Two Streams Mingling: The American Episcopal Church in the Anglican Communion

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ABSTRACT

This article identifies and compares two ecclesiological 'streams' that coalesced when the Anglican Communion was definitively formed in 1867: the traditional western catholic ecclesiology of England and Ireland and the more democratic, egalitarian ecclesiology of the American Episcopal Church. These streams had already mingled in George Augustus Selwyn's constitution for the New Zealand Church. Incorporation of laypeople into the Church of England's synods represented further convergence. Nonetheless, different understandings of the role of bishops in church government are still reflected in attitudes to the respective roles in the Communion's affairs of bishops and primates on the one hand and the more recent Anglican Consultative Council on the other. Differences between the two streams were noticeable at the 1867 Lambeth Conference. The efforts of Archbishops Davidson and Fisher, rooted in the work of Selwyn, to hold together what Selwyn called 'the two branches of our beloved Church' are praised.

KEYWORDS: America, bishops, democracy, ecclesiology, laity, primates, synods

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This article is an expanded version of a paper given at a symposium held in Cambridge in April 2009 to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the birth of George Augustus Selwyn, after whom Selwyn College is named. It forms part of a larger project of research and writing about the American Episcopal Church.[2] That is 'work in progress', and the same could be said of the Anglican Communion. The crisis in which it has found itself since 2003 is prompting the Communion to try to define more closely the basis of its common life and the structures that might hold it together. In that context, it is worth recalling just what a recent phenomenon the Anglican Communion is. The term was first used in its modern sense in 1847,[3] and the Communion only achieved structural expression with the first Lambeth Conference in 1867—just over 140 years ago. The See of Canterbury is ten times as old.

In the run-up to the 1867 Lambeth Conference it was not entirely clear which churches belonged to the Communion and which did not. A decision was taken to invite not only the bishops of what was then still the United Church of England and Ireland (covering England, Wales and Ireland and including 'the Colonial Church' in other parts of the British Empire and missionary bishops operating beyond it) but also the bishops of the Scottish Episcopal Church and the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America.[4] After consulting the English bishops, Archbishop Longley rejected a proposal to invite the Swedish bishops as well.[5] This 1867 meeting of the bishops of the United Church of England and Ireland throughout the world with those of the American and Scottish Episcopal Churches thus not only gave visible expression to the idea of an 'Anglican Communion' but also defined its extent and its limits. As Bishop and Metropolitan of New Zealand, George Augustus Selwyn was a leading participant.

2. The official name of the church under discussion is 'The Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America'. Since 1967 its Constitution has recognized the name 'The Episcopal Church' as 'also designating' it. In respect of events before 1967 that name would be anachronistic and, where the Scottish Episcopal Church is also mentioned, potentially confusing. The traditional informal designation 'the American Episcopal Church' is therefore used in this article.

3. C.J. Podmore, *Aspects of Anglican Identity* (London: Church House Publishing, 2005), p. 36.

4. A.M.G. Stephenson, *The First Lambeth Conference 1867* (London: SPCK, 1967), pp. 173, 180–82.

5. W.M. Jacob, *The Making of the Anglican Church Worldwide* (London: SPCK, 1997), pp. 163–64; Stephenson, *The First Lambeth Conference 1867*, pp. 200, 220–221; C.H. Lyttkens, *The Growth of Swedish-Anglican Intercommunion between 1833 and 1922* (Lund: C.W.K. Gleerups Förlag, 1970), pp. 61–63.

Indeed, the Bishop of Quebec called him 'well-nigh the most conspicuous figure, certainly the most attractive spirit' in the conference.[6]

An American ecclesiology

The Anglican Communion brought together churches whose understandings of church governance differed markedly. The United Church of England and Ireland had continued the episcopal structure inherited from the Western Church, albeit now subject to royal, rather than papal, supremacy. The Scottish Episcopal Church was a tiny minority church in a largely Presbyterian country, formed in defence of hierarchy by High Churchmen who remained loyal to Scotland's bishops when episcopacy was abolished there in 1690. By contrast, the 'polity' of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, which was formed in Philadelphia in 1789, after the American Revolution, reflected a democratic and egalitarian ecclesiology.[7] Paul Marshall, the present Bishop of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, has called it 'an American ecclesiology'.[8] The chief architect of this new church was not Samuel Seabury, famously consecrated by the Scottish bishops as the first bishop of the high-church Episcopalian minority in Congregationalist Connecticut, but the first Bishop of Pennsylvania, William White, a liberal, Latitudinarian disciple of John Locke. White's Lockean view that the Church (like the state) should be a democracy was in line with the prevailing opinion in the United States that all power, spiritual as well as temporal, originated with the people.

The American Episcopal Church was constructed by congregations which had never been part of a diocese, though their clergy had been episcopally ordained (in England) and in some states, at some times in the past, had been under the oversight of a commissary of the Bishop of London. In each state the congregations now formed a convention consisting not only of clergy but also (except in Connecticut) of lay representatives. These state conventions in turn formed a General

6. J.H. Evans, *Churchman Militant: George Augustus Selwyn, Bishop of New Zealand and Lichfield* (London: George Allen & Unwin; Wellington: A.H. & A.W. Reed, 1964), pp. 58–59.

7. This section of the article is based on C.J. Podmore, 'A Tale of Two Churches: The Ecclesiologies of The Episcopal Church and the Church of England Compared', *Ecclesiastical Law Journal* 10 (2008), pp. 34–70, reprinted in *International Journal for the Study of the Christian Church*, 8 (2008), pp. 124–54.

8. P.V. Marshall, *One, Catholic, and Apostolic: Samuel Seabury and the Early Episcopal Church* (New York: Church Publishing, 2004), p. 53 (chapter title: 'The search for an American ecclesiology').

Convention, which adopted a constitution. The American Episcopal Church was surely the first Episcopal Church to have, and indeed derive its existence from, a document so named. That this Episcopal Church was to any extent episcopal in structure (rather than simply having bishops to confirm and ordain and in some states to preside at meetings and exercise some supervision of the clergy) was the achievement of Seabury and the New England High Churchmen, but as Paul Marshall has written, their position was accommodated only 'to some degree'.[9] The pre-emptive strike of Seabury's consecration forced other state conventions to elect bishops and send them to England for consecration (and prompted the English bishops to get the law changed so that they could do the consecrating), and ensured that only episcopally ordained clergy would operate in the new church. As the price of Connecticut's participation in the General Convention, a House of Bishops was added to what became the House of Deputies. The bishops could initiate and veto legislation, though until 1808 their veto could be overridden by an 80% vote of the Deputies. Each state church (they were not called 'dioceses' until 1838) could choose whether to have its own bishop or instead send its clergy to neighbouring bishops for ordination, and there was no bishop in New Jersey until 1815, North Carolina until 1823 or Georgia until 1841.[10]

The powers of a bishop in the Episcopal Church are more limited than those of a bishop in the Church of England, even today. Like, the General Convention's House of Deputies, the diocesan conventions have provision for voting by 'Orders'. There are two 'Orders': clergy and laity. In a sample of ten American diocesan constitutions, nine give the bishop a single vote in the clergy Order and in one he has no vote at all. In only one of the ten is the bishop's consent required for any decision of the convention, and even there it is needed only for amendments to the diocesan constitution and canons.[11] In the Church of England, by contrast, a diocesan synod's role is primarily advisory and consultative, though it has a quasi-legislative power to 'make

9. Marshall, *One, Catholic, and Apostolic*, p. 73.

10. F.V. Mills, *Bishops by Ballot: An Eighteenth-Century Ecclesiastical Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), p. 283; E.A. White and J.A. Dykman, *Annotated Constitution and Canons for the Government of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America otherwise known as The Episcopal Church, adopted in General Conventions 1789–1979* (New York: Church Publishing, 1981), pp. 16, 90; D.L. Holmes, *A Brief History of the Episcopal Church* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1993), p. 59.

11. Podmore, '*A Tale of Two Churches*', pp. 35–125.

provision' and the power to approve or disapprove the diocesan budget. A diocesan bishop can veto any motion in his diocesan synod.[12]

In each diocese of the Episcopal Church, there must be a diocesan standing committee, typically consisting of four priests and four laypeople. The bishop is not a member and they elect their own president. For many decisions the standing committee's consent is required. For example, the bishop may not ordain anyone who has not been approved by the standing committee. Many of the powers of the bishop are expressed in the canons of the General Convention as powers of what is called the 'ecclesiastical authority' of the diocese, and if there is no diocesan bishop the standing committee is automatically the ecclesiastical authority and exercises the powers of the bishop. In the Church of England, by contrast, the 'bishop's council and standing committee of the diocesan synod' exists to discharge the synod's advisory and consultative functions on its behalf;[13] it is not, in itself, an executive body.[14] A diocesan bishop has an absolute right to ordain anyone who fulfils the requirements of the relevant canons. During a vacancy the powers of the diocesan bishop are exercised by a bishop to whom they have been delegated either by the outgoing bishop or by the archbishop or senior bishop of the province.[15]

The American church historian F.V. Mills aptly commented, 'For the first time since the Norman Conquest…, the Episcopalians in America made a bishop of a major religious body an elected official of a convention of clergy and laity'.[16] In the words of another American church historian, David L. Holmes,

> A very American system of church government was created… Delegates from scattered state churches had fashioned a national church that

12. The Church Representation Rules require the standing orders of each diocesan synod to enable the diocesan bishop both to require a vote by houses and to direct that the question 'shall be deemed to have the assent of the house of bishops only if the majority of the members of that house who assent thereto includes the diocesan bishop': *Church Representation Rules* (London: Church House Publishing, 2006), p. 38: rule 34(1)(e), 34(1)(g).

13. Synodical Government Measure 1969, section 4(4); Church Representation Rules, rule 34(1)(k).

14. For further information about the roles of diocesan synods and bishop's councils in the Church of England, see C.J. Podmore, *The Governance of the Church of England and the Anglican Communion* (GS Misc 910, 2009), pp. 3–4, Accessed at http://www.cofe.anglican.org/about/gensynod/agendas/feb09/gsmisc910.pdf

15. Dioceses, Pastoral and Mission Measure 2007, section 14.

16. Mills, *Bishops by Ballot*, p. 288.

> combined the ministry and liturgy of the English established church with the constitutional forms of American republicanism.[17]

The American Episcopal Church, of course, did not stand still over the three-quarters of a century between its inception in 1789 and the first Lambeth Conference in 1867. From the second decade of the nineteenth century onwards High Churchmen became increasingly influential under the leadership of John Henry Hobart, who was consecrated bishop in 1811 at the age of 35 (not quite so young as Selwyn, who was just 32 when he was consecrated in 1841) and was first Assistant Bishop and then from 1816 until his premature death in 1830 Bishop of New York. High-church dominance reached its peak in the 1830s: eleven of the fourteen bishops elected between 1830 and 1840 were High Churchmen.[18] One of these was George Washington Doane, Bishop of New Jersey, whose sermon 'The Missionary Bishop', preached at the consecration of Bishop Jackson Kemper in 1835, emphasized the role of bishops in leading the Church's mission.[19] In the 1830s Hobart's followers secured a number of canonical and other changes that similarly reflected a more catholic and apostolic understanding of episcopacy. However, though the Hobartian high-church era certainly left its mark on the nature of episcopacy in the Episcopal Church and perhaps even more so on how it was understood and practised, constitutionally the high-church changes and innovations were relatively minor adaptations to a structure that was (and remained) primarily the creation of the American Revolution. The effect of nineteenth-century American high-churchmanship was, it may be suggested, to apply a more catholic gloss to what remained essentially an eighteenth-century democratic structure.

England and the United States compared

Hobart himself remained committed to democracy in the Church. The English High Churchman Thomas Sikes observed after Hobart visited him in 1823, 'It was funny to see honest democracy and sincere episcopacy fast yoked in the man's mind, and perpetually struggling for his heart'.[20] Hobart's visit to England represented the first substantial contact between

17. Holmes, *A Brief History of the Episcopal Church*, p. 57.

18. G.E. DeMille, *The Catholic Movement in the American Episcopal Church* (Philadelphia: Church Historical Society, 2nd edn, 1950), p. 69.

19. See T.E. Yates, 'The Idea of a ''Missionary Bishop'' in the Spread of the Anglican Communion in the Nineteenth Century', *Journal of Anglican Studies* 2.1 (2004), pp. 53–61 (53–54).

20. E. Churton, *Memoir of Joshua Watson* (Oxford: Parker, 2nd edn, 1863), p. 137.

the Church of England and the American Episcopal Church for over thirty years. Before that visit, White (who remained Presiding Bishop until his death in 1836) was not in contact with anyone in England.[21] While in London, Hobart was present at an episcopal consecration in Lambeth Palace Chapel, but was not permitted to participate in the laying on of hands, which is a sign of churches being in communion. Nor could he preach while he was in England. The 1786 act of Parliament which made possible the consecration of bishops for America specified that no bishop, priest or deacon whose orders derived from bishops consecrated under it could officiate on British territory.[22] An act of 1840 having allowed Scottish and American clergy to officiate in the Church of England on one or two days with the consent of the diocesan bishop, in 1841 Bishop Doane became the first American clergyman to preach in the Church of England—at the consecration of Leeds Parish Church.[23] Only in 1853 did an American bishop join in laying on hands at the consecration of an English bishop.[24] That marked another stage in the recognition of what was then beginning to be called 'the Anglican Communion'.

After his return from England Hobart reflected on the differences between England and the United States, and in particular between the Episcopal Church and the Church of England, in a published address. The two churches, he pointed out, 'differ in many respects in their Episcopal government'. 'Episcopal government', he argued, 'may be adapted to any form of civil polity; and in this country, resembles more than any other ecclesiastical government, our civil constitution'. He stressed the equality of bishops, clergy and laypeople in church governance:

> The supreme authority of the American Episcopal Church is vested… in a General Convention of two houses, with co-ordinate powers…; the consent of both Houses being necessary to the acts of the Convention; and the Clergy and Laity having a negative on each other. The government of the Episcopal Church in America is perhaps even more republican than that of the Presbyterian denomination.[25]

21. R. Bosher, *The American Church and the Formation of the Anglican Communion, 1823–1853* (Evanston, IL: Seabury-Western Theological Seminary, 1962), p. 5.

22. Foreigners Consecration Act 1786 (26 Geo. 3 c. 84), section III, quoted in Podmore, *Aspects of Anglican Identity*, pp. 28–29.

23. Scottish Episcopal and Other Clergy Act (3 & 4 Vict. c. 33); Stephenson, *The First Lambeth Conference 1867*, p. 42.

24. M. Dix (ed.), *A History of the Parish of Trinity Church in the City of New York*, Vol. 3 (New York: Putman, 1905), pp. 352–53.

25. J.H. Hobart, *The United States of America Compared with Some European Countries, Particularly England: In a Discourse Delivered in Trinity Church, in the City of New York, October, 1825* (London: J. Miller, 2nd edn, 1828), pp. 28–29.

In comparison, he found the Church of England's governance wanting. Its provincial synods, the Convocations of Canterbury and York, had not met to transact business since 1741. Parliament was the only body that legislated for the Church, and its members included dissenters. Hobart commented, 'I need not remark to you how superior are the arrangements of our ecclesiastical constitution'. He summed up his feelings thus: 'I revere and love England and its church, but I love my own church and country better'.[26]

Even when the Convocations were revived, they continued to differ from the General Convention in two respects: first, they included only bishops and clergy, and second, the powers of the Upper and Lower Houses were by no means equal or 'co-ordinate'. Hobart rejoiced in the fact that 'In the American Episcopal Church, the body which exercises her legislative power is constituted analogous to the paramount civil body in the United States—the Congress', its two Houses having 'co-ordinate powers'.[27] By contrast, in his *Synodus Anglicana*, published back in 1702 but re-published in 1854 as the standard work on the English Convocations, that great authority on English canon law Bishop Edmund Gibson had been at pains to stress that 'There is no such resemblance as has been pretended between the proceedings of parliament and convocation'.[28] This was rightly so, because 'The rights and privileges of the house of commons, if vested in the lower house of convocation, would give the clergy a coordinate power with their bishops, and so remove our church still further from primitive practice'.[29] In England the Lower House could veto the proposals of the Upper House, but the initiative remained with the bishops. The role of the clergy in Convocation was more limited than that of the American House of Deputies: in the words of that great canonist of our own day, Bishop Eric Kemp, to offer their counsel and give or withhold their consent.[30]

26. Hobart, *The United States of America Compared with Some European Countries*, pp. 22–24 (cf. p. 18), p. 32.

27. Hobart, *The United States of America Compared with Some European Countries*, p. 28.

28. E. Gibson, *Synodus Anglicana: or, the Constitution and Proceedings of an English Convocation, Shown from the Acts and Registers Thereof to be Agreeable to the Principles of an Episcopal Church* (London, 1702), ed. E. Cardwell (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1854), p. liii.

29. Gibson, *Synodus Anglicana*, p. 3.

30. E.W. Kemp, *Counsel and Consent: Aspects of the Government of the Church as Exemplified in the History of the English Provincial Synods* (London: SPCK, 1961). Bishop Kemp died on 28 November 2009.

These, then, were the two streams that coalesced in the mid-nineteenth century and definitively in 1867 to form the Anglican Communion. On the one hand, there was the western catholic tradition, inherited by the United Church of England and Ireland and the Scottish Episcopal Church, of episcopal governance (although, in England, with synods in which the clergy were consulted and had the right to give or withhold their consent, and since the Reformation subject to statute law made by Parliament). On the other hand, there was the novel democratic, republican polity of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, with supreme authority vested in a General Convention in which bishops, clergy and laity exercised equal powers.

Two streams mingling: Selwyn's constitution for New Zealand

To an extent, those two streams have mingled in the Communion at large, and George Augustus Selwyn played a very significant part in that. Though the Church in New Zealand formed part of the United Church of England and Ireland, the constitution drawn up for it under Selwyn's leadership and at his instigation, which was adopted in 1857 and amended in 1865, did not draw on the tradition of the English Convocations with their two (unequal) houses of bishops and clergy (admittedly, a tradition then effectively in abeyance). Instead, the Constitution of 'the Branch of the United Church of England and Ireland in the Colony of New Zealand', as it was initially called,[31] drew on the Constitution of the American General Convention. A group of laypeople led by the Governor of New Zealand, Sir George Grey, had submitted to Selwyn in 1850 'the outline of a plan of Church Government, resembling in many points that which we are informed has proved so beneficial to our brethren in America'.[32] American influence was seen most notably in the incorporation of lay representatives. It is, however, important to note that, as W.M. Jacob has pointed out, 'By 1852 there seems to have been a general agreement

31. In 1874 the name needed to be changed following the separation of the Church of Ireland from the Church of England. The constitution prevented this, but the General Synod resolved that the New Zealand Church could be 'referred to or designated as the Church of the Province of New Zealand commonly called the Church of England': H.L. Clarke, *Constitutional Church Government in the Dominions Beyond the Seas and in Other Parts of the Anglican Communion* (London: SPCK, 1924), p. 177.

32. *Colonial Church Chronicle*, 5 (1852), p. 161, quoted in N. Cox, *Church and State in the Post-Colonial Era: The Anglican Church and the Constitution in New Zealand* (Auckland: Polygraphia, 2008), p. 94.

among most of the bishops in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and South Africa that the colonial churches needed freedom… to hold their own synods, which would include lay participation' and in that year Archbishop Sumner unsuccessfully introduced into the House of Lords a bill that would have permitted colonial churches to establish synods including laypeople.[33]

Selwyn's New Zealand Constitution in fact went beyond that of the American Episcopal Church, establishing not a General Convention of two Houses (clerical and lay Deputies, and Bishops) but a General Synod, consisting of the bishops, and clergy and lay representatives, without any constitutional provision requiring the bishops to form a separate house. For binding decisions, however, the consent of what were termed three 'Orders'—bishops, clergy and laity—would be required, necessitating separate votes (rather than separate meetings).[34] The term 'Orders' was borrowed from the American Episcopal Church, though there it refers only to the distinction between clergy and laity within the General Convention's House of Deputies and in the diocesan conventions: in the General Convention the bishops constitute not an 'Order' but a separate House, whereas in the diocesan conventions they are generally treated as part of the clergy 'Order'. Importantly, New Zealand followed America, and departed from the English tradition, in not reserving any powers or special role in its General Synod to the bishops (beyond the veto that the clergy and laity also have). Like the General Convention, the New Zealand General Synod would meet every three years and its clerical and lay members, equal in number, would be freshly elected on each occasion. However, the diocesan synods were to be modelled on the General Synod, which meant that for binding decisions the bishop's consent would be required—the veto that American bishops generally lack in their diocesan conventions.[35]

33. Jacob, *The Making of the Anglican Church Worldwide*, pp. 129, 135–36.

34. The Constitution of the Church of the Province of New Zealand (1857–1865), quoted in Evans, *Churchman Militant*, pp. 268–76, para. 5: 'There shall be a Representative Governing Body for the management of the affairs of the Church, to be called the General Synod of the Branch of the United Church of England and Ireland, in the Colony of New Zealand, which shall consist of three distinct Orders, viz.: the Bishops, the Clergy and the Laity, the consent of all of which Orders shall be necessary to all acts binding upon the Synod, and upon all persons recognizing its authority'.

35. The Constitution of the Church of the Province of New Zealand (1857–1865), paras 7–9, 19.

Another important difference from the situation in the United States is that the New Zealand church was founded as a single church sub-divided into dioceses, whereas the American Episcopal Church was formed as an aggregation of state churches. (Accordingly, the General Convention's House of Deputies is an assembly of diocesan deputations, in which, when there is a vote by Orders, each deputation has a single block vote in each Order). In the USA deputations sent by the state conventions formed a General Convention, whereas the New Zealand General Synod was formed by a unitary church, not by action of the diocesan synods. Indeed, the General Synod could overturn individual decisions of the diocesan synods. However, the Constitution assumed the existence of diocesan synods (they were not the General Synod's creation) and furthermore a regulation passed by all of them and not purporting to amend the Constitution could have the force of a General Synod regulation.[36]

With regard to his own office Selwyn again departed from the English tradition and adopted a solution similar to that in the United States. Though he was appointed as Metropolitan of New Zealand by Letters Patent in 1858, that role was not understood as automatically bestowing presidency of the General Synod, which the English metropolitans enjoy in the Convocations and now also in the English General Synod by virtue of their office. Instead, at the first New Zealand General Synod, held in 1859, Selwyn was elected to preside. The Constitution made no mention of the office of Metropolitan, which lapsed with Selwyn's departure, and instead an office of Primate was created in 1868.[37] The Primate was Primate by election (by a majority in each Order of the General Synod), rather than by virtue of occupying the 'first see' of the people or nation concerned (which is the original meaning of the term 'Primate'). New Zealand thus followed the United States and indeed the Scottish Episcopal Church in having no primatial see.

The position differed, however. At that time the American Episcopal Church had no office of 'Primate' at all. Only since 1901 has the Episcopal Church's Constitution mentioned the office of Presiding Bishop (previously the Presiding Bishop was simply the presiding officer of the House of Bishops) and not until 1982 (following the establishment of the Anglican Communion's 'Primates' Meeting' in its

36. The Constitution of the Church of the Province of New Zealand (1857–1865), paras 20–22; Evans, *Churchman Militant*, p. 152.

37. Clarke, *Constitutional Church Government*, p. 177.

present form and under that name in 1978) was the Presiding Bishop given the additional designation of 'Primate'.[38] Furthermore, until 1919 the office was held by the most senior bishop by date of consecration (though the House had long elected a younger bishop actually to chair its meetings).[39] The Scottish Episcopal Church has an elected 'Primus' but has never had an office of 'Primate'. It was, therefore, the Anglican Church in New Zealand, under Selwyn, that invented a personal office of 'Primate' not derived from occupation of a primatial see.

The two streams in the Anglican Communion: Individual churches

Selwyn's New Zealand Constitution is said to have had significant influence on those of other Anglican churches,[40] but the extent of that influence needs closer examination. The other constitutions all follow New Zealand in establishing synods with lay members, but it had been generally agreed that that should be the case; New Zealand was simply the first to put that decision into effect. The constitution of the Church of the Province of South Africa adopted in the 1870s (the first that is cited as having been influenced by New Zealand) certainly displays similarities with New Zealand, but there are also important differences. The Bishop (later Archbishop) of Cape Town, for example, is Metropolitan by virtue of his see. Canon I provided for the bishops to 'constitute a separate House of the Provincial Synod' and for the clergy and laity 'to deliberate apart from each other whenever a majority of either Order shall desire it', and Canon II included among the 'Functions of the Metropolitan' a power of metropolitical visitation, during which, where there was 'strong reason', the jurisdiction of the diocesan could be inhibited.[41] To examine the other provincial constitutions would go beyond the scope of this article, but that of South Africa at least reflects the tradition of the Church of England much more strongly than the New Zealand Constitution does,

38. White and Dykman, *Annotated Constitution and Canons*, p. 199; White, and Dykman, *Annotated Constitution and Canons: 1991 Supplement* (New York: Church Publishing, 1991), pp. 21–22.

39. White and Dykman, *Annotated Constitution and Canons*, pp. 26–27; J.T. Addison, *The Episcopal Church in the United States, 1789–1931* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951), p. 297.

40. Evans, *Churchman Militant*, p. 163; Cox, *Church and State in the Post-Colonial Era*, p. 144.

41. Clarke, *Constitutional Church Government*, pp. 348–52: Constitution, Article XXIV.4, Canons I, II.

whereas the influence of American ecclesiology is much more difficult to detect. It was the South African constitution on which Archbishop Fisher modelled the constitutions that he drew up in the 1950s for West, Central and East Africa.[42]

Since Selwyn's day the Church of England has itself moved somewhat towards the American position by incorporating the laity in its synods.[43] Selwyn played a key part in this too. In 1868 he presided, as Bishop of Lichfield, over one of the first two formal diocesan conferences to be held in England that included lay representatives (the other was in Ely). This was, in fact, the culmination of a movement that had been developing for several years, and Selwyn's predecessor had been contemplating a diocesan assembly before he died, but Arthur Burns notes that Selwyn was 'ideally suited to carry out his [predecessor's] intentions' and his 'plans were more ambitious' than those of his colleague in Ely, 'reflecting his experience of effective synods in New Zealand'.[44] At the national level, the process began a generation later than in New Zealand, with the addition of an advisory House of Laymen to the Convocation of Canterbury in 1886. In 1919 a Church Assembly, with Houses of Bishops, Clergy and Laity, was created to legislate by Measure.[45] Once approved by Parliament (which can reject but not amend them) and given the Royal Assent, Measures have the force of statute law. Representatives of the laity thus continued to make statute law for the Church of England as members of both Houses of Parliament had done since the Reformation, but legislation by Canon continued to be the prerogative of the Convocations (the provincial synods of bishops and clergy).

Not until the Synodical Government Measure 1969, which established diocesan and even deanery synods as well as the General Synod, was the name 'synod' given to a Church of England meeting including laypeople. (Whether 'synod' is the most appropriate term for a group of clergy and laity at the deanery level meeting apart from their bishop is another matter.) The General Synod consists of the Convocations (whose members comprise the Houses of Bishops and

42. E. Carpenter, *Archbishop Fisher: His Life and Times* (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 1991), pp. 500–501.

43. For a history of synodical government in the Church of England, see C.J. Podmore, 'Synodical Government in the Church of England: History and Principles', in Podmore, *Aspects of Anglican Identity*.

44. A. Burns, *The Diocesan Revival in the Church of England, c. 1800–1870* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999), p. 253.

45. Church of England Assembly (Powers) Act 1919.

Clergy) and a House of Laity. It inherited the role of the Church Assembly and most of the powers of the Convocations, including the power to legislate by Canon. The Convocations continue to meet separately from time to time.

Notwithstanding the continued existence of the Communion's most ancient synods, the entirely clerical Convocations, as the provincial synods of the Provinces of Canterbury and York, the inclusion of laypeople in the synods of the Church is now an agreed principle of the Anglican Communion,[46] but important differences of polity and ecclesiology remain. Although since 1969 laypeople have taken their place in the synods of the Church of England, the position in England is still strikingly different from that in the United States and New Zealand. Though the English General Synod generally meets as a single assembly, it consists of distinct Houses, rather than merely voting by 'Orders', and the powers of the Houses of Clergy and Laity are not equal with those of the House of Bishops. Most notably, under Article 7 of the Synod's Constitution a 'provision' (including a Measure, Canon or Liturgy) 'touching doctrinal formulae or the services or ceremonies of the Church of England or the administration of the sacraments or sacred rites thereof' can only be submitted to the General Synod for final approval in terms proposed by the House of Bishops. This means that after the Synod has finished revising the text concerned it is referred to the House of Bishops, which may amend it as it thinks fit. No further amendment is then possible. Furthermore, liturgies can only be prepared and introduced into the Synod on the instructions of the House of Bishops, which therefore exercises a right to determine the form in which they are submitted for First Consideration as well as a right to amend them after the synodical revision process is concluded.[47]

The two streams in the Anglican Communion: The Communion as a whole

Different understandings within the Anglican Communion of the role of bishops in the government of the Church continue to make it difficult to come to a settled agreement about the structures that are

46. *The Principles of Law Common to the Churches of the Anglican Communion* (London: Anglican Communion Office, 2008), pp. 29–36, 39, especially Principle 22 (pp. 34–35).

47. For the role of the House of Bishops in the Church of England, see Podmore, *The Governance of the Church of England and the Anglican Communion*, pp. 6–9.

needed for decision-making at the level of the Communion as a whole. To the extent that these differences persist, the two ecclesiological streams discussed in this article can sometimes seem more like oil and water.

For eighty years after 1867, only bishops represented the Communion's churches and provinces in its international structures — the Lambeth Conference itself and a Consultative Body created in 1897.[48] A non-episcopal element was introduced in 1948 with the creation of an Advisory Council on Missionary Strategy, consisting of representatives of the member churches who were not necessarily bishops.[49] The Consultative Body was defined in 1958 as consisting of the Archbishops of Canterbury and York and the 'Primates or Presiding Bishops' (or their nominees if they could not attend).[50] In 1968 these two bodies were replaced by a single Anglican Consultative Council (ACC), whose constitution provided for episcopal, clergy and lay members, with the Archbishop of Canterbury as President but an elected Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Standing Committee.[51]

Archbishop Michael Ramsey came to regret this development, over which he had presided, commenting, 'I think Lambeth 1968 erred in giving power to the ACC' and 'I quickly came to think that it was not the right way to run the Anglican Communion and that it was a poor substitute for a meeting of archbishops'.[52] In 1978 Archbishop Coggan re-established a separate 'Primates' Meeting' (initially called the 'Primates Committee'), explaining the move in an address to that year's Lambeth Conference. His statement that the 'primates' should meet 'for leisurely thought, prayer, and deep consultation' has often been quoted out of context—sometimes with the implication that he envisaged merely an international fellowship group for church leaders. In fact, his address presented the Primates' Meeting as central to

48. The Pan-Anglican Congress of 1908 was a one-off event not repeated until 1954.

49. *The Lambeth Conference 1948: The Encyclical Letter from the Bishops; together with Resolutions and Reports* (London, 1948), pp. 88–90: resolution 80.

50. *The Lambeth Conference 1958: The Encyclical Letter from the Bishops together with the Resolutions and Reports* (London: SPCK; Greenwich, CT: Seabury Press, 1958), pp. 1.43–45: resolution 61. For further details of the history of this body, see Podmore, *The Governance of the Church of England and the Anglican Communion*, pp. 14–15.

51. See Podmore, *The Governance of the Church of England and the Anglican Communion*, pp. 14–15.

52. W.O. Chadwick, *Michael Ramsey: A Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), pp. 277–78.

solving the problem of where authority in the Anglican Communion should lie.[53] During the Conference the 'Primates' Committee' was convened to take major decisions, and Resolution 11 gave it a crucial role with regard to local actions of international significance: 'The Conference advises member Churches not to take action regarding issues which are of concern to the whole Anglican Communion without consultation with a Lambeth Conference or with the episcopate through the Primates Committee'. It made no mention of the ACC, but instead went on to call on the Primates 'to initiate a study of the nature of authority within the Anglican Communion'. Resolution 12 called on the Archbishop and Primates to take the lead in sorting out the relationship between what are now called the 'instruments of communion'.[54]

Discussion of the respective authority and roles of the Primates' Meeting and the ACC has continued ever since. In 1998, the Virginia Report of the Inter-Anglican Theological and Doctrinal Commission commented positively on the ACC as including laypeople, but noted that its existence 'raises questions' and that the Primates' Meetings 'have an inherent authority by virtue of the office which they hold as chief pastors'.[55] Ten years later, the Windsor Continuation Group effectively presented the two bodies as valued by different groups: the ACC was 'particularly valued by those who emphasize the contribution of the whole people of God in the life, mission and the governance of the Church', but 'Not all believe that a representative body is the best way to express the contribution of the whole people of God at a worldwide level'.[56] These two schools of thought, it may be suggested, are closely related to the two ecclesiological streams that are the subject of this article.

Also in 2008, the Anglican Communion Legal Advisers Network published its compilation of *The Principles of Canon Law Common to the Churches of the Anglican Communion*. Though this makes a very valuable contribution to the development of the Anglican Communion, it

53. *The Report of the Lambeth Conference 1978* (London: CIO Publishing, 1978), pp. 116, 122–24; cf. Podmore, *The Governance of the Church of England and the Anglican Communion*, pp. 15–16.

54. *Report of the Lambeth Conference 1978*, pp. 14, 41–42.

55. 'The Virginia Report: The Report of the Inter-Anglican Theological and Doctrinal Commission' in *The Official Report of the Lambeth Conference 1998* (Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Publishing, 1999), pp. 15–68 (60–61).

56. Windsor Continuation Group, 'Preliminary Observations: A Presentation at the Lambeth Conference', p. [4], Accessed on October 24, 2008 at http://www.anglicancommunion.org/commission/windsor_continuation/docs/WCG%20Observations%20080724.pdf

inevitably tends to obscure the fundamental differences between the two ecclesiological streams that the Communion brought together. Thus, for example, it is undoubtedly true that in the Anglican Communion 'An episcopal synod or college, or other assembly of bishops, enjoys such authority as is recognized by law' (Principle 18.1), but the more significant fact is that in some churches its authority is equal or 'co-ordinate' with that of a house or houses of clergy and laity and in others it is not. That Principle 18 is entitled 'Representative government', and that there is a principle entitled 'Lay Participation in Government' (22) but no principle entitled 'Episcopal Government', might be thought to owe more to the American than the English tradition.[57]

The differences in approach between those who (in the more hierarchical English tradition) see the Primates as the natural international representatives of their churches and those who (in the American tradition) are uncomfortable with ceding authority to any forum in which the clergy and laity are not represented by members of their own 'Orders' have been displayed in the successive drafts of the Anglican Communion Covenant. The first (Nassau) draft gave the role of offering definitive 'guidance and direction' in the case of disputes to the Primates.[58] Criticism of this resulted in the second (St Andrew's) draft giving the ACC the final decision.[59] The Commentary on the third (Ridley Cambridge) draft reported that 'If the role of the Primates' Meeting in the Nassau Draft has been criticized as too curial, then the role now given to the ACC was considered beyond their capacity as a consultative body'.[60] The third draft therefore envisaged that the Joint Standing Committee of the ACC and the Primates' Meeting would make a declaration on the basis of advice from the two bodies.[61] This

57. *The Principles of Law Common to the Churches of the Anglican Communion*, pp. 32–33.

58. 'An Anglican Covenant Draft prepared by the Covenant Design Group, Updated Version April 2007', para. 6.5, Accessed on January 12, 2010 at http://www.anglicancommunion.org/commission/covenant/report/draft_text.cfm

59. 'An Anglican Covenant — Draft Appendix: Framework Procedures for the Resolution of Covenant Disagreements', para. 8.4, Accessed on January 12, 2010 at http://www.anglicancommunion.org/commission/covenant/st_andrews/appendix.cfm

60. 'An Anglican Covenant — Commentary to the Ridley Cambridge Draft', Accessed on January 12, 2010 at http://www.anglicancommunion.org/commission/covenant/ridley_cambridge/commentary.cfm

61. 'An Anglican Covenant — The Third (Ridley Cambridge) Draft', para. 4.2.4, Accessed on January 12, 2010 at http://www.anglicancommunion.org/commission/covenant/ridley_cambridge/draft_text.cfm

was in turn criticized as exalting the Joint Standing Committee into a fifth 'instrument of communion'. Therefore, while the final draft continues to give the Standing Committee the crucial role, the commentary explained that it 'derives its authority from its responsibility to the two Instruments of Communion which elect its membership, and on whose behalf it acts'.[62] The difficulty in agreeing where ultimate responsibility should lie reflects differences in the understanding of the role of bishops in the government of the Church that can be traced back to the two ecclesiological streams that coalesced to form the Anglican Communion.

Americans and Anglicans at the 1867 Lambeth Conference

It was in 1867 that these two streams were first brought together in an international structure. Back in 1851, the high-church Bishop John Henry Hopkins of Vermont had expressed to Archbishop Sumner his fervent hope 'that the time may come when we shall prove the reality of that communion [between the American and English churches] in the primitive style, by meeting in the good old fashion of Synodical action', and suggesting nothing less than 'a Council of all the Bishops in Communion with your Grace'.[63] Though the Canadian suggestion that led to the 1867 Lambeth Conference was for a 'National Synod' of the United Church of England and Ireland throughout the world, the Scottish and American bishops were, as already mentioned, invited as well. Just over half of the American bishops (nineteen out of thirty-seven) accepted the invitation, led by Hopkins, who was now the Presiding Bishop.[64]

At least five factors have been identified as prompting requests for a synod or council of bishops: the development of synods in the British colonies, growing confusion over the constitutional position of the Colonial Church, amendments to the Canons of 1604 by the English Convocations (resulting in a divergence of canon law between England, Ireland and the Colonial Church), controversy over the broad-church volume *Essays and Reviews* (published in 1860) and the case of Bishop Colenso of Natal (deprived of his see for heresy by his metropolitan).[65] The first three of these issues were, in fact, specifically

62. 'The Anglican Communion Covenant: Commentary on Revisions to Section 4', Accessed on January 12, 2010 at http://www.anglicancommunion.org/commission/covenant/final/commentary.cfm

63. J.H. Hopkins to J.B. Sumner, 15 May 1851, quoted in Stephenson, *The First Lambeth Conference 1867*, p. 43.

64. R.N. Hebb, 'The Americans at Lambeth', *Anglican and Episcopal History* 78 (2009), pp. 30–66, 37.

65. Stephenson, *The First Lambeth Conference 1867*, pp. 85–86.

problems of the United Church, but the theological issues involved in the other two were of concern to the Scottish and American churches as well. In a sermon published early in 1867 Bishop Fulford of Montreal added five more agenda items of equal concern to the Scots and Americans: a joint declaration acknowledging the shared identity of the communion's churches, the terms upon which unity might be achieved with other churches, limitations on the ministry of overseas and Scottish clergy in the Church of England, the anomaly of English and American missionary bishops in the same territory (China) and the desirability of the Authorized Version of the Bible being altered only by agreement of a synod of the whole Communion.[66] One hundred and forty-three years later the declaration of shared identity is at last on its way in the form of the Anglican Communion Covenant, but parallel jurisdictions (for example, in Continental Europe) remain a neuralgic issue on which successive Lambeth Conferences have commented.[67]

The conference duly gathered on 24 September 1867. Archbishop Longley was flanked by the other metropolitans, the Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church and the American Presiding Bishop.[68] Though Hopkins sat with the metropolitans, the Canadian church historian Ross Hebb has argued that the fact that he was not a metropolitan meant that in practice he was unable to speak for his national church as the metropolitans spoke for theirs, and that this weakened the overall American contribution. He has suggested that the absence of Hopkins' successors as Presiding Bishop from the conferences of 1878, 1888 and 1898 can be explained, at least in part, by their awareness of the limitations of their position as compared with that of the metropolitans.[69] Incidentally, at the second conference in 1878 Tait was flanked by the Archbishop of York and the two Irish Primates, with the colonial metropolitans, the Primate of New Zealand, the Scottish Primus and the senior American bishop present seated in the front row, while in 1888 the Primates, Metropolitans and Primus sat with the Archbishop on a dais.[70] Such hierarchical seating

66. Stephenson, *The First Lambeth Conference 1867*, pp. 167–69.

67. Most recently in *The Official Report of the Lambeth Conference 1998* (Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Publishing, 1999), p. 421: Resolution V.6.

68. Hebb, 'The Americans at Lambeth', p. 43. The remainder of this section of the article draws extensively on Ross Hebb's research.

69. Hebb, 'The Americans at Lambeth', p. 65.

70. A.M.G. Stephenson, *Anglicanism and the Lambeth Conferences* (London: SPCK, 1978), pp. 36, 62, 79.

arrangements have been abandoned in the most recent conferences, leaving the Archbishop of Canterbury seeming a more isolated and hence more papal figure than he might otherwise appear.[71] His appearing alone, rather than with the 'Primates', has emphasized the distinctiveness of the Archbishop's office rather than suggesting a role in speaking, as a 'first among equals', on behalf of the metropolitans and presiding bishops (in whose hands the leadership of earlier conferences lay).

On the second day of the 1867 conference some high-church bishops, with Selwyn in the lead, pressed for a pan-Anglican synod. The American bishops were divided in their response. The evangelical McIlvaine of Ohio was hesistant — attracted to a pan-Anglican synod but believing that the American bishops could not commit their church without consulting 'representatives of our church at home' (a theme often echoed since 2003).[72] The American High Churchmen, by contrast, were much more positive. Replying to the invitation, Hopkins had argued for not just a conference but a 'council', as he had sixteen years earlier. Jackson Kemper (now Bishop of Wisconsin), in his seventy-eighth year and infirm, whose family had forbidden him to embark on such a lengthy journey, agreed, telling Longley: 'Had you… called a Council by which Canons could have been enacted, I would at all hazzards strive to be with you' (*sic*).[73] In the debate, Hopkins spoke in favour of a pan-Anglican synod and Horatio Potter of New York said that he would feel 'stultified' in coming to Lambeth 'if the chief pastors of one great communion like the Anglican communion … could not come together and consult and reach conclusions which should have great weight with all'. If that were the case, 'so much worse for any claim that we might be supposed to have to be a part of the Catholic Church'. Thus, in advance of the gathering high-church American bishops at least were by no means hostile to something more than a mere 'conference'. It was British bishops (notably Tait of London and Thirlwall of St Davids) who, to Hopkins' frustration, repeatedly used the American Episcopal Church's different polity, lacking archbishops, metropolitans and synods (as distinct from conventions), and the fact that it was in no sense part of the

71. For the present Archbishop of Canterbury's response to this sentence in his concluding remarks at the Cambridge symposium, see his article in this issue of the Journal of Anglican Studies.

72. Hebb, 'The Americans at Lambeth', p. 51.

73. J. Kemper to C.T. Longley, 17 August 1867: Lambeth Palace Library: Longley 6 (Lambeth Conference 1867), fol. 148–49 (fol. 148v); cf. Hebb, 'The Americans at Lambeth', pp. 37–38.

United Church of England and Ireland—as well as the United Church's established status in England, Wales and Ireland—to argue against a pan-Anglican synod. In the end an amended resolution, moved by Selwyn, was put to the vote: 'That, in the opinion of this Conference, Unity in Faith and Discipline will be best maintained among the several branches of the Anglican Communion by due and canonical subordination of the Synods of the several branches to the higher authority of a Synod or Synods above them'. This was carried nem. con., but the fact that only forty-seven bishops voted indicates that the American bishops had felt obliged to abstain.[74]

When the Conference turned to the case of Bishop Colenso, the discussion was initiated by Selwyn. Hopkins argued that Selwyn's motion, which called for a committee of enquiry into 'the condition of the diocese of Natal', was too weak. He proposed an amendment whereby the conference would approve Colenso's deposition and excommunication as 'valid, righteous and just' and condemn him 'as a heretic, cut off from the communion of the Church'. It was bishops from England and Scotland who objected that the amendment assumed that the conference had the power to act synodically and expressed an opinion not only on Colenso but also on the validity of his metropolitan's action. Though Hopkins withdrew his amendment, he pointed out that the argument that the conference lacked synodical authority was logically also an argument against the original motion: 'If we have here no synodical authority, or something very much like it, we have no business to appoint this committee to investigate, because a power to appoint a committee for that purpose is the power to decide upon the subject when the investigation is over'. The committee was appointed nonetheless. Dissatisfied with the conference's failure to endorse the deposition and excommunication of Colenso, Bishop Samuel Wilberforce of Oxford drew up a document stating 'We the undersigned bishops declare our acceptance of the sentence pronounced upon Dr Colenso by the metropolitan of South Africa and his suffragans, as being spiritually a valid sentence'. The fifty-six bishops (out of the seventy-three bishops at the conference) who signed the statement included all nineteen American bishops.[75]

Though willing to express condemnation of Colenso, the American bishops were not in a position to consent to any constitutional

74. Hebb, 'The Americans at Lambeth', pp. 26–32; *The Six Lambeth Conferences, 1867–1920* (London: SPCK, 2nd edn, 1929), p. 54.

75. Hebb, 'The Americans at Lambeth', pp. 53–58.

mechanism which would give an instrument of the communion authority to review provincial decisions. A proposal, again by Selwyn, for a 'Board of Reference, or a Spiritual Tribunal' for 'all branches of the Anglo-Catholic Church' (a description which, incidentally, indicates that the term 'Anglican Communion' was not yet definitive) met with silence from the American bishops. Selwyn acknowledged this and withdrew his motion, but added, pointedly, that he did not regret 'placing the question before our American brethren as to whether there ought not to be one faith held by the Anglican Communion throughout the whole world'.[76]

In summary, then, at the first Lambeth Conference the high-church American bishops seem to have been caught between their catholic instincts, which favoured a pan-Anglican synod and the condemnation, deposition and excommunication of heretic liberals, and their inability to agree to anything that might infringe the autonomy of their own church — either the subordination of their own General Convention to a pan-Anglican synod or an instrument of the Communion with authority to review provincial decisions. The inclusion of the American Episcopal Church in the Communion was certainly not the only reason why such steps, of which Selwyn was the leading advocate, could not be taken, but it was in itself sufficient to prevent them.

Americans and Anglicans since 1867: Selwyn, Davidson and Fisher

At the adjourned meeting of the first Lambeth Conference in December 1867 Selwyn was appointed as Corresponding Secretary of the Anglican Communion. In that role he visited the United States for the 1871 General Convention, becoming the first English diocesan bishop to set foot on American soil, and he returned for the General Convention of 1874.[77] During his 1871 visit he spoke of 'the unity of the two branches of our beloved Church'.[78] The Church of Ireland had recently become completely independent of the Church of England, as the Scottish Episcopal Church always had been, and the colonial churches were beginning to enjoy autonomy. Yet Selwyn could still speak of 'the two branches of our beloved Church', the American Episcopal Church being one and, presumably, the rest of the Anglican Communion being the

76. Hebb, 'The Americans at Lambeth', pp. 59–60.

77. Stephenson, *Anglicanism and the Lambeth Conferences*, pp. 46, 54.

78. G.H. Curteis, *Bishop Selwyn of New Zealand, and of Lichfield: A Sketch of his Life and Work* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench & Co., 1889), p. 306.

other. Those two branches each embody one of the two ecclesiological streams that are the subject of this article.

By the Lambeth Conference of 1888 the American Episcopal Church was just short of 100 years old. That Conference received an American gift to the Communion: a statement of minimum requirements for the unity of the Church that became known as the Lambeth Quadrilateral. More recently, the omission from the Quadrilateral of a fifth limb—structural bonds that would bind the churches together in visible unity—has come to be seen as problematic. In line with that omission were the successful resistance at the 1897 conference of the American bishops, whose ecclesiological instincts were less catholic than those of their predecessors thirty years earlier, to the central tribunal of reference that the 'home and colonial' bishops generally desired (and which Selwyn had advocated in 1867) and also their apparently rather reluctant acceptance at the same conference of the Central Consultative Body of bishops from each of the churches (the precursor of the present 'Primates' Meeting').[79]

This impressed upon Randall Davidson (the episcopal secretary of the 1897 conference, who became Archbishop of Canterbury in 1903) the need for archbishops of Canterbury to cultivate close ties of friendship with the American bishops. He accepted an invitation to the 1904 General Convention and in all he, his wife and two chaplains spent five weeks in the United States. Having visited Canada first, they spent a fortnight staying with two American bishops in their holiday homes on Mount Desert Island off the coast of Maine. After touring for two weeks they spent the last week staying with the Bishop of Massachusetts in Boston, where the General Convention was meeting. Davidson attended the Convention meetings daily, observing with interest the proceedings of both Houses. He noted the 'rapidity' with which canonical changes could be made at a single meeting of the General Convention—in this instance, removing the age limit for deaconesses after 'a few minutes' debate' in the House of Bishops and 'twenty minutes' discussion' in the House of Deputies.[80]

In his letter inviting Davidson to the General Convention the Presiding Bishop wrote: 'We have gladly received from time to time English Bishops, especially Bishop Selwyn. The coming of the Archbishop, however, would do much towards bringing into closer and more

79. Stephenson, *Anglicanism and the Lambeth Conferences*, pp. 100–104; G.K.A. Bell *Randall Davidson*, London: Oxford University Press, 3rd edn, 1952), pp. 299–302.

80. Bell, *Randall Davidson*, pp. 445–51.

sympathetic relations the two branches of the Anglican Communion'.[81] Thus he not only recalled Selwyn's pioneering example in visiting the United States but also echoed Selwyn's understanding of the duality of the Anglican Communion.

Just over forty years later, when Geoffrey Fisher took up office as Archbishop of Canterbury in 1945, he sensed a lack of interest on the part of American bishops in another Lambeth Conference, and the concomitant danger of the American Episcopal Church drifting apart from the rest of the Communion. He remembered Davidson's example and, as he later commented, 'I saw clearly the one thing that I must do at all costs'.[82] In his second year in office he and Mrs Fisher visited the United States for the 1946 General Convention. His 'charm offensive' worked: no fewer than sixty-six American bishops attended the 1948 conference.[83] Fisher and Henry Knox Sherrill, who was elected Presiding Bishop in 1946, and their families, became close friends.

Both Davidson and Fisher were careful to accord to the American presiding bishops a status that reflected their position as the leader not only of the Communion's second largest church but also of the second of the two branches or streams that it brought together. At each of the five Lambeth Conferences from 1908 to 1958 the Presiding Bishop preached (in 1920 it was in fact the elected President of the House of Bishops[84])—in four cases at the closing service and in 1948 at the opening service, held on 4 July.[85]

At the Anglican Congress of bishops, clergy and laity held in Minneapolis in 1954, Sherrill presided and Fisher preached at the opening service. An English delegate wrote,

> The Archbishop's handling of the Congress was superb. At the end of the many colourful processions, behind a long line of three hundred bishops who brought up the rear, the Archbishop and Bishop Sherrill

81. T.M. Clark to R. Davidson, 20 May 1953: Bell, *Randall Davidson*, p. 442.

82. Quoted in W. Purcell, *Fisher of Lambeth: A Portrait from Life* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1969), p. 176.

83. Carpenter, *Archbishop Fisher*, p. 451.

84. In 1919 it was decided that future Presiding Bishops would be elected and would also chair the new National Council, but while the last Presiding Bishop by seniority was still in office an elected chairman of the House of Bishops chaired the National Council: G.E. DeMille, *The Episcopal Church Since 1900: A Brief History* (New York: Morehouse-Gorham, 1955), pp. 26–27.

85. Stephenson, *Anglicanism and the Lambeth Conferences*, pp. 125, 150, 175, 189, 211.

> walked side by side. The Americans loved it. I cannot remember that Geoffrey Fisher ever took the chair himself. He sat in black coat and gaiters towards the back of the platform, and one sensed that he was the presiding genius.[86]

Sherrill observed, 'Perhaps the happiest contribution the Fishers made was at the afternoon teas held in a tent outside the Cathedral in Minneapolis. There they mingled and talked with delegates from all over the world'.[87]

Geoffrey Fisher has sometimes been criticized as being overly interested in structures. His contribution to the creation of the modern Anglican Communion (he could be said to be the father of the Communion in the form it took in the second half of the twentieth century) was indeed in part structural, but that much under-rated archbishop also understood the importance of establishing warm personal relations as a means of building up the unity of the Church. Before inviting the American bishops to the Lambeth Conference he went out to meet them on their own territory. In sixteen years (at a time when international travel, though growing, was much less commonplace than it is now) he made no fewer than four official visits to the United States. The opportunities for meeting included an Anglican Congress which, with its clerical and lay components, was rather more congenial to American Episcopalians than the purely episcopal Lambeth Conference, and Fisher gracefully allowed his friend Henry Sherrill not only to host it but also to preside. The relationship between Fisher and Sherrill, and their families, underlines the importance of friendship within inter-Anglican relationships as in ecumenical relationships more generally. It doubtless contributed to the way in which Fisher treated Sherrill publicly, as effectively the second most senior figure within the Anglican Communion—or, one might say, the second among equals—but this was also a way of honouring the American Episcopal Church. All of this created the basis for closer structural links, such as the appointment of the American Bishop Stephen Bayne as the first Executive Officer of the Anglican Communion from 1960 (a full-time version of the role that Bishop Selwyn had exercised ninety years earlier).

The result of Fisher's efforts was that, for a time at least, the American Episcopal Church (a distant church with a very different ecclesiology)

86. Arthur Bryant (chairman of A.R. Mowbray), quoted in Purcell, *Fisher of Lambeth*, p. 194.

87. Quoted in Purcell, *Fisher of Lambeth*, p. 194.

was integrated more closely into the family of churches centred on the See of Canterbury. Between 1967 and 1979, however, the Episcopal Church underwent a revolution that set it on a course that has ultimately resulted in a marked theological and ethical divergence from much of the rest of the Anglican Communion. This, combined with the distinctive ecclesiology, born out of the first American Revolution, on which this paper has reflected, played a significant part in generating the crisis in which the Communion now finds itself. But that is another story and must be saved for another day.[88]

88. For one part of the story, see C.J. Podmore, 'The Baptismal Revolution in the American Episcopal Church: Baptismal Ecclesiology and the Baptismal Covenant', *Ecclesiology* 6 (2010), pp. 8–38.