

Protestant Episcopal Church Publishing Association ^[1]

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by Robin Brabham, 2006

See also: [Confederate Imprints](#) ^[2]

The Protestant Episcopal Church Publishing Association was founded in [Charlotte](#) ^[3] in 1864 by John Wilkes, a businessman and prominent Episcopal layman. The likely catalyst for the establishment of the association was the need to find a way to revive publication of the *Church Intelligencer*, a [Raleigh](#) ^[4]-based weekly newspaper that had served the [Episcopal denomination](#) ^[5] throughout the southern states since 1860. As the territory controlled by the Confederacy shrank and economic conditions deteriorated, the number of subscribers declined, and the paper was forced to suspend operations with the 8 Apr. 1864 issue.

Five months later, on 14 September, the *Church Intelligencer* reappeared under the proprietorship of the Protestant Episcopal Church Publishing Association, of which Wilkes was treasurer and chief financial backer. In addition to publishing the newspaper, the association proposed to help fill "the great need of suitable Tracts for the army, and Sunday School Literature and Prayer Books for the Church at large." During the next three months, the association published 21 tracts, ranging in length from 4 to 55 pages. Of their six named authors, three were Episcopal bishops, while the others were the rector of [Saint Mary's School](#) ^[6] in Raleigh, a Methodist clergyman from Tennessee, and a former Unitarian minister who had become an Episcopal priest (and was the only northerner among the named authors).

Despite a seemingly promising beginning, the association was soon forced to curtail its tract program. Although December issues of the *Church Intelligencer* announced the impending availability of two additional tracts and four [Sunday School](#) ^[7] books, no copies of these works with the association's imprint can be found today, and it is doubtful that they were ever published.

In spite of this retrenchment, the association carried on with the newspaper until 3 May 1865, when it was forced to suspend all operations temporarily. Publication resumed on 31 August, but Wilkes replaced the association as proprietor in February 1866. The newspaper ceased publication with the issue of 7 Mar. 1867.

References:

Joseph Blount Cheshire, *The Church in the Confederate States: A History of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Confederate States* ^[8] (1912).

T. Michael Parrish and Robert M. Willingham, *Confederate Imprints: A Bibliography of Southern Publications from Secession to Surrender* (1984).

Additional Resources:

"About The Church intelligencer." *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress. <http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn94051161/> ^[9]

"Words of counsel to Confederate soldiers" Charlotte, N.C.: Protestant Episcopal Church Publishing Association, circa 1864-1865. <https://archive.org/details/wordsofcounselto00char> ^[10].

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From:

[Encyclopedia of North Carolina, University of North Carolina Press.](#) ^[17]

1 January 2006 | Brabham, Robin

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