

8 Moon Shell Road  
Hilton Head Island, SC 29928  
4 July 1984

Dear Miss Warren,

The Secretary to the Rector of St. Luke's Parish has referred your letter to me as President of the Hilton Head Island Historical Society. Although the historic St. Luke's Parish goes back to 1767, the violence of the federal invasion of this area 1861-1865 left nothing much above ground. We have had to reconstruct our history from what was preserved elsewhere. Naturally, the best sources for Church history are Dr. Dalcho's account of the Episcopal Church in South Carolina through 1820 and the continuation thereof by the late Bishop Albert S. Thomas. There are several references therein to the Rev. Dr. James Stoney (1821-1870). Unhappily, there is no reference to him in Malone's History of the Episcopal Church in Georgia.

However, since Dr. Stoney's grandfather, Captain James Stoney (1772-1827) of Otterburn Plantation, Hilton Head Island, married Elizabeth Mosse, a sister of my gr<sup>2</sup>-grandmother, Jane Mosse (Mrs. Benjamin T. D. Lawton of Lawtonville), it happens that I do have in my files a rather extensive account of the family of Dr. Stoney, certainly more than I can imagine you are interested in knowing.

James Stoney was born 19 Nov 1821, 3rd child of Dr. George Mosse Stoney (1795-1854) of Otterburn, Hilton Head Island, and his first wife, Catherine Adams Jenkins who died ten days after his birth. His father married (2) 18 Jan 1823 Sarah Woodward Barnwell who took over the rearing of his three small children. James graduated from the S.C. Medical College 1842, just after marrying 5 Apr 1842 Mary Clara Reed, born Beaufort 4 Jun 1826, daughter of Dr. Samuel Reed. Dr. Stoney was given Trimblestone Plantation just east of present Bluffton as a wedding present by his father; his tiny medical office was still standing a decade ago, sole remnant of his extensive plantation. In 1849 he packed up his family and moved them to Va. Seminary, Alexandria where he received BD and was ordained 18 Apr 1852 by Bishop Meade as deacon, advancing to the priesthood 15 Jul 1853, having served his deaconate in St. Helena's, Beaufort. He returned to Trimblestone and was Rector of Church of the Cross, Bluffton 1853-1861, directing the building of the historic building consecrated 1857. He also ministered to the communicants of Zion Chapel of Ease here on this island. He became Rector of Good Shepherd, Yorkville in April 1861 where his wife died and his sons Reed and James went off to fight for CSA; he served briefly as a Chaplain but had to return to care for his family & his 2nd wife, Amanda Springs. In 1866 he returned to Trimblestone to find everything in ruins, his slaves gone. He accepted the position of Rector of St. Stephen's Ch., Savannah, Ga. 5 Jan 1868 and died there 10 Feb 1870, buried in Laurel Grove Cem., Richardson lot, plot No. 1152. A daughter gave a marble altar in Yorkville in 1923 in his memory and his descendants gave a ewer to St. Luke's Church here in 1973 at the time the Historical Society unveiled a marker at the site of Zion Chapel of Ease. His widow moved to Charlotte, NC with her two children, Julia & Saida, both of whom died there of diphtheria; Amanda married (2) Mr. Gibson who also left her widowed; she is buried in Charlotte beside her two Stoney daughters.

If you will telephone me when next you are on Hilton Head Island, I shall be happy to let you examine my files on the Stoney family, if you so desire. Or, I shall undertake to answer any specific questions you may have. Cousin Jim Stoney has many descendants, of course, quite a few of whom are well-known to me.

With every good wish for you, I have the honor to remain

Faithfully,

Robert E. H. Peeples +

Rev. Dr. Robert E. H. Peeples,  
Pres., H. H. Is. Historical Society