Bishop Family of Annapolis, unpublished family history, 1999: Finding Aid

African American Episcopal Historical Collection
Virginia Theological Seminary Archives
Bishop Payne Library
3737 Seminary Road, Alexandria, Virginia
22304-5201
703-461-1850
askaaehc@vts.edu
http://www.vts.edu/aaehc

Published on June 13, 2008

OVERVIEW OF THE COLLECTION

Title: Bishop Family of Annapolis, unpublished family history

Collection Date(s): Written 1996, revised 1999

Extent and Forms of Material: One unpublished manuscript.

Creator: Joan C. Scurlock

Abstract: An unpublished family history, “Bishops of Annapolis” written by family member Joan C. Scurlock, details the history of the Bishop family, a prominent African-American family whose many members were often actively involved in the history of the Episcopal Church. This family history also records the experiences of “mulattos” in the United States, providing glimpses of the society they established among themselves. Although this manuscript was written in 1996 and revised in 1999, its content covers the time period from the early to mid 1700’s through the year 1999.


Collection Number: RG A12
INFORMATION FOR USERS OF THE COLLECTION

Conditions Governing Access: None.

Conditions Governing Reproduction and Use: Copyright held by creator and/or heirs.

Preferred Citation: [Title and date of item], Bishop Family of Annapolis, unpublished family history, African American Episcopal Historical Collection, Virginia Theological Seminary Archives, box number X, folder number XX, digital file number XXXXXXX

IN-DEPTH INFORMATION ABOUT THE COLLECTION

Biographical History:
The Bishop family was a prominent African-American family whose many members were often actively involved in the history of the Episcopal Church. The history of the Bishop Family begins during the pre-Revolutionary era of the United States. The first known member of the family was a British immigrant named William Henry Bishop who married a “mulatto” slave, Jane Minskie Ennis, in Annapolis, Maryland in the 1700s. They had four children.

William and Jane’s second born, William Henry Bishop, Jr. (1802-1870), was an active member of St. Anne’s Parish, Annapolis, and later St. Philip’s Episcopal Church, Annapolis, a predominately African-American church. “According to historian William Calderhead in *Anne Arundel Blacks: Three Centuries of Change*, he was not only the richest black in Annapolis, but was also among the twelve richest families, black or white, in Annapolis” (page 32 of family history). He and his wife, Charity Folkes (1793-1877), had seven children. Their eldest son William Henry Bishop III was a successful barber in Baltimore who was active in the vestry at St. James Episcopal Church, Baltimore, and later a charter member of St. Mary the Virgin Protestant Episcopal Church, Baltimore.

William Henry Bishop III married Elizabeth Chew in 1828, they had seven children. Their eldest son, William Henry Bishop IV, was the chief clerk for the Internal Revenue Service in Baltimore. He helped found St. Mary the Virgin with Reverend Cassius Mason, who was married to William and Elizabeth’s eldest daughter, Emily. Reverend Cassius Mason later became rector of St. Mary the Virgin. Another son of William and Elizabeth’s, Reverend Hutchens Chew Bishop is the most well known today within the Episcopal Church. Reverend Hutchens Chew Bishop studied at General Theological Seminary in New York and was ordained in 1883, eventually becoming rector of St. Philip’s Protestant Church, Harlem.

Reverend Hutchens Chew Bishop married Estelle Gilliam, originally of Petersburg, Virginia, but a resident of New York City when they met. They had seven children.
Their eldest son, Shelton Hale Bishop, named after famous surgeon, Daniel Hale Williams, also went into the ministry studying at General Theological Seminary, Columbia University, and Yale Divinity School. Reverend Shelton Hale Bishop married Eloise Carey of Chicago, Illinois, in 1919. He worked at Holy Cross Episcopal Church before becoming curate at St. Philip’s under his father. He was appointed rector of St. Philip’s in 1931. Reverend Shelton Hale Bishop was once proposed as a candidate for the position of Suffragan Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of New York, but the election was cancelled.

There are many other prominent members of the Bishop family. Dr. William Bishop, grandson of William Henry Bishop Jr. and son of Nicholas Bishop of Annapolis, Maryland, was one of the founders of the Anne Arundel County General Hospital. Andrew Bishop, a younger son of Hutchens Chew Bishop, was an actor who performed at the famous Lafayette Theatre in Harlem as a Lafayette Player during the peak of the Harlem Renaissance in the 1920s.

The information for this statement was taken from the unpublished family history, “The Bishops of Annapolis,” written by Joan C. Scurlock.

Scope and Content: This collection consists of one item, an unpublished manuscript titled, “The Bishops of Annapolis,” a family history compiled by Joan C. Scurlock in November 1996 and revised in August 1999. In addition to detailing the history of the many illustrious members of the Bishop family, many of which were active in the Episcopal Church, this document records the experiences of “mulattos” in the United States, providing glimpses of the society they established among themselves. Although this manuscript was written in 1996 and revised in 1999, its content covers the time period from the early to mid 1700’s through the year 1999. The manuscript includes many black and white images of family members, heirlooms, and homes.

Finding Aids: An earlier draft version of this finding aid was written by Kimberly Robinson in March 2006. This edited and expanded version was compiled by Danleigh Kaplan, March 2007.

Acquisition Information: Gift of Dr. Elizabeth Bishop Trussell, daughter of the late Reverend Shelton Hale Bishop, former rector of St. Philip’s Episcopal Church, Harlem, 2002.

Existence and Location of Originals: Author and/or heirs have the original manuscript and photographs.

Archival materials related to the Bishop family are located at the Maryland State Archives, [http://www.msa.md.gov/](http://www.msa.md.gov/).

**Access Points:**
Bishop Family Members, most notably:
- William Henry Bishop & Jane Minskie Ennis
- William Henry Bishop, Jr. & Charity Folkes
- William Henry Bishop III & Elizabeth Chew
- William Henry Bishop IV
- Rev. Cassius Mason & Emily Bishop
- Rev. Hutchens Chew Bishop & Estelle Gilliam
- Rev. Shelton Hale Bishop & Eloise Carey
- Dr. William Bishop
- Andrew Bishop
- St. Philip's Episcopal Church (Harlem, New York, N.Y.)
- St. James' Episcopal Church (Baltimore, Md.)
- St. Mary the Virgin Protestant Episcopal Church (Baltimore, Md.)
- African American Episcopalians
- African American clergy
- Manuscript, unpublished

**CONTAINER LISTING**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box</th>
<th>Folder</th>
<th>Title/Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>