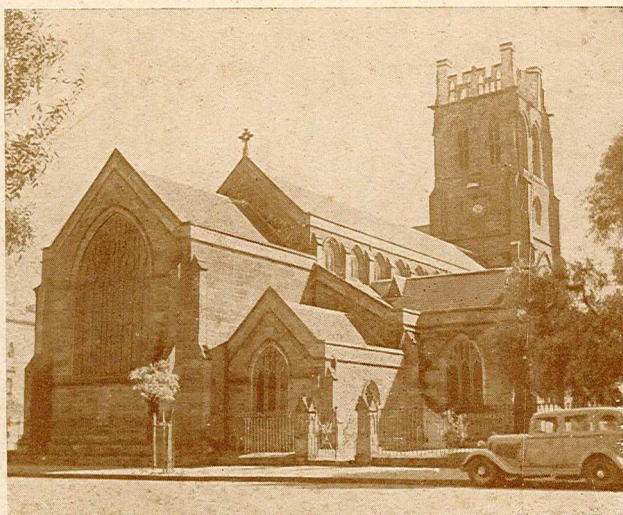
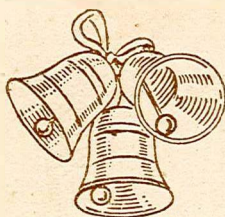


Our Wedding



ST. PHILIP'S CHURCH, CHURCH HILL, SYDNEY

OUR WEDDING

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Former Minister in Charge

Our Wedding



I am greatly indebted to the Ven. Canon T. C. Hammond, M.A., Th.D., former Principal of Moore Theological College, for his helpful suggestions in the production of this small booklet.

THE CHURCH.

St. Philip's, Church Hill, is a very historic old church, as well as being very beautiful. The foundation stone of the original building was laid about the middle of October, 1798, after the first "wattle and daub" structure of the Rev. Richard Johnson, the first chaplain, had been burnt by the convicts. This, however, was not the first time that the idea of a St. Philip's Church was mooted. In the *London Chronicle* of June 4, 1789, a letter was published headed, "Port Jackson, 14th November, 1788", in which the writer, a resident of Sydney, said: "We hear, as soon as sufficient quantity of bricks can be made, a church is to be built and named St. Phillip, after the Governor." That was 1788, the very year in which the colony was founded.

Although the foundation stone was laid in 1798, the erection of the church proceeded very slowly, and it was not consecrated till Christmas Day, 1810, the original name Phillip being changed to the scriptural spelling of Philip. During the latter years of its construction it had been used as a meeting place for the deponents of Governor Bligh.

For the next two decades, the Church of St. Philip proved a great blessing to the inhabitants of Sydney, and the pioneers of our land felt that here was a place where they could worship God in spirit and in truth in the same manner as their forefathers had done in England. In the early 'forties, however, it was found

that the structure was inadequate for the number of parishioners attending. In 1845, the Parochial Association reported, "that notwithstanding there are three services in the Church on each Lord's Day, and one every Thursday evening, still several hundreds of parishioners, if disposed to attend, must unavoidably be without any accommodation in their own Parish Church; whence there appears to be a necessity for some arrangement to be made, as early as practicable, for the erection of a new and more commodious church." Accordingly, a resolution was passed in 1846, for the building of the present Church. The first contract was entered into in December of 1847, and the Church completed in 1856, when it was consecrated.



NORTHERN ENTRANCE

Thus the history of St. Philip's goes back to the earliest days of the colony. Conditions have altered since then, but man's wants are still the same as they were one hundred and seventy years ago. The Church still has some relics of those early times. There is in its possession the first Prayer Book and Bible sent out with the First Fleet for the use of the Colony and used in the first Christian Service held in Australia. There is a Chalice believed to have been retrieved from the Church of the Rev. Richard Johnson, which was burnt, and thought to be the first one used in Australia. There is in the vestibule of the Church a Reredos which was placed over the communion table of old St. Philip's Church, probably in 1809. There seems little doubt that this Reredos is the one which arrived by the "Calcutta" and mentioned in the *Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser* of January 1st, 1804. Then there is the superb Service of Communion Plate presented to the Colony by George III in 1803, a prized possession of the Church. Besides these things, there are records which have a very valuable historic association.

THE MARRIAGE SERVICE.

The Marriage Service forms part of our Book of Common Prayer. This magnificent liturgy was the product of the Reformation, when the Church of England cast off the burdensome yoke of the unscriptural doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church. During the Middle Ages, many false traditions had grown up and found a place in the Church Service. The result was a weakening of spiritual life resulting in the moral and spiritual degradation of the clergy and people. Then the piercing light of the Word of God shone through the darkness of error and superstition, and the Reformers at the cost of their lives, gave us back the faith of the early Church—a faith based on the Bible. The expression of this faith is found in our Book of Common Prayer. No longer does the priest as a judge forgive sins, but as a minister of God he announces the great truth that "God pardoneth and absolveth all them that truly repent and unfeignedly believe His Holy Gospel". No longer is the false doctrine of the Sacrifice of the Mass imposed upon the people. The true meaning of the

Sacrament as something which God gives to us, is brought out when the bread is broken in the sight of the people and the cup of wine shown to them, and each one who comes to the Lord's Table receives both bread and wine in remembrance of our Lord's death and feeds on Him in the heart by faith with thanksgiving. No longer is there compulsory confession to the priest. The minister directs the thoughts of his flock to Christ and points to Him as the only One Who can forgive sins.

Yet the Reformers did not cast aside anything that was good in the Medieval Papal system. They retained those things which were profitable. So parts of our wedding service have come down to us from the earliest Christian times. Those married by it have seen times of joy and plenty, times of sorrow and hardship, times of spiritual fervour and times of spiritual stagnations, years of peace and years of war. Yet behind it all has been the abiding principles—those things which do not change—the spiritual truths which are part and parcel of our very existence. The sense of unity when two are united by God. The sense of the imminent being of a great guiding Force upholding all creation and intimately concerned in the affairs of men.

THE MEANING OF MARRIAGE.

One may well ask, "What is the difference between a marriage in a Registry Office and one in a Church?" The answer is: "Legally there is no difference, both marriages are valid in the eyes of the State." Morally the obligations taken in a Registry Office are binding alike before God and man. "Why then be married in a Church?" Because all undertakings should be carried out in dependence on the Divine blessing. This has special force when we remember that marriage is God's appointment in order that man should not be alone but have one who is a help, suited to his need, and that by this means God has provided for the extension and preservation of the race in a manner worthy of man's high destiny as a being, made in the image of God. We

should always remember that we come to Church to be married in order that in the name of Christ, we may suitably recognise that the marriage bond is a spiritual bond ordained by God and to be entered into in humble reliance on His blessing.



INTERIOR VIEW

Pleasing to God.

A question may naturally arise, "Some religious people seem to look down on marriage, making out that they are more holy being unmarried. Is this so?" This is certainly not so. After man had been created, God in His love and mercy said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make a help meet for him", and so woman was formed. Wherefore the ancient writer says: "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother and cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh." Marriage is an institution of God—and that in the time of man's innocence. The fact that the married state is well pleasing to God is further emphasis by two facts connected with our Lord Jesus Christ. He was born of a pure Virgin, yet lest any should thereby belittle the marriage state, Mary the Virgin was espoused to Joseph. This is a gracious way of indicating that God still blesses and approves the state of marriage as a condition compatible with the highest holiness. Mary, the mother of our Lord, was married immediately after the birth of her son, the Lord Jesus.

Again, Christ adorned and beautified with His presence and first miracle that He wrought, the marriage feast of Cana of Galilee. Further, the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews declares that marriage is honourable among all men. The New Testament sets the Divine imprimatur on marriage. True it is that our Lord Jesus Christ tells us that some remain unmarried for the kingdom of God's sake. St. Paul also warns the Corinthians that in the days of distress and persecution there is the danger that married persons might seek to please their partners and care more for that than the things of God. But there is no rule in the New Testament making celibacy binding on any particular group of Christ's flock. It is distinctly laid down that clergy can be married men and that was the almost invariable rule in early Christian times. God wants everyone to be happy, that His name may be glorified, and marriage can be a source of untold happiness if the hearts of the man and the woman are in tune with the will of their Maker.

For the Preservation of the Human Race.

The Reformers were quite emphatic as to the prime reason for marriage, namely, the upbringing of a family. The Bible is quite

emphatic: "Be fruitful and multiply." Nature with its implantation in all forms of life of the powerful instincts of propagation and preservation, is quite clear. Children are a gift of God. Why do so many spurn this gift, deny themselves the joy that children bring and turn a divine institution into a means of gratifying selfish lustful passions and nothing more. If God chooses to bless your marriage with children, for the sake of your own happiness, and higher, that God's name may be glorified, have them, and count them indeed a great honour, a source of joy to the young, and a staff of comfort to the aged.

For the Comfort of Man.

God is intimately concerned with the affairs of men and their temporal and eternal welfare. He made a man with certain abilities, potentialities, and temperament, and He made a woman to harmonise these abilities and to present the two a living unity. Neither a man nor a woman is complete alone—they need the companionship and comfort of their opposite sex. Marriage affords this joy in the highest degree and offers an intimate fellowship deeper than any other companionship, but one which apart from marriage, cannot be lawfully enjoyed.

THE SOLEMNITY OF MARRIAGE.

Marriage is therefore a very solemn business. As the Prayer Book says, "It should not be taken in hand unadvisedly, lightly, or wantonly . . . but reverently, discreetly, advisedly, soberly, and in the fear of God." It is sometimes approached from the point of view, "If we don't hit it off, we can easily get a divorce." But can you? "Those whom God hath joined together, let no man put asunder"—is the statement made in the service. A divorce is a disruptive force which is threatening the stability alike of the family and of society. The New Testament ideal is a life-long union, and you should both make it your aim that by faithfulness to your solemn obligations that ideal will be realised in your case. The New Testament only speaks of divorce as something

which is of the gravest consequence and only justified in the very last resort as a result of deliberate disregard of the marriage bond. Apart from the New Testament, altogether, the demands of the social life should make it impossible for anyone to entertain lightly an action that must inflict grievous loss on both partners and expose both to the greatest danger of licentious and ungodly living.

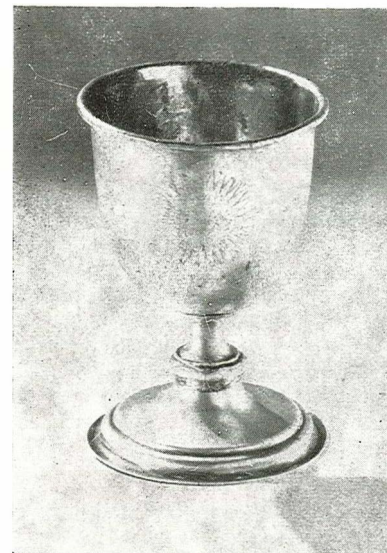
Also, make no mistake, God is not mocked "so many as are coupled together otherwise than God's word doth allow are not joined together by God." Before Him Who knows the very thoughts of our hearts can no secret be hid. Let us then take knowledge of Him with whom we have to do.

Again, marriage is solemn, because in the presence of friends and relatives, the couple have sworn to be faithful to each other, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, till death should part them. Man can swear by no higher than God in the presence of his friends, and that is what is done in the service. Both before God and man a solemn vow is made. Let us be sure that we be faithful to ourselves, our partners, our friends, and above all, to God.

THE MINISTER.

There are different names for the officiating clergyman in the wedding service. Sometimes he is called the "Minister", at times the "Curate", at other times the "Priest". There is no reason why the different names should be used, except that it shows that the framers of our Prayer Book considered the terms to be synonymous. The word "priest" in England is used to translate two different Latin words "sacerdos" and "presbyter". The first word is used of a sacrificing priest and this is the sense in which the Church of Rome employs the word. Archbishop Whitgift, Archbishop of Canterbury for nearly twenty-one years, from 1583-1604, wrote: "I read in the old fathers that these two names *sacerdos* and *presbyter* be confounded. I see also that the learned and best of our English writers, such I mean as write in these our days, translate the word *presbyter* so; and the very word itself, as it is used in our English tongue, soundeth the word *presbyter*. As

heretofore use hath made it to be taken for a sacrificer, so will use now alter that signification and make it to be taken for a minister of the Gospel." Whitgift was acquainted with all the Church leaders in the time of Elizabeth. He was Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity in Cambridge from 1566. He had close connection with the University until he was consecrated Bishop of Worcester in 1577. The work from which our quotation is taken had the approval of Archbishop Parker and Bishop Cooper of Lincoln and must be regarded as authoritative. In the Church of England, every true believer may be termed a priest in the sense of offering sacrifices to God—the sacrifice of a broken and contrite spirit, and the sacrifices of prayer, praise and thanksgiving.



"This Cup in poor condition, bears evidence of having been in a fire. Its date from style could well be about 1785, and this, together with the evidence of fire, gives reason for the assumption that it may well be the original cup brought out by Richard Johnson as Chaplain of the First Fleet in 1788."

A. G. GRIMWADE OF CHRISTIES, LONDON.

The officiating clergyman is also called a "Curate" because he is one who has the cure of the souls of men. He is also a "Minister" as he is one set aside by the people to minister to their spiritual needs. The word "Minister" seems to be most suitable, as it was used by our Saviour when He said: "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many."

The Minister in the Church of England acts in several capacities when solemnising matrimony. He is given by the State authority to receive the solemn declarations of those who are about to be married and in their oath or affirmation that there is no impediment being given, to proceed to join them together in marriage. He is given authority by his Church to exhort those undertaking marriage as to their sacred duties and to invite the blessing of God on a union publicly ratified before the congregation. He is also the spokesman of the assembled congregation who join with him in prayer that God will bless the union of two persons in holy wedlock.

THE RING.

Article XXV of the Church of England tells us that Matrimony "is not to be counted as a sacrament of the Gospel". On this account some objected in early days to the giving of a ring. But we do not claim that the use of a ring creates a sacrament. The handing over of the key of a home as a sign of possession does not make the purchase of a house a sacrament of the Gospel. Why then should a ring be given? The answer is contained in the Marriage Service. The ring is a token and pledge of the vow and covenant made between the two people. Every time the ring is seen it should remind us who are married that we have entered into a very sacred union and lead us to pray that we may ever remain in perfect love and peace together.

The ring is also a sign of eternity, constancy and purity:

*And as this round
Is nowhere found
To flaw or else to sever:
So let our love
As endless prove,
And pure as gold forever.*

In pre-Reformation days, the bridegroom was instructed to place the ring on the thumb of the bride, saying, "In the name of the Father", then upon the second finger saying, "And of the Son", then upon the third finger saying, "And of the Holy Spirit", and then upon the fourth finger saying, "Amen", where he was to leave the ring. The vein of the fourth finger was supposed to go straight to the heart.

THE SPIRITUAL ALLEGORY OF MARRIAGE.

The spiritual link of marriage has a very deep significance. Throughout the Bible, Christ our Lord is often referred to as the Bridegroom. He Himself told various parables using this metaphor. In the same way the true followers of Christ are called His body, His church, or His bride. There is a link of fellowship between Christians, a bond which has been made manifest down the ages. And His disciples, the Bride are linked to Christ Himself in the same spiritual way by which a man is linked to a woman in marriage. The link is there now, to be finally consummated when all the believers of Christ are to be joined with Him in heaven. Surely this is a wonderful revelation which God has given to us. At this very moment, anyone who is a faithful servant of the Lord Jesus is part of Him—and more—has been part of Him all down the years. They were joined to Him when He was crucified. That is how He could take away their sins. They were with Him as it were on the cross and when God justly gave them the reward for whatever they had done amiss, they received the penalty, but being hid in Him went free as He took the punishment for them. O the depth of the riches of the wisdom God! That God in Christ should take our penalty, that we in Him might go free.

Yet the analogy does not stop there. We are not linked only to the crucified Christ, also to the risen Christ. Not to the humble carpenter only, but to the glorified Saviour, the King of kings and Lord of lords. Every moment of the day there can be communion between the heart of the Christian and the very throne of God, where Christ is seated in glory and honour. How glorious this is! How humble it should make us! How we should strive

to walk those ways of righteousness for His dear Name's sake, bearing in mind that whatever we do, wherever we go, then Christ is present with us and linked to us with bonds which even death cannot sever.

Then there is this great source of comfort, that we know that whatever may come this way in life, there is afterwards that glorious hope that in the life to come, we shall be with Christ, not only beholding His glory, but also being changed into His glory. And eternity shall be the span during which we shall comprehend with increasing measure the beauty of our Master, and the great love wherewith He loved us.

*The bride eyes not her garment,
But her dear bridegroom's face.
I will not gaze at glory,
But on my King of Grace;
Not on the crown He giveth,
But on His pierced hand,
When throned where glory dwelleth
In Immanuel's land.*

GOD'S SECRET FOR HAPPY MARRIAGE.

Augustine said many centuries ago: "Thou hast made us for Thyself, and our restless heart finds no rest until it has found its rest in Thee." Everyone must confess that at some stage of life satisfaction of the soul has been sought. Some try and find it in various ways, but true satisfaction can only be found by a heart devoted and consecrated to the purpose and will of God. It is then that life takes on a new aspect. Old things are changed. Old habits fall off to give way to new and better modes of life. Tasks one considered irksome and dreary now prove avenues of service and joy. And the secret of happy marriage is when both the husband and wife are devoted to God—when they both have a common Master, and when both have the common purpose of seeking to serve Him and their fellow men.

It is not easy to be truly consecrated. It means the sacrifice of all we have to Christ, just as God gave all He had in the sacrifice of His Son. It means that the couple must be prepared, if God should desire them, to jeopardise their money, their friends, their most prized possessions, yea, their very lives for Him. They can give no more. But what does He give in return? Peace of soul, happiness, joy, times of prosperity, times of hardship, with the purpose of enlarging and beautifying character, in this life, and in the world to come, life and felicity with Him for ever.

God's secret for a happy marriage then is true and utter consecration—a fellowship, individually with Him, which makes fellowship with each other mean more than all the wealth of the world—a fellowship which grows and deepens day by day.



The set of Communion Plate presented by George III in 1803

Don't be frightened to pray together, and together dig out of the Bible those treasures which He has there for those who search diligently. Don't be ashamed to come to Church together and together worship God and learn more of Him.

But above all things have the Spirit of Christ—"Bear and forbear"—do not look for your own happiness, look for the happiness of your partner, and in so doing you will have greater happiness yourself.

And may the blessing of God Almighty, the Eternal Spirit made manifest in the flesh, be your portion this your wedding day and for ever.



"God be with you"

