

PART I

History

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CHAPTER 1

Locating the Anglican Communion in the History of Anglicanism

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1867 and All That

On September 24, 1867, at 11 o'clock in the morning, 76 bishops representing Anglican and Episcopal Churches across the globe gathered without great ceremony for a quiet said Service of Holy Communion in Lambeth Palace Chapel. They were keenly observed – from outside the Palace – by press and commentators alike, because this was the opening service of the first Lambeth Conference. This gathering of bishops marks the self-conscious birth of the Anglican Communion. Bringing together a college of bishops from around the world, the Conference was a step unprecedented outside the Roman Catholic Church in the second millennium of Christianity, as bishops of three traditions within Anglicanism were consciously gathered together in what we can now recognize as a “Christian World Communion.”¹ The 76 constituted only just over half of the bishops who had been invited, but they had deliberately been invited as being in communion with the See of Canterbury, and they now began to understand themselves as belonging to one family.

Groundbreaking as it was, the calling of the first Lambeth Conference by Charles Longley, the 92nd Archbishop of Canterbury, represented the culmination of a process of self-understanding which had been developing rapidly over the previous 100 years. In the previous decades, many had articulated a vision intended to draw the growing diversity of Anglican Churches and dioceses into one fellowship and communion. In a seminal moment some 16 years before, for example, 17 bishops had processed together at the invitation of the then Archbishop of Canterbury, John Sumner, at a Jubilee

¹This term has become widely accepted in the ecumenical world to describe those councils, federations, or gatherings of families of churches which share a common heritage or point of origin, namely, the World Methodist Council (1881), Lutheran World Federation (1947), and the Reformed Ecumenical Council (1946).

Service to mark 150 years of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. It was an event which had been enthusiastically greeted at the time as the dawn of a new age and a harbinger of things to come. Henry Caswell, one of the first American clerics to take up a ministry in England, had taken inspiration from the Jubilee Service, seeing the presence of the bishops there as a trailblazer for “the 108 bishops of the Anglican Communion whom they may be considered to represent” (see Stephenson 1967, 43).

However, the opening of the first Lambeth Conference may be reliably taken as the first occasion when the Churches of the Anglican Communion – in the persons of their bishops at least – acted deliberately and consciously as a worldwide communion. The Archbishop of Canterbury presided, the Archbishops of Dublin and Armagh read the lessons, and the Bishop of Illinois preached the sermon. The first Lambeth Conference formalized a profound change in the consciousness of Anglicanism, acknowledging its evolution from an essentially British Protestantism into something which could identify itself as a global expression of the Church Catholic. Now, an episcopally ordered communion could claim to reach out as an equal partner to the Orthodox Churches and the episcopal Lutheran Churches of Scandinavia with a vision of an episcopally ordered global family to rival that of the Roman Catholic Church. As a result of the first Lambeth Conference, Anglicanism gained the confidence to become a global communion in which diversity of church life, adapted to local cultures and increasingly pluralistic in its expression, could flourish; an international movement in which the voices and expressions of church life far removed from the established Church of England could contribute to and shape a distinctive form of Christianity.

Early Diversity: A Prehistory of the Anglican Communion, 1530–1776

While the Anglican Communion as a self-conscious entity belongs to the second half of the nineteenth century, its origins lie alongside the very roots and foundations of Anglicanism. It is possible to talk of two distinct periods in the history of Anglicanism prior to the emergence of the Anglican Communion, with each contributing philosophical and theological understandings to shape the later reality.

Between 1530 and 1776, Anglicans defended their faith as a national expression of Christian discipleship lived out in the realms of a monarch who ruled “by the grace of God,” and who was therefore correctly acknowledged as the supreme head or governor of the church as well as the state in the territories subject to him.² The early architects of Anglicanism did not see themselves as establishing a new branch of Christianity, but

² Article 37 of the Articles of 1571: “The King’s Majesty hath the chief power in this Realm of England, and other his Dominions, unto whom the chief Government of all Estates of this Realm, whether they be Ecclesiastical or Civil, in all causes doth appertain, and is not, nor ought to be, subject to any foreign Jurisdiction. Where we attribute to the King’s Majesty the chief government, by which Titles we understand the minds of some slanderous folks to be offended; we give not our Princes the ministering either of God’s Word, or of the Sacraments, the which thing the Injunctions also lately set forth by Elizabeth our Queen do most plainly testify; but that only prerogative, which we see to have been given always to all godly Princes in holy Scriptures by God himself; that is, that they should rule all estates and degrees committed to their charge by God, whether they be Ecclesiastical or Temporal, and restrain with the civil sword the stubborn and evil-doers.”

as discharging their responsibility, under God and the monarch, to order church life in their nations in a way which conformed to the will of God expressed in Holy Scripture. It was essentially a political vision of Christian faith, justifiable to the rest of Christendom on the grounds that it was right for the British and Irish peoples, under a Christian monarch, to determine and establish for themselves the form of their church and worship.

Such an explicit nationalism, however, also meant that, from its very beginning, Anglicanism carried the seed of the idea that there should be autonomy for each church in each nation, governing itself in a way which was authentic for that people. This principle was from the first acknowledged quite naturally beyond the English realm. In the sixteenth century, the Protestant Churches of the European continent were natural partners in faith and life. In the seventeenth century, political necessity allowed established religion to take very different paths north and south of the English–Scottish border. Anglicanism has always understood itself as belonging to a wider family of churches rather than as constituting a self-sufficient church, and this was particularly true as it developed distinct and separate expressions of Christian life in the different nations of the British Isles. The theological principle that each people was competent to decide its own religion and liturgy formed part of the foundations of Anglicanism, and this bore fruit centuries later as national and regional churches were formed to sustain Anglicanism in very different environments.

Even in the earliest period, this diversity was apparent in the distinct Anglican Churches of the Atlantic Isles. The four dioceses of Wales were part of the Province of Canterbury, and the nation of Wales had been united to the Crown of England by the will of the Westminster Parliament in 1536. There was nevertheless a real sense that religious provision for the people of Wales should be adapted to their own language and culture. This contrasted with the way in which the institutions of civil government imposed English methods of state control. While the officers of the state were required to govern Wales through the medium of English, Welsh remained the language of faith. The Bible was rapidly translated by a series of Welsh scholars in the late sixteenth century, and a Welsh Prayer Book followed a decade later.³ Care was taken to promote Welsh speakers to the episcopate in Wales,⁴ and Anglicanism was adapted to an indigenous form.

Across the Irish Sea, the Church of Ireland was established by the Irish Parliament as a separate and independent church in 1536, and survived as such until Ireland was itself united politically with Great Britain in 1801, and a United Church of England and Ireland created. In 1615, the Church of Ireland created its own body of doctrine with the publication of the 104 Articles of Religion, which were more explicit in their Calvinism, even if the Thirty-Nine Articles were also adopted alongside them in 1634.

³The 1599 translation of the 1552 Book of Common Prayer, and the 1667 translation of the 1662 Book of Common Prayer.

⁴Richard Davies, who assisted in the translation of the New Testament, was Bishop of St. David's between 1561 and 1581. William Morgan, principal translator of the Bible into Welsh, was both Bishop of Llandaff (1595–1601) and Bishop of St. Asaph (1601–1604). He was succeeded by his fellow translator, Richard Parry, who was Bishop of St. Asaph between 1604 and 1622.

The translation of the Scriptures into Irish was promoted by the Irish episcopate between 1580 and 1680, although the episcopate came to be dominated increasingly by English or Scottish clergy. This independent life was extinguished with the political union of England and Ireland, but it remained as a clear precedent that Anglicanism was a faith capable of expression in more than one church.

The early chapters of the life of the Scottish Episcopal Church were much stormier, being bound up with the battle between the king and “covenanters” in the early seventeenth century. When the bishops refused to accept the legitimacy of King William III in the Revolution of 1688 and were ejected from the Church of Scotland, forming their own Scottish Episcopal Church, the Church of England was unsure whether its true partner in Scotland was the (Presbyterian) Church of Scotland or the tiny remaining Episcopal Church – a tension exacerbated by the severe legal penalties imposed on the nonjuring church. While there could be said to be at least two Anglican Churches in Great Britain, they were not regarded as being in communion. Nevertheless, it was the independent existence of a form of Anglicanism north of the English border which was ultimately to be a vital catalyst in the development of the Anglican Communion, since a distinct and separate hierarchy survived, not bound by the structures or doctrine of the larger church to the south. From its very beginnings, Anglicanism existed as a family of churches.

The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries saw the exploration of the globe by British soldiers, merchants, and adventurers, and the expansion of British rule across vast swathes of North America, Southern Africa, and India. However, there was no attempt at this stage to plant anything like autonomous churches in these lands. Rather, while the practice of Anglicanism was propagated, it was seen as an extension of the Church of England. Indeed, the Bishop of London was nominally the Bishop of all these territories and responsible for the deployment of clergy across the burgeoning Empire, sending out Commissaries as necessary to order the life of scattered congregations. It was often the mission societies that provided the links between the churches, and at the turn of the eighteenth century, societies such as the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge (SPCK, founded in 1698) and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG, founded in 1701) set the tone for links within Anglicanism in different parts of the globe. There were occasional attempts to provide bishops in North America – but politics on one side of the Atlantic or the other tended to frustrate all schemes (see Neill 1958, 222f).

The Church of England had become a global institution. Nonetheless, the pattern of the four home nations set the tone for an underlying acknowledgement of the importance of diversity, and seeds were sown which would sustain a more federated polity in the future. All this was to be radically realized when part of His Majesty’s dominions asserted their independent status in the American Revolution.

Parallel Tracks 1776–1867

Anglicanism arrived in North America with the first English settlers. Although the majority of settlers tended to be those seeking an escape from Anglican conformity,

the pattern was far from uniform, and many settlers remained part of structures that understood themselves as part of the Church of England. Indeed, the second Charter of the London and Plymouth Virginia Company, granted by King James in 1606, specifically provided that the established religion of the new colony should be that of the same church established in England.

Even so, Anglican Churches in North America tended to be left to their own devices, apart from the occasional ordination of a cleric for service in North America, and the occasional Commissary acting in North America on behalf of the Bishop of London. Thomas Bray, a founding figure in both the SPCK and the SPG, was one such Commissary. He operated in Maryland by license of the Bishop of London, but spent little more than a year at the task before returning to London. More effective was James Blair, a Scotsman, who was appointed as Commissary in Virginia, and stuck to the task between 1689 and 1743. Anglican Churches in North America were, however, without the direct ministrations of bishops, and aspiring clergy would have to seek ordination from any bishop they could find back in the "old country." Thus, Samuel Seabury, who would become a pivotal player in forthcoming events, was deaconed by the Bishop of Lincoln and priested by the Bishop of Carlisle.

Following the American Revolution and the establishment of an independent United States of America, one of the chief challenges for Anglicans in North America was to determine their future and polity and to define their relationship with the Church of England. The decisions to be "Episcopal" and to seek a catholicity which maintained links with the Church of England was to have profound consequences for the future.

Early leaders of Anglicanism in the newly independent United States, such as William White, were keen to ensure that "as far as possible [the liturgy of the Episcopal Church] should conform to that of the Church of England" (see Stephenson 1967, 37). White advanced his views in books such as *The Case of the Episcopal Churches in the United States Considered*, published in 1782, and through meetings of the churches in New York and Pennsylvania congregational conventions. In October 1784, a particularly significant meeting was held prior to the first General Convention. In setting out their hopes for the church whose shape was to be decided at the General Convention, the meeting resolved thus: "4th. That the said Church shall maintain the doctrines of the gospel, now held by the Church of England, and shall adhere to the liturgy of the said Church, as far as shall be consistent with the American Revolution, and the constitutions of the respective states" (Resolution for an Episcopal Church in the United States of America, New York, 1784, recorded in William White, *Memoirs*, quoted in Evans and Wright 1991, 289).

Such arguments proved to be persuasive at the General Conventions of 1785 and 1786. By 1801, the General Convention had already met nine times (the second and third General Conventions both met in two separate sessions), and had shown itself ready to adopt the historic formularies of the Church of England, the Thirty-Nine Articles, as the basis of its own faith, although with appropriate revisions for a republic. In doctrine, therefore, the North American Episcopalians set out their faith in continuity with the Church of England. In discipline, as well, North American Anglicans chose to be episcopal in governance, and the first General Convention had made it clear that it was "requesting due episcopal succession" (see Perry 1874, 25) in its life, even if it took

until 1789 to secure the establishment of a House of Bishops as a separate entity within the polity of the church.

The story leading to the ordination of Samuel Seabury as Bishop of Connecticut in 1784 is well known, but it is important to note that the refusal of the bishops of the Church of England to consecrate Seabury did not arise out of any inherent hostility to the idea, but because the English bishops were all too stuffily conscious that, as part of a church by law established, they were limited by that law and could only consecrate bishops by the sovereign's mandate and only then for service in his realms. The law was in fact quickly changed (the Consecration of Bishops Abroad Act, 1786, 26 George III, c.84), and the next two bishops for the United States (William White, Bishop of Pennsylvania, and Samuel Provoost, Bishop of New York) were ordained by the Archbishop of Canterbury acting with the Archbishop of York and the Bishop of Bath and Wells in Lambeth Palace Chapel in 1787. To these was added James Madison, consecrated at Lambeth Palace in 1790 as Bishop of Virginia. From this point on, the new Episcopal Church had its own line of bishops in historic succession.

By 1808, the House of Bishops could write a pastoral letter to the members of the new Protestant Episcopal Church that rehearsed a history referring to the "connections speedily created of our churches until then detached from one another, in terms which contemplated the perpetuating of the communion [a use of the term which was to become highly significant, *vide infra*], with all the distinguishing properties of the Church of England" (The Pastoral Letter of the House of Bishops [Baltimore, 1808] quoted in Evans and Wright 1991, 298).

Even so, from the first there was uncertainty in the English episcopate as to the implications of their participation in the consecration of bishops for the American Church. Although the authority to consecrate had been conferred by Act of Parliament, the act of consecration was not seen as constitutive of interchangeability of ministries. Consecration was seen as an exceptional action, and the legislation passed specifically excluded the possibility of bishops and clergy ordained for and in the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States serving in His Majesty's domains.⁵ When Bishop Hobart of New York was present at a consecration in Lambeth Palace Chapel in 1824, he was not permitted to participate in the actual laying on of hands (see Boshier 1962, 28, note 65). It took until 1840 and another Act of Parliament to introduce interchangeability of ministers (see Podmore 2005, 29). This uncertainty did not, however, focus solely on the American Church; even those ordained for work in the colonial church had been placed in a separate category from those ordained for ministry in England.⁶

⁵Section 3 of the Act: "no person or persons consecrated to the office of a bishop in the manner aforesaid nor any person or persons deriving their consecration from or under any of the bishops so consecrated nor any person or persons admitted to the office of deacon or priest by any bishop or bishops so consecrated shall be thereby enabled to exercise his or their office or offices within his Majesty's domains." Quoted in Chapter 3 of Colin Podmore's *Aspects of Anglican Identity*, 2005, p. 28.

⁶The Ordination for the Colonies Act, 1819: "in every such case it shall be distinctly stated in the letters of ordination of every person so admitted to holy orders that he has been ordained for the cure of souls in his Majesty's foreign possessions." Quoted in Evans and Wright, *The Anglican Tradition*, p. 302.

The story of Anglicanism in the early nineteenth century becomes, therefore, a story of three communions – the first centered on the now United Church of England and Ireland, and the second centered on the Protestant Episcopal Church, which soon began to spread its wings and commitment to overseas mission. The Scottish Episcopal Church constituted a third element in the growing families of churches. However, it remained the junior partner given its reduced numbers, and different writers of the period varied in their opinions as to whether there were now two or three branches of Anglicanism.

Having consecrated bishops for the United States, the Church of England woke up to the importance of providing episcopal ministry for the other territories in which Anglicanism now flourished and that remained part of the British Empire. The United States had not only created its own indigenous form of Anglicanism; it triggered the development of such structures right across the British Empire. Bishops were provided in sharp order for newly erected dioceses in Nova Scotia (1787), Quebec (1793), Calcutta (1814), Barbados and Jamaica (1824), Madras (1835), Australia (1836), Bombay (1837), and Newfoundland and Toronto (1839). The process was unsteady, and the strange nature of episcopal governance envisaged for these territories may be gauged from the fact that, between 1824 and 1836, the entire landmass of Australia had been seen to comprise merely part of the Archdeaconry of Calcutta in a diocese which spanned most of South East Asia and Australasia.

The Episcopal Church also became committed to vigorous overseas development, and a firmly grounded missionary impulse led to outreach across the globe. At first, their missionary society, founded in 1821, had an independent existence, but General Convention decided in 1835 that membership of the Church and the Missionary Society was to be identical: mission was the responsibility of the whole church. Indeed, the legal corporate name of the national body of the Episcopal Church remains to this day the “Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America.”

Having secured its own episcopate in the historic succession through the consecrations of 1784 and 1787, the Episcopal Church was confident in establishing the episcopate in other places where it now began to spread its wings, both within the United States and without. In 1834, James Otey was consecrated for the new Diocese of Tennessee, a state in which there was not a single existing Anglican congregation. In 1844, the Episcopal Church appointed Horatio Southgate as Bishop of the Dominions and Dependencies of the Sultan of Turkey, and William Boone as Bishop of China. In 1851, John Payne was consecrated to be Bishop of Cape Palmas and to lead the work of the Episcopal Church in Liberia.

There were indeed three families of Anglicans now spreading across the globe. However, how exactly were these three branches related?

Envisioning an Anglican Communion

When William White published *The Case of the Episcopal Churches in the United States Considered* in 1782, he had argued persuasively that both the liturgy and the polity of

the newly emerging Episcopal Church should continue to be modeled closely on the Church of England. White was insistent that there could be no question of any continuing subjection for the Episcopalians of the United States “to any spiritual jurisdiction connected with the temporal authority of a foreign state” (accessed on February 25, 2012, from the online version of the book at <http://anglicanhistory.org/usa/wwhite/case1782.html>). Although the North American Church would be independent like the new United States, it was intended that it would live in the closest association with the Church of England.

In the description that William White offers of his own church, White has to reach out to forge a new vocabulary for the way in which the emerging network of Anglican congregations were related to one another. It was in this context that White repeatedly referred to the network of congregations and parishes as “a communion,” which seems to have functioned for White in the way in which the term “connexion” has functioned for Methodists. In other words, the continuing unity of the congregations of the various parishes depended on the “communion” they shared. Such a communion flowed from the common bonds of faith and polity. Woven into the foundation of the Episcopal Church was an understanding that it sustained its being through the communion it shared. William White’s own usage of “communion” as the way to describe what binds Anglican Churches together forms the true backdrop to all later usage of this term.

The argument that the two “communions” or branches on both sides of the Atlantic did belong together was timely and welcome, at least as far as the leaders of the High Church movement in England were concerned. This movement, which had inherited the more Catholic approach of the Caroline divines, included a fierce anti-Erastianism and wanted to exalt the independent credentials of the Church of England over and against a view which treated it as a department of state entirely subject to parliamentary control. The recognition that there were Anglican Churches which stood outside the British political system and yet were able to be recognized as part of a wider communion with the Church of England, therefore, fitted the agenda of the High Church party. From 1790 onward, clergy, including, for example, the Bishop of St. Asaph, Samuel Horsley, agitated for increasing recognition of Anglicanism outside England as a step toward establishing Anglican ecclesiastical autonomy within the state. Horsley argued first for the relief of the clergy of the Scottish Episcopal Church, facing severe penalties under the law – a goal which was achieved in an Act of Parliament of 1792 – and then for the recognition and interchangeability of their orders. For such churchmen, the reality of an episcopally ordered and catholically minded church north of the border was far more important than an alliance of the two established churches: the Church of England and the Presbyterian Church of Scotland.

The journals and publications of the High Church movement now became the articulators of a new vision for Anglicanism – one which was international and comprehended the different branches of Anglican Churches. For the Church of England, the *Colonial Church Chronicle and Missionary Journal*, a newspaper published from 1847 under the editorship of Francis Fulford, a Devonshire cleric who was to go on to be the first Bishop of Montreal in 1850, was a primary organ by which the vision of a worldwide association of Anglican Churches was advanced. Its very first edition was entitled “The Extension of the Reformed Episcopal Church” (see Podmore 2005,

34), a name then being favored and advocated in some quarters for international Anglicanism.

One of the foremost advocates of a global vision of Anglicanism in England was the cleric Walter Farquhar Hook (1798–1875). In 1825, Hook preached the sermon at the Consecration of Matthew Luscombe in Stirling, Scotland. The bishops of the Scottish Episcopal Church were taking the lead once again, consecrating Luscombe, a Church of England cleric, as a missionary Bishop for Europe. Luscombe was the Anglican Chaplain in Paris and had been given a ministry of superintendence of European Anglican congregations. With the connivance of the then foreign secretary, George Canning, Luscombe followed the path pioneered by Seabury and received episcopal ordination from the Scottish bishops. In the sermon, Hook sought to defend and advance “the Catholicism of the Church of England and the other branches of the Episcopal Church” and spoke of a “reformed Catholic Church” held together by a bond of union which transcended human organization or state boundaries. This one church existed “in England, in Ireland, in presbyterian Scotland [and] republican America, in the regions of the East, and the islands of the West” (Hook 1825, 24).

Sixteen years later, Hook as Vicar of Leeds oversaw the construction of the new Parish Church, a magnificent neo-Gothic creation, and at its consecration ensured that his bishop (the then Bishop of Ripon, Charles Longley, who was to go on to call the first Lambeth Conference) was joined not only by the Metropolitan, the Archbishop of York, but also by the Bishop of Ross, Argyll and the Isles, and by the Bishop of New Jersey to represent the other two Anglican traditions.

Another of the chief advocates of association at this time was Henry Caswell. Caswell had been ordained for ministry in the United States. Arriving in the United Kingdom in 1843, Caswell had required a private Act of Parliament to be allowed to become an incumbent in the Church of England (see Podmore 2005, 28), but he never ceased to be a warm advocate of “America and the American Church,” a phrase which became the title of his bestselling work published in 1839, and which was re-issued in a second edition in 1851. Caswell worked tirelessly in support of a vision of a worldwide family of churches. In the second edition, issued after the SPG Jubilee Service, Caswell spoke of his hopes for the future, that “They [the bishops] might devise measures for adapting the church to its enlarged sphere” (Caswell 1851, 395). For Caswell, the future of Anglicanism lay in Catholic order and a united episcopal college.

This movement in England was also supported across the Atlantic. William Whittingham, Bishop of Maryland, wrote in 1851 to urge a revision of the 1604 Canons of the Church of England in order to fit them for the present age and as something which could be recognized as Canon law “by the whole of the Churches of the two Communions” (letter of William Whittingham, Bishop of Maryland, quoted in Stephenson 1967, 49). By the middle of the nineteenth century, it became commonplace to refer to the growing family of Anglican and Episcopal Churches as “two communions,” and talk of there being a single communion was not slow in following.

In 1843, John Jebb, another high-churchman, gave his book – an overview of the cycle of worship in the great Anglican ecclesial foundations of Britain and Ireland – the title *The Church Service of the United Church of England and Ireland, Being an Enquiry into the Liturgical Systems of the Cathedral and Collegiate Foundations of the Anglican*

Communion. In such an offhand way was the future name given birth, and it expressed what was a growing vision in the minds of many people. Although the book was confined to the foundations of the United Church, Jebb was consciously invoking the wider loyalties that were now being generated.

In 1847, Horatio Southgate, the Missionary Bishop of the Episcopal Church in the Dominions of the Sultan, writing to the *Colonial Church Chronicle* about his plans to record his presentations to explain Anglicanism to the Church of Constantinople, expressed himself in these terms: "I next spoke of each of the three branches of the Anglican Communion separately, namely, the English, the Scotch, and the American . . . I then combined the three under the title, 'The Anglican Branch of the Church of Christ'" (*Colonial Church Chronicle*, 1, 1847/1848, 396, quoted in Podmore 2005, 36).

These ideas were finding favor in high places. In 1851, when Archbishop Sumner invited the American bishops to the service to celebrate the sesquicentenary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, he spoke of "the close communion binding the Churches of America and England" and of the "two branches" (see Stephenson 1967, 43) of Anglicanism. However, the Archbishop was already behind the curve of the developing language by which this "close communion" was now being described as one family and one global communion.

The Emergent Communion and the Path to Lambeth

As ever in the history of Christianity, it was the mission field that generated urgent questions for the organization and corporate life of the church. China was the most obvious arena in which the two communions of Anglicanism came into competition with one another. Like Japan, China had turned against the presence of Christian missionaries toward the end of the seventeenth century, and the country remained closed to foreign mission until 1844. Almost as soon as this policy of exclusion was relaxed with the accession of the Daoguang Emperor, the Episcopal Church sent Bishop Boone to Shanghai to establish a Christian mission. This was followed by a similar mission from the Church of England, which established a See of Hong Kong in 1848, to be followed by another in Ningpo in 1872, and a third for North China in 1880. With two expanding missionary episcopates, the mission of the church would not be best served by two competing and mutually exclusive jurisdictions. In 1852, therefore, the General Convention of the Episcopal Church called for closer cooperation among the Anglican Churches and for the clergy domiciled in the other's jurisdictions to be allowed to minister in all the jurisdictions in China. It was clear that steps would have to be taken to bring the two branches closer together.

In 1852, the Canadian bishops met in Quebec as the Synod of the United Church of England and Ireland in Canada and passed resolutions which included in Article 12 their desire that "there should be no let or hindrance to a full and free communion between ourselves and the other Reformed Episcopal Churches" (see Stephenson 1967, 52).

Alongside these growing aspirations, others warmed to the idea that the best way forward would be a council of all the bishops in communion with the See of Canterbury. Bishop Hopkins of Vermont wrote to the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1851, speaking of the communion shared by “these two branches” and expressing the hope that “we shall prove the reality of that communion in the primitive style by meeting in the good old fashion of synodical action” (see Stephenson 1967, 43). Similarly, Bishop Whittingham of Maryland wrote a letter published in the *Colonial Church Chronicle* (July 1852, 32) to commend “An assemblage of the whole episcopate, either absolutely or representatively, in council, for organization as one branch of the Church Catholic.”

Furthermore, as relations developed, and bishops from one family of Anglicanism visited another, old scruples were breaking down. In 1853, Bishop McIlvaine of Ohio was permitted to participate in the consecration of John Jackson as Bishop of Lincoln in the Church of England, contrary to the precedent set in 1824 when Bishop Hobart had been able to preach but not participate in the laying on of hands. As the potential for easier travel across the globe increased, so did the visits that were paid by bishops from one territory to another. This created a momentum for further change.

The immediate cause of the first Lambeth Conference lay, of course, in the objections that the conservatively minded bishops of North America had against the liberal attitudes of the African bishops. The challenges that Bishop John William Colenso, a Cornishman appointed by the Crown as Bishop of Natal in South Africa, provided to the church by his writings would be regarded as mild today, but they were enough to excite comment and outrage in the growing Anglican communities across the globe then. The Provincial Synod of the United Church of England and Ireland in Canada, meeting in Montreal in September 1865, addressed a letter to the Convocation of Canterbury following a motion introduced by the Bishop of Ontario. This suggested, as a direct response to the Colenso affair, that the growing relations between Anglican Churches across the globe “would be most effectually preserved and perpetuated if means could be adopted by which the members of our Anglican Communion in all quarters of the world should have a share in the deliberations for her welfare, and be permitted to have representation in one General Council of her members gathered from every land” (see Neill 1958, 360).

However, the questions arising from the mission fields also had a key role in persuading the bishops of the different churches to cooperate. In the event, the first two resolutions of the 1867 Conference and two others (four of the thirteen passed) would focus not on the Colenso affair, but on questions of the coordination of mission activity and the system of jurisdictions most fitting to support it. This meant that the participation of the bishops of all three Anglican traditions was vital. In February 1867, the letters of invitation went out with this crucial addition:

both Houses of the Convocation of my Province have addressed to me their dutiful request that I would invite the attendance, not only of our Home and Colonial Bishops, but of all who are avowedly in communion with our Church. The same request was unanimously preferred to me at a numerous gathering of English, Irish, and Colonial Archbishops and Bishops recently assembled at Lambeth; at which – I rejoice to record

it – we had the counsel and concurrence of an eminent Bishop of the Church in the United States of America – the Bishop of Illinois (the Archbishop of Canterbury’s Letter of Invitation to the 1867 Lambeth Conference, reproduced in Evans and Wright 1991, 329).

So it was that when 76 bishops of the Anglican Communion met in London in September 1867, the hopes and aspirations of many to see one communion which drew all the branches of Anglicanism together were realized. Of course, the Anglican Communion did not emerge fully formed from the 1867 Lambeth Conference. However, the value and impact of the Conference was considerable, and there was an immediate desire to meet again. By the time Archbishop Archibald Tait came to invite the bishops for the second Conference which was convoked in 1878, his letter of July 19, 1877 (quoted in Neill 1958, 363) was confidently addressed “to the Bishops of the Anglican Communion.”

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