

The William W. Goodman Gift

*Documents pertaining to
the Second Presbyterian Church of Memphis
after it had been seized during the Civil War,
including a handwritten and
signed endorsement of Abraham Lincoln
directing the return of the church to its trustees.*

Notes by
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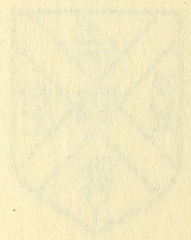
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SOUTHWESTERN AT MEMPHIS
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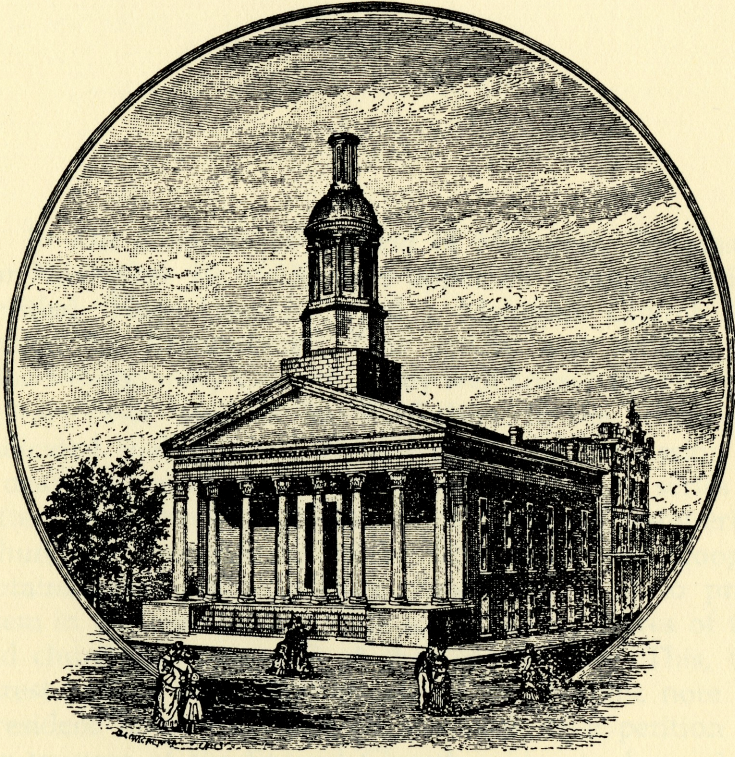
The William W. Goodwin Club

...the purpose of
...of Memphis
...the year 1910
...and
...of Memphis
...the name of the club in its honor.

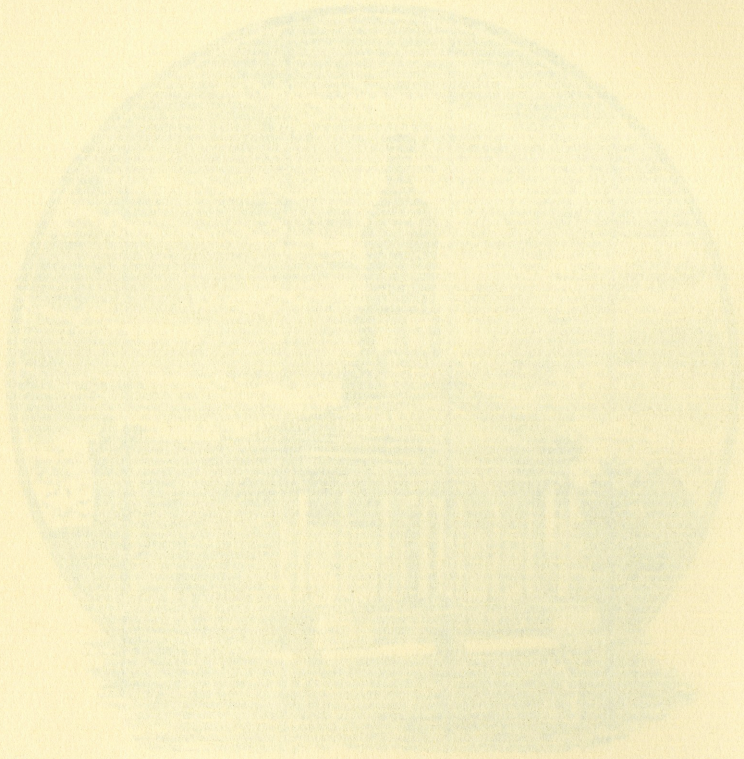
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**How Lincoln Saved
The Second Presbyterian Church**



How Lincoln Saved
The Second Presbyterian Church

In *The Commercial Appeal* of Memphis, Tennessee, for November 10, 1935, there appeared a lengthy article entitled "How Lincoln Saved a Memphis Church Revealed by Documents." This article was written by Miss Montgomery Cooper, a lady well known then for her literary taste, and for her bookshop. In the article she indicated that she had discovered in the possession of a dealer in rare books in Washington, D.C., a series of letters which bore on the fate of the Second Presbyterian Church of Memphis during the Civil War. Miss Cooper obtained permission to copy these letters and to print them in the newspaper article along with pictures of the old church building and of the Lincoln note. This, the rarest item of the collection, was a holographic note by President Lincoln written on the back of a petition of the trustees of the Second Church asking to have their building restored. Miss Cooper concluded her article with these words:

The documents from which we have quoted should remain in Memphis, and it is to be hoped that some public-minded citizen will purchase them. . . Never again, probably, will any be found that show that Abraham Lincoln had such direct contact with and influence upon the history of this city.

As it transpired, one public-minded citizen did heed the call and shortly thereafter these letters were purchased by Mr. William W. Goodman, Memphis attorney, bibliophile, collector and philanthropist. These documents reposed in his own extensive collection until February 1970, when he decided to present them to Southwestern At Memphis.

The documents herein presented really tell their own story, but some background and a brief recapitulation of the story may clarify the contents of these documents.

In the 1840's, the original town of Memphis (founded in 1819) began to flourish, but two nearby communities to the south of the original town began to grow also and to rival it. One was Fort Pickering, sponsored by John C. McLemore; and the other was South Memphis, developed primarily by Robertson Topp. South Memphis, that is the new community south of Union Avenue, was only incorporated in January 1846, but it had been growing rapidly prior to that date. As early as 1840 a group of eighteen or twenty "Old School" Presbyterians, moved by a revival meeting held on the bluff behind the Gayoso Hotel, got together to organize a "second" Presbyterian church (the first being located in Memphis proper). They began to worship in a warehouse on the corner of Beale and Shelby (now Front), but by 1846 the congregation had grown to such an extent that members purchased a lot on the northeast corner of Beale and Main and began the construction of a classically porticoed church, capable of holding a thousand worshippers though the church numbered only about two hundred members at the time. This structure was completed in 1848.

The original revivalist, Dr. John H. Gray, became the first pastor and continued with the church until 1857, when he became Secretary to the General Assembly's Executive Committee on Education and also accepted the presidency of La Grange College, La Grange, Tennessee. Later he was a member of the Assembly in which the Southern Presbyterian Church was formed.

His successor to the pulpit was the Reverend R. C. Grundy, graduate of Centre College and a nephew of the more famous, The Honorable Felix Grundy. He was pastor, therefore, when the Civil War broke out, and it has been assumed by some historians of the Second Church that he was a Unionist sympathizer from the fact that he reported to the Federal officials (after the capture of Mem-

phis on June 2, 1862) that the church's Session had offered its bell to the Confederate government for recasting into cannon; hence giving the Federal military authorities the excuse for occupying the church building, which was done by U.S. General William Tecumseh Sherman's orders on May 1, 1863. Yet from the petition sent by the trustees of the church to President Lincoln (Document 6) it seems clear that the minister had alienated the congregation and aroused their hostile feelings for other and more personal reasons, and that he had been dismissed by the congregation with the approval of the presbytery prior to the Federal occupation. In fact, in the petition it clearly states: "First, that Dr. Grundy was not removed from the Church because he was a Union man," and a little later, "There were a few, and but a few who disliked his mode of politics. We say mode because he had preached the strongest southern doctrine and boasted of what he had done." Thus it appears that it was his dismissal as pastor and not his Unionism that led Dr. Grundy to betray his congregation to the Federal forces.

After the building was taken over (May, 1863), it seems to have passed through three phases before its restoration to its original congregation at Lincoln's behest. From letters in the Goodman collection (Documents 1-5) it is possible to piece together the fate of the church building until its restoration. First, it was used by various individual chaplains of hospitals, encampments, etc., until late in 1863 when the chaplains of the various units formed an association, taking turns in preaching, calling in also local preachers, and enlarging the scope of their activities by starting Sunday School classes, mid-week services, lectures and other activities. It was then called Union Chapel and was used not only by the military, but also for non-military Union workers, local Union sympathizers and others, for church services and for the reading of governmental proclamations.

The long and interesting letter from the Chaplains' Association (Document 1) to U.S. Major General S. A. Hurlbut reviews their tenure of the building, and their cause is backed by a group of surgeons and by the Super-

intendent General of the local hospitals, B.J.D. Irwin (Documents 2 and 3). All warn General Hurlbut against the activities of a local minister—a Northerner and a Congregationalist—the Reverend Thomas Eliakin Bliss, who came to Memphis in 1862 as a special representative of the American Home Mission Society of the Congregational Church. Him they cast in the role of a villain who was attempting to change Union Chapel into a Union Church (a non-or inter-denominational church), or as his critics said “a Congregational church.” Dr. Bliss and his supporting petitioners (whose letter is unfortunately missing from this collection) seem to have made their appeal to another Federal officer, General Buckland. Dr. Bliss did later found the first Congregational church in Memphis. But his intrigue, and the chaplains’ spirited defense of their own program, which came in mid-March 1864, were both in vain, for by early March the Second Presbyterian’s petition had reached the President, and his dignified and important note restoring the building to the church was dated March 4, 1864, though it would have taken some time for it to reach Memphis and General Hurlbut (Documents 6-8).

To underline their appeal to General Hurlbut, the Chaplains’ Association got thirty-four Memphians to write, backing their stand in warning against Dr. Bliss (Document 4). In part they wrote that, Union Chapel,

...has been heretofore as far as practicable, a union of denominations, the members and clergymen representing various denominations. We look upon the new organization (i. e. of a Union Church) as neither less nor more than a Congregational Church under the specious name of Union. And we regard the movement as an artful and unfair attempt on the part of that denomination to get possession of the property of the Old School Presbyterian Church.

In defense of Dr. Bliss, it may here be inserted that the late Dr. Marshall Wingfield, Congregational minister, local historian and long-time president of the West Tennessee Historical Society, wrote a long article in the *W.T.H.S. Papers* (vol. VIII, 55-94), attempting to prove that Dr. Bliss was mistakenly villified and was innocent of the transgression of which he was accused. Incidentally,

he pointed out that Dr. Bliss lived on into the present century and died a Presbyterian minister.

As pointed out above, as this tempest over the temple was raging, the trustees of the Second Church, having pleaded in vain with the local military authorities to restore their property, finally made a direct appeal to the President himself. The President heard their appeal and in an almost classic statement of religious liberty and the separation of church and state, ordered the restoration of their property—on the back of the petition—and this was seconded by another note on the petition by General Hurlbut, (Documents 6-8).

As an epilogue to this story, it may be noted that when the Reverend Henry E. "Jeb" Russell, the present pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church, was recently (February 8, 1970) invited to preach at the White House by President Nixon, he carried as a gift to the President a framed copy of Lincoln's same great memorandum ordering the restoration of the church. In presenting it to Mr. Nixon, Dr. Russell remarked,

that the last communication Second Presbyterian Church had from the White House, prior to his invitation to be preacher on February 8, 1970, was the memorandum from President Lincoln of March 4, 1864.

"and," Dr. Russell added, "the President seemed delighted to receive the letter." Southwestern was also delighted to receive the entire correspondence as a gift from Mr. and Mrs. William W. Goodman.

THE DOCUMENTS

1. The appeal by the Chaplains' Association, March 11, 1864.
2. & 3. (on the back of #1.) Concurrence in the appeal by the surgeons and by the Superintendent General, B.J.D. Irwin.
4. An appeal to Major General S. A. Hurlbut by thirty-four citizens backing the chaplains' recommendation, March 14, 1864.
5. General Hurlbut's instructions to General Buckland (?) cautioning delay, March 15, 1864.
6. Undated petition of the trustees of the Second Presbyterian Church to President Lincoln.
7. (On the back of #6) Order of the President to release the church building unless it "becomes dangerous to the public interest."
8. (On the back of #6) General Hurlbut's order to carry out the President's instruction. Undated.

1.
Appeal by the Chaplains' Association

Memphis, Tenn., March 11, 1864. Surgeon B.J.D. Irwin, U.S.A.:

Sir—The members of the Chaplains' Association of Memphis have the honor to report that about the 1st of May, 1863, in obedience to your order, we occupied the Chapel known as Union Chapel, corner of Beale and Main Sts., which had previously been occupied for several months by individual Chaplains, as a place of worship for the benefit of the convalescents, attendants and officers of the various hospitals in this city. In addition to the inmates of hospitals many soldiers and officers on detached service in the city with their families and a number of loyal citizens became attached to the congregation.

We secured the services of an excellent choir, inaugurated a weekly prayer meeting, opened an efficient Sabbath school with large classes of soldiers under competent instructors, and set in operation for the moral and religious improvement of soldiers and others in the U.S. service, and all loyally disposed persons, such various agencies as are usually employed by religious societies.

For many months after we commenced operations in Union Chapel our congregation was the only avowedly loyal congregation in the city. And our church was the only house of worship opened for Divine service on the days set apart by proclamation of the president of the United States, to be religiously observed. On each of these days Divine service has been held, and appropriate discourses preached in Union Chapel.

Our congregation composed of soldiers, officers and their families and loyal citizens is one of the largest if not the largest in this city. The audience room, capable of holding about 1,000 persons, is often overcrowded. The church edifice which we occupy is the property of the Old School Presbyterian Church. The trustees of the society formerly occupying said edifice made application some months ago to Major General Hurlbut, commanding 16th Army Corps for the return of the property to them. But the application was promptly refused by General Hurlbut for the reason that there was standing on the church book the record of a vote passed by said society offering their church bell to the Southern Confederacy to be used for making cannon; and for the additional reason that they would not consent that prayer should be offered in the church for the president of the United States, when they should receive possession. We are informed that these same trustees have applied to the president of the United States for the possession of the property.

The character of our congregation and the attractiveness of our arrangements (sic) for public worship, have excited the cupidity of some religious adventurers from the north.

A few weeks since one Bliss, claiming to represent the missionary society of the Congregational Church, arrived in this city and by the courtesy of Chaplains' Association, was invited to preach in Union Chapel. Whereupon said Bliss immediately set on foot a scheme to get

possession of Union Chapel for the use of a church which he proposed to organize to be composed of whoever chose to join, irrespective of previous denominational relations—thus making a union of denominations, and to be called a Union Church.

We have heard from said Bliss a full statement of his plan of organization and articles of belief, and find them to be identical with the organization and articles of belief of the Congregational denomination—the most important modification being the change of name from “Congregational Church to “Union Church.”

And we regard the movement as an attempt on the part of said Bliss to get possession of the property of the Old School Presbyterian Church for the use of the Congregational Church.

By operating through several congregationalists in this city, and a very small proportion of the citizen members of our congregation, Bliss succeeded in securing the signatures of several influential loyal citizens to an application to Brigadier General Buckland who recently came in command of the District of Memphis, to give the Union Chapel to the church he proposed to organize. Most of the citizens signing this application were not members of our congregation. And some of the most influential of them since declare they signed the application under misapprehension. General Buckland issued an order giving to Bliss' proposed organization the possession of Union Chapel. But promptly suspended his order on hearing from officers and citizens a correct representation of the case—thereby leaving the chapel in the possession of the Chaplains' Association until further orders.

The Chaplains' Association of Memphis is composed of clergymen of the various denominations in the United States, who officiate in turn in the Union Military Chapel. We regard such an arrangement (sic) as this to be the only possible union of denominations.

And we believe that the interest of the service require the continuance of the Military Chapel.

We therefore respectfully recommend that measures be taken to secure the use of the Union Chapel to the Medical Department of this city, insuring the existence of the present system of hospitals, or until a loyal society of the denomination owning the property is ready to occupy it.

We would respectfully state that a petition to General Buckland was prepared and signed by a respectable number of the citizen members of our congregation making a request of him precisely the same, with the above recommendation. But on learning that General Buckland had suspended his order the petition was not presented.

We have the honor to be, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servants, Z. Ragan, hospital chaplain, U.S.A. Officers, and Gayoso, Hospital; H. M. Carr, hospital chaplain, U.S.A., Adams Hospital; William C. Hubbard, hospital chaplain, U.S.A., Washington Hospital; B. Hungerford, 28 Ill. vol. Duty Webster Hospital; C. P. Baldwin, chaplain 114 (word?) Guard Regiment; G. W. Rue (?) chaplain 108 Ills in camp at Memphis.

2 and 3.
**Concurrence in the appeal by surgeons and
by the Surgeon General.**
B. J. D. Irwin

Memphis, Tenn., March 11, 1864.

We the undersigned surgeons in charge of U.S.A. General Military Hospitals, concur with the recommendation of the chaplins (sic) that Union Church be retained for the use of the hospital department of this city as a Military Chapel, under the direction of the chaplin's (sic) association. J. M. Sturdy, assistant surgeon, U.S. Vols., in charge Officers' Hospital; W. M. Dorran, A. A. surgeon, U.S.A. executive offices, and temporarily in charge of Gayoso Hospital (350 inmates); Edward G. Strode, assistant surgeon, U.S. army, in charge Washington Hospital (450 inmates); J. G. Keenon, U.S.V., in charge Adams General Hospital, 546 inmates; J. C. G. Happersett, assistant surgeon U.S. army, in charge of Overton Hospital (500 inmates).

(On Back)

Office Superintendent Hospitals
Memphis, Tenn., March 14, 1864.

Respectfully referred to Major General S. A. Hurlbut, commanding 16th Army Corps, whose attention is respectfully called to all the facts in the case. There are several thousand soldiers in the hospitals of this city who have no place of worship, as the hospitals are unprovided with chapels. During the last year there has been 23,950 inmates in the general hospitals, the convalescents from which, the officers and their families and the employes of these institutions have used this church as their place of worship, under the administration of some half-dozen regularly commissioned army chaplains who have labored zealously and faithfully to ministering to the wants of this large congregation that has attended their meetings. The church is known as "Union Chapel," and no one can doubt the loyalty or patriotism of those who attend there—the maimed and disabled soldiers, who have been stricken down in defense of our country and her rights. To dispossess them, except for the most cogent reasons, is a poor reward for their zeal and devotion.

I earnestly and respectfully urge that the church may be set apart for the use of the inmates of U.S. Army General Hospitals and I have no place that is suitable that can be used for similar purposes.—B.J.D. Irwin, surgeon U.S. Army, Superintendent General Hospitals.

4.
Appeal by "Thirty-four" citizens.

Maj. Gen. S. A. Hurlbut, Commanding 16th Army Corps &c.,
Memphis, Tenn.:

The undersigned, citizens of Memphis, members of, or sympathizing with the congregation, worshipping in Union Chapel (corner of Beale and Main Streets) desire respectfully to represent, that in our

opinion a large majority of said congregation do not desire such an organization as certain parties most of whom have not heretofore been members of the congregation are attempting to inaugurate under the name of a "Union Church."

The society has been heretofore, as far as practicable, a Union of denominations, the members and clergymen representing various denominations. We look upon the new organization as substantially, neither less nor more, than a sectarian society of congregational denomination, under the specious name of "Union."

And we regard the movement as an artful and unfair attempt on the part of that denomination to get possession of the property of the Old School Presbyterian Church. And we believe that the introduction of such an organization, in place of the arrangement for a Union congregation, as heretofore existing, will produce discord, instead of union.

We would also mention, that initiatory steps have been taken, in answer to an inquiry of Fr Janeway (?), Secretary of the Board of Home Missions of the Old School Presbyterian Church, to organize a loyal Presbyterian church, and as several of the signers of this petition have been loyal members of the old organization, as it existed under the charge of Rev. Dr. Grundy, we would respectfully ask for them the right of occupation over any other sect or set of men, most of whom are not members of any Christian church whatsoever.

We therefore respectfully petition, that Divine Service in said chapel may continue under the direction of the Chaplains' association of Memphis for the time being or until such time, as a loyal society of the denomination rightfully owning the property desire to occupy it.

Submitting the above to your favorable consideration, we remain,
Most Respectfully,

Angus Campbell, J. D. Perryman, Wm. S. Bond, Mrs. W. S. Bond, H. Osborn, H. F. Cooper, Mrs. H. F. Cooper, Edward R. Hill, Mrs. Edward R. Hill, Mrs. E. R. Hoadley, Mrs. W. M. Crain, Virginia Crain, James B. Wells, A. C. Cady, Mrs. A. C. Cady, B. Burbank, E. M. Holman, F. Katzenbach, Mrs. A. R. Perryman, Edward Silvey (?), Mrs. C. Silvey, Mrs. F. Katzenbach, A. A. Rickert, A. P. Burditt, L. S. Knowlton, Mrs. L. S. Knowlton, Geo. B. Patterson, Wm. A. Coit, Cyrus Randall, Mrs. Harriet Randall, E. H. Scrantom, A. C. Saunders, Mrs. E. M. Holman.

Memphis, Tenn., March 14-64

5.

**General Hurlbut's instruction to General Buckland (?)
urging caution.**

Headquarters, Sixteenth Army Corps.
Memphis, Tenn., March 15, 1864.

General:

The inclosed communication puts a different face on the Union Chapel affair.

I have determined to investigate the matter more closely and try to render effectual justice.

The order placing the Church in Mr. Bliss' hands will be held in abeyance until all parties can be heard.

Your obt. Servt

S. A. HURLBUT,
Maj Genl

6.

**Petitioning the Trustees of the Second Presbyterian Church
to President Lincoln.**

To Abraham Lincoln, President:

Be pleased to gratify us so much at least, as to read this communication.

We make this apparently strange request, simply because we know you have so much before you that you cannot give any special attention to all presented.

The object of this effort, is to induce you to return to our use, and control, the Second Presbyterian Church of this City.

Eighteen years since, this Church organization was nearly as small as the Church of the twelve disciples (sic) and as to worldly goods, only of similar importance.

At the beginning of 1861, we had grown to be a large and useful body, but only after years of unremitting toil and sacrifice.

Upon the occupation of Memphis by the Federal Authority, our Church Edifice was taken from us, mainly through the representations of the Rev. R. C. Grundy, D.D., who had been our pastor.

Truth, and duty, impel us to state that Dr. Grundy did not place us in the right position before the Military Authority. Not so much by misstatements perhaps, as by withholding important and qualifying truth.

Against his presentation of the case, we did not then, nor have we since, made any public response, for the single Christian reason that, we object to bringing Church difficulties before the public.

To you we state, and what we affirm, we will at any time prove by incontestable evidence: First—That Dr. Grundy was not removed from the church because he was a union man.

Second—That the Presbytery of Memphis did not have the subject of his loyalty or disloyalty before it and could not therefore have dismissed him on that account.

The Presbytery of Memphis having been informed by us that the church was in difficulty, sent commissioners to investigate the case. These gentlemen were men of sound wisdom and discretion. They heard the elders of the church with patience and courtesy. They freely interrogated them, eliciting all they desired. The elders are not aware that they manifested any sympathy to their cause. The commissioners heard as patiently and courteously Dr. Grundy.

After due deliberation they reported back to the Presbytery that they believed the difficulty so serious that Dr. Grundy's usefulness

in this church and congregation seemed to be ended. They then recommended that the church should be either divided, or that the pastor be dismissed.

The Presbytery after proper deliberation dissolved the relation between the church and the pastor.

Before we solicited the Presbytery to make an effort to heal our difficulties, we secured the mind of the church and congregation in relation to the pastor by a mode altogether favorable to him, and which he approved. This we suggested principally because we were unwilling to do him any injustice. It was prompted, too, because we wished to avoid a public meeting, at which there would have been too much excitement, which would inevitably have arisen from one of Dr. Grundy's frailties—vindictiveness.

The plan approved was, for the officers to circulate through the church and congregation, at the residences of the people, papers favorable and unfavorable to the pastor's continuance with us—the officers promising not to use the slightest influence against him. This they did faithfully. The effort resulted in securing a small majority for Dr. Grundy. Had the elders used any influence against him they could easily have caused many to vote against him who voted for him.

The complaints against him were various, and had been accumulating for two years, and were constantly pressed upon the officers by the members. In September, 1860, the elders visited the numerous disaffected and obtained a promise that they would attend church, and make an effort to be pleased with the pastor. They did attend church, and appeared to do it in good faith. The pastor, though he had promised to be conciliatory, in two sermons preached in succession, called them censorious critics. This, with new complaints, did not heal the disaffections, but aggravated them.

Pardon us, while we protract this already too long complaint and petition, in briefly stating some of the reasons offered against the continuance of Dr. Grundy as the pastor of the church.

First—He neglected the sick and afflicted to a reprehensible degree. This is a serious charge against a pastor.

Second—The young men were leaving the church, as also entire families, from dissatisfaction and for valid reasons.

Third—He never had a Bible class—nor a monthly concert of prayer—nor catechetical instruction, all of which are general in Presbyterian churches, especially in cities.

Fourth—A great many persons disliked him—they did not fancy his ways—he was distasteful to them. This was not because they were hard to please for Dr. J. H. Gray was our pastor from the organization of the church for 14 years, and when our relations were dissolved that he might take the presidency of the LaGrange College, it was with great reluctance the church gave him up.

Fifth—For nearly two years many complained that the pastor did not study—that his sermons were a repetition.

There were a few, and but a few, who disliked his mode of poli-

tics. We say mode, because he had preached the strongest southern doctrine and boasted of what he had done.

As to the doctrine the proof is found ample in the sermon sent. These few, alluded to, were against him, more because they believed him insincere. Their apprehensions of his insincerity, the sequel of his residence in Memphis, too painfully proved.

Be assured, sir, the elders of the Second Presbyterian Church of Memphis would never have countenanced the removal of Dr. Grundy for his loyalty to the government. We did not do it. We may add, had the secession of the southern states turned or depended upon our vote, it would not have transpired, for there was at least a large majority of our officers who would always have said it is inexpedient.

But such is the outside influence against us, arising from chaplains, and others, who have been misinformed by Dr. Grundy and others, we do not hope that we shall ever get the church from the military authorities here.

In consideration of the foregoing, therefore, and of what shall follow, we most respectfully solicit you to direct that the church be given us, to control, as our own property, as we did previous to these troublous times.

We sincerely and solemnly promise that there shall not be any disloyal service ever held in the church. We will place in the pulpit a loyal man, and do our best to have the preaching spiritual, all the gospel enjoins.

All of the different denominations among the Chaplains now use it, Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, Unitarians and Universalists. Concerts, schools, political meetings, etc., are held in the Church to our grief and mortification. When the Church was dedicated it was recorded, as our solemn vow, that it should not be used for anything but the preaching of the Gospel and the usual Church services.

Our members are scattered everywhere, and we are fearful the Church will become extinct, except we get the Church edifice into our possession soon.

For all these reasons, and many more, we respectfully petition you to regard favorably our complaints and our prayer.

In conclusion we desire to add that it is unpleasant to place before you Dr. Grundy in an unfavorable aspect, but it has been necessary in order to assert truth, and promote the true interests of our Church. We would have preferred silence and waited patiently the disclosures of Eternity as to the issues of the case concerning him.

Very respectfully,

J. B. KNEELAND (?)

R. H. PETTIT

HENRY WADE

B. M. ESTES

E. (O.) M. AVERY.

7.

President Lincoln's order to release the church.

I have written before and I now repeat: The U. S. Government must not undertake to run the churches. When an individual, in a church or out of it, becomes dangerous to the public interest, he must be checked; but the churches, as such, must take care of themselves. It will not do for the U. S. to appoint Trustees, Superiors or other agents for the churches. . .I add, if the Military have military need for the church building, let them keep it; otherwise let them get out of it, and leave it and it's owners alone, except for causes that justify the arrest of anyone.

A. LINCOLN.

March 4, 1864.

8.

**General Hurlbut's order to carry out the
Presidents instruction.**

This church was taken possession of by Genl. Sherman because of a traitorous resolution adopted by the Trustees.

There is no "military Necessity" for retaining it. If the Corporation satisfy Genl. Buckland of their loyalty the Church building will be delivered up to them.

The Order of the Prest will be strictly carried out.

S. A. HURLBUT, Maj. Genl.

PRESIDENT LINCOLN'S ORDER

I have written before, and I now repeat: The U. S. Government must not undertake to run the churches. When an individual, in a church or out of it, becomes dangerous to the public interest he must be checked; but the churches, as such, must take care of themselves. It will not do for the U. S. to appoint trustees, supervisors, or other agents for the churches.

I add, if the Military have military power for the church building, let them keep it; otherwise let them get out of it, and leave it and its owners alone, except for causes that justify the arrest of any one.

A. Lincoln

March. 4. 1864