

## *Reverend Augustus Amory – the Enabler*

If William Lawrence was the brains behind the founding of St Paul's, certainly Augustus Heard Amory was the hands and heart.

In 1880, Wm Lawrence, firmly established as rector of Grace Church, knew from the past experience of Rev Horatio Grey some three years earlier that the organization of a mission in North Andover was going to take applied effort. Eying the graduating class at Episcopal Theological Seminary for that year, as early as April he sought out and started the recruiting process on Augustus Amory, a bright- in fact first in his class—prospect about to graduate. Some historians write that the two were related, and while this relationship is not obvious, it is certainly possible. Most of the people of privilege in that era tended to be at least entwined. Amory's

mother was the granddaughter of John Copley; his father was a well-to-do cotton merchant. They could certainly be in the same circles as the Lawrence's.



Augustus Amory was ill as a child and his education was slowed as a result of that. At age 13 his parents took him on a trip through Europe as a diversion. When he entered Harvard in 1870, he was once more ill and went on an extensive trip with two cousins to Europe, Egypt and the Holy Land. He returned to Harvard, graduated in '77, entered ETS and graduated in 1880, first in his class. He was 28.

On April 23 of his graduating year, Rev. Lawrence approached Amory, he wrote in his diary, "Willie Lawrence came to ask me to be his assistant next year at Lawrence, and to do some mission work in South Lawrence and No. Andover. Much in the proposition I like especially in the kind of work it offers". With that North Andover's relationship was forged, but tentatively. Other offers and other recommendations would tempt him, but he remained on course. On Sep 2<sup>nd</sup> he arrived in Lawrence on the 2:55 train and by Sep 10<sup>th</sup> the organizing meeting was set for the North Andover congregation at the Town Hall, and the first service was held on the following Sunday, Sep 12<sup>th</sup>, 1880—82 people attended, the collection was \$22.50.

Within a month Amory organized the Sunday school, and continued to grow his church. In December an Executive Committee was organized and a mission was formed, and given the name St Paul's—Amory's recommendation. His work was not without some personal angst. Amory continued to receive overtures from others, and in early December, the prestigious St James Church Philadelphia offered what some, including his father, would view as a more significant opportunity. He agonized, and certainly prayed, and apparently touched by St Paul's Christmas celebration, among other issues, he wrote to St James in January, and declined the invitation. Now, his ties were set. Rev Amory was ordained on June 12, 1881 at Grace Church.

Amory led the organization of the building of the chapel in 1881-82 and the first three years of growth in which the membership increased by about 30%. Moreover he molded the Executive Committee into a fine working organization of very significant and accomplished individuals- no small task. In December 1883,



Rev Amory resigned his work at North Andover to become rector of Grace Church, when William Lawrence resigned that position. Amory served as rector at Grace for 17 years and resigned unexpectedly to become rector at St Stephen's Lynn in 1901. His service there was short. He died of the grippe on Easter Saturday 1904. His life is memorialized in the book, Memoirs of Augustine Heard Amory by A L Moulton, 1906, available on-line. His picture hangs in the founding priests' picture in the French Memorial. A memorial window in the north transept honors his service.