

Texas Historical Commission Staff (DP), 8/30/73

27"x 42" Official Texas Historical Marker
Harrison County (Order #3998)

Location: Grove & W. Houston,
Marshall

TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH*

3998

ONE OF THE OLDEST EPISCOPAL CHURCHES IN TEXAS. AN
OUTGROWTH OF 1840s WORK IN CADDO LAKE AREA BY THE
REV. WILLIAM STEEL OF LOUISIANA, AND OF APPEALS FOR
PRIESTS MADE BY FRANCES COX HENDERSON (WIFE OF THE
DIPLOMAT-GOVERNOR-U.S. SENATOR, J. PINCKNEY HENDERSON)
TO THE CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES. TRINITY PARISH
WAS FOUNDED JAN. 4, 1851, WITH 22 MEMBERS, BY THE REV.
HENRY SANSOM (1821-1903), WHO WAS RECTOR 1851-55.

ORIGINAL MEMBERSHIP INCLUDED E. G. BENNERS, LATER A
PRIEST; ALSO THE KEY FAMILY, WHO REMAIN IN PARISH A
CENTURY LATER. COMMUNICANTS HAVE INCLUDED CONFEDERATE
GENERALS BENJAMIN HUGER AND LOUIS T. WIGFALL, AND 20TH
CENTURY JURIST T. WHITFIELD DAVIDSON.

THE REV. EDWIN A. WAGNER (RECTOR INTERMITTENTLY, 1859-
75), THE REV. C. C. KRAMER (1909-14), THE REV. C. S. SARGENT
(1914-21) AND OTHERS BUILT SPIRITUAL STRENGTH OF THE
PARISH AND ADVOCATED A PERMANENT CHURCH EDIFICE TO
REPLACE SUCCESSIVE EARLY STRUCTURES. PRESENT CHURCH
WAS BUILT IN 1925-26, WHEN THE REV. CHARLES S. MONROE
WAS RECTOR. IT WAS DEDICATED BY BISHOP CLINTON S. QUIN,
JULY 25, 1926. ARCHITECT WAS J. W. NORTHRUP, JR., HOUSTON.
THE REV. HENRY F. SELCER (1930-56) ACHIEVED RECORD FOR
LONGEST SERVICE AS RECTOR. PARISH IN 1972 HAD 508
MEMBERS. ITS DAY SCHOOL RENDERS COMMUNITY SERVICE. **
(1973) ***

FILE COPY-DO NOT REMOVE

RECEIVED
READY FOR
OCT 12 1973

SOUTHWELL ORDER
TEXAS HISTORICAL FOUNDATION

*3/4" lettering
**1/2" lettering
***1/4" lettering

APPROVED

Truett Latimer

by Bob Watson
10-12-73

APPLICATION FORM FOR OFFICIAL TEXAS HISTORICAL MARKER

Harrison
County

July 27, 1973
Date

3998

1. Trinity Episcopal Church
Marker title or subject

2. Trinity Episcopal Church

Name of building, cemetery, public square, park, etc., where marker is to be placed

3. Corner of West Houston and Grove, Marshall, Texas

Marker site (street address or highway number)

4. Marshall, Texas

City or nearest city. If marker is to be placed on a highway or in a small community, you must briefly explain how to get there from the nearest town shown on a current Texas road map. For example, "Marker will be in Bastrop Beach, which is 6 miles southeast of Angleton on FM 523."

5. Marker will be placed on church grounds

Distance (miles, yards, feet) and direction (north, south, east, west, northeast, etc.) of subject from marker site. For example, "Subject is 1/2 mile southwest of marker site."

6. Trinity Episcopal Church

West Houston and Grove
Address

Marshall
City

7. Trinity Episcopal Church

West Houston and Grove
Address

Marshall
City

8. Max S. Loe

3704 Fitzgerald
Address

Marshall
City

9. Rector, Trinity Episcopal Church

West Houston Street
Street Address

Marshall
City

Note: If marker is to be placed on a highway right-of-way, it will automatically be shipped to your district highway engineer.

ORDER FORM

Please consult the marker catalog for specifications of the markers, paperweights, and signs available. Then check items desired below.

HISTORICAL MARKERS

- | | | | |
|---|-------|---|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 27" x 42" subject marker with post | \$400 | <input type="checkbox"/> 16" x 12" building marker marker with post | \$ 95 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 27" x 42" subject marker without post | \$375 | <input type="checkbox"/> 16" x 12" building marker without post | \$ 80 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 18" x 28" subject marker with post | \$200 | <input type="checkbox"/> 16" x 12" building plaque only | \$ 60 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 18" x 28" subject marker without post | \$175 | <input type="checkbox"/> 14" medallion only (for replacement purposes) | \$ 20 |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> 16" x 12" grave marker (comes with mounting bar) | \$ 80 |

MARKER REPLICA PAPERWEIGHT

This item should be ordered at the same time marker is ordered. Indicate quantity desired.

- ☐ 3" x 4" plastic paperweight with replica of marker inside \$ 25

SCOTCHLITE HIGHWAY DIRECTIONAL SIGNS

Please indicate quantity desired.

- 24" x 24" Historical Markers In City sign \$ 25
- ☐ black-and-white (for state highways, U.S. highways)
- ☐ green-and-white (for interstate highways)

- 18" x 22" Historic Route sign (in black-and-white only) \$ 25
- ☐ with arrow pointing straight ahead
- ☐ with arrow pointing left
- ☐ with arrow pointing right

Mail this application and your narrative history, together with a check made payable to the Texas Historical Foundation, to

Research Department
Texas Historical Commission
P.O. Box 12276
Austin, Texas 78711

TEXAS STATE HISTORICAL SURVEY
COMMITTEE

Please note that no applications will be accepted unless payment is included. You will be notified as soon as possible if your application is approved. If it is not approved, your check and other material will be returned. In general, at least 90 days are required to process and manufacture an historical marker. For rush orders, a surcharge of 50 percent over and above the regular price will be assessed to cover the cost of special handling. Under no circumstances will applications be accepted for processing in less than 45 days.

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TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH
Marshall, Texas

Trinity Episcopal Church, Marshall, was formally organized January 4, 1851,¹ following a preliminary meeting held on Christmas Day, 1850, when the Rev. Henry Sansom⁽¹⁸²¹⁻¹⁹⁰³⁾ met with interested residents of the town and circulated articles of association for signature.²

After years of bitter frustration and struggle, the Episcopal congregations already existing in the state had been organized by this time into a diocese at a two-day meeting January 1 and 2, 1849, at Christ Church, Matagorda, which was called for that purpose by the Rt. Rev. George Washington Freeman, provisional bishop of Texas.³ Six organized congregations were listed as members.⁴

Four additional congregations were admitted to membership at the first annual convention of the diocese which met on Ascension Day, May 9, 1850, in Houston,⁵ and Bishop Freeman asked the convention for the appointment of additional missionaries by the Domestic Committee for fields "ready to be occupied," including Marshall.⁶

The way had been prepared in some degree even earlier, however. The Rev. William Steel, a canonical resident of Louisiana, for some time had been ministering to the Leigh community, near Caddo Lake in northeastern Harrison County. On Bishop Freeman's first visit in Marshall in June 1851, Mr. Steel was on hand to greet his old friend, whom he had known many years earlier in Virginia. The diocesan historian notes that "This fact certainly

indicates good communication between the 'Louisiana' Episcopalians of St. Paul's Chapel, Leigh, and the new 'Texas' Episcopalians of Marshall.⁷

Among the 22 Marshall residents who signed Mr. Sansom's articles of association establishing the Trinity congregation were Charlotte and Louis T. Wigfall.⁸ The latter was an attorney and firebrand stump speaker (derisively referred to by his old enemy Sam Houston as "Wiggletail") who was elected to the United States senate in 1858 while living in Marshall. Subsequently he went on to become the first commander of the fabled Hood's Texas Brigade, as a brigadier general, and a Confederate States senator. Others included Mary B. Hill Key and Hobart Key, a kinsman of Francis Scott Key, and E. G. Benners, whose own lives and family members in later generations were to become important influences in the history of the church.⁹

The new church in Marshall issued a call to Mr. Sansom to serve as Trinity's first resident clergyman, and on April 1, 1851, he resigned his missionary appointment at San Augustine,¹⁰ where he had served brilliantly for three years. His appointment there, his subsequent service in Marshall, and the service in both San Augustine and Marshall of his successor constitute one of the most engaging stories in the early annals of the Texas church.

In 1837, Miss Frances Cox, daughter of a wealthy Episcopal family in Philadelphia, had been introduced to J. Pinkney Henderson while she was a student in Paris and he was minister from the Republic of Texas to France. Shortly before sailing for home, the couple were married at St. George's Chapel, Hanover, in London. At Galveston, the minister received the plau-

dits of the republic at a great banquet and ball. The couple then continued their journey to San Augustine, where he resumed a law practice which eventually led to the governor's chair, command of a Texas division in the Mexican War, and a seat in the United States Senate to which he was elected while living in Marshall.

A dedicated churchwoman,¹¹ Mrs. Henderson petitioned the Committee on Domestic Missions of the national church over a period of several years for the assignment of a missionary to San Augustine. But Philadelphia, which was the headquarters of the committee, "was a long way off, and no one could be found willing to adventure into a new country where there was only one communicant of the church."¹² Her efforts finally bore fruit, however, when Mr. Sansom was appointed to the San Augustine and Nacogdoches mission in April 1848. San Augustine quickly became a thriving congregation, with General Henderson serving the church as senior warden, though himself not an Episcopalian, by an arrangement under which many vestrymen were "merely well wishers of the Church, brothers-in-law, as they have been wittily described."¹³

Mr. Sansom's missionary zeal (no doubt encouraged by Mrs. Henderson) led him in due course beyond his assigned field to Marshall. Whether Mrs. Henderson accompanied him on his Christmas mission is not clear.

A room was rented and furnished for use as a chapel, and a schedule of services on three Sundays out of each month was announced to the new Marshall congregation. Bishop Freeman, on his first visitation (met also by Mr. Steel as previously noted), administered the rite of confirmation

on June 22, 1851, to a class of three candidates prepared by Mr. Sansom.¹⁴

Two new congregations¹⁵ were admitted to the diocese of Texas at its second annual council May 1, 1851, in Galveston, but Trinity's application was not received in time for consideration, perhaps because neither Mr. Sansom nor any of his flock are recorded as attending.¹⁶ For this reason, Trinity's admission was delayed until the 1852 council, when Epiphany Church, Austin, also was admitted.¹⁷ Epiphany had been organized January 18, 1851,¹⁸ and its first minister, the Rev. Edward Fontaine, was in the process of moving his family from Mississippi to Austin at the time of the 1851 council.

Trinity, Marshall, thus was the thirteenth congregation organized in Texas and admitted to union with the Diocese of Texas, though it shares its admission date with Epiphany, the fourteenth. However, because four earlier churches disappeared from the rolls in the years between 1858 and 1870, it now ranks as the ninth oldest parish still surviving in Texas.¹⁹

Mr. Sansom resigned his Marshall ministry in September 1855 to accept a call to Christ Church, Houston, leaving Trinity without a resident clergyman until November 1856.²⁰ And again the indomitable Mrs. Henderson became the angel of its delivery! This niece of Bishop Kemper had gone to Philadelphia earlier, armed with a letter from her vestry, and by sheer audacity had persuaded the Rt. Rev. Alonzo Potter to allow her to address the clergy of his diocese. On the strength of the letter granting her authority to call a clergyman, she was able to recruit a deacon, the Rev. Charles H. Albert, for the San Augustine and Nacogdoches field. He elected to accept a call to Marshall late in 1856, a move which coincided with a

decision on the part of Gen. and Mrs. Henderson also to move to Marshall.²¹
Mr. Albert thus became the second minister in charge of Trinity, and the second to come from San Augustine, which suffered a double loss in the removal of the Hendersons.²²

Mrs. Henderson infused new life into the struggling Marshall congregation and continued to exert a strong influence over its life as long as she herself lived. So also did her husband, who was elected to the United States senate in 1857, succeeding his old friend and former law partner, Thomas J. Rusk. Long a victim of tuberculosis, Senator Henderson died in Washington on June 4, 1858, at the age of 50. Editor R. W. Loughery of The Texas Republican (Marshall) reversed the column rules of his newspaper in reporting the death on June 19.²³

Mr. Albert already had left the parish by this time, and Trinity was without a clergyman for about two years, save for visitors who conducted occasional services.

Then began, on April 8, 1859, the ministry of one of the most beloved clergymen in Trinity's history, the Rev. Edwin A. Wagner, who was to return two different times to inspire new faith and devotion at critical periods in the life of the church.²⁴ His energy is reflected in numerous reports of suppers, concerts and other activities designed to stimulate new interest in the parish and the community.²⁵ At the time of his resignation in 1863 for health reasons it was said that "he labored most earnestly for the church and welfare of souls . . . "

Parish records show that on April 17, 1860, Mr. Wagner baptised Elkanah Guy Greer, whose father was to become a general in the Confederate

army. His aunt, the beautiful Lucy Holcomb Pickens of Marshall, already was the wife of the ambassador from the United States to the Czar of Russia, who would become the governor of South Carolina in time to play a leading role in the civil conflict which was brewing.

Mr. Wagner was followed at Trinity's altar by the Rev. G. W. E. Fisse, a deacon from Maryland who was "a refugee for conscience's sake" in Marshall.²⁶ He undertook his ministry on Whitsunday, May 24, 1863, and was minister in charge for a year and a half. During this time, the beloved Alexander Gregg visited Trinity as bishop of the Diocese of Texas, as he did at least annually even during the war years, and on October 25, 1863, confirmed 11 candidates. Among these was Maj. Gen. Benjamin Huger.²⁷ General Scott's chief of staff in Mexico and the fourth ranking ordnance officer in the "old army," General Huger's early performance as a division commander in Virginia failed the test of later campaigns, and he was assigned as ordnance officer of the Trans-Mississippi Department, with headquarters in Marshall and Shreveport.

The Rev. S. D. Davenport took charge of the Marshall parish in early January, 1866, making his residence in the parish but dividing his time equally with Christ Church, Jefferson.²⁸ The much loved Mr. Wagner had returned to the diocese at the request of Bishop Gregg, and he alternated at the Trinity altar with Mr. Davenport, thus affording the congregation services every Sunday. Mr. Davenport is reported to have believed Marshall was the more hopeful of his two fields, first because Trinity al-

ready had a church building and was considered the more stable of the two communities (with a population of approximately 4,000), and second because completion of a railroad from Vicksburg to Marshall by way of Shreveport inevitably would work to the detriment of Jefferson as a river port. Yet almost exactly the reverse of Mr. Davenport's prophecy came about. By the 1867 council, a slight decline was reported in Trinity's membership, and there was no report from Marshall filed at the 1868 diocesan convention.²⁹

Mr. Davenport was absent from his Jefferson cure for most of the year previous to the 1868 council, and Mr. Wagner, the diocesan missionary resident in Marshall, conducted services in both Marshall and Jefferson. By the fall of 1869 Mr. Davenport had moved to Dallas, and Mr. Wagner once again became Trinity's rector.³⁰ However, Bishop Gregg found him gravely ill on his visit in November, and shortly he was forced to return to his home in South Carolina.

Bishop Gregg, during his November visit, prepared candidates for confirmation himself and visited extensively in the parish. The diocesan historian speculates that "he must have found its life at a rather low ebb," because he met twice with women's groups and once with the men of the parish in an effort to stimulate interest.³¹ The bishop also seems to have encouraged the Rev. E. G. Benners to come over from Jefferson for two services before the council of 1870. Mr. Benners reported to this convention that the number of Trinity communicants was 17 and that "A large portion of the Church building has fallen," with repairs deemed inadvisable. He added that the ladies of the parish had realized \$850 toward a new building.³²

The parish register records that the small brick church which had been

erected through the valiant efforts of Mrs. Henderson and the early members of the parish had fallen to the ground "with a crash."³³ Trinity staggered under the blow, and it appeared for a time that the parish - ridden by the post-Civil War depression, an exodus of population from the community and the burdens of an occupation garrison - would be unable to recover from it.³⁴ Its vestry sold the site and pile of rubble to Dr. James Harper Starr, the former Secretary of the Treasury in the days of the Republic of Texas, who had moved his prosperous land office to Marshall in 1870.³⁵

Bishop Gregg remained characteristically optimistic during his succeeding visits, however, and it apparently was through his efforts that Mr. Wagner, now well again, was persuaded to return once again to lead Trinity out of its parochial wilderness. He was back in Marshall again by February 1873 and hard at work.³⁶ At a time when it had become a matter of doubt whether the parish could survive, this noble clergyman had returned to his labors.³⁷

Mr. Jagner reinstituted regular prayer services in the Odd Fellows Hall. Gradually the communicants of Trinity were inspired to rise from the depths of their depression with a will to rebuild their church and to recreate the place of worship that had been. When it became apparent that a new church would proceed from these labors, Doctor Starr offered to return to the parish the corner lot at West Houston and Grove on which the original church had stood, on condition that a new building would be erected. The tender was accepted, and a new frame structure was begun.³⁸ The bishop found the building progressing in December 1873, despite the yellow fever epidemic which had swept through the South during the summer.³⁹ Of the part Trinity's rector had played in these endeavors, notes entered in the parish

register declared: "All praise is due to the loving and faithful service rendered by the Rev. Mr. Wagner, who with his own hands labored to bring the new church to completion."⁴⁰

During this time, Doctor Starr had developed a firm attachment to Trinity, though he was not a member of it, or of any denomination. Members of his family became staunch supporters, however, and remain so to this day.

The first service in the new church was held on March 5, 1874, a day which surely must be counted as one of the most significant in the history of Trinity Church. In the words of an anonymous early historian, it was "a time of great rejoicing for both priest and people."⁴¹ The diocesan historian records that "Trinity Church grew again under Wagner's care. By 1874 it was back up to fifty communicants, partly due to the removal of the Texas and Pacific shops from Hallsville to Marshall, but also to the love and respect which the veteran Priest commanded in the town to which he had ministered so faithfully during his previous residences."⁴²

An anonymous manuscript penned by an earlier historian of Trinity Church declares:

The genius of his guiding hand may be traced through the formative and trying years. He first came to the rectorship when the church had been without a rector for three years. After four years, in another parish, he returned to gather together the scattered congregation. This accomplished, he accepted another parish, only to be called back to Marshall when the church had crumbled to the ground and the property had been sold. On the ruins he built. To him, more than to any other, is Trinity Church indebted. Others have but entered into his labors.⁴³

With the congregation safely set upon its course, this saintly man resigned his charge in October 1875 and moved to Corpus Christi, comforted by the knowledge that the parish to which he had given so much was worthy once

again to meet whatever hazards lay ahead.

Surely, too, Trinity Church continues to owe much, a century later, to the grace and determination which Alexander Gregg brought to the struggle.

His biographer described how he worked his magic:

He was very much more to his people than the executive head of the diocese; he was in a true sense the chief pastor of the flock. Many of the smaller parishes and missions of the Diocese were sometimes for years without a resident minister, the services often kept up by a lay-reader or in some instances intermitted altogether . . . it was the Bishop, who by his pastoral care and oversight preserved the feeble spark of life and kept the church from dissolution. There was no one else to baptize the children, to administer the sacraments, to preach the Gospel or in any way to represent the organization of the Church. The Bishop's annual visit was the event of the year in church circles in such places as these, and his influence was felt accordingly . . . Arrived at his destination, after resting from the fatigue of the journey, he would at once start upon a round of parochial visits, going from house to house among the members of the congregation. So constant was this habit that every family was prepared to meet him, and the older members assembled with befitting gravity to await his call . . . If the service were to be held on Sunday, the Bishop would be on hand at the Sunday School and have the children range in due order before the chancel to be catechized . . . he was a true father in God to the people placed in his charge. The bond of personal relationship between him and every member of the flock in the diocese was a strong and intimate one. 44

An indication of the importance which the community always had attached to Bishop Gregg's visits is given by the press notices through many years of his scheduled arrival and the services which had been arranged. Implicit in these editorial notices and subsequent reports of his visits was a note of respect and pleasure over his presence in the community. 45

Mr. Wagner was succeeded at Trinity's altar by the Rev. E. G. Benners, also serving Christ Church, Jefferson. Mr. Benners, an original communicant of Trinity Church, had been an almost equally stalwart supporter of the Marshall congregation, and his efforts at critical times were a very real con-

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tribution to Trinity's survival. From his resignation November 1, 1876, until the arrival of the Rev. F. R. B. Hall in 1878, services were conducted by Dr. A. T. Smith, a godly and faithful layman whose services as organist became legendary, and by Maj. E. J. Fry and Col. F. ^{B.}~~C.~~ Sexton. The former came to Marshall in 1872 to enter a partnership with Charles M. Raguet in a private banking and land business which was successor to James H. Starr and Son. Colonel Sexton also came to Marshall in 1872, from San Augustine (how often this fine old city's story has been linked with Marshall's and Trinity's). During his residence in Marshall he was a delegate to the national Democratic convention in St. Louis which nominated Governor Tilden of New York for the presidency. In his lifetime Colonel Sexton served as Grand Master of the Blue Lodge of Texas, as Grand High Priest of the Royal Arch Masons, and as Grand Commander of the Knights Templar. ⁴⁶

The Rev. A. Kenney Hall accepted Trinity's call in 1882 but remained only five months, and the pulpit was vacant for approximately 12 months. The Rev. H. A. Skinner took charge just before Christmas in 1883, but he, too, remained only briefly. He was followed in 1884 by the Rev. J. H. Jenkins. In the years of Mr. Jenkins' ministry Trinity parish continued its slow growth which began with Mr. Wagner's last years, and the church appears to have experienced few of the traumatic events which marked its earlier decades. He was followed by the Rev. Rupert S. Stuart, the Rev. John Sloan and the Rev. T. W. Jones, who served the church for five years and saw it close the century of its birth. ⁴⁷ During his rectorship the church raised the money - through a series of raffles, home talent shows,

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garden shows, suppers sponsored by the churchwomen's Trinity Guild, and special offerings, including \$125 at an Easter service at which "the Rudd Rifles turned out in full company" - for a new Pilcher organ. ⁴⁸

Mr. Jones was followed as rector, in 1901, by the Rev. H. E. Bowers, during whose ministry the rectory burned along with many of the parish records. He was succeeded by the Rev. S. G. Porter, whose ministry appears not to have been a happy one, and the Rev. C. C. Kramer was called from Grace Church, New Orleans, at a meeting of the vestry on May 27, 1909, which he attended. The modern era in Trinity parish may be said to have begun under his ministry. Before his resignation on March 24, 1914, because of ill health, the church began discussing the possibility of a new church structure. His dream was not realized during his rectorship, nor even during his lifetime (he died at the home of relatives in Louisiana less than a month after his resignation), but there is little question the inspiration for the present church structure was his. ⁴⁹

The proposal for a new church first appears in the minutes of a called vestry meeting held in September 1912 "for the purpose of discussing the building of a new church as outlined in the plan prepared by Dr. Kramer . . . " After "much discussion," the vestry was instructed to outline the plan to the congregation. The rector entered upon a final illness before the plan could be put into execution, however, and the effort was allowed to lapse for a period of several years.

The Rev. C. S. Sargent, D.D., was called on August 4, 1914, and remained as Trinity's rector until 1921. The subject of a new church came up again in February 1916, and at its meeting on March 9, 1916, the vestry

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reached a decision to employ an architect. A location for the new building was "discussed at length." It was noted that Doctor Sargent "favored the present location."

There apparently were second thoughts, however, for the next reference in the vestry's minutes, for its meeting November 13, 1916, was the appointment of a committee "to see about remodeling the present church." Nevertheless, wishes for a new structure seem to have been dominant, despite the apparent reservations, for the vestry clerk noted in February 1917 that "The plans for the new church were discussed, and it was decided to let the ladies look them over, also." (Mrs. Henderson's heritage obviously still made its presence felt.)

World War I intervened before further action could be taken, and the plans were shelved for two years. By April of 1919 the vestry was obtaining cost estimates, and in the next month, Dr. Sargent proposed that the frame building erected with so much effort and devotion in 1873 and 1874 be removed from the site, for a parish house, and that the new structure be raised on the site at West Houston and Grove where two earlier churches had stood. Again there was a round of discussions about remodeling the old structure. Still, in September 1920, T. Whitfield Davidson reported as chairman of a building fund committee that "between \$30,000 and \$40,000" had been pledged for a new church.

Dr. Sargent submitted his resignation, to be effective July 31, 1921, in a statement fraught with a sense of impending death but optimistic for the new church structure in whose cause both he and Mr. Kramer had labored.

Earlier, in a letter to the congregation dated October 18, 1920, Dr. Sargent had reviewed his six years at Trinity in a manner which gives a remarkably clear picture today of the congregation's historical difficulties.

At the time of his coming, he noted:

The salary was very small, less than half what I had most of my life . . . The equipment was an old and very dilapidated church building, which the Bishop pronounced a disgrace . . . There was no place for a men's club or a women's guild, old or young, or to have the boys and young men to meet together or to welcome strangers . . . I never was over a church without parish house or rooms connected with the church in twenty years of my ministry.

Trinity parish formerly owned the best half block in East Texas for a church, but the former bishop being sore pressed after the Civil War for money to build churches in new cities, in the vast state of Texas, sold lots off from this block until only a small lot was left. We offered \$14,000 for an adjoining quarter block and could not get it. It was a case where the old saw did not prove true that 'the light which shines farthest shines brightest at home', for it nearly snuffed out the light of Trinity. I do not blame the bishop, for perhaps some of the strongest churches in Texas grew from the sacrifice of Trinity, but we do not call Trinity selfish because she has not given more now . . . 50

Dr. Sargent died only a few months after leaving the parish, by which time the Rev. H. B. Mc. Jamison had been called to serve Trinity as its next rector. During his rectorship, T. Whitfield Davidson, the communicant who had solicited building pledges two years earlier, was elected lieutenant governor of the state. He was unsuccessful in a campaign for the governorship later, but subsequently was appointed a federal district judge in the early years of Franklin Roosevelt's presidency, relinquishing an active role in the judiciary only at the age of 90. He was then, by many years, the federal judge with the longest service on the bench, and at this writing still is living in Dallas.

The proposal for a new church, which by this time had been discussed for

approximately 10 years, was again revived by the vestry on December 6, 1921, and a building committee composed of Mr. Davidson, B. C. McElroy, W. L. Barry, T. L. Whaley, Lee Hawley and Edmund Key reported a month later that a new church was "especially desirable."

Planning continued throughout the remainder of Mr. Jamison's rectorship, but it was only after the Rev. Charles S. Monroe had become rector in 1925 that the small frame church was moved east on a lot purchased from W. C. Pierce, Jr., to make way for construction of the new church. Frank Moos, a Marshall contractor, was awarded a \$40,000 contract to build the Gothic brick structure which the congregation still occupies.

The new church was dedicated at services held July 25, 1926, by the Rt. Rev. Clinton S. Quin, who also confirmed a class of 13 candidates during the visit. Newspaper accounts of the day's events reported that "The edifice erected on the site of the modest frame structure built in 1875 (sic) is an architectural gem . . . possessed of all the charm inherent in good architectural proportions" - an altogether fitting and proper tribute to J. W. Northrup, Jr., of Houston, who drew the plans for the modestly elegant church. ⁵¹

In the following year, the old frame church was demolished, and Mr. Northrup was commissioned to draw plans for a parish house in the same architectural style. Mr. Moos again was the successful bidder, completing the structure at a cost of \$27,000 within six months. Now used as a part of the facilities of Trinity Day School, following construction of a new parish house on the quarter-block north of the church, it was dedicated to the memory of Mr. and Mrs. E. J. Fry, the devoted churchpeople and longtime

communicants to whose efforts the church owed so much in its earlier years.

Construction of the church and parish house came during the rectorship of the Rev. S. Moylan Bird, who succeeded Mr. Jamison in 1926 and continued to serve the parish until he was called to St. Peter's, Brenham, three years later.

Mr. Byrd was succeeded on March 1, 1930, by the clergyman who was to serve Trinity Church longer than any other in its history and was to preside over celebrations marking the church's centenary during the 10 days following Christmas, 1950. The Rev. Henry F. Selcer, a native of Cincinnati, was to serve the parish during the last fifth of its first century and to continue as its rector for another five years before his retirement.

Highlight of the church's centennial observance was an elaborate midnight communion service on Christmas Eve, for which the choir prepared special music and to which community leaders and former communicants received special invitations. The vestry had commissioned a history of the church's first 100 years, written by Max S. Lale and entitled "As It Was in the Beginning." Each communicant family received a paperback copy of the history as one of the features of the observance. ⁵²

The debt on the church and parish house was retired 13 years after Mr. Selcer's arrival, and the venerable John Brownrigg, parish treasurer for many years, was able to report in February 1943, with an almost audible sigh of relief, that " . . . the release has been recorded." Title to the property thus being cleared, Trinity Church was consecrated by Bish-

op Quin on the Third Sunday in Lent, March 28, 1943. It is recorded that "In one of the faith's most impressive rites, the congregation made its vows and offered up its prayers of thanksgiving in solemn ritual." ⁵³

In the years since the retirement of Mr. Selcer, whose devotion to his duties as pastor of the Trinity flock will be remembered as long as there is a Trinity congregation, the church has continued to grow as an expression of God's love and promise in the manner that Mrs. Henderson and Louis Wigfall and Henry Sansom and so many others had hoped for it " . . . in the beginning."

Many have joined their labors in the 123 years since that first Christmas. Other rectors have offered their prayers and their inspiration, including the Rev. Donald Raisch, the Rev. Edward Haffner, the Rev. Roger Rishel and the current rector, the Rev. William S. Douglas, and new parishioners have taken up Christ's challenge in Marshall.

Among the achievements of recent years have been the establishment of a day school now serving a student body of 180 through seven grades and the erection of All Saints' Hall, a spacious parish house in the same Gothic style of the church and older parish house, now serving as classrooms for the school.

Communicant strength was 508 at the end of 1972, a number which surely would have seemed unlikely to the 22 who met to organize Trinity parish, and perhaps even more unlikely to the 17 who so sturdily kept the faith in 1870.

The faith of the early saints has been fulfilled. ⁵³

FOOT NOTES

1. Max S. Lale, "As It Was in the Beginning," (a history of Trinity Episcopal Church, Marshall, from 1850 to 1950), Marshall, Texas, 1950, p. 3.
2. ibid., p. 3.
3. Lawrence L. Brown, "The Episcopal Church in Texas, 1838-74," The Church Historical Society, Austin, Texas, 1963, p. 39.
4. ibid., p. 40. These were Christ Church, Matagorda, organized in 1839; Christ Church, Houston, 1839; Trinity Church, Galveston, 1841; St. John's Church, Brazoria County, 1847; Christ Church, San Augustine, 1848; and Christ Church, Nacogdoches, 1848.
5. ibid., p. 43. These were Trinity, San Antonio; St. Paul's, Washington; St. Peter's, Brenham; and St. Paul's, Fireman's Hill, Washington County.
6. ibid., p. 43. Others were Clarksville, Red River County; Huntsville, Walker County with Fireman's Hill, Polk County; Austin; Columbus, with La Grange and Bastrop; Victoria with Port Lavaca; and Brownsville.
7. ibid., p. 81.
8. Lale, op. cit., p. 3.
9. ibid. See numerous references throughout.
10. Brown, op. cit., p. 45.
11. George L. Bocket, "Two Centuries in East Texas," Dallas, 1932, p. 290. " . . . both parishes (San Augustine and Marshall) stand as monuments to her zeal."
12. ibid., p. 238.
13. ibid., p. 238.
14. Lale, op. cit., p. 5.
15. Brown, op. cit., pp. 44, 45.
16. ibid., p. 45.
17. ibid., p. 47.

18. Weldon Hart, "1859 . . . and the Bishop Came to Austin," Austin, 1959, p. 11. This attractive pamphlet history of St. David's, Austin, was prepared in observance of the parish's centenary and as a memento to delegates attending the 110th council of the Diocese of Texas.
19. Trinity Church, Austin, was reported in 1857 as "a vacant parish," and a year later a petition was received at the council of 1858 requesting the admission of a new parish in Austin under the name of St. Mark's. "After proper inquiry the Committee on New Parishes satisfied themselves that Trinity Parish was in fact extinct; they therefore recommended the admission of St. Mark's, which the convention granted." Brown, op. cit., p. 65. The town of Washington had fallen into a decline after 1855, and, though the Rt. Rev. Alexander Gregg made annual visits to St. Paul's, there is no evidence that other services were conducted between these visits. "In April of 1870 the old church building, the beloved 'red cedar church', was moved across the Brazos River to Navasota, where it could be put to more frequent use. Thereafter St. Paul's, Washington, disappears from the record, its members, if any remained, presumably attended services occasionally at Navasota." ibid., p. 216. The community of Fireman's Hill, Polk County, changed its name to Cold Spring prior to 1859, and its church had ceased to exist prior to 1863. "In this same period an effort was made to clear the list of extinct congregations . . . St. Paul's was dropped in 1863." ibid., p. 122. St. Luke's at Chappell Hill had ceased to exist prior to 1860, and in the effort to clear the list of extinct congregations, "St. Luke's . . . was removed in 1860." ibid., p. 122.
20. Lale, Op. cit., p. 5.
21. Brown, op. cit., p. 79.
22. ibid., p. 79.
23. Lale, op. cit., p. 6.
24. ibid., p. 7.
25. The Texas Republican (Marshall), Oct. 27, 1859; February 16, 1861; etc.
26. Brown, op. cit., p. 242.
27. Lale, op. cit., p. 10.
28. Brown, op. cit., p. 243.
29. ibid., p. 243.

30. ibid., p. 243.
31. ibid., p. 244.
32. ibid., p. 244.
33. These circumstances had been duplicated earlier when the church at San Augustine, to which Mrs. Henderson had contributed so generously and for which she had headed the subscription campaign, also fell into ruin after only 10 years because of a "dishonest contractor, that bane of so many building enterprises." Crocket, op. cit., p. 292.
34. Lale, op. cit., p. 15.
35. ibid., p. 15.
36. Brown, op. cit., p. 244.
37. Lale, op. cit., p. 15.
38. ibid., p. 16.
39. Brown, op. cit., p. 244.
40. Lale, op. cit., p. 16.
41. ibid., p. 16.
42. Brown, op. cit., p. 245.
43. Lale, op. cit., pp. 16, 17.
44. Wilson Gregg, "Alexander Gregg, First Bishop of Texas," The University Press, Sewanee, Tennessee, 1912, pp. 127-131.
45. The Texas Republican (Marshall), May 18, 1861; ibid., Oct. 17, 1862; The Harrison County Flag (Marshall), Nov. 12, 1868; etc.
46. Lale, op. cit., pp. 18, 19.
47. ibid., p. 22.
48. ibid., p. 22.
49. ibid., p. 27.
50. ibid., pp. 32, 33.
51. ibid., p. 35.

52. One hundred copies of this work were bound in hard covers and numbered for the collectors' market. Individual copies were ordered by a number of university libraries, and others are in the hands of individuals. Single copies are listed from time to time in the catalogs of Texas rare book dealers.
53. The summarized history of Trinity Church since the end of World War II which appears above came under the author's own observation as a communicant of Trinity Church. It is given less extensive treatment in this paper than the earlier period of the church's history for the reason that it is the early years of the parish which establish Trinity as worthy of a Texas historical site marker.

27" x 42" Official Texas Historical Marker
Harrison County - 11-20-73 - Grove & W. Houston, Marshall FG

TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH

ONE OF THE OLDEST EPISCOPAL CHURCHES IN TEXAS. AN OUTGROWTH OF 1840s WORK IN CADDO LAKE AREA BY THE REV. WILLIAM STEEL OF LOUISIANA, AND OF APPEALS FOR PRIESTS MADE BY FRANCES COX HENDERSON (WIFE OF THE DIPLOMAT-GOVERNOR-U.S. SENATOR, J. PINCKNEY HENDERSON) TO THE CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES. TRINITY PARISH WAS FOUNDED JAN. 4, 1851, WITH 22 MEMBERS, BY THE REV. HENRY SANSOM (1821-1903), WHO WAS RECTOR 1851-55.

ORIGINAL MEMBERSHIP INCLUDED E. G. BENNERS, LATER A PRIEST; ALSO THE KEY FAMILY, WHO REMAIN IN PARISH A CENTURY LATER. COMMUNICANTS HAVE INCLUDED CONFEDERATE GENERALS BENJAMIN HUGER AND LOUIS T. WIGFALL, AND 20TH CENTURY JURIST T. WHITFIELD DAVIDSON.

THE REV. EDWIN A. WAGNER (RECTOR INTERMITTENTLY, 1859-75), THE REV. C. C. KRAMER (1909-14), THE REV. C. S. SARGENT (1914-21) AND OTHERS BUILT SPIRITUAL STRENGTH OF THE PARISH AND ADVOCATED A PERMANENT CHURCH EDIFICE TO REPLACE SUCCESSIVE EARLY STRUCTURES. PRESENT CHURCH WAS BUILT IN 1925-26, WHEN THE REV. CHARLES S. MONROE WAS RECTOR. IT WAS DEDICATED BY BISHOP CLINTON S. QUIN, JULY 25, 1926. ARCHITECT WAS J. W. NORTHRUP, JR., HOUSTON.

THE REV. HENRY F. SELCER (1930-56) ACHIEVED RECORD FOR LONGEST SERVICE AS RECTOR. PARISH IN 1972 HAD 508 MEMBERS. ITS DAY SCHOOL RENDERS COMMUNITY SERVICE. (1973)

DEDICATION DATE (if known) _____

MARKER NAME Trinity Episcopal Church

JOB#

3998

TOWN MarshallCOUNTY HarrisonDATE 7-30-73Design E, 27" x 42", without Post

\$375.00

MARKER

SIZE

PRICE

Mrs. O. H. Clark

SIGNER OF CHECK

PROCEDURE FOR MARKER APPLICATION

INITIAL

DATE

gna	7-30-73	1. Application checked and dated
gna	7-30-73	2. Check deposited
---	---	3. Folder checked and approved
Bay	7-31-73	
		4. Additional information sent for
Bay	8-3-73	5. Letter of approval sent, permanent record and DSA recording, labeling, listed & filed in current marker work
DP	8-30-73	6. Checkout to inscription writer
Bay	9-8-73	7. Sent for State Marker Committee approval
Knw	10-1-73	8. Inscription submitted for County approval
		9. Highway permission secured (if necessary)
		10. Order sent to Southwell
gna	10-12-73	
DP	11-19-73	11. Rubbing checked
		12. Stencil cut
gna	11-20-73	
Knw	11-26-73	13. Recorded for Marker Guide
Knw	11-26-73	14. News release sent, w/copy to TSHSC President (Recorded Landmark Certificate sent, if necessary)
Knw	12-4-73	15. Notice of shipment sent
Knw	12-5-73	16. Extraneous material deleted, folder given to architectural historian
		17. Folder placed in completed marker file

NAME OF MARKER Trinity Episcopal Church

TOWN Marshall, COUNTY Harrison

DATE 7-30-73

TO: TEXAS STATE HISTORICAL SURVEY COMMITTEE

FROM: TEXAS HISTORICAL FOUNDATION

3998

On this date the Texas Historical Foundation received a donation for a Design E, 27" x 42", without Post.

We ask to be advised by your Committee if the history is sufficient, the location satisfactory, and all other requirements set forth by the State have been met.

Gertrude N. Amador

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS: Category: FG

Truett Latimer: Approved

Bas
Initial

7-31-73
Date

Deolece Parmelee: Mr. Lale did not use the checklist in quite the way it was intended, but he has incorporated all the materials, so I think one is satisfactory. D. Parmelee 7-31-73



Texas Historical Commission

Box 12276, Capitol Station,
Austin, Texas 78711
Truett Latimer
Executive Director

October 1, 1973

Mr. Max S. Lale
3704 Fitzgerald
Marshall, TX 75670

RE: Trinity Episcopal Church
Design E, 27"x 42", without post

Dear Mr. Lale:

Before we order casting of the enclosed marker inscription, we would like for you to please review and verify the history set forth in the text, as approved by the State Marker Committee.

Will you please signify your approval of the inscription as submitted by signing and returning the enclosed card at your earliest convenience. You may retain the marker copy for your files.

Sincerely,

Truett Latimer
Executive Director

By:

Bob Watson
Director of Programs

TL/km

Harrison

I approve of the inscription for Trinity Episcopal
Church

as sent to me October 1, 1973.

RECEIVED

OCT 12 1973

TEXAS STATE HISTORICAL SURVEY
COMMITTEE

Max S. Lane

Signed

10-10-73

Date

TEXAS HISTORICAL FOUNDATION

BOX 12243 • CAPITOL STATION • AUSTIN, TEXAS 78711 • PHONE GR5-3238

October 12, 1973

Mr. Bill Southwell, Jr.
The Southwell Company
P.O. Drawer 289
San Antonio, Texas 78208

3998

NO. _____

RE: Design E, 27" x 42", without Post

Trinity Episcopal Church
Marshall, TX
Harrison County

Dear Mr. Southwell:

Enclosed is an application for Design E, 27" x 42", without Post,
Trinity Episcopal Church, for the City of Marshall,
Harrison County.

We would appreciate a rubbing of this inscription.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Gertrude N. Amador
Secretary

GNA/s

Enclosure

SHIP TO:

Trinity Episcopal Church
West Houston Street
Marshall, TX 75670

MR.
File



Trinity Episcopal Church

CORNER OF GROVE AND HOUSTON STREETS
MARSHALL, TEXAS 75670

March 11, 1974

THE REV. WILLIAM SAVAGE DOUGLAS
RECTOR

Church Phone: 214 938-4246
Rectory Phone: 214 935-9648

Mr. Truett Latimer
Box 12276, Capitol Station
Austin, Texas 78711

Dear Mr. Latimer:

The Vestry and congregation of Trinity Episcopal Church extend a very cordial invitation to you to attend the dedication of our Texas Historical Marker on Sunday, March 31st.

The Rt. Rev. James P. Clements, retired Suffragan Bishop of the Diocese of Texas, will conduct the morning worship service at 10:00 o'clock. The marker will be dedicated following the service, and a luncheon will be served in All Saints Hall with recognition given to our distinguished guests.

We hope you will plan to join us for this memorable occasion. If you are able to attend the service and luncheon, please return the enclosed post card to confirm your reservation.

We are especially proud of the significance of this marker in view of the history of our Church in this community. It would please us very much to have you share our joy in paying tribute to those persons who have been faithful to our Lord and committed to the growth of our Parish in years past.

Faithfully and sincerely yours,

Wm S. Douglas
William S. Douglas, Rector

RECEIVED

MAR 13 1974

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

"Grace Be Unto You, and Peace, from God our Father,
And From the Lord Jesus Christ." PHILIPPIANS 1: 2.



Trinity Episcopal Church

CORNER OF GROVE AND HOUSTON STREETS
MARSHALL, TEXAS 75670

March 11, 1974

THE REV. WILLIAM SAVAGE DOUGLAS
RECTOR

Church Phone: 214 938-4246
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Box 12276, Capitol Station
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MAR 13 1974

Wm S. Douglas
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