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LETTER TO JOHN D. MURRELL FROM N(ICHOLAS) H. COBBS, 1831

The letter is from the Rev. Nicholas Hamner Cobbs, of Bedford Co., 27 Oct. 1831, to John D. Murrell, of Lynchburg, urging Murrell in his resolve to become a Christian.

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NICHOLAS HAMNER COBBS (1796-1861)

Nicholas Hamner Cobbs was born near Goode (Bedford Co.), VA, on 5 April 1796, the son of John Lewis & Susan Hamner Cobbs. He was educated in a local school run by a Scottish Presbyterian minister. By the age of 17, Cobbs was teaching in a local school.

In 1821, at the age of 26, Cobbs married his first cousin, Lucy Henry Landonia Cobbs, the daughter of Edmund Cobbs of Bedford County. Lucy was 14 years old and a student in Nicholas' class. They had 10 children.

At the Episcopal Convention in Staunton in 1824, Nicholas Cobbs presented himself to Bishop Moore. He was shortly thereafter confirmed, took his first communion, and was ordained a deacon at the same time. His ordination as a priest came on 22 May 1825. During that same year St. Stephen's and Trinity Churches were founded by him in Bedford County. He also later saw the founding of St. John's in Liberty (Bedford) and St. Thomas at Sedalia.

In 1826, he was elected head of the New London Academy and became Principal in January of 1827 and served until he resigned in 1830. He also served as minister of the church at the academy. He was made chaplain at the University of Virginia in 1835, and for two years, continued to serve both in that capacity and as the priest of St. Stephen's and Trinity churches. On 27 July 1839, he resigned to become the Rector of Bristol Parish in Petersburg, VA.

He accepted the call of the St. Paul's church in Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1842. Two years later, he was elected Bishop of Alabama and was consecrated in Philadelphia on 24 October 1844.

Nicholas Hamner Cobbs then served as Bishop of Alabama until his demise on 11 January 1861.

SOURCES: duVal Radford, "Nicholas Hamner Cobbs," St. Stephen's Episcopal Church of Bedford County, Forest, Virginia. Forest, VA: St. Stephen's Historical Records Committee, 1983. Asher, Julia. "Cobbs Family," MS1400, Jones Memorial Library, Lynchburg, VA