-project/learn-more/research-summary/. See also Luker, *A Southern Tradition*, 171.

[59] DuBose, "Reminiscences," 139-51; Emerson and Stokes, "Epilogue," 334; Luker, *A Southern Tradition*, 164–65.

[60] David Paulsen, "Sewanee's School of Theology Drops Name of Slavery Apologist DuBose from Annual Lecture Series," Episcopal News Service, April 13, 2021, accessed November 27, 2022, https://www.episcopalnewsservice.org/2021/04/13/sewanees-school-of-theology-drops-name-of-slavery-apologist-from-annual-lecture-series/.

[61] Luker, "The Crucible of Civil War and Reconstruction in the Experience of William Porcher Dubose," 69.

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facing white ministers in the postwar church. Stevens argued that the freed people should be welcomed into a segregated Episcopal Church. Although they would not enjoy full membership with whites, Black communicants should have the right to choose their own leaders and make decisions about their congregations. Porter also favored a measure of autonomy for African American Episcopalians, but he was willing to allow white church leaders to exercise paternalistic control over their decisions. DuBose disagreed. He believed freed people were dangerous and that African Americans had no place in the Episcopal Church.

Although the backgrounds of these men before the Civil War were similar, time and circumstances contributed to their varying reactions to the Civil War and Reconstruction. Stevens and Porter fulfilled their duties by ministering to Black communicants despite the emergence of Jim Crow. DuBose was a figure of the Old South with an abiding faith in the Lost Cause mythology. DuBose's experiences convinced him that African Americans should be kept at a distance. Importantly, these three men were ordained at different times. Porter was ordained during the antebellum era in 1854, and Stevens on the eve of the war in 1861. Although he became a deacon in 1863, DuBose was not ordained a priest until 1866, during Reconstruction. When Porter and Stevens assumed their ministerial duties, they viewed the evangelization of African Americans as a duty of Episcopal ministers. Thomas F. Davis, the Episcopal bishop of South Carolina from 1853 until 1871, encouraged Blacks to join the church, and Porter and Stevens accepted Davis's direction. When they were ordained, the institution of slavery still existed and provided social control.[62] Younger than Stevens and Porter, DuBose was not ordained until after the war. Still reeling from the social upheaval precipitated by the end of slavery in 1865, many white southerners viewed the freed people with suspicion and resentment. DuBose looked upon the possibility of racial violence with growing alarm. Moreover, when DuBose and his young family moved

[62] Badders, *Remembering South Carolina's Old Pendleton District*, 97; Stevens, Autobiography, 100; Emerson and Stokes, "Epilogue," 334; Luker, *A Southern Tradition*, 163-64; Porter, *Led On*, 106-17; Thomas, *A Historical Account of the Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina, 1820–1957*, 213–16.

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to Abbeville in 1868, the violence inflicted by the Ku Klux Klan on African Americans was common. DuBose became the rector of Trinity Episcopal Church in Abbeville at the same times as the "Ku Klux" spread to the South Carolina Upcountry.[63]

In his study of the Ku Klux Klan during Reconstruction, Allen W. Trelease noted that Klan-related violence was especially prevalent in South Carolina in 1868, "but it was restricted almost entirely to twelve northwestern counties in which the balance between races and parties was more equal than elsewhere in the state." Klansmen harassed white Republicans and assailed them at every opportunity. According to Trelease, "In Abbeville, still the worst county in this respect, harassment extended to the political assassination of two legislators."[64] In addition, Trinity Episcopal Church was the home of Abbeville's gentry before the war. DuBose later wrote that the "church at Abbeville was one of the most beautiful in the state and its congregation and community one of the most distinguished." He remembered that "Many of the most distinguished men of the state had been born there, and many more had been educated there at the famous old school at Willington, by the famous old teacher, Dr. Waddell." After the war, when DuBose became the rector at Trinity, many former Confederate leaders were congregants. "In my congregation there were a number of leading lawyers, judges, etc.," he wrote. DuBose was surrounded by the Old Southern elite. They feared their loss of control over Black folks. After three years in this environment, DuBose departed for the University of the South, an institution founded by former Confederate leaders. It was little wonder that

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[63] DuBose, "Reminiscences," 143-44. For the rise of the KKK in Abbeville, see Herbert Shapiro, "The Ku Klux Klan During Reconstruction: The South Carolina Episode," *The Journal of Negro History* 49, no. 1 (January 1964): 35–36, 37. See also Jerry L. West, *The Reconstruction Ku Klux Klan in York County, South Carolina, 1865–1877* (Jefferson, N.C. and London: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2002), 32, 33, 40; Lou Falkner Williams, *The Great South Carolina Ku Klux Klan Trials, 1871–1872* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1996), 20–22.

[64] The quotes are found in Trelease, *White Terror*, 115, 116. See also pages 72, 349, 353. See also Edgar, *South Carolina*, 398, 399-401; Luker, "The Crucible of Civil War and Reconstruction in the Experience of William Porcher Dubose," 66–68; Luker, *A Southern Tradition*, 166.

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he accepted the Lost Cause mythology, supported a white supremacist regime, and looked upon freed people as undesirables.[65]

Living in the South Carolina Low Country in 1868, Peter Fayssoux Stevens and A. Toomer Porter did not experience the fear of freed people supposedly marauding throughout the countryside. Ku Klux Klan activity was largely nonexistent in the Low Country. Charleston was the epicenter of the movement to attract African Americans to the Episcopal Church following the exodus at war's end. Moreover, Stevens and Porter frequently interacted with freed people. Their proximity to people of color – witnessing their births, marriages, struggles to eke out a living, and their deaths – instilled a level of empathy in these men that did not exist elsewhere. They did not regard African Americans as alien "others" bent on destroying the southern way of life, as DuBose did. Accordingly, Stevens's and Porter's sympathies differed markedly from DuBose's.[66]

A white clergyman in South Carolina during the 1870s and 1880s had at least three choices regarding African American Episcopalians. If the minister disagreed with the church's decision to allow Blacks to join while denying them the right to choose their leaders and manage their congregations, the minister could petition for a change. Afterward, he could leave the church if the change did not occur, as Stevens chose to do. Alternatively, the minister could petition for a change but remain within the church even if the change did not occur, as Porter chose to do. Finally, a minister could argue for the elimination of African American congregations as necessary to the social order, as DuBose chose to do. The lives and ministries of these three clergymen illustrate the range of choices facing Episcopal churches

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[65] DuBose is quoted in DuBose, "Reminiscences," 143-44. See also Jon Alexander, O.P., "Introduction," in William Porcher DuBose, *Selected Writings*, ed. Jon Alexander, O.P. (New York and Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1988), 8; Larry S. Bell and Marvin L. Cann, "Silver Spoons and Spyglasses: The Lifestyle of the Abbeville Gentry, 1820-1860," *The South Carolina Historical Magazine* 115, no. 4 (October 2014): 317-18; Luker, "The Crucible of Civil War and Reconstruction in the Experience of William Porcher Dubose," 66–68.

[66] Eberly, "Our Stevens Family," 11–12; McCarriar, "A History of the Missionary Jurisdiction of the South of the Reformed Episcopal Church 1874-1970," 203; Porter, *Led On*, 223–25.

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in the United States during the nineteenth century and reflected fissures within the larger society. Racism was, and continues to be, a vexing problem for many Americans. It was little wonder that the myriad choices confronting the citizenry were reflected in the Episcopal Church.

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