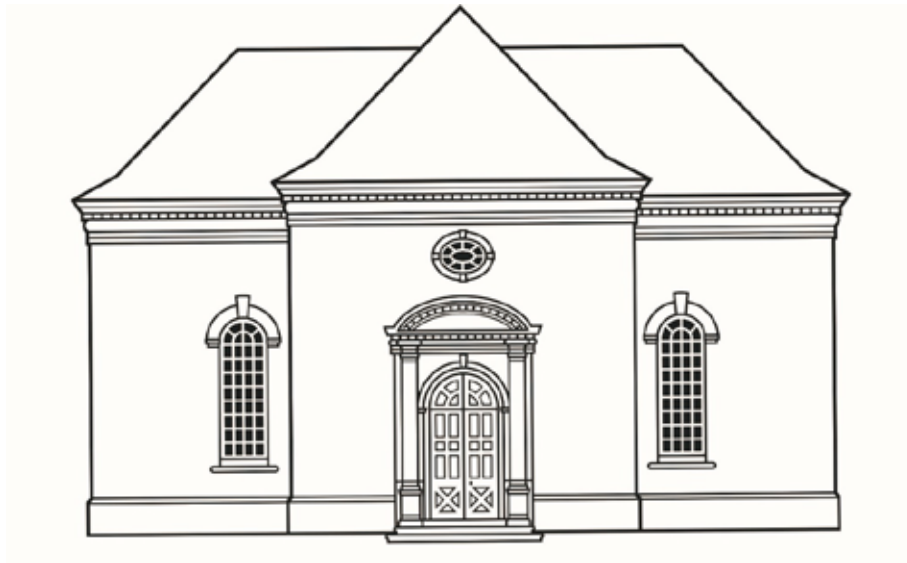


# ***The Red Book***

## **A Guide to Historic Christ Church**



***Preservation, Education, Inspiration***

**Compiled 1990**

**Revised 1994**

**Revised 2001**

**Revised 2016**

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# Thank You

This fourth edition of *The Red Book* was begun at the request of the Cultural Resources Management Committee (CRMC). It builds upon the work of the past committees and individuals who have looked into the story of Christ Church, its builder, Robert Carter, and the parishioners who, over the course of three centuries, lived within its compass. As the writers of the third edition expressed the debt, “Acknowledgment is made to the many dedicated stewards of Historic Christ Church—past and present—who have kept its history alive and current.”

Thanks are due as well to the volunteers who responded to a survey distributed in the fall of 2013. Their input convinced the current revision committee to maintain most of the previous edition intact, to add new material in selected areas, and to include practical elements designed to assist volunteers as they tell the Historic Christ Church story.

Thanks also to the Foundation staff whose input has shaped both the content and format of this edition. Their knowledge and support have been invaluable.

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## Introduction

*The Red Book*, from its earliest editions, has been, and still is, based on primary sources whenever available and reliable secondary sources when necessary. Most of these sources are available in the HCC Research Room and can be identified through the notes in the text. In the words of the third edition, *The Red Book* brings together “pertinent and descriptive material about Historic Christ Church. . .so that volunteers may have organized, concise, and readily accessible information. . .[that] is accurate to the best of our knowledge.”

That high purpose remains the goal of this edition. The current *Red Book* envisions helping volunteers carry out the relevant areas of the Foundation’s Mission Statement and the values underlying them, i.e., “curiosity, diligence and accuracy in historical research” and “quality, vitality and innovation in. . .presentation.”

The additions in the 2016 edition speak to all of these fundamental values. New parts of the Architecture & Preservation section enhance the information on the building and its design and update the story of its preservation. The section on Christ Church Parish has changed from a chronological to a topical presentation supplemented with a timeline. The sections on the Tombs, now titled The Churchyard, and the Carter Family have been reconceived and enlarged. The section on the Foundation had been substantially updated and includes more information about archaeological findings. A final section of Additional Resources includes what volunteers consider the most important aspects of selected topics and reflects the collected wisdom of various docents over the years.

As volunteers take advantage of the knowledge base represented by *The Red Book* to create their own presentations, they should review their work in light of the following core ideas:

1. Architecture and Preservation: Historic Christ Church is a national treasure both for the quality of its architecture and the state of its preservation.
2. Christ Church Parish: Christ Church Parish epitomizes colonial Virginia’s political, social, economic and religious institutions.
3. Carter Family: The story of the Carter family, from the immigrant John through the second generation Robert and into the third generation of Robert’s sons and daughters, is the story of America’s change from colony to nation.

These core ideas, combined with the volunteer’s own emphasis and details, should be referenced in all presentations. With a solid knowledge base in the care of enthusiastic volunteers, Christ Church will continue, in the words of its Mission Statement, as a “legacy of our common heritage [and] a source of learning and inspiration.”

# **THE RED BOOK 2016**

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  - Eight Features of Early Georgian Architecture
  - Cruciform Church Shape
  - Orientation of the Church
- 3. Architectural Features: Exterior**
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- 6. Foundation for Historic Christ Church Preservation Policy**
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- 8. Repair and Preservation Timeline**
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## **SECTION I: ARCHITECTURE AND PRESERVATION**

**Theme:** Historic Christ Church is a national treasure both for the quality of its architecture and the state of its preservation.

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Architectural Overview**
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## 1. Introduction

Where is the house built in these degenerate days of slight modern architecture, which may compare with Old Christ Church, either within or without?

—William Meade, 1857

In 1857, Bishop Meade remarked on the architectural singularity of Christ Church. It is no wonder that so many years later visitors are still intrigued by how this building came to exist and how it has survived despite the course of history and the ravages of time.

The following pages are organized in three sections so that volunteers may study Historic Christ Church within the framework of its structure, its historical record, and its preservation. Each section is a necessary part of the story. First, the ARCHITECTURAL OVERVIEW is virtually unchanged from previous editions of the Red Book. Second, the ARCHITECTURE section has been revamped, now describing the architectural terms previously found in the Glossary within the context of their expressions in the church. Third, a fully developed section has been added that details the foundation's PRESERVATION POLICY, the PRESERVATION HISTORY of Christ Church, and PRESERVATION PRIORITIES for the future.

It is hoped that this revamped and extended section will provide a strong foundation for volunteers' understanding of the architecture and preservation efforts at Historic Christ Church.

## 2. Architectural Overview

With tall, flat brick walls, a steep double-pitched roof, and a nearly centralized cross plan, [Christ Church] is vertical and cubical in its massing and boldly geometrical in form. It is an imposing and entirely original creation in the Anglo-Dutch style, within the limits of which it presents brick and stone detailing unsurpassed in the colonies. The window and door treatments and the bold entablature suggest a professional hand of no small talent, a designer whose name—like the details of the commission, is lost to us.<sup>1</sup>

— William M. S. Rasmussen

The genius of this designer, who was likely guided by the pattern books available at the time, was attested to by the no less than six adaptations of Christ Church in colonial Virginia: Lunenburg and North Farnham, Richmond County (begun while Christ Church, Lancaster, was still under construction); St. Mary's White Chapel, Lancaster County; Wicomico Parish Church (a specific copy), Northumberland County; Christ Church (upper church), Middlesex County; and Abingdon Church, Gloucester County.

While there is no evidence regarding the designer/builder of Christ Church, Lancaster, it is quite possible that this grand edifice was, in effect, the effort of a committee. In other parishes, where vestry records are intact, the evolution of the shaping of the church structure is quite clear. The vestry itself was responsible for broad specifications that, following a bidding process, were reduced to a contract with the undertaker (builder). Surviving records indicate that in cases where the specifications were altered as to dimensions or descriptions of interior trim, the builder was expected to produce a structure of pleasing and proper proportions. While simple sketches may have been utilized as a means of communication, building plans—as we know them today—did not exist. One can easily visualize the often difficult give and take between the vestry and the undertaker/builder as a structure evolved.

In the case of Christ Church, Lancaster, where Robert Carter was the major, if not sole, monetary contributor, the role of the vestry is less clear. It can be assumed that as benefactor, powerful political figure, and vestry head, Robert Carter played a major part in the shaping of this magnificent structure.

Clearly Christ Church shows the neo-classical influence of its Anglican counterparts. However, the Virginia “Anglican Church is not just Wren and the Renaissance, it is *The Builder's Dictionary*, and the Reformation, and the gentry, and slave and indentured labor, and the taxation system. It is the vestries, and the builders, and the parishioners, and Virginia and England.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>William M. S. Rasmussen, “Drafting The Plans: Pride and Practicality in Virginia's Colonial Architecture, 1643-1770,” in Charles E. Brownell, et al., *The Making of Virginia Architecture* (Richmond, Va., 1992), 15.

<sup>2</sup>Dell Upton, *Holy Things and Profane: Anglican Parish Churches in Colonial Virginia* (New Haven, Conn., 1997), xxii.

## **Eight Features of Early Georgian Architecture**

1. Symmetry
2. A base, middle and termination
3. Identifiable human scale
4. Visible roof (termination)
5. Discernible proportions
6. Rhythm, pleasing to the eye
7. Emphasis on features—accented openings, a flourish of architectural statement
8. Masculine details—solid, strong, massive

**Cruciform Church Shape** Often, when we see the cruciform or cross-plan shape of a historic church like Christ Church, Lancaster, we immediately credit the form with symbolic meaning. However, if we examine the historic record, we find that the old adage is still true, “looks can be deceiving.”

Before the late Middle Ages, most parishioners usually stood or knelt during mass. Some medieval churches built benches around the walls for the sick or aged; from this practice comes the saying, “The weak to the wall.” Interiors of churches were richly embellished with painted walls and altars, carved chancel screens and stained glass. Since most of the parishioners did not understand the Latin service, the emphasis was on visual embellishment.<sup>3</sup>

With the Reformation, worship services began to be delivered entirely in English. Only after the service could be understood by parishioners did the interior of Anglican churches change to accommodate an emphasis on hearing. Anglican leaders now began to restructure the church and its ceremonies in a manner that allowed the people to hear the service. As emphasis shifted to the written and spoken word, the pulpit took on increasing importance. Conversely, anything associated with religious symbolism and the perceived idol worship of the Catholic Church was strictly shunned.<sup>4</sup>

Virginia’s first churches were simple rectangles, developed in part from the room, or auditory, church used widely in rural areas of 17<sup>th</sup> century England. They addressed auditory concerns by limiting the size of the building. Eventually, though, most parishes had to confront the problem of either enlarging an existing church or constructing a new, bigger church to accommodate a growing congregation.<sup>5</sup>

The easiest method was to lengthen the church, but this worked only for buildings that were relatively small already. More commonly, Virginia builders made additions at right angles to the main structure, producing the T plan. According to Dell Upton, “Every T-plan church resulted

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<sup>3</sup>Upton, *Holy Things and Profane*, 47-50, 175.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid, 47, 77.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid, 56-57, 72, 77.

from an addition to an existing rectangular church.” While the earliest existing record of a T-plan addition is that made in 1701 at Poplar Spring church in Petsworth Parish, the oldest *surviving* T-plan addition is at Vauter’s church in Essex where a wing was added in 1731, some twelve years after the original construction of the building.<sup>6</sup>

Upton notes that colonial Virginia’s T-plan churches may have been influenced by Scottish kirks (churches):

Possibly Virginia’s T-plans owed something to Scots kirks. Kirks incorporated ‘aisles,’ or perpendicular north additions, from the Middle Ages on. . . .These north wings were often burial aisles or the private seating and retiring rooms of local lairds, but they sometimes had pews on their ground floors as well. If kirks were a source of Virginia T-plans, no particular individual can be credited with introducing the form.

A substantial portion of colonial Virginia’s population was of Scottish origin, and their building styles undoubtedly migrated with them. At the same time, however, it was not unusual to see additions at right angles made to houses in late 17<sup>th</sup> century Virginia, whatever the owners’ cultural identity.<sup>7</sup>

The cruciform plan developed from the T-plan. With the exception of the church in the upper parish of Nansemond County and that at Pungoteague in Accomack Parish, all the cruciform churches constructed in colonial Virginia lay in the “long-established, wealthy parishes along one of the three principal rivers.”<sup>8</sup>

The first Virginia church built in a cruciform plan was the third Bruton Parish church at Williamsburg, finished in 1715. Upton points out that “No crucifix symbolism was intended by the Bruton plan: the concern was with audibility in a very large urban church.”<sup>9</sup> By constructing the church in a cruciform and shifting the pulpit from the front of the church to the center, everyone inside could hear the service.

Three cruciform churches followed the Bruton model. The second cruciform church built in Virginia, Elizabeth City Parish Church, now known as St. John’s in Hampton, was completed in 1728. The lower church of St. Stephen’s Parish, now known as Mattaponi Baptist Church, became the colony’s third cruciform church when it was completed circa 1730-1734. Both St. Stephen’s and the church at Elizabeth City Parish featured pedimented doorways, a style not yet in use when Bruton was constructed. Another cruciform church, that of Elizabeth River Parish, today known as St. Paul’s in

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<sup>6</sup>Upton, *Holy Things and Profane*, 77-80.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid, 78-79.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid, 80-81.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid, 81-82.

Norfolk, was completed around 1739 and “followed the Bruton precedent closely in its three-bay body, one-bay chancel, and large bull’s-eye windows over the transept doors.”<sup>10</sup>

Virginia’s fourth cruciform church, **Christ Church, Lancaster**, was finished in 1735. Like the others, there is no evidence to suggest the shape of the building had symbolic meaning to 18<sup>th</sup> century worshipers. Christ Church differed from Bruton Parish church, however, in two important respects: First, the north-south portion of Christ Church was the same length (70 feet) as the east-west section, whereas east-west, Bruton ended up 18 feet longer (although only projected to be 9 feet longer) than it was north-south. Second, whereas Bruton’s transepts (as well as those of the three modeled after it discussed above) lie clearly east of center, Christ Church’s are set just slightly east of center. This makes Christ Church, although technically a Latin cross, appear to be a Greek cross. As Upton points out, this design

. . . adds length to the body of the church, and reduces the eastern arm to a relatively small chancel housing the communion place and the two large pews, at least one of which belonged to the Carter family. Furthermore, the centralizing intent of the plan was fulfilled by the pulpit’s being set, as in the T-plan churches, in the southwest corner at the intersection of the arms. It could be seen from every seat in the church, something that could not be said of the altarpiece and the communion rail.<sup>11</sup>

Christ Church, Lancaster, had a significant influence on church design throughout the remainder of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Before it was even completed, the cruciform churches of North Farnham and Lunenburg parishes in Richmond County, the adjoining county west of Lancaster County, had been started; both were completed in 1737. By 1739, St. Mary’s White Chapel was under construction. Originally proposed in 1753 but not completed until 1771-72, Wicomico Parish in Northumberland County was an exact copy of Christ Church, Lancaster. And though slightly larger than Christ Church, Abingdon Parish Church in Gloucester County, completed in 1755, drew heavily from its cruciform design.

Altogether, through the work of Bishop Meade, Upton, and others, more than twenty cruciform churches can be accounted for in colonial Virginia.<sup>12</sup> The cruciform shape remained popular until late in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, when Virginians transformed the rectangular plan of the 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> centuries into what became the deep plan: a rectangular church substantially increased in width (depth), with the south door centered on the south side and the pulpit centered along the north side, as embodied in Falls Church (1770) and Pohick (1774).<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>Upton, *Holy Things and Profane*, 82-84. Upton states that after these three, “no other cruciform churches in Virginia bear a direct resemblance to Bruton church, and to the extent that it was an example, it must be accounted so for showing how the perpendicular wing might be treated in a relatively formal way, not for its Latin cross plan or for any of its details. Far more influential was Christ Church, Lancaster County. . .” See p. 84.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid, 84.

<sup>12</sup>Nathaniel P. Neblett, *Christ Church, Lancaster County, V.A.: Historic Structure Report* (Irvington, Va., 1994), 17.

<sup>13</sup>Upton, *Holy Things and Profane*, 90-91, 96-97.

## Orientation of the Church

The origin of orientation, lost to us in the uncertainties of antiquity, was based without doubt upon traditions and practices of pre-Christian civilizations.

G.H. Cook relates that “In the Apostolical Constitutions of the fourth century it was ordained that churches should be built oblong, with the head towards the east; worshippers were enjoined to pray to God eastwards... Orientation was not, however, enforced by the church but established itself as a tradition.”

Following continental European precedents, the medieval churches of England were planned on an east-west axis with the sanctuary in the east end. From the Saxon period onward orientation seems an established practice...

Most writers on Virginia colonial churches ascribe orientation to “canon law” probably because the practice was so pervasive. If orientation proceeded from canon law, then it stands to reason that this provision would be included among the Canons of 1604. Although much about the physical church and its arrangement is to be found among them, the Canons of 1604 are silent concerning orientation.<sup>14</sup>

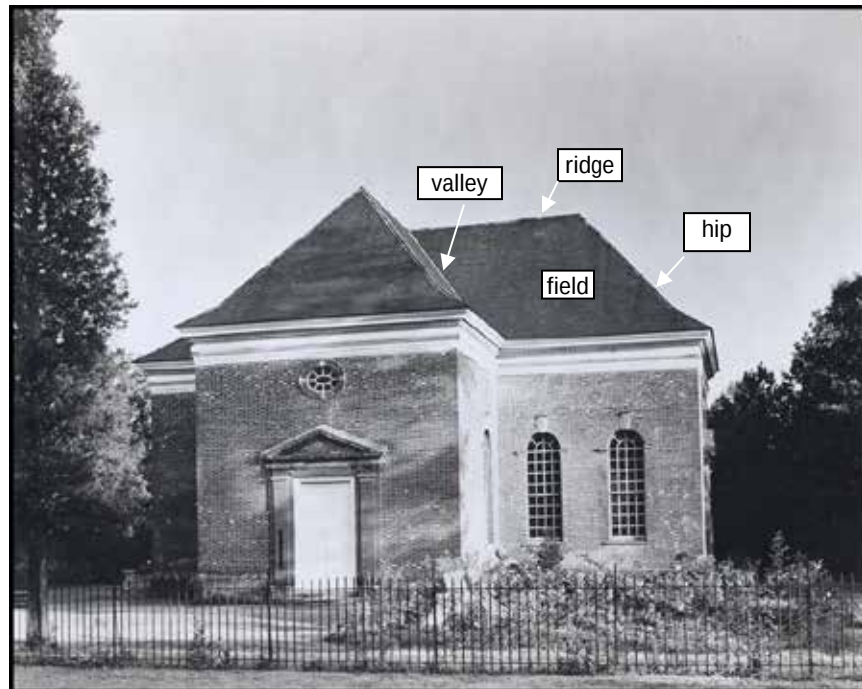
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<sup>14</sup>Nathaniel Palmer Neblett, AIA, *Christ Church, Lancaster County, VA.: Historic Structure Report* (Irvington, Va., 1994), 15-16.

### 3. Architectural Features:

#### Exterior

**Roof:** In form, the hipped roof of Christ Church is double-pitched with a pronounced splay or kick to the eaves. (*Kick* is an architectural term for the change of slope in a roof.) The original cypress shingles were replaced in 1838, and in 1897 were removed and replaced with slate.



*View from northwest July 1956*

**Entablature:** Defined as the upper section of a classical order resting on the capital. Christ Church features a fully developed Ionic entablature including a cornice, frieze and architrave. A significant part of the design of the church, the entablature was one of the first of this magnificence in the colonies. Additionally, it establishes the principle decorative theme of the church and is repeated in the interior design around the pulpit and the chancel, and on the exterior below the door pediments.

***Denticulated Cornice:*** A horizontal molded projection that crowns or completes a building or a wall. At Christ Church the cornice features a series of small rectangular blocks forming a molding or a projection beneath it. These are structural, in that they help support and lock in place the cornice above and the molding below. (See an example in the gallery.)

***Frieze:*** The plain or decorated horizontal part of an entablature between the cornice and the architrave. At Christ Church, the frieze is pulvinated (shaped like a pillow).

***Architrave:*** The lowermost part of an entablature that rests directly on top of a column or wall.

***Archivolt:*** Curved architrave.



**Walls:** Below ground level, the foundation increases gradually from three feet to a little over five feet wide and extends over five feet deep. (See photo of foundation probe and schematic measurement of its depth on Architecture and Preservation page 37.) The exterior brick walls are laid in Flemish bond with mortar containing ground oyster shells. At ground level, the walls are three feet thick, very gradually tapering as they rise. The bricks were made on sites south of the church yard.

***Flemish Bond:*** Brickwork in which rows of alternating stretchers and headers are staggered to produce a checkerboard pattern. The headers, discolored or glazed in the firing process, provide contrast when used in the finished brickwork. (You may have seen Flemish bond brickwork that featured all glazed headers. At Christ Church, the glazed headers are placed at random.)

***English Bond:*** Brickwork in which rows of headers (short side or end) alternate with rows of stretchers (long side of brick). The interior brickwork (behind the plaster) is English bond which is the equal of Flemish bond for strength but cheaper to lay.

***Rubbed Brick:*** Bricks which were chosen for uniformity of color and hardness and then rubbed with another brick or stone to smooth the surface. These were used to highlight the corners, doorways and windows of the church.

***Gauged brick:*** Bricks that were molded or cut to a gauge, or specific size and shape, for decorative use as part of the overall design of the church.

***Water Table:*** A course of molded, sloping bricks that marks the transition between the plinth (base) and upper walls of a building. Above the watertable, the brick walls step back two to three inches. The water table forms an angled bridge so water does not pool on the ledge. At Christ Church, this classical Georgian feature provides a visual base for the building.



Wall: “stock,” “well-burnt,” or “common” brick

Water table: rubbed molded brick

Base: stock brick. *Note that in the churchyard wall, unlike the church wall, the bricks beneath the water table are laid in English bond.*

**Door Enframement (“frontispiece”):** The three door surrounds are embellished with rubbed and gauged brick pilasters and elaborate classical pediments. The finely carved pilaster capitals, bases, keystones, and imposts are of Aquia sandstone.

**Doors:** The west doorway (the main liturgical entrance) is the most elaborate. The original semicircular lunette is walnut. The pine doors are replacements and appear to date from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, as does the old lock. The north and south doors, though extensively repaired, appear to be original and are made of walnut.

***Classical Order:*** The fundamental unit of design in classical architecture consisting of a column with a base, shaft, capital and entablature according to five styles: Tuscan, Doric, Ionic, Corinthian and Composite.

***Keystone:*** The central wedge-shaped stone at the top of an arch that locks the other stones or bricks into place.

***Pediment:*** A wide, low-pitched, triangular gable surmounting doors, windows, and porticoes of a building in the classical style. (Note: pediments can also be elliptical in shape.)

***Impost:*** The uppermost part of a column or pillar supporting an arch.

***Pilaster:*** A rectangular faux column with a capital and a base set into a wall as an ornamental motif.

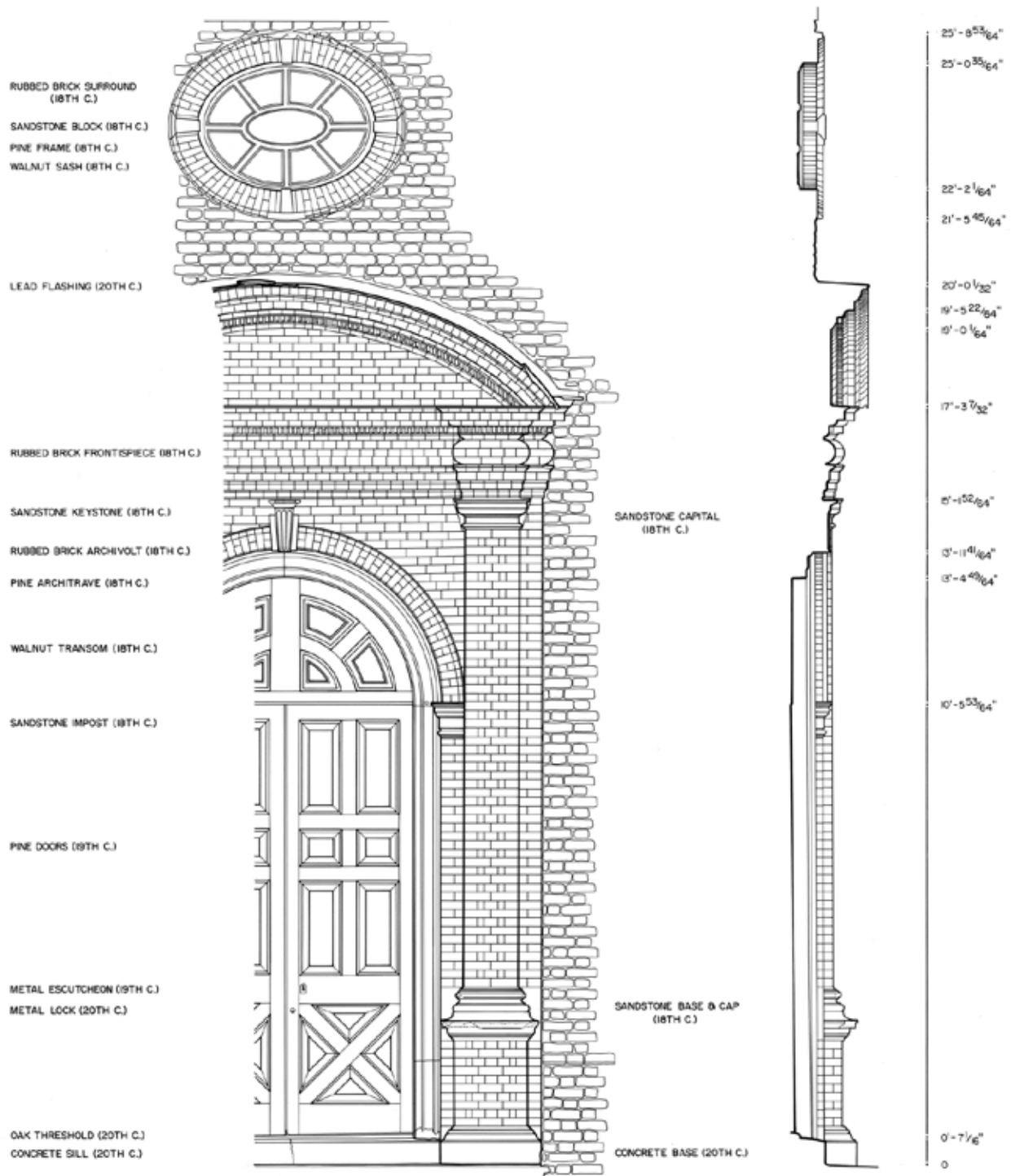
***Lunette:*** A crescent-shaped or semicircular opening or surface – usually over a door or window.

***Jamb:*** The vertical side post of a doorway or window frame.

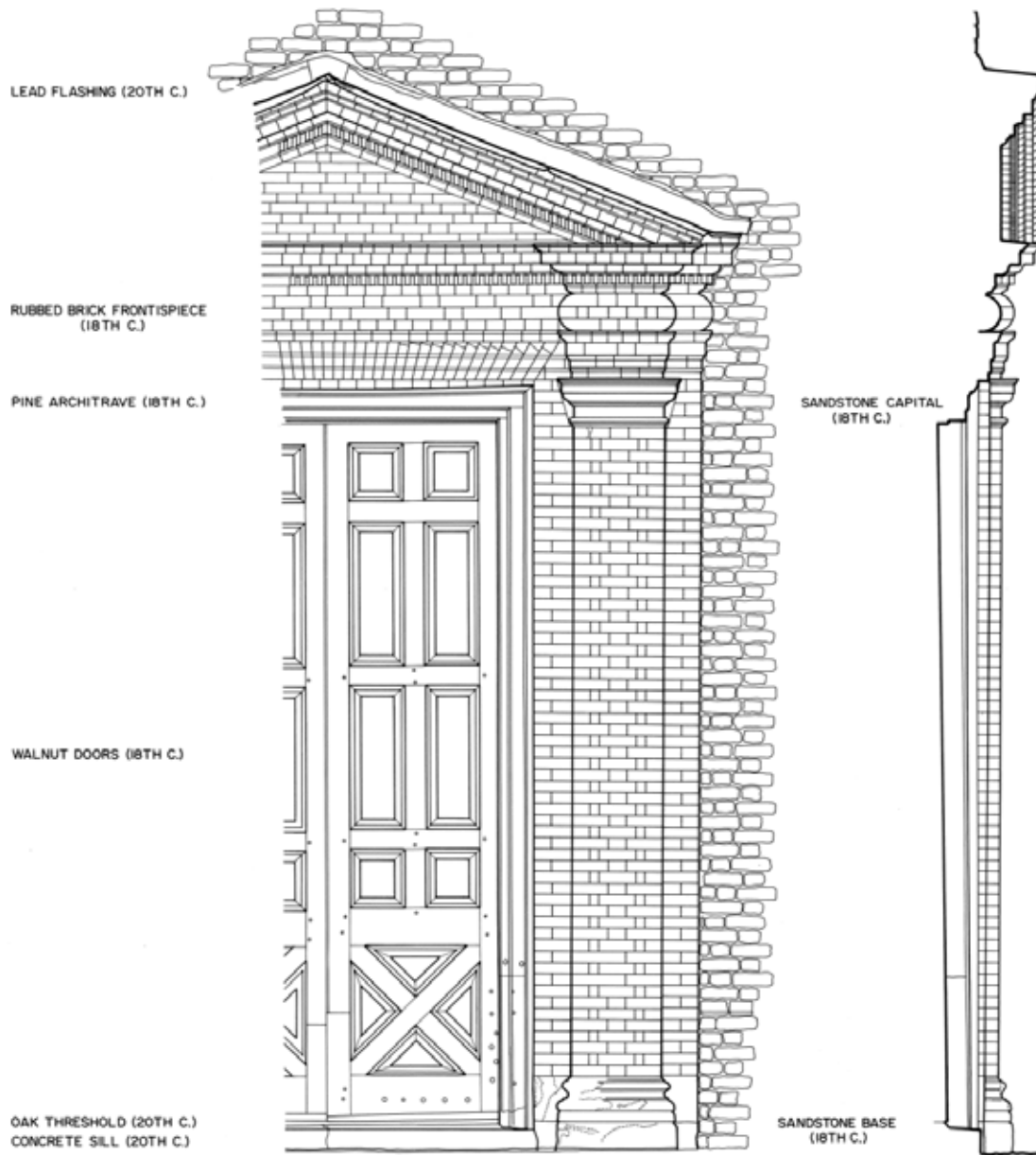
***Threshold:*** The piece of wood or stone placed under a doorway.

***Sill:*** The horizontal member that bears the upright portion of a frame.

## WEST DOORWAY

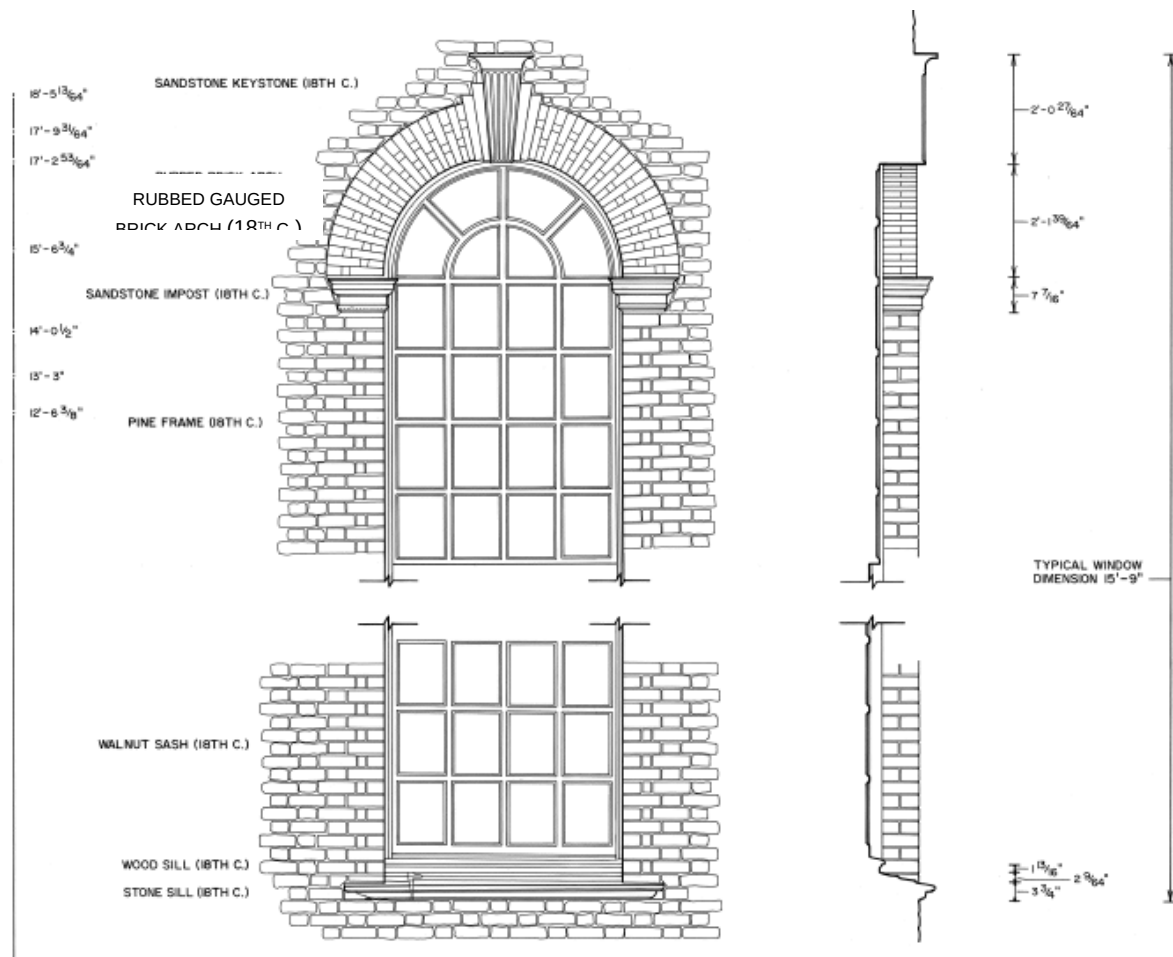


## SOUTH DOORWAY



**Windows:** Twelve large *compass head windows* provide illumination and ventilation. The rubbed and gauged brick jamb and arch define the opening. Each arch is crowned with a fluted keystone providing strength as well as decoration. The keystones, imposts, and exterior sills are of Aquia sandstone. All but one sill are believed to be original. The *oculus* (elliptical or ox eye) windows over the entrances compliment the exterior design and provide light to the vaulted ceiling. The window sash are “guillotine hung,” meaning that the lower sash may be raised.

## WINDOW HEAD AND SILL ELEVATION AND PROFILE



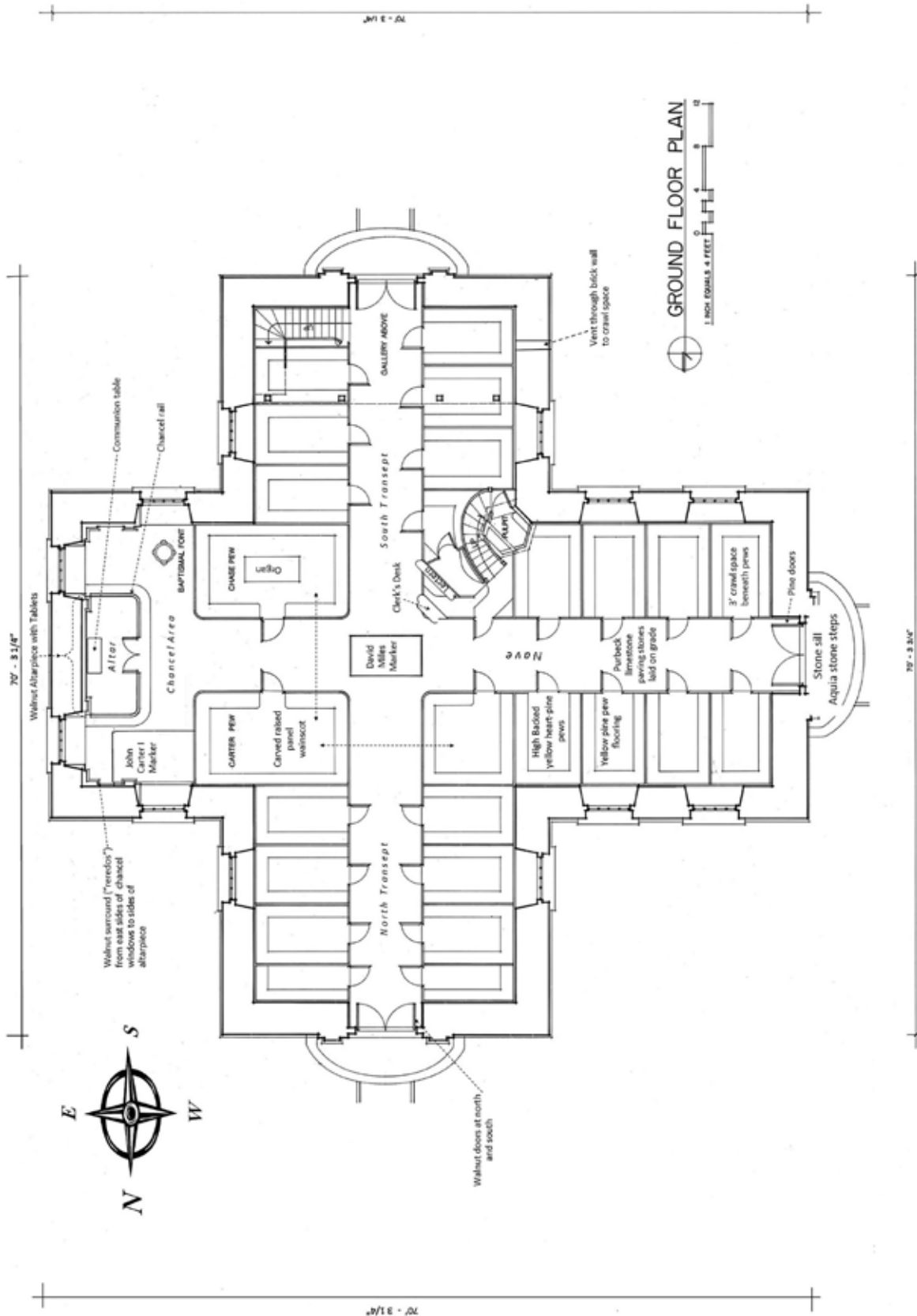
**Steps:** The semi-elliptical stoops with one step appear to originally have been Aquia sandstone. The stones have been dismantled, repaired, reset and some replaced with limestone. Concrete sills have been added at each doorway.



*Stone Step repairs, 1974-1978*

**Plan:** The plan of Christ Church forms a Latin cross. The 70-foot north to south and east to west dimensions are almost exactly the same; however, the north to south transept is set slightly east of center. The church is oriented with the chancel in the east arm according to church tradition.







## 5. Architectural Features:

### Interior

**Paving:** The interior aisles are paved with rectangular stone blocks of varying dimensions four to six inches thick, laid directly on the earth. This hard limestone is identified as Purbeck stone, quarried from the Isle of Purbeck on the south coast of England. 140-145 million years old, this stone was a favored paving material in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Robert Carter paved his basement at Corotoman with Purbeck stone. After the fire there in 1729 he may have salvaged these pavers for reuse at Christ Church. The memorial stone of David Miles in the crossing is of polished Purbeck limestone referred to in early builders' terms as "marble." John Carter's memorial stone in the northeast corner of the chancel has been identified as black Belgian limestone (polished) that is 330-332 million years old.

**Nave:** The central part of the church, extending from the west entrance to the chancel.

**North Transept:** The north lateral arm of a cross-plan church.

**South Transept:** The south lateral arm of a cross-plan church.

**Chancel:** That part of the Anglican church containing an altar.

**Altarpiece:** An ornamental screen or wall behind the altar consisting of tablets containing the Ten Commandments and frequently the Lord's Prayer and the Apostles' Creed. Canon LXXXII of 1604 ordered "the Ten Commandments be set up on the East end of every Church and Chapel, where the people may best see and read the same."

The Christ Church altarpiece has a segmental, or rounded, pediment supported by fluted pilasters on either side of the two framed tablets. It forms part of a larger composition of walnut wainscoting that wraps around all three walls of the chancel, terminating in triangular pediments that are asymmetrical when seen head on but look symmetrical when viewed from the west.

The altarpiece is designed to accommodate the two tablets directly above the communion table. In 1838, Bishop Meade observed, "the two tables of the law, the creed and the Lord's Prayer are still to be seen." In 1878 *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* reported, "Above the communion table are two framed tablets of black canvas, with the Lord's Prayer, Creed and Commandments printed in quaint yellow letters thereon" The present tablets of walnut are reported to have been installed in the 1930s. Lettered only with the Ten Commandments, the decorative lettering appears to have been copied from the two tablets, dated 1702, at St. Mary's White Chapel.

**Altar Table:** The extensively repaired walnut communion table is thought to be a part of the original furnishings of the church. It is of the period and was made to fit against the wall. Bishop Meade described the table as "firm and unimpaired."

**Chancel Rail:** Also constructed of native walnut, the rail, turned balusters, and base are remarkable for their excellent condition, survival, and graceful style. The south gate is a replacement of acceptable craftsmanship.

**Font:** The high, circular gray marble font is carved with angel heads and acanthus leaves around the rim and base of the bowl in the classical style of the period. Broken sometime in the late 19<sup>th</sup>

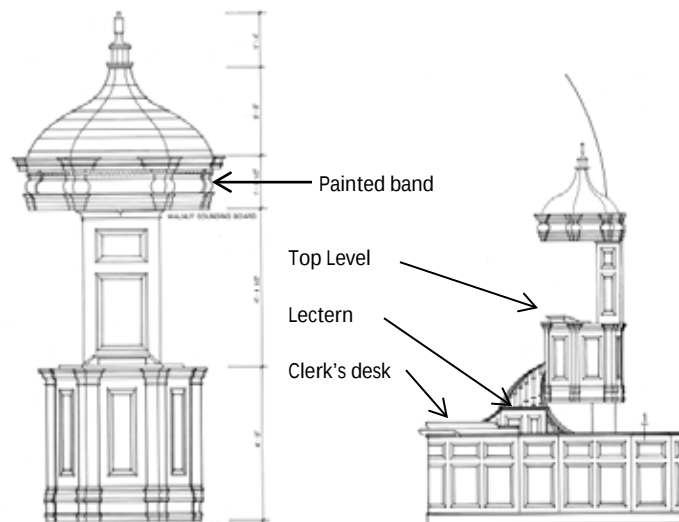
century, it has been carefully mended and is still used today. Bishop Meade called the font “the largest and most beautiful I ever saw.”

**Organ:** No record of the existence of an organ in this church during the colonial period has been found. The present Allen organ was installed in 1974 with funds provided by the Grace Church Organ Committee.

***Kneeling Cushions:*** The needlepoint cushions on the step below the communion rail are a 1973 addition and were designed by a member of the congregation of Grace Episcopal Church. They were a gift of the Gloucester Needlework Guild. A combination of traditional Christian symbols, and the arms of the Carter family and the Anglican Communion are depicted on the cushions. The names on the sides honor those who finished the cushions.

**Pews:** Christ Church is the only church from colonial Virginia in which the original high backed pews remain. Constructed of native yellow heart pine, all are enclosed with paneling, or wainscoting. The three large pews have raised panels both inside and out while the rest have raised panels only on the outside. The depth of the benches in the largest pews is 14 inches. The single and double pews are 13 inches. The hand-wrought iron “H” hinges appear to be of mostly 18<sup>th</sup> century origin. Christ Church is completely fitted with pews throughout, which was unusual during its period of construction. A crawl space of approximately 3 feet exists under the pews.

**Pulpit:** One of two original triple-deck pulpits surviving in Virginia, the other being located at Aquia Church in Stafford County, Christ Church's pulpit is located in the southwest quadrant of the crossing for maximum prominence and visibility. The clerk read announcements and conducted responses from the lower reading desk, the service was read from the center desk (lectern) and the sermon was delivered from the top level. The balustrade of the curved flight of steps to the uppermost portion has been replaced. The underside of the sounding board (type) is inlaid with rays of contrasting wood. There is no known documentation of any specific significance related to that design. A painted band decorates the encircling frieze.



**Gallery:** The materials and craftsmanship of the gallery suggest an early date of construction but that it was not part of the original church. Physical examination reveals removal of the last pew in the southeast corner to provide space for the stairs and workmanship that is inferior to that of the original church structure. There is no documentary evidence to ascertain the original purpose of the gallery. Containing three benches, the gallery may have been used for overflow seating capacity as the congregation grew.



*Gallery pews missing caps and back panels*



*Accumulated debris between stair and pew.  
Note ghost of earlier partition on the wainscot.  
This represents an earlier pew that pre-dates the stair.*

**Woodwork:** All wooden materials used in the original construction of Christ Church were harvested from the glebe.

**Ceiling and Walls:** The ceiling plaster is applied to split wood lath nailed to the ribs that form the vaulted ceiling. Below the wood molding, plaster is applied directly to the brick walls. Made of oyster-shell lime, sand, water and animal hair, the original plaster is in good condition with only minimum patching through the years mostly due to water damage around doors and windows and rising damp at pew tops.

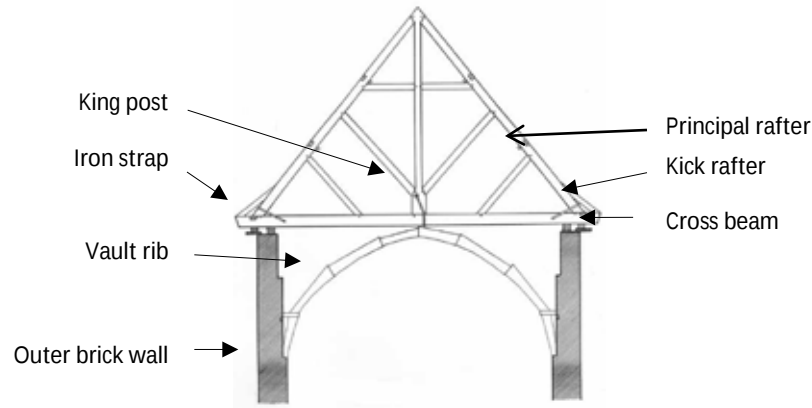


*1965 north door and northeast wall plaster repairs*

**Ceiling Structure:** The only groined vaulted ceiling left in a Virginia colonial church is at Historic Christ Church.

**Groin:** The curved edge at the junction of two intersecting vaults.

**Vault:** Arched ceiling or roof. The junction of two vaults or arches is called a groin.



*Section through roof showing king post truss.  
Note iron straps used at lower connections of truss.  
Schematic by Amy Speckart and Carl Lounsbury.*

**Windows:** The twelve large compass head windows have sashes of native walnut left natural on the interior but painted on the exterior. There may be a few colonial glass panes left but most are believed to date to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The bottom sashes have been repaired using the original heavy metal sash weights. The sills of the four windows in the chancel are of walnut matching the wainscoting of the chancel area. The interior sills in the rest of the church are plastered.

## 6. Foundation for Historic Christ Church Preservation Policy

Preservation of Christ Church is the primary function of the Foundation. The *Historic Structure Report*, authored by Nathaniel P. Neblett, A.I.A. in 1994 and published by the Foundation, provided the historic background, chronological condition report, recitation of existing conditions (i.e., in 1994) and future considerations, most of the last of which had been addressed by 2011. The 2012 Condition Survey by the firm of Mesick, Cohen, Wilson, Baker Architects, LLP provides additional updates to findings about the way the church was built and features a photographic history of the building and its preservation history. It also provides a prioritized list of needed work over the years to come.

The process of preservation is ongoing and planned in multi-year increments, and proceeds according to the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*, 1995. Of the four distinct, interrelated approaches to the treatment of historic properties that the Standards define (Preservation, Rehabilitation, Restoration, and Reconstruction), *Christ Church is a preservation project*, defined in these standards “as the act or process of applying measures necessary to sustain the existing form, integrity, and materials of an historic property. Work, including preliminary measures to protect and stabilize the property, generally focuses upon the ongoing maintenance and repair of historic materials and features rather than extensive replacement and new construction.” As noted in the Introduction to the *Standards*, “**preservation** places a high premium on the retention of all historic fabric through conservation, maintenance and repair. It reflects a building's continuum over time, through successive occupancies, and the respectful changes and alterations that are made.”

The Foundation's preservation strategy for Historic Christ Church is to sustain the church's original features, details, and materials utilizing the highest quality conservation methods for as long as possible, avoiding replacement or reconstruction employing modern materials until the deterioration or failure of an original element of the church will cause unacceptable collateral damage. In addition, the policy of the Foundation is that any treatments, repairs or replacements be performed in such a way as to be reversible, when possible.

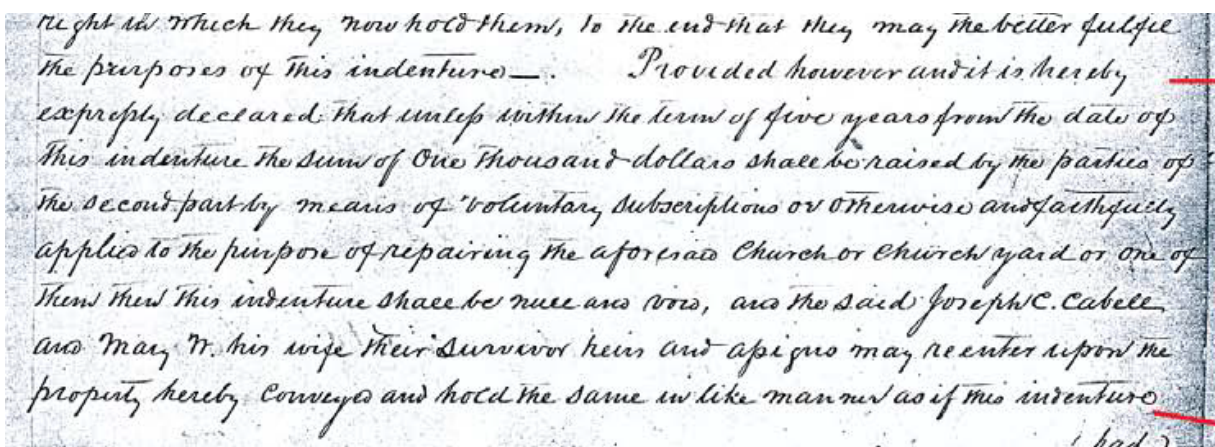
In 1999 the trustees of Grace Church, owners of the building, and the Foundation, lessees of the building for a term of 99 years beginning in 2002, granted an historic easement on Christ Church to the Commonwealth of Virginia. Under the terms of the easement administered by the Department of Historic Resources (DHR), the integrity of the church is assured in perpetuity and rigorous standards of preservation are enforced. DHR approval is required for any new structure or landscape feature. Management of archaeologically significant deposits or sites is regulated, excavations must conform to DHR approved plans, and excavated objects must be treated and preserved “consistent with the State Curation Standards.”

In return the Foundation has access to counsel and technical assistance from DHR and is eligible for preservation grants from the Commonwealth of Virginia.

## 7. Preservation History at Christ Church, Lancaster

**Vestry Book of Christ Church Parish November 28, 1774** The vestry book's order in November 1774 that the "Church Wardens see the necessary Repairs to both Churches done" is the earliest known account of repair work on Christ Church. The reference to both churches included Christ Church and St. Mary's White Chapel, which by that point were the upper and lower precincts of the same parish (Christ Church Parish).

**Deed of lease for Christ Church for 99 years from Carter family heirs to Christ Church vestry April 9, 1836** The 1836 deed of lease from the Carter family heirs to the vestry of Christ Church stipulated that repairs costing at least \$1,000 be undertaken within five years. The deed does not specify the type or nature of these repairs.



right to which they now hold them, to the end that they may the better fulfill the purposes of this indenture—.. Provided however and it is hereby expressly declared that unless within the term of five years from the date of this indenture the sum of One Thousand dollars shall be raised by the parties of the second part by means of voluntary subscriptions or otherwise and faithfully applied to the purpose of repairing the aforesaid Church or Churchyard or one of them then this indenture shall be null and void, and the said Joseph C. Cabell and Mary W. his wife their survivors heirs and assigns may re-enter upon the property hereby conveyed and hold the same in like manner as if this indenture had

**Vestry Book, Christ Church Parish, March 6, 1837** In March 1837, the vestry appointed a committee to oversee the repairs to Christ Church mandated by the deed of a year earlier from the Carter heirs leasing the building to the parish. Brothers William and James Kelley, both members of the vestry, directed and funded this work. The vestry book does not discuss any details of this work.

On Motion, seconded, ordered that William Kelley, James Kelley, Armstead J. Palmer, John Chowning and Thomas Armstrong or any three of them be requested and are hereby authorised to contract for and have executed according to their views of what is necessary and proper the repairs of Christ Church and also to collect on subscription now made or make further subscription as may be required, to effect the fore going object.  
Resolved further that it is the wish of this body that the object of the fore going resolution be carried in to effect as speedily as possible. . .

—Vestry Book, Christ Church Parish, March 6, 1837

The only record of the work comes from Bishop William Meade (see below and see Meade's full report on Christ Church from *Old Churches, Ministers and Families of Virginia*):

Very few, if any, repairs have been put upon it: the original roof and shingles now cover the house, and have preserved in a state of perfection the beautiful arched ceilings, except in two places which have within a few years been a little discolored by the rain, which found its way through the gutters where the shingles have decayed. . .

It is pleasing to know that a considerable sum of money has been subscribed for repairing the roof, which requires a new covering, and for improving the interior of this remarkable building, and that a generous portion of it is contributed by some of the descendants of the original builder, or those connected with them, who, though residing at a distance from the spot, possess the land around it, and have given the best assurance to the remaining families of the church, that it shall ever be continued for its original and sacred purposes...

... and there was the heavy plastering of an old church, built one hundred and twenty or thirty years before, perfectly sound and impervious to rain, except in one or two small spots where it was a little discolored underneath the gutter, where the shingles had decayed. Where is the house, built in these degenerate days of slight modern architecture, which may compare with Old Christ Church, either within or without? When a few years since it was repaired, as I in my report expressed the belief that it would be, the only repairs required were a new roof, (and but for the failure in the gutters that would have been unnecessary,) the renewal of the cornices, supplying the broken glass, and painting the pews, pulpit, etc. All the rest was in a most perfect state of soundness. The shingles, except in the decayed gutters, were so good that they were sold to the neighbors around, and will probably now last longer than many new ones just gotten from the woods, having become hardened by age on the steep and taunt roofs from which the rains of more than a century rushed downward, not stopping for a moment to settle in the joints...

For the repairing of this house we are indebted mainly to the liberality of two brothers, Mr. Kelleys, descendants of old Episcopalians of the Northern Neck. Not only did they furnish far the larger part of the fifteen hundred dollars required for it, but superintended most carefully the expenditure of the same. Their bodies lie side by side within a strong iron enclosure near the church. . .

— *Old Churches, Ministers and Families of Virginia*

**Christ Church from North c. 1857** This drawing, the earliest known image of Christ Church, appeared in 1857 in William Meade's *Old Churches, Ministers, and Families of Virginia*. Note the small enclosure (left) around the Carter tombs on the east end of the building and (right) the intact walls of the Kelley burial plot.



**Christ Church c. 1885-1895** This view from the northwest captures the church in a time of neglect and deterioration. Church doors are filthy. Some panes of glass are missing. The shingle roof would be replaced in 1897. Walls to the Kelley family burial plot (left center) are falling in. Trees are shooting up through its middle. The white house (far left) most likely is Henry Ball's, who served as church sexton in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Identity of the lady standing by the white fence is unknown.



Note the road running along the east side of the church. A postcard from October 1906 indicates the church was still being used periodically around this time.



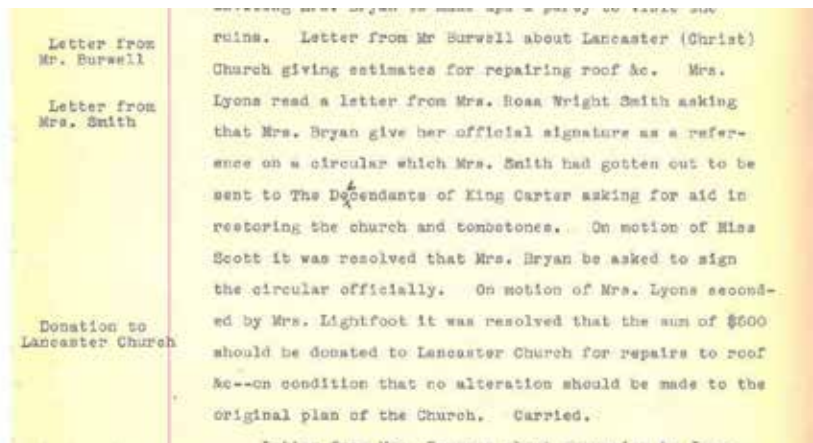


### **Reverend Edward B. Burwell, minister of Christ Church Parish 1890-1899**

At a vestry meeting in 1893, Reverend Edward B. Burwell raised the question of repairing Christ Church, which at that time stood “in a very dilapidated condition.” In 1897, after raising funds from private donations and the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities (APVA), Burwell and a committee of Christ Church Parish vestrymen undertook a number of important preservation projects. As requested by the APVA, Burwell and the vestrymen pledged not to change “the original design of the building...either in the interior or exterior, further than is absolutely necessary in making said repairs.”

### **APVA Minute Book, April, 1897**

Records donation of \$500 to Christ Church for roof repairs “on condition that no alteration should be made to the original plan of the Church.” See vestry book minutes for work on roof and other repairs carried out in 1897 with this \$500 donation.



### **Christ Church c. 1900**

View from the north after preservation projects undertaken by Reverend E. B. Burwell and parish vestry. Note the slate roof, installed in 1897 at a cost of \$390.00. Burwell's committee also oversaw painting of all exterior woodwork, repairing the doors, re-glazing the windows and covering them with wire screens, and installation of a wire fence around the yard.



**Interior View of Christ Church c. 1902** In this interior view from around 1902, the original black canvas tablets in the altarpiece have been torn from their frames. The railing to the pulpit is also almost completely missing.



**Pulpit c. 1908-1923** Pulpit railing partially replaced. Donation box mounted under clerk's desk but no guest register mounted on other side yet (as in 1937 *Historic American Buildings Survey* photograph). Columns supporting gallery are painted white. Graffiti below sounding board not visible as in earlier photographs.



**Second Set of Tablets c. 1922-1923** Sometime between June 1922 and July 1923, these tablets were installed in the altarpiece to replace the original canvas tablets which had been torn from their frames in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Though the original tablets contained the Ten Commandments, Lord's Prayer and Apostles' Creed, these replacements featured only the Lord's Prayer on the left and the Apostles' Creed on the right. This view of the chancel area shows the repaired font and the second set of tablets, the latter appearing to be made out of a thin material like cardboard.

(Photo: post-1927 but before 1937. See photos on *Architecture and Preservation* page 26.)





**Carter Tombs Restoration 1927** By the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Carter tombs had been reduced to a heap of broken pieces scattered around the east side of the church. While reassembling the Carter tombs in 1927, workmen laid brick cores inside the tombs to stabilize their side and end panels and corner pieces. Originally the tombs were hollow and joined by iron staples set in molten lead. Note the loose end panel in the center of Judith Armistead Carter's tomb at right; a large piece of a broken side panel from the north side of her tomb rests on top of the brick core as it awaits reassembly. The light colored sections are cast replicas fabricated to replace lost side panels and corner pieces, mostly in Robert Carter's tomb to the left.

An iron fence partially enclosed the churchyard; the repair committee used extra funds from its work on the tombs (1927) to extend the fence around the rest of the yard. By the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the north side had become the main entrance to Christ Church. A view from the west shows the iron fence with no entry gate to the west doorway as there was on the north side.

**View from the West July 1930** An unidentified man stands in front of the tree on the west side of Christ Church in the July 1930 photograph. Note the tomato plants in front of the man and the barrel to the right of the west door below the compass windows.





**Christ Church Interior c. 1937** The *Historic American Buildings Survey* (HABS) captured Christ Church's pulpit in this photograph from 1937. Note the donation box mounted under the clerk's desk at the crossing (right) and the guest register stand mounted on the other side (left). Visible along bottom of pews is copper flashing installed as termite and water protection in 1933 during repairs to pews/floor joists carried out by Claiborne & Taylor of Richmond.



ca. 1927



**Two Views of Christ Church's Font c. 1927 and 1937** Photograph on left shows font without base and fitted with a small collar that is attached on left side to communion rail. Right side appears to be attached to chancel paneling and has sign requesting visitors not to touch the font. Photo on right taken on April 25, 1937 by John Brostrup for HABS. Note base.

**Christ Church Interior 1939** Singleton P. Moorehead, an architectural historian in Colonial Williamsburg's early days, took a photograph of Christ Church's chancel area in 1939 (see the FHCC Digital Images collection.) The altarpiece tablets, installed around 1934, *reportedly* were made from a walnut tree in the churchyard with lettering copied from the Ten Commandments at St. Mary's White Chapel. These are the third (and current) set of tablets known to have been installed in Christ Church.

**Kelley Family Burial Plot, February 1958** Though the gate still stood, the brick wall surrounding the Kelley family burial plot and the markers themselves were in poor condition in the winter of 1958, shortly before the Foundation for Historic Christ Church formed. The Kelley plot would be restored in 1967. This photograph also shows the east churchyard before FHCC reconstructed a brick wall around the yard based on the archaeological findings of J.C. Harrington in 1959. The Kelley gate is now in the museum/gallery.



**Footings to Original Brick Wall at West Entrance to Christ Church** As soon as the Foundation for Historic Christ Church, Inc. was formed in 1958, a decision was made to explore for the original churchyard wall before further preservation work on the building commenced. J.C. “Pinky” Harrington’s archaeological investigations on the original churchyard wall in 1959 uncovered the locations of the north, south and west entrances. At the west entrance Harrington found two inward turning ogee curves that flanked a 10 ft. 10 in. opening for a pair of gates. The openings at the north and south entrances were only 5 ½ feet. Though parishioners had used the north door as the main door since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Harrington’s findings confirmed what the architecture already said: the west side was designed to be the primary entrance into the church.





**Christ Church Yard, southwest view c. 1960** Visible on the ground below the windows are the stone balls which once capped the brick wall that surrounded the Kelley plot. Note areas right (south) of west door and right of compass window that need repointing. Sheet metal rolls still on roof hips. Compass window to far left has stone sill wash running down brick wall. This is the only sill replaced on building (done in 1960s). One of the earliest color photographs of Christ Church and yard. From the FHCC *Digital Images Collection*.

**Betty Landon Carter's tomb c. 1963** By 1963, the Carter tombs, particularly the tops, had begun to deteriorate again. The Foundation for Historic Christ Church brought noted sculptor and art conservator Joseph Ternbach from New York to inspect the tombs and recommend a plan for their restoration. Repairs included use of an epoxy that ten years later began to fail and resulted in more cracks in the tombs.





**Inspecting Christ Church's Roof 1964** Dick Herndon, Henry Taylor, Jr. and Fred Nichols inspected Christ Church's roof truss in 1964. This marked the second time a Henry Taylor from the Richmond construction firm of Taylor & Parrish helped with preservation work on Christ Church. Mr. Taylor's father worked on the pews and floor joists in the early 1930s. Fred Nichols was a distinguished architectural historian from the University of Virginia. Dick Herndon served as president of the Foundation for Historic Christ Church from 1963 to 1975.

**Plaster Work October 1965** Photograph 1: North door and northeast wall repairs. Photograph 2: Detail of work around north door; note English bond. Photograph 3: North west wall. Note screens on windows and bottom rails to windows (rails replaced in 1967 during Warnie Pritchett's repairs.)



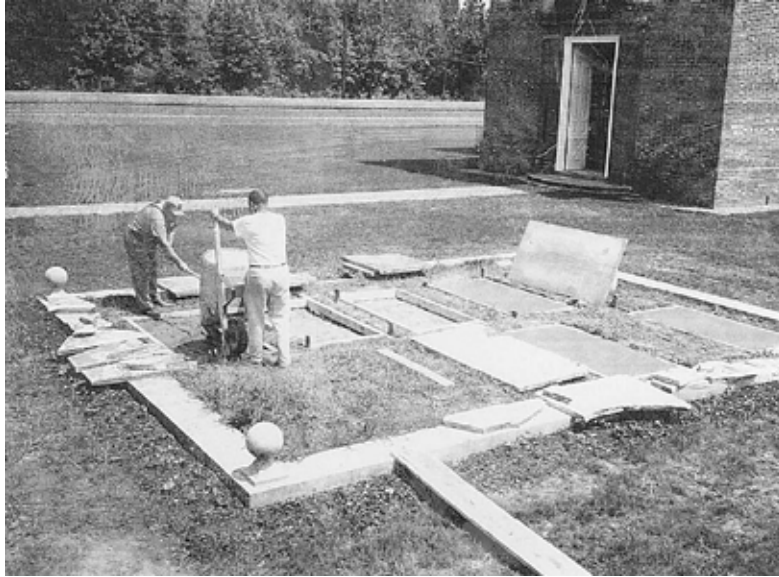
**Graffiti on Plaster Walls c. 1965** Sometime in the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Christ Church's plaster walls and ceiling had been painted over with a cold-water white paint. By the early 1960s, this paint had started to flake off, so workmen began to remove it. As they did, they uncovered hundreds of signatures and dates, many from the period 1886 to 1906. Unfortunately, no one thought to record the names before cleaning them off with a mixture of Ivory soap and warm water. Still, a number of signatures and dates do remain in the gallery, and a few just below the pulpit.



**Warnie Pritchett Restoring Compass Windows 1967-1968** Local finish carpenter Warnie Pritchett restored Christ Church's twelve compass windows in 1967-68. Pritchett replaced the bottom rails, which had deteriorated beyond repair. He also replaced the original wooden pulleys and sash ropes (for the 23-lb. weights used to raise the lower windows) with metal pulleys and chains.



**Garden Club of Virginia Creates New Landscape and Grounds 1966-1967** In 1966, the Garden Club of Virginia selected the landscape restoration at Christ Church as its annual project. Landscape architect Ralph E. Griswold, with the assistance of Fred Nichols and Arthur Foster, planned and directed the work that included brick walkways, plantings, and a circular drive and parking area west of the church.



**Restoration of the Kelley Family Burial Plot July 1967** By the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, the brick wall surrounding the Kelley family burial plot had almost completely fallen down and trees and overgrowth covered the tombs. In 1967, as part of the Foundation and Garden Club of Virginia's project to restore Christ Church's grounds, workmen cleaned the plot and created a ground level enclosure using the stone stringers and balls that once topped the brick wall surround. Notice also the brick splash around the building.

**Stone Step repairs 1974-1978** (This photo shows south steps) Cyrus Davenport (left) and Ellis Harcum, local brick and stone masons, repaired the stone steps at the south door and west doors in 1974 and the north door in 1978. This work (and additional repairs carried out in the 1990s) retained most of the original stone pieces, but in several places replacement stones were used where the originals had completely failed or were deemed unsafe. Davenport and Harcum would also undertake repointing work and repairs to stone pavers inside the church.



**Exterior Woodwork Painting and Analysis** In July of 1976, the APVA's Joseph Dye Lahendro conducted a paint analysis to determine the original color used on Christ Church's exterior woodwork. Dye found that a dark reddish-brown primer coat, known in colonial Virginia as "Spanish Brown," went on first, followed by a white lead primer topped with a White Lead finish coat.

The following summer, historic paint consultant Frank Welsh visited Christ Church to show a team headed by local contractor Collin Berry how to remove the layers of accumulated paint on the church's doors, windows and entablature. Removing the paint exposed the architectural details and fine craftsmanship in the doorways. Berry and his team painted all the exterior wood with a modern (lead-free) paint that matched the original "eggshell" white color.

**Replacing the Carter Tomb Tops 1980** By the mid-1970s, the repairs made to the Carter tombs in 1963 had begun to fail due to the breakdown of epoxy patches and subsequent opening up of cracks in the tops and side panels. The tomb tops had fragmented to the point where they could not be saved. The foundation made the difficult decision to place the original tops in storage and order replacement ones. Workmen installed new tops made of Culpepper black granite in 1980.

When they removed the old top to Betty Landon Carter's tomb, workmen discovered an original cherub head from Judith Armistead Carter's tomb. It had been placed there to help stabilize an interior brick core created during the restoration of the Carter tombs in 1927.





**Brick Splash and Sill Repair 1981** This photograph from 1981 shows University of Virginia architect Fred Nichols (right) and two unidentified foundation members discussing brickwork along an area in the southwest wall that needs repointing. It also captures two notable projects carried out in the 1960s: 1) Visible along the southwest and west walls are parts of a brick splash installed c. 1967 to combat rising damp. The splash would be removed in 1997. 2) The limestone window sill at the

upper right is a replacement and is the only sill of the twelve compass windows that is not original.



**Repairing the Stone Floors 1983** Cyrus Davenport repaired a number of paving stones in the church's aisles in the early 1980s. He remembers using stone pieces retrieved from the Corotoman site to replace some of these heavily damaged pavers, which were thought to be unsafe for foot traffic. The repaired stones are easily detected in the church floor today as they are, for the most part, mortar set rather than dry laid.

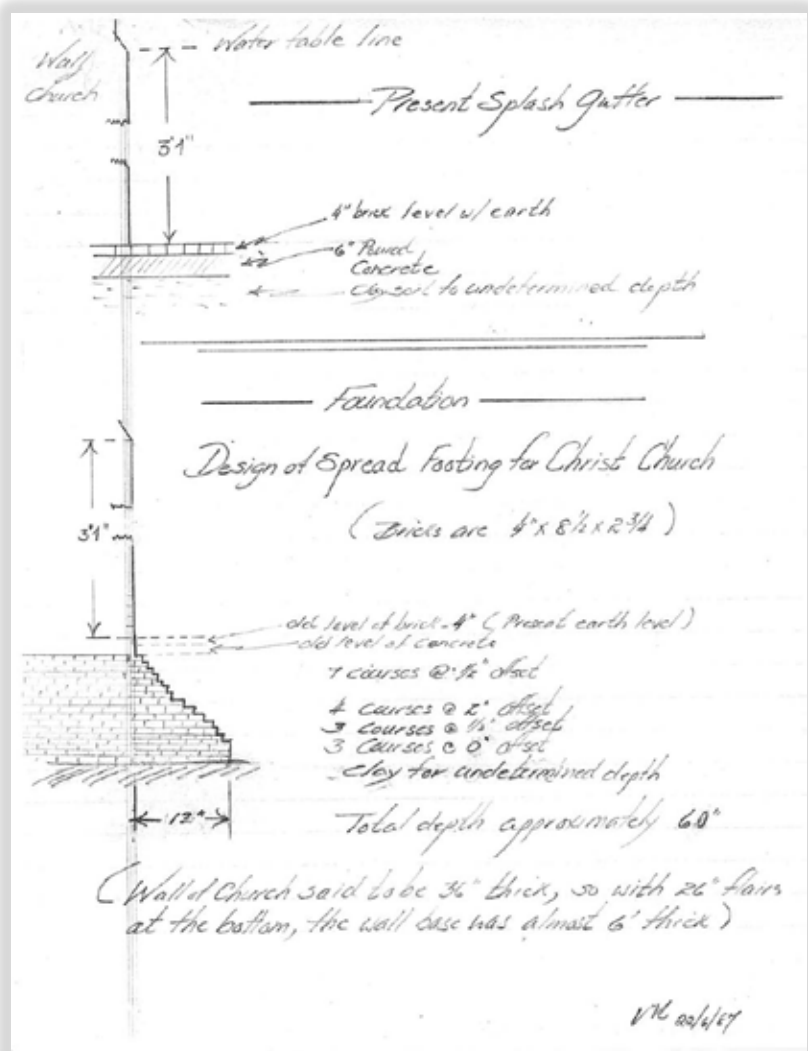


### Spread Foundation Probed 1987

To check for moisture problems associated with continued rising damp, masonry contractor Franklin Fisher excavated along the north transept in 1987. The spread foundation he uncovered extended 17 courses below grade to a depth of roughly five feet. Each of the first 14 courses was slightly offset to create the spread footing. At its base, the walls were more than five feet thick.

### Brick Splash Specifications

Installed in 1967; when it was seen to aggravate rather than ameliorate the problem of rain water damaging the mortar of the church walls, the brick splash was removed in 1997.





**John Brostrup Photograph April 1937 for HABS**

**Removing the Old Cedar Tree 1988** Since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, two cedar trees had stood near the southeast corner of Christ Church. In 1987, an inspection of the roof determined the trees were contributing to moisture problems in some of the beams in the southeast corner of the roof trussing. Workmen replaced parts of the rotted beams in 1987; a year later Curtis Patton removed the cedar trees that had stood by the church for more than 100 years.

**Installation of Vents in Pew Floors 1988** Curtis Patton fabricated ten wooden grates of heart pine and installed them in the pew floors in 1988 to facilitate ventilation of the crawl space.



1994-1998 North door pilaster stabilization and work on north entrance



...and jack arch (below)





**Splash Removal 1997** The brick splash installed c.1967 proved ineffective at mitigating rising damp (besides being historically inaccurate.) Note the cant of the placement of the tombs.



**Attic Cleaning, Structural Repairs and Catwalk Installation 1998** In 1998 conservators with Tidewater Preservation removed slate shingles and opened a small hole in the west side of Christ Church's roof. After moving equipment and materials through this small space, they repaired the roof's structural system by reinforcing trusses which had become weakened or deteriorated. They also cleaned the attic and installed a lightweight aluminum catwalk and electrical lighting that can be activated only by running an extension cord to it.



**Attic Cleaning, Structural Repairs and Catwalk Installation 1998**

**Brickwork Repointing 2000-2007** Sections along the west, southwest, and south sides of the church have been particularly susceptible to rising damp and required repointing several times since the 1970s. Tidewater Preservation undertook repointing (i.e., removal and replacement of mortar) in several areas here in 2000 and again 2007. In this photograph from 2000, conservator Greg Cowan (left) prepares mortar while Chris Anderson works to remove decayed mortar joints.



**Door Conservation 2000-2001** In 2000-2001, Tidewater Preservation removed the doors to Christ Church's three entrances (west, north and south) and transported them to Fredericksburg for conservation. They sealed up the empty spaces and created a temporary door on the south side to allow entry into the church. Back in their workshops, the crew carefully removed the existing, deteriorated paint from all the doors. They applied epoxy repair or wood Dutchmen to any weakened or deteriorated surfaces and applied finish to the doors' interior and exterior surfaces. They also repaired broken or worn hardware back to its original operational design standards.

**Window Conservation 2001-2002** Conservation of Christ Church's 12 compass-head windows began in December 2001. Greg Cowan, Chris Anderson and E.J. Benedict from Tidewater Preservation carried out much of the work. The crew began by removing the windows and transporting them back to their workshops in Fredericksburg. In the interim, they installed temporary plexiglass sashes that bore such remarkable similarity to the original sash that most visitors that winter did not even realize the original windows had been removed from the church.



**Site Beautification 2002** The Foundation removed two houses south of the church site that had been unused and deteriorating for several years. Their removal paved the way for archaeological exploration of the site during which brick kiln sites were located and improved the viewshed from that area.

**Entablature Conservation 2002-2008** Conservation of the entablature began in late 2002 and took place in stages. Tidewater Preservation treated two sections at a time over a period of six years. After chemically and manually removing the built-up layers of paint, conservators repaired deteriorated wood elements and sanded surfaces before applying an alkyd resin to help stabilize the wood. Using paint analyses done in the 1970s and 1990s, Tidewater applied a primer followed by off-white finish coats that closely matched the original color. (Below, left) Section to left had been treated previous year. (Below, right) Arrow indicates small section left un-stripped along southwest corner.



**Carter Tombs Conservation 2004-2006** Opening Judith Armistead Carter's tomb reveals the two successive brick cores constructed to stabilize it during two earlier conservations. Also revealed: the Roman and Arabic numerals carved into its stone end panels, cornerposts, side panels and base pieces as guides to assembly once the tomb "kit" arrived on site.



**Repointing Brickwork 2007** Tidewater Preservation carried out more repointing on brickwork along the south transept and west wall in the fall of 2007.



**Chase Pew Door Repairs June 2011** Door to Chase pew had cracked and was knocked out by a visitor who leaned against it. Carpenters from Connemara Corporation cut the sections out and mended them in their shop before reinstalling. .



## 8. Repair And Preservation Timeline<sup>15</sup>

### Before the Foundation for Historic Christ Church was Formed

- 1836** The earliest record we have of any activities at Christ Church on preservation or restoration is in 1836 when a deed of lease between the Carter heirs and the “Protestant Episcopal Inhabitants of Lancaster County” was recorded in the courthouse, whereby the latter leased Christ Church for a period of 99 years. The deed of lease also stipulated that \$1,000 was to be raised for repairs on the church within five years of the deed of lease.
- 1838** The brothers William and James Kelley contributed perhaps as much as \$1500 to repair the **roof** and broken **window** glass, restore **cornices**, paint **pews**, and make repairs to the **pulpit**.
- 1880s** A gift of \$500 was received by the Rev. Mr. Henry Derby, Rector, on behalf of a Philadelphia churchwoman.
- 1897** A cyprus-shingled **roof** was replaced with slate by a \$500 gift from the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities (APVA). (This is the slate roof that underwent major repair/replacement in 2014-15.) Broken **windows** were replaced, **plaster walls** were repaired, a barbed wire **fence** was erected around the churchyard, and the **windows** were protected with wire screens with gifts from various individuals amounting to several hundred dollars.
- 1904-22** Baptismal **font** and **Communion Table** were repaired. A strongbox for prayer books and hymnals was made. Two **tablets**, featuring the Lord's Prayer and the Apostles' Creed in black lettering on a white background, were installed on the altarpiece. A **hymn board** of walnut mounted above the Chase pew was given by Miss Anne David in memory of Miss Anna Clarke. Having proven a welcome home to mud wasps, the hymn board was cleaned and moved into the museum/gallery in 2009.
- 1927** Carter **tombs** were restored and a barbed wire **fence** was replaced with an iron fence with funds raised by The Committee for Restoration of Carter Tombs in Lancaster County, headed by Mrs. Bessie Carter Funsten. The committee was organized by the Bishop of the Diocese of Virginia, the Rt. Rev. Mr. William C. Brown, serving as its honorary chairman.
- 1930** One hundred two dollars was raised for Christ Church by efforts of Anne David, Anna Clarke and the Misses Francis in organizing a showing of a Will Rogers movie at Fairfax Theatre in Kilmarnock.
- 1931-33** Extensive restoration was done on the interior woodwork including **floor joists**, **floors**, **pews**, **pulpit**, and **wainscoting** due to damage by termites and moisture. This was a major restoration organized by Mrs. Bessie Carter Funsten and financed by the St. Andrews Association of Richmond as a memorial to Miss Grace Arents, the founder of the St. Andrews Association. The **plaque** mounted on the east wall of the north transept commemorates Miss Arents.

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<sup>15</sup>For a more comprehensive list of these preservation projects and the sources which document them, see “Record of Restoration and Preservation of Historic Christ Church,” in HCC Research Files.

- c. 1934 Beveled walnut panels, featuring the Decalogue lettered in gold paint, were installed in the altarpiece.
- 1951 A walnut **cross** on the **Communion Table** was given by Mrs. Rawleigh D. Carter. A **processional cross** was purchased by Mrs. Carter with proceeds contributed by guests during local Garden Week.
- 1952-53 During this period, the Lancaster branch of the APVA hired W. L. Ragland & Son, Richmond, VA, to inspect and submit recommendations for the restoration of the church. Total cost estimated to be \$7,000.
- 1953 Exterior brickwork was **repointed**, and **doors** were removed and sent to Richmond for repair. **Roof** leaks were repaired and steel support was added to the arch over the west **doors**. The APVA continued their financial support.
- 1954 The APVA continued to sponsor restoration, raising \$550 to paint exterior **wood**, reglaze **windows**, and repair **window** frames.
- 1958 An **organ** was purchased and restoration was done on the church by a gift of \$15,000 from E. Worthington Coslett of Media, PA through efforts of Miss Francis. Mr. Coslett was a member of the Board of Directors of the Foundation. C. Jackson Simmons, senior warden of Christ Church Parish, was instrumental in preventing the whole church from being wired for electricity. Only one line was put in for the organ.

#### **After the Foundation for Historic Christ Church Formed**

- 1958 FHCC was formed after consultation with the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The purpose was for continuing the restoration and preservation of Christ Church. This was the beginning of a complete assessment of restoration of one of America's finest colonial churches.
- FHCC acquired nine acres of land contiguous to and west of the church to provide a buffer zone.
- 1958-68 Restoration inside the church. The following quote is from a FHCC report of 1966:
- “A hole was cut in the ceiling to gain access to the **attic** for inspection. This [the attic] was found to be in perfect condition. All interior church **woodwork** was thoroughly cleaned with boiled linseed oil and turpentine. Numerous small jobs were completed. The beautiful walnut **doors** and **hardware** were restored. All cracks were repaired in the oyster shell **plaster walls** and **ceiling**. About 100 years ago the walls and ceiling were painted with a cold water paint which flaked badly. In the attempt to brush this paint off, hundreds of names and dates were found covering a period from 1886 to 1906. Cleaning was done using Ivory soap and hard scrubbing. This restored the color.”
- 1963 **Tomb** restoration and repair of the stone **steps** and **aisles** was accomplished with a donation from Mrs. Alfred I. duPont.

- 1965** The brick churchyard **wall** was rebuilt on the foundations of the original wall under the direction of Dr. J.C. Harrington of the National Park Service at a cost of approximately \$30,000.
- 1966** The **gates** to complete the wall were built with a gift of \$2,000 from the APVA.
- The Garden Club of Virginia selected the general and overall landscaping of HCC as their 1966 project at a cost estimate of approximately \$33,000.
- The FHCC purchased two acres of land east of the church as additions to the buffer zone.
- 1968** Restoring the twelve large **windows** was the last major restoration during the ten-year period from 1958 to 1968. An interesting account of this was given in an interview with Warnie Pritchett, the “finish” carpenter, conducted by Louise Dawe. [Published in the *Rappahannock Record*, copy in FHCC Research files].
- 1974** Plaster **walls** and **roof** were repaired; termite inspection and protection for wooden portions of building were done.
- The present Allen **organ** was installed under the supervision of the Christ Church Organ Committee of Grace Church at a cost of approximately \$6,700.
- 1975** **Woodwork** and **pews** were treated with a rubbed coating of linseed oil, turpentine and vinegar. The **steps** were repaired and broken **window** panes replaced.
- 1977** **Exterior doors** and **trim** were painted—color selected by APVA analysis of original paint color.
- 1980** The Carter **tomb** tops were replaced with Culpeper black granite with the original letter(s) embossed. The old tops were placed in storage for safekeeping.
- The exterior **brickwork** was repaired by repointing. Other repairs included **window** ledges, stone **floor**, **gates**, and **roof** slates.
- 1981** The **pulpit sounding board** was cleaned.
- The problem of “rising damp” was identified by architect Fred Nichols, who recommended resetting the **splash course** of bricks around the perimeter of the church on a sand base.
- 1982** Architectural drawings of HCC were authorized to be carried out by Craig Hudson, AID. Project completed June 1983.
- The south **steps** were repaired.
- 1980** West entrance **gates** to churchyard were sent to APVA in Yorktown for repair.
- Stone flooring** was repaired with replacement stones from the cellar of the mansion house site at Corotoman.
- 1984** Church **exterior trim** was repainted. **Windows** and **sills** were repaired.
- 1986-88** As a continuing program of preservation, Mr. Nicholas Pappas of Colonial Williamsburg Foundation was engaged to appraise the overall condition of HCC and prepare

recommendations. As a result of these recommendations, experts were engaged to inspect all **woodwork** for termite damage and the roof structure for needed repairs.

To check for moisture, Franklin Fisher dug a test hole in the brick **splash course** between the north and west arms of the church. An interesting spread-foot construction was revealed. The supporting foundation gradually increases in width to a maximum of slightly more than five feet at the base.

Charles Rackley, a craftsman associated with the APVA, made new north and south **gates** for the wall to replace rotted ones.

Curtis Patton repaired the north **doors** of the church. Damaged wood was replaced with Northern Neck walnut.

W. P. Williams repaired cracks in **plaster** under several window ledges and in the **walls** and **ceiling**.

Curtis Patton removed two large cedar trees, over 100 years old, from the southeast corner of the church. Shading from these had caused moisture problems in the church attic and had contributed to moisture problems in the crawl space beneath the **pews**. Mr. Patton reinforced the end of one **attic** beam. He also installed ten wooden grates in the **floor** of the church to increase air circulation and reduce moisture. Repairs were made on the south **door**.

N. W. Martin & Bros., Inc., (Richmond) repaired the **roof**. They installed four 20-ounce lead-coated copper valleys, replaced broken slate, and pointed up ridges.

Cyrus Davenport repointed brickwork on all outside **walls** of the church.

**1989** Bayne Center built. Old **tomb** tops taken from storage and mounted in Bayne Center.

**1990-93** The FHCC contracted with Nathaniel Palmer Neblett, AIA, to write a Historic Structure Report to use as a guide for restoration.

**1995-98 South Entrance:** Repaired/replaced lead flashing; repaired two rubbed brick **pilasters**; repointed **bricks**; replaced/restored stones on **stoop**; replaced several feet of bottom ends of walnut **doorframes**.

**West Entrance:** Restored **door frame**; replaced lead **flashing**; repointed bricks and cleaned masonry; replaced/restored stone stoop and steps.

**North Entrance:** Stabilized pilasters; replaced lead flashing; restored **jack arch** by removing steel support from earlier repair; replaced some **pediment** bricks, most of which were from earlier repair; restored door frame; replaced/restored stones on stoop; repaired oculus window.

**South and West Oculus Windows:** Removed glass; repaired sash and frame; replaced glass and painted sash and frame.

Replaced rotted **west gate**.

Removed **brick splash** surrounding base of church installed in 1960s.

**Attic:** Constructed scaffold and stairwell tower to roof line; removed roof staves and opened section of **roof** in southwest corner through which construction material could be moved;

cleaned attic; repaired structural system weakened and compromised by previous repairs; installed lightweight aluminum catwalk to replace pine catwalk; installed electrical lighting and receptacles (can only be used by running extension cord to it.)

- 1999** Completed removal of unsightly **power lines** from the church and burying ground across highways 646 and 709 to Foundation-owned property.

FHCC granted an **historical easement** to the State of Virginia. The easement requires FHCC to have all preservation work approved by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, who in turn can provide oversight on such work. The easement also allows FHCC to receive state grants over \$50,000 towards its various preservation projects.

- 1999-2000** Tidewater Preservation, Inc., repointed **brickwork** on selected areas of the church's exterior walls.

- 2000** Tidewater Preservation, Inc., repaired a section of **plaster** ceiling on the underside of the **gallery** at its western end.

- 2001** Tidewater Preservation, Inc., repaired interior **plaster** at the **window jambs** and above the **wainscot**.

Replaced deteriorated north and south **gates** in churchyard wall.

Tidewater Preservation, Inc., removed the church **doors** and repaired deteriorated wood elements and surfaces.

- 2001-02** Tidewater Preservation, Inc., removed the twelve large compass-headed **windows** to strip, repair, glaze, and repaint their wooden sash.

- 2004-06** Tidewater Preservation, Inc., dismantled, cleaned, repaired and reconstructed all three of the Carter tabletop **tombs**.

- 2012** Mesick, Cohen, Wilson, Baker Architects conducted a **Condition Survey** to identify and prioritize long term preservation goals.

Oxford Dendrochronology Laboratories performed a study of **roof** timbers which placed the age of the trees used as saplings in 1511 – 1515 and felled as trees in 1731 – 1732.

- 2014-15** Peter Post Restoration repaired the sub-roof and replaced the Buckingham slate **roof**, re-using at least 60% of the original slate.

## 9. Major Preservation Projects 1995-2016

The Foundation follows a Master Plan based on needs and priorities first identified in the 1994 *Historic Structure Report* by Nathaniel P. Neblett, AIA, and updated in 2012 in the *Condition Survey* by Mesick, Cohen, Wilson, Baker, Architects. Project work and experts who provide it are subject to approval by the **Virginia Department of Historic Resources**, holder of a historic preservation easement, and the **Episcopal Diocese of Virginia**, owner of the building. Major projects completed since 1995 or soon to be undertaken are listed below. Note that many of these could only be completed by budgeting and spreading the work and cost over several years.

|         |                                                                             |                  |
|---------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| 1995    | Stabilization: south entrance                                               | \$19,986         |
| 1995    | Stabilization: west entrance                                                | \$13,560         |
| 1995    | Conservation: south and west oculus windows                                 | \$4,479          |
| 1996/98 | Stabilization: north entrance. Jack arch replacement and repair             | \$42,500         |
| 1997/98 | Attic structural repairs and catwalk                                        | \$76,736         |
| 1999/00 | Exterior masonry stabilization                                              | \$89,604         |
| 2000    | Gallery ceiling plaster repair                                              | \$12,236         |
| 2001    | Selected plaster repair                                                     | \$3,702          |
| 2001    | Conservation of doors                                                       | \$19,380         |
| 2002    | Paint exterior door and window casings                                      | \$4,830          |
| 2002    | Sash conservation                                                           | \$92,360         |
| 2002/08 | Entablature conservation (now repainted as needed)                          | \$96,000         |
| 2004/06 | Carter sarcophagi stabilization                                             | \$91,000         |
| 2007/10 | Masonry conservation (ongoing)                                              | \$28,000         |
| 2006    | Replace mobile access ramp                                                  | \$10,000         |
| 2007    | Roof Assessment                                                             | \$5,000          |
| 2008    | Interior wood finishes study                                                | \$5,000          |
| 2010    | Sand/paint door frames, transoms                                            | \$4,500          |
| 2011    | Sand/paint doors, windows, gates; replace thresholds; repair Chase pew door | \$4,475          |
| 2012    | Updated <i>Condition Survey</i>                                             | \$25,500         |
| 2015    | Remove, repair and weatherproof, and replace 1897 slate roof                | <u>\$243,171</u> |
|         |                                                                             | \$892,019        |

The *2012 Condition Survey* by the firm of Mesick, Cohen, Wilson, Baker Architects identified the following long term preservation project priorities:

| Issue              | Action                              | Priority |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------|----------|
| Life Safety/Legal  | Repair Keystones and Imposts        | 1.2      |
| Sequence/Integrity | Install Exterior Drainage System    | 1.3      |
| Building Integrity | Regrade Low Areas                   | 1.4      |
| Phasing/Cost       | Repair Church Wall                  | 1.5      |
| Building Integrity | Repair South Doorhead               | 2.1      |
| Building Integrity | Repair Brick/Stone Oculus Surrounds | 2.2      |
| Building Integrity | Repair Pedestal Caps - West Doorway | 2.3      |
| Building Integrity | Re-point Failed Mortar Joints       | 2.4      |
| Building Integrity | Compact and Relay Subsiding Floor   | 2.5      |
| Building Integrity | Shore & Reposition Chancel Wainscot | 2.6      |
| Building Integrity | Clear Vent Holes and Repair Screens | 2.7      |
| Building Integrity | Tent and Fumigate Pews              | 2.8      |
| Building Integrity | Replace Window Sills                | 2.9      |
| Aesthetics/History | Repair Pews                         | 3.0      |
| Aesthetics/History | Create New Attic Access             | 3.1      |
| Aesthetics/History | Repair North Doorway                | 3.3      |
| Aesthetics/History | Repair Gallery Slip Pew             | 3.4      |
| Aesthetics/History | Repair Altar Riser                  | 3.5      |

The *2012 Condition Survey* is available in digital and hardcopy formats. Please check with the Education Director & Curator. The Foundation Preservation Committee identifies experts, gathers cost estimates, and works with the Foundation Board of Directors to undertake each of these projects in turn.

## SECTION II. THE CHURCHYARD

**Theme:** Christ Church Parish epitomizes colonial Virginia's political, social, economic and religious institutions.

1. **Introduction: 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Century Burial and Mourning Customs**
2. **Definitions, Usage and Iconography**
3. **Markers Inside Christ Church: The 17th Century**
4. **Markers Outside Christ Church: The 18th Century**
5. **Markers Outside Christ Church: The 19th Century**
6. **Archaeological Findings**
7. **Grave Marker Inscriptions**
8. **Sources**



## 1. Introduction: 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Century Burial and Mourning Customs

At the southeast corner of Christ Church, not far from the imposing tombs of Robert Carter and his



two wives, lies a flat stone recalling the many other parishioners buried in the churchyard. This 20<sup>th</sup> century memorial to the unknown dead was placed by the Foundation for Historic Christ Church in 1992 to remind visitors of those parishioners whose graves are no longer marked but who once worshiped and were buried at Christ Church. Their story is part of the larger one that begins inside the church with the 17<sup>th</sup> century markers of John Carter and David Miles and continues outside with the 18<sup>th</sup> century Carter tombs and the 19<sup>th</sup> century Chase and Kelley plots. Three other simple stones remain as well from that century.

The story of the dead of Christ Church Parish, both known and unknown, is revealed in several ways. For the known dead, their grave markers bear inscriptions, sometimes lengthy and sometimes tantalizingly brief, about their lives and at times how they left this world. For

the unknown dead, those bits of information remain undetermined; no parish register survives from the early days of Christ Church Parish to identify who is buried there.

But hints do appear in a number of sources about these dead known only by their “Good Shepherd.” Nathaniel Neblett, for example, in his 1994 *Historic Structure Report*, notes that hundreds of parishioners are believed to be buried in the churchyard based on the observations of 19<sup>th</sup> century visitors like Bishop Meade and early 20<sup>th</sup> century parishioners who cited numerous tombstones, fragments and grave sites still present. The will of Christ Church Parish minister David Currie indicates his desire to have his “Dust” buried in the churchyard; a letter from Robert Carter’s eldest son John in September 1733 notes the death of his brother Charles’ son and Charles’ intention to bring “the Body to this place to be buried at our Church.” In the second parish vestry book, covering the period from 1739 to 1786, the vestry periodically allocates funds for coffins and burials of parishioners but does not specify locations of their graves. A final trace can be found in recent archaeological investigations that show evidence of infant burials near the Carter tombs.

The identities and numbers of these unknown dead are likely to remain so despite the tantalizing bits of information that currently exist. However, one way to look at these unknown dead and to give a fuller rendition of the lives and passing of those whose names remain is to investigate the burial and mourning customs of their day. These customs reflect the fact that death, in the words of historian Lauren F. Winner, “was a regular encounter” for Virginians of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. Men in the 17<sup>th</sup> century could hope to live on average to their mid-forties, 18<sup>th</sup> century men to their mid-fifties. Women in both centuries died earlier. This sense that death could come early, especially for

women and children, led to what Winner calls “modulated grief” with very little of the emotional expression that would become more common as people expected that they and their loved ones would live longer. Death and the dead were part of everyday life. Her study of what she calls the “deathways” of the Virginia gentry illustrates how that class understood and experienced death and its outcomes.

The Virginia gentry, the social class that the Carters epitomized, kept their grief at home and within bounds. They wore black clothes and mourning jewelry and discussed their loss at dinner and in their diaries. They memorialized the dead in funeral sermons and at funeral banquets. They created and maintained family lineages to keep alive at least the names of their lost loved ones. And more directly relevant to the Christ Church site, they buried their dead at home.

Winner identifies two stages in the process of death. First was the preparation for death that had gentry men making wills for the disposition of their property. (Women’s last thoughts were more often recorded by loving family members than in wills.) When death finally occurred, the body was wrapped in a shroud left loose at the hands and feet to make resurrection easier. The body was then placed in a coffin and a vigil kept. (In the early days of the Virginia colony, shroud-wrapped bodies were placed directly in the ground, but by the late 17<sup>th</sup> century, wood coffins were common.)

All of these activities occurred at home. The second stage in the process, the actual funeral rituals, often took place at home as well. These rituals included, in varying order, the actual burial and recitation of the burial liturgy, the funeral sermon and a gathering of family and friends to honor the dead. Despite the long-standing English customs of churchyard burial and services in the parish church, the realities of plantation life led to an emphasis on the home as the place for the gentry to bury their dead. It was easier to visit and maintain the burial site, and the presence of deceased ancestors enhanced the importance of the land itself and gave it a sacred or holy quality.

This approach to burial spread to most Virginians who owned land. In fact, historian Dell Upton calls Robert Carter and his son Charles “out of touch with their peers’ habits” and points out that 18<sup>th</sup> century commentators noted that the churchyards “were abandoned to the poor,” despite laws requiring parishes to fence in a yard to serve all parishioners.

Also taking place at home was the recitation of the liturgy from the *Book of Common Prayer*, the “Order for the Burial of the Dead.” Sometimes a sermon was added, but this was not so much a eulogy but more of a meditation on a scriptural passage, much like the sermons offered on Sunday. The sermon would conclude with a few words about the virtues of the dead person.

Accompanying the rituals was a meal served the day of the funeral. It was sometimes elaborate with many people attending, but a common offering was the “mourning biscuit,” a molasses cookie stamped from a mold and seasoned with caraway and ginger. The mold often was incised with hearts or cherubs to signify the mourners’ belief that their loved one would live again, a belief sustained in the *Book of Common Prayer*’s assertion the resurrection of the body was “sure and certain,” despite its concurrent refrain of “earth to earth, ashes to ashes, [and] dust to dust.”

This belief helped Virginians temper the grief they felt at the frequent loss of those they loved. Although their verbal expression was moderate, they did use mourning apparel to signal their grief. Black dresses were worn by women; men used black gloves and hatbands. Mourning jewelry was common, especially the mourning ring designed to help the living remember the dead. John Carter's will left funds for two friends to purchase rings in his memory. Robert Carter's will left funds and directions for 30 rings to be given to family and friends. The rings were not intended to create a public display of grief but to identify those Carter hoped would remember him. The rings identified who mattered to Carter as he prepared for his death; they were to be *memento mei*, or remembrances of him after his death. Benjamin Doggett, Christ Church Parish's minister from 1670-1682, requested in his will that his wife Jane buy a mourning ring that said "Follow mee."

## 2. Definitions, Usage and Iconography

Early Virginians' mourning and burial customs exhibited a restrained and dignified understanding of death as well as an emphasis on the importance of home and land. Grave markers, their inscriptions and iconography also have much to say about the people whose life and death they record. Sometimes they are the only traces of the individuals who, collectively, formed the parish of Christ Church. They tell how the dead wished to be remembered or, in some cases, how others chose to remember them. The styles of the markers and the content of the inscriptions can bring back to life those who rest in the ground at Christ Church.

Before looking at the grave markers at Christ Church, some definitions and distinctions are relevant to understanding them. These include:

**Cemetery:** a site of one or more burials

**Plot:** an area of a cemetery given over to a family or social group

**Grave:** a burial place

**Grave marker:** any aboveground device or monument that marks a grave. The Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR) identifies several types of grave markers relevant to the Christ Church churchyard:

**Tablet:** an upright slab of any kind. It may be seated on a plinth or directly in the ground. An example of a tablet marker is that of Anne E. R. Christopher, located near the southeast corner of Christ Church. Another name for this type of marker is headstone. Sometimes a headstone is complemented by a footstone similar to the marker honoring Charles Taylor in the Kelley plot.

**Capstone:** a flat slab seated directly on the ground; also known as a ledger stone. Examples are the paired stones of Peter and Anne Hazard Bush Chase located in the southwest quadrant of the churchyard.

**Chest marker:** a box-shaped enclosure, usually constructed of brick or stone masonry; also known as an altar marker. Examples at Christ Church include the markers for Robert, Judith and Betty Carter.

These three types are the only common Virginia funerary styles found at Christ Church. At times the Carter markers have been called table markers because they have flat tops. DHR, however, defines table marker as a flat slab supported on legs.

Other types of grave markers needing clarification are:

**Tomb:** a receptacle for the dead, often box-like. Sometimes the distinction is made between a “true” tomb, which contains the corpse, and a “false” tomb, which has a similar shape but only marks the underground burial.

**Sarcophagus:** a further distinction is between tomb and sarcophagus, a term which refers to a stone coffin containing a corpse.

Neither term applies to the burials in the Christ Church churchyard despite the traditional application of the word “tombs” to refer to all the grave markers in the churchyard and, in particular, the markers of Robert Carter and his wives. The term “tomb” continues to be useful, however, because it reflects long-standing usage and may continue to be used with the knowledge that all the burials at Christ Church were in-ground.

A final set of definitions refers to the markings on grave markers:

**Inscription:** any writing on a grave marker, whether painted or inscribed, usually with biographical information and sometimes with an epitaph.

**Epitaph:** a brief saying or literary note on a grave marker. Epitaphs were seen as lasting eulogies to the dead, and while they may not be literally true, they do indicate the traits most admired by the deceased and their contemporaries. Mary Newton Stanard, for example, in her classic 1917 collection of colonial Virginia customs, cites as “a perfect epitaph for a young girl” that of Elizabeth Washington of Gloucester, who was “a maiden virtuous without reservedness, wise without affectation, beautiful without knowing it.”

**Iconography:** common symbols or images found on grave markers and recognized as having specific meanings. The symbols found on grave markers at Christ Church include:

### ***Carter Family Markers:***

***Skull and crossbones:*** This image on Robert Carter's marker is readily identified as a *memento mori*, an image signifying that viewers must remember that they too will die.

***Cherubs:*** These images are found on the markers for Robert, Betty and Judith Carter. They stand for immortality in the sense of spiritual resurrection but are considered related to earlier, seventeenth-century images of a death's head, another *memento mori*.

***Architectural elements:*** These images include the stylized acanthus leaves on Judith's marker, which are part of the Greek Corinthian order; the egg and dart motif on Betty's marker; and the columns on all three Carter chest markers. Carved in England, these elements reflect the great excitement in Europe in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century about the archaeological findings at Greek and Roman sites. Lauren Winner also sees these elements tied to the classical patterns used in gentry homes during this time, thus emphasizing the importance of the family property.

***Plants:*** Several flower and vine images adorn the Carter markers, but one readily identifiable plant is the four-petaled dogwood on Robert's marker. According to DHR, this flower stands for sorrow and repentance; it offers an intriguing contrast to the inscription on the grave.

### ***Chase Markers:***

***Cross:*** One icon not found on the Carter markers is a cross. Considered rare in Virginia prior to the Civil War, this icon is also missing from the church interior. However, the markers that commemorate Peter Chase (died in 1860) and his wife Anne Hazard Bush Chase (died in 1864), placed in the Christ Church yard ca. 1927-1930, are inscribed with simple crosses.

### ***Kelley Markers:***

***Freemason insignia:*** The only marker in the Kelley plot to bear an icon is that of Dr. Charles Taylor. Centered at the top of the stone are two of the icons identifying a member of the Freemasons: a carpenter's square and a compass. To the left of these is a broken monument, a symbol of mourning, and to the right is a book, perhaps a reference to Dr. Taylor's medical education.

### ***Other Markers:***

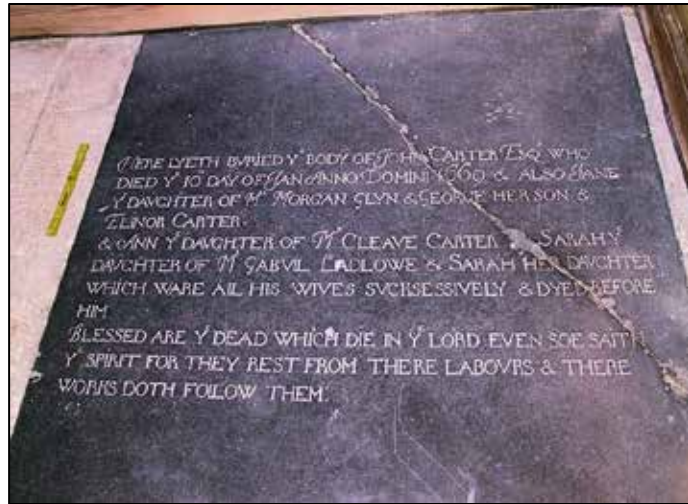
None of the individual markers in the churchyard bears an icon. However, Nathan M. Oyler is identified as a member of "Wicomico Lodge No. 99 I.O.O.F.," the initials referring to the International Order of Oddfellows, a fraternal organization.

A final instance of symbolic meaning lies in the very location of the Carter markers. Why did Robert Carter choose to bury his wives and himself in the churchyard if, according to both 18<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century commentators, this placed his beloved family alongside the common people of the parish. Nat Neblett's 1994 *Historic Structure Report* notes that Christ Church, both the building and the churchyard, was built as a family memorial. The parishioners wanted a more convenient

location than that offered by the site of the 1670 church, but Robert Carter offered to pay for the building of a new brick church if the place where his family was buried were chosen. His will even specified that the chancel of the new church be set aside for Carter family burials. By continuing this family tradition, Robert Carter honored Christ Church as a Carter family site.

### 3. Markers Inside Christ Church: The 17<sup>th</sup> Century

**John Carter and Family** The grave markers inside Christ Church reflect earlier English customs that provided burial places for elite parishioners within the walls of the church. The graves of John Carter, four of his five wives, and two of his children are marked by a large black Belgian marble stone in the floor of the chancel. The inscription is considered an outstanding example of printing in that era, and honors, by its quality and size, the builder of the first Christ Church.



The inscription identifies John Carter as esquire, a courtesy title or honorific. It identifies his four wives, Jane, Elinor, Ann and Sarah, and two of his children, George and Sarah, who all predeceased him. The epitaph on the stone notes that those “who die in the Lord” will have relief from their earthly trials and be known for what they have accomplished in life.

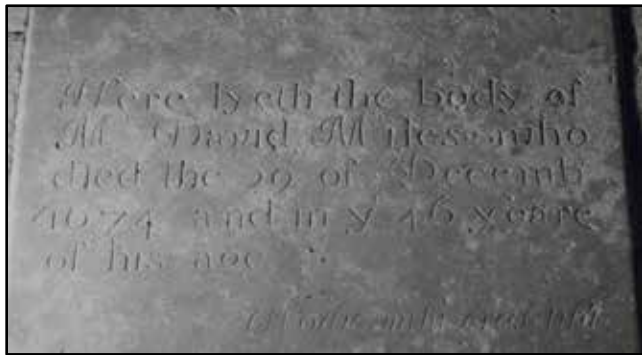
John Carter had ordered the stone and its location in his will. His executors saw to it that the bones of his late wives and children were exhumed and buried with him in the chancel of the first Christ Church, a wood-frame structure. When his son Robert wrote his will, he too specified the chancel of the brick church he was building as the burial place for his family and thus a memorial to the Carter family's association with the parish and church site.

**David Miles** At the crossing of the aisles is the stone of David Miles whose epitaph, *Hodie mihi cras tibi* or “Today for me, tomorrow for you,” speaks to the emphasis of early Virginians on the transitory nature of human life and the eventual outcome of human effort.

Who is the man commemorated by the stone at the crossing of Christ Church? Colorful stories abound identifying him as everything from an unlucky plasterer to a spiteful servant. For many years, the conclusion of FHCC researchers was that there were two David Miles known to John Carter I. One David Miles, an indentured servant, was accused of threatening his master, John Carter I, with a hoe in October 1655. A second David Miles was a witness to several of John Carter I's important papers and deeds from 1659 until Carter's death ten years later. By 1661, as shown in the Lancaster County Deed and Will books, this David Miles had begun acquiring indentured servants. By 1666, he had amassed nearly 1,000 acres of land on the easternmost branch of the Corotoman River. He continued to act as witness to deeds and papers for John Carter I, Thomas Carter and other gentry. In 1669, David Miles witnessed the will of John Carter I in which David

and his wife, Martha, received bequests. It was assumed that, given the rigid class system of England and the Virginia colony, the troublesome indentured servant David Miles and the respectable planter David Miles were two different individuals.

In 2015, however, this assumption was called into question during an investigation into the indentured servants and slaves at Corotoman. FHCC researcher Patrick J. Heffernan made a discovery that upended the earlier interpretation of the David Miles puzzle. Looking at the same documentary sources, Dr. Heffernan concluded that “the David Miles whose grave marker lies within the walls of Christ Church is the man who began his life in Virginia as an indentured servant of the only other man with such a memorial in Christ Church, his once master and later friend, John Carter I.”<sup>1</sup>



Dr. Heffernan began his study of David Miles with a document known to previous FHCC researchers. It was a certificate of importation issued to John Carter I in 1655 that listed the names of twenty individuals whom John Carter I had “imported” or brought into Virginia. This document was badly damaged; in particular, the first name on the list was difficult to decipher. Earlier researchers had

concluded that the first named person was a “Miles Andrew.”

By comparing the damaged list to a later and completely legible list of these same 20 individuals, Dr. Heffernan was able to conclude that the first person named was indeed “David Miles” and the second was “Andrew Scott.”

This second list identified the twenty individuals whose headrights John Carter I sold to another planter in 1657. This planter did not obtain the services of the listed servants and slaves, just the right to claim the 50 acres of land per person to which John Carter I became entitled by virtue of importing them. By comparing the two documents Dr. Heffernan concluded that it was John Carter I who brought David Miles to Virginia, although Miles’ status is not identified in either document.

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<sup>1</sup>Patrick J. Heffernan, Ph.D., *David Miles Revisited*, 2015, p.1. For Dr. Heffernan’s full study of David Miles, see [www.christchurch1735.org/david\\_miles\\_training2015.pdf](http://www.christchurch1735.org/david_miles_training2015.pdf).

Perhaps the biggest roadblock to deciphering the identity of David Miles was a 1655 court order issued in Lancaster County. In this order David Miles is convicted of showing contempt by “taking up his hoe” against his master John Carter and ordered to be punished by 20 lashes “on his naked back.” How could this aggressive, contemptuous servant be the same man John Carter I later trusted to witness documents for him and represent him in court? But, as Dr. Heffernan points out, that is what the documentary record shows to have happened. At no time between the importation certificate of 1655 and the will filed for David Miles’ estate in 1674 and probated in January the following year is there any documentary evidence of two David Miles.

So how did the David Miles ordered to be whipped for his surliness become worthy of a marker in the Carter family church? How did he become an exemplar of what the mother country of England hoped to create in its colonies through the indenture system: the opportunity to rise above one’s origins and prosper for one’s own and the colony’s good?

Again the documentary record offers clues about how David Miles flourished. The inventory of his estate, which included large amounts of fabric and the tools of a tailor, led Dr. Heffernan to conclude that David Miles made and sold clothes. When he completed his indenture with John Carter I, his skill with needle and thread allowed him to begin the process of moving up. By 1661, he had indentured servants of his own. By 1666, he had a plantation of almost 1,000 acres. He continued to act as witness to deeds and papers for John Carter I and was sought after to witness for other members of the gentry, such as Thomas Carter.

David Miles served the court as a Justice of the Peace, one of the highest political offices in the county, until his death on December 31, 1674. His will indicated a substantial estate with half going to his wife, Martha, and half to his underage daughter, Elizabeth. Elizabeth had as her guardians two important gentlemen, Lt. Col. John Carter II and Mr. Thomas Marshall, High Sheriff of Lancaster County.

In 1669, David Miles had witnessed the will of John Carter I. He received ten shillings in the will “as a token of my love to buy. . . a mourning ring to ware in memorie of me, in a signe of [his] love towards me, in [his] attendance upon me in my sickness.” The bound-over servant had indeed come far from his early status.

Nearly 60 years after his death, David Miles’ grave marker, like that of John Carter I, was placed in the present church. The stone was either moved from the old church or a new stone cut for him and placed in an honored spot within the new building. The imported polished Purbeck (“marble”) stone, its location, the Latin epitaph as well as the use of the title “Mr.” all indicate that this is the memorial of a man to whom respect was due.

#### 4. Markers Outside Christ Church: The 18<sup>th</sup> Century

**The Carter Family** Outside the east end of the church stand the three grave markers of Robert Carter and his two wives, Judith Armistead Carter and Betty Landon Carter. Carter ordered his wives' markers from England and left directions in his will for his own burial:

I order my body to be laid in the yard of Christ Church near and upon the right hand of my Wives a decent funeral to be kept at my interment a monument or tombstone to be sent for to be erected over my grave of about the value of my last wives Tombstone with a proper Inscription at the discretion of my son John.

The sides of the three markers are elaborately decorated with architectural elements, acanthus leaves, vines and flowers, skull and crossbones, and cherubs. The base of Judith's marker is made of limestone while Robert's and Betty's are both made of marble. Portions of the original tops as restored in 1927 are mounted on the interior walls of the Bayne Center. New tops were made in 1980 of black Culpeper granite from West Virginia and inscribed with the original wording and coats of arms.

The Carter markers were considered by 18th and early 19th century observers as among the finest of the colonial period; Bishop Meade, for example, called them "probably the largest and richest and heaviest tombstones in our land."

The fourth Carter marker is that of Mary Carter, the wife of Charles Carter of Corotoman. She was the daughter of Charles Carter of Cleve and a granddaughter of Robert Carter. Her marker was replaced in 1980.

**Robert Carter** Robert Carter's inscription, written by his son John, describes a man of virtues and



*Carter tombs after conservation in 2004-2006*

accomplishments esteemed in 18<sup>th</sup> century, genteel society. Like his father, he was called an esquire. He honored education as a governor of the College of William and Mary and as a generous parent funding his children's education. He was politically active and powerful in the colonial government, serving both his king and his neighbors. He built a beautiful church as a dutiful believer. He was a courteous host but more importantly he forgave debts. Written in Latin, the very words mark a man of education whose peers are those who can read about him.



*Robert Carter used the Carter family arms on his marker top*

He married well, first to Judith, the daughter of another esquire, and then to Betty, a descendent of a gentleman's family. He had 15 children, ten of whom lived to maturity and nine of these marrying and giving him grandchildren. His wealth was "worthily acquired" and his lengthy "honors and days" were the "rewards of an illustrious life." He was indeed a man of honor and a man to be honored.

His epitaph expressed the ideal of patriarchy that Robert Carter embodied in 18<sup>th</sup> century Virginia: The unhappy mourn the comfort, the widows the protection, and the orphans the father, taken away from them.

**The Carter Women** Perhaps the most obvious similarity among the three tombs honoring Carter women is the age at which they died. Robert's first wife, Judith, died in 1699 at the age of 34. His second wife, Betty, died 20 years later at the age of 36. In 1770, 80 years and two generations after Judith died, Carter's granddaughter, Mary (the daughter of his third son, Charles) died at the age of 34. Despite the wealth and status of their fathers and husbands, the Carter women died as readily as other women of their time. Mary Carter's "truly Christian fortitude" was happily brief.

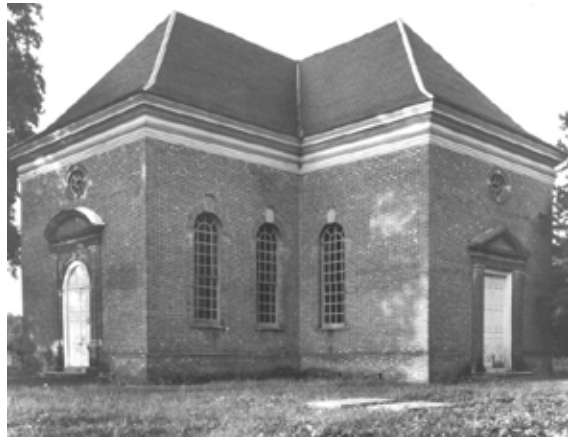
Judith was 23 when she and Robert married; he was 25. When he married Betty in 1700, she was 15 and he was 37. Two of Judith's five children are "buried near her," while three of Betty's ten children also predeceased her and lie nearby.

Like Robert Carter's, his wives' inscriptions record the virtues and accomplishments admired in gentry-class women. They are pious and charitable, treating their husband, children, servants and slaves, and neighbors and friends with the same generosity. Their friends and their children will remember them and live by their example.

Their epitaphs are gracious. Judith left behind her the sweet perfume of a good reputation, while Betty's children were told to make their mother's virtues the pattern of their lives and actions. However, their children, both in number and gender, are listed first of their accomplishments. This placement indicates, perhaps, what their contemporaries and possibly their husband most valued.

## 5. Markers Outside Christ Church: The 19<sup>th</sup> Century

**The Chases** Peter Chase (1795-1860) of Newport, Rhode Island, the founder of the Chase family of Christ Church Parish, sailed into Chesapeake Bay in 1818 where his ship met with disaster in a storm. All was lost except his Bible, which is now in the possession of one of his descendants in this area.



*This 1936 photograph by Frances Benjamin Johnston is one of the earliest views of the Chase markers, which are believed to have been installed ca. 1927-1930.*

By 1820 Peter had married Anne Hazard Bush (1797-1864), also of Rhode Island, and had purchased land in Irvington. Ledger stones for Peter and Anne Chase are in the SW quadrant of the churchyard, though it is not known if they are actually buried there. They and their descendants have been active members of Christ Church and its parish to the present day.

William Tell Chase (1832-1894), the son of Peter Chase, was first elected to the vestry in 1867 and continued in this office until his death. In 1884 he purchased two tracts of land, one directly north of Christ Church and the other east of the church across from what is now Rt. 646, both of which he gave to the Protestant Episcopal Church, Christ Church Parish in 1890. He and later Chase descendants are buried at Grace Church in Kilmarnock.

Both Chase tombs take care to delineate their esteemed New England heritage. They descend directly from governors, ministers, ship captains and merchants and passed this tradition on to their son, Captain William Tell Chase, who is listed on the his father's stone but was not interred at the site. In addition, the Chase family continues active in the work of the Foundation and Christ Church.

**The Kelleys** The Kelley plot originally was enclosed by a brick wall topped by stone stringers with a ball at each corner and an iron picket gate. As restored by the Foundation and The Garden Club of Virginia, the plot retains the stringers and balls on the ground level with vines planted inside.

The two rear graves in the plot are of James Kelley (1735–1795) and his wife, Judith Campbell (1756–1809), who emigrated from Kilmarnock, Scotland in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century. They were married in Lancaster County in 1778 and had ten children—six of whom grew to maturity, but only one of whom is known to have married. The tomb of James Kelley also has inscriptions on it for six children: Armistead Kelley and David Kelley, who are buried elsewhere, and four children who died in infancy and are buried in this plot, two of whom are named, Elizabeth C. and Robert.

The front row of graves includes those of four other Kelley brothers: James (1784-1856), William (1781-1848), Charles (1786-1833), and John (1790-1821). John was the only child who married. The present Kelley family of Christ Church descends from this son and has continued the family tradition of service to the parish.

Also included in the Kelley Plot is the grave of Dr. Charles Taylor, a house guest of the Kelleys when he died. Dr. Taylor was a neighbor and family physician of James Madison in Madison County. The local chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution has verified his service and has placed at the head of his grave an emblem commemorating his work as a surgeon. The Sons of the American Revolution has also recognized the grave with an emblem placed by the Richard Henry Lee chapter. Records from the War of 1812 indicate Charles, John, and James Kelley served Virginia regiments in local engagements with British forces during 1813-1814 and the graves are so marked.

All of the stones in the Kelley plot list A. Gaddess of Baltimore as their “maker.”

The two oldest Kelley brothers, James and William, gave both service and money to Christ Church during their lifetime, including perhaps as much as \$1,500 donated in 1838 for repairs to the building. In their wills, each left Christ Church \$500. They also stipulated that all their slaves were to be emancipated and bequeathed to them some \$15,000. Executors of their estates were to purchase a plantation for these slaves in some state that allowed emancipated slaves to move there, unless they deemed it more appropriate that the slaves should be sent to Liberia, where they would be set up with agricultural implements and any other articles that "promote[d] their comfort and happiness in this World." A record in the Lancaster Courthouse shows that they went to Africa.



*Kelley Family Plot  
Photograph by Bill Humm*

**Other Parishioners** Three small tablet markers remain in various parts of the churchyard.

The earliest is that of Melville B. Noell, who was 24 when his loving mother buried him in 1834 near the northwest corner of the church.

Nathan M. Oyler died in 1853 but his age is not given. His membership in the International Order of Oddfellows is the only relationship noted on his stone in the northwest quadrant of the churchyard.

Finally, Ann E. R. Christopher lies near the southeast corner of the church. She was 49 at her death in October of 1867. Her epitaph recalls that she sighed like summer flowers that “fade from the field away” yet “her spirit” will pass “to heaven.”

These three markers are perhaps more representative of the great majority of burials in the Christ Church yard. They are small and unimposing and make no claim to greatness, prosperity or connections. They reflect the grief of a parent and a spouse. They point to the wide range of people who lived and died under the auspices of Christ Church Parish.



*Marker for Melville B. Noell  
Photograph by Bill Humm*



*Marker for Nathan M. Oyler  
Photograph by Bill Humm*



*Marker for Ann E. R. Christopher  
Photograph by Bill Humm*

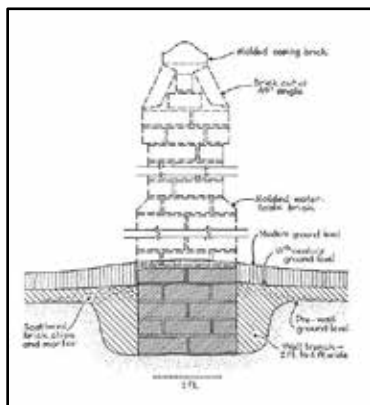
## 6. Archaeological Findings

Of the many burials that took place over the years at Christ Church, only a few remain marked today. In the chancel of Christ Church, seven individuals are remembered: John Carter I, the four wives who predeceased him, and two of his children. At the crossing is the marker for David Miles, making a total of eight identified individuals.

In the churchyard, nine Carter family members are identified: Robert, his two wives, five of his children and his granddaughter Mary. Two Chases are remembered (although they are believed to be buried in the Grace Church yard) as well as twelve Kelleys: the two parents and their ten children, two of whom are buried elsewhere according to the inscriptions. Four individuals are also named: one in the Kelley plot and three buried in various areas of the churchyard, making a total of 27 identified individuals, some unnamed and some buried elsewhere.

In total, the lives, some long and some very brief, of 35 parishioners are remembered through grave markers at Christ Church. The search for the others is ongoing as early documentary evidence like the missing first Vestry Book and Parish Register continues to be sought. However, archaeological exploration has been the primary method used to uncover the location of burials in the church and in the churchyard.

Some aspects of early colonial burial practices have made this work more difficult. For example, in the 17th century most corpses were buried in shrouds held together with brass pins, sometimes left open at the hands and feet to assist in the final resurrection of the body. (Graves were often oriented, that is, placed on an east-west axis with the head at the west end.) A few were buried in simple wooden coffins and this practice increased in use into the 18th century. Although embalming was understood, it was rarely used; in general, burial practices led to a rapid and complete deterioration of remains.



*Typical section of wall remains uncovered in archaeological excavations in 1959. Restored portion shown by broken lines.*

Archaeological work over the years, however, has led to a number of discoveries. The earliest dig, done in 1959 just after the Foundation was organized, identified the layout of the churchyard wall and how its main gate was structured. The enclosure marked off the area set aside for the burial of the dead, an area specified in law by the General Assembly of 1622-3 as well as the Canon Laws of 1604.

In 1985 a geophysical survey of the church and churchyard was conducted to determine where there might have been burials other than those marked. Perhaps eight to nine gravesites were found, a limited result that could have several explanations. Perhaps, given the burial practices of the time, most human remains had indeed decomposed. Also possible is the recognized difficulty of getting GPR (Ground-Penetrating Radar) to work in Tidewater soil with its high iron content and the need, consequently, for its operator to be a trained professional.

Sometimes, however, projects designed for other purposes have led to a greater understanding of the Christ Church churchyard as a burial site. Building on digs in 1979 and 1999 designed to investigate both inside and outside the churchyard wall, a further study to look for the first or 1670 Christ Church was undertaken in 2005-2006. Led by Thane Harpole and David Brown, the project suggests that the tombs of Robert, Betty and Judith Carter point to the location of the 1670 church. As they note in their report, *In the Shadow of Greatness*:

All three tombs were completed before the 1735 church, and their orientation differs from that of the standing church by several degrees, implying they were oriented with a different structure. . . . and given the prominence of the Carter family, their tombs would have been placed prominently near a church entrance.

The current project area appears to contain the remains of the 1670 church as well as a significant number of unmarked graves associated with the 17th and 18th century churchyard.



*View of archaeological excavations on 1670 church, Fall 2006. The rectangular areas of lighter dirt behind archaeologist Thane Harpole (standing) are likely burial sites.  
Photograph by Gary Andrashko*

The identities of the deceased may never be known but the different sizes of the burial shafts suggest that different sized individuals were buried there. Perhaps the tiny markings near the Carter tombs were indeed the final resting places of Judith and Betty Carter's children who "died before" their mothers.

## 7. Grave Marker Inscriptions

### Inside the Church:

#### John Carter I

HERE LYETH BURIED Y<sup>e</sup> THE BODY OF JOHN CARTER ESQ<sup>r</sup> WHO  
DIED Y<sup>e</sup> 10<sup>th</sup> DAY OF JAN ANNO DOMINI 1669 & ALSO JANE  
Y<sup>e</sup> DAUGHTER OF M<sup>r</sup> MORGAN GLYN & GEORGE HER SON &  
ELINOR CARTER  
& ANN Y<sup>e</sup> DAUGHTER OF M<sup>r</sup> CLEAVE CARTER & SARAH Y<sup>e</sup>  
DAUGHTER OF M<sup>r</sup> GABUIL LADLOWE & SARAH HER DAUGHTER  
WHICH WARE AIL HIS WIVES SUCKSESSIVELY & DYED BEFORE  
HIM  
BLESSED ARE Y<sup>e</sup> DEAD WHICH DIE IN Y<sup>e</sup> LORD EVEN SOE SAITH  
Y<sup>e</sup> SPIRIT FOR THEY REST FROM THERE LABOURS & THERE  
WORKS DOTH FOLLOW THEM.

#### David Miles

Here lyeth the body of  
M<sup>r</sup> David Miles who  
Died the 29 of Decemb<sup>r</sup>  
1674 and in Y<sup>e</sup> 46 yeare of his age  
*Hodie mihi cras tibi*

## In the Churchyard:

### Robert Carter

H[ic]. S[epultus]. E[st].

Vir honorabilis ROBERTUS CARTER, ARMIGER,  
qui genus honestum Dotibus eximiis et moribus  
antiquis illustravit. COLLEGIUM GULIELMI et MARIAE  
temporibus difficillimis propugnavit, GUBERNATOR.

SENATUS ROGATUR et QUAESTOR  
sub serenimissis  
PRINCIPIBUS GULIELMO, ANNA, GEORGIO  
PRIMO et SECUNDO.

A publicis concilliis concillii per sexennium  
praeses; plus anno COLONIAE PRAEFECTUS, cum  
regiam dignitatem et publicam libertatem aequali  
jure asseruit.

Opibus amplissimis bene partis instructus,  
aedem hanc sacram, in Deum pietatis grande  
monumentum propriis sumtibus extruit.  
Locupletavit.

In omnes quos humaniter excepit nec  
prodigus nec parvus hospes. Liberalitatem  
insignem testantur debita munifice remissa.

Primo JUDITHAM, JOHANNIS ARMISTEAD,  
ARMAGERI, filiam; Deinde Betty generosa  
LANDONORUM stirpe oriundam, sibi connubio  
junctas habuit: equibus prolem numerosam  
suscepit, in quia erudienda pecuniae Vim  
maximam insumpsit.

Tandem Honorum et dierum satur, cum  
omnia vitae Munera egregiae praetisset,  
obit Pri. Non. Aug. An. Dom. 1732, aet. 69.

Miseri solamen, Viduae praesidium,  
orbi patrem, ademptum lugent.

HERE IS BURIED

The Honorable ROBERT CARTER, ESQUIRE,  
a man who adorned good breeding with  
exceptional gifts and time-honored morals. As a  
GOVERNOR of the COLLEGE of WILLIAM  
and MARY, he was its champion in perilous  
times.

Speaker of the HOUSE and TREASURER under  
the most serene SOVEREIGNS WILLIAM,  
ANNE, GEORGE, the FIRST and SECOND.

While in the general assembly he became  
president of the council for a period of six years;  
for more than a year while acting GOVERNOR  
of the COLONY, he defended with equal justice  
the royal authority and the common freedom.

Provided with extensive wealth worthily acquired,  
he erected at his own expense this sacred building  
as a great monument of devoted duty towards  
God.  
He enriched it.

To all whom he courteously entertained he was  
neither a lavish nor a frugal host. Debts  
generously forgiven bear witness to a remarkable  
liberality.

He joined to himself in marriage, first JUDITH,  
the daughter of JOHN ARMISTEAD,  
ESQUIRE; then BETTY, descended from the  
gentle line of LANDONS; by whom he begot a  
numerous progeny, in the educating of whom he  
expended a vast amount of money.

At length, full of honors and of days, having  
displayed the rewards of an illustrious life, he died  
on the fourth day of August in the year of our  
Lord 1732, at the age of 69.

The unhappy mourn the comfort, the widows the  
protection, and the orphans the father, taken away  
from them.

## **The Carter Women**

### **Judith**

Here lyeth buried the body of JUDITH CARTER the wife of ROBERT CARTER Esq., and oldest daughter of the Hon. JNo. ARMISTEAD Esq., & JUDITH his wife. She departed this life the 23rd day of February Anno 1699, in the [34th] year of her age, and in the eleventh year of her marriage having borne to her husband five children, four daughters and a son, two whereof SARAH & JUDITH CARTER, died before, and are buried near her. Piously she lived, and comfortably died, in the joyful assurance of a happy Eternitie, leaving to her friends the sweet perfume of a good reputation.

### **Betty**

To the memory of BETTY CARTER second wife of ROBERT CARTER Esq., youngest daughter of THOMAS LANDON Esq., and MARY his wife, of Grednal in the County of Hereford the ancient seat of the family and place of her nativity.

She bore to her husband ten children, five sons and five daughters, three of whom SARAH, BETTY, and LUDLOW died before her and are buried near her.

She was a person of great and exemplary piety and charity in every relation wherein she stood; whether considered as a christian, wife, a mother, a mistress, a neighbor, or a friend, her conduct was equalled by few, excelled by none.

She changed this life for a better on the 3rd of July 1719, in the 36th year of her age and 19th of her marriage.

May her descends make their mother's virtues and graces the pattern of their lives and actions.

### **Mary**

Under this stone are the remains of MARY CARTER, the affectionate wife of CHARLES CARTER of Corotoman who died on the 30th of January, 1770 after a painful illness of three months during which time she discover'd a truly Christian fortitude

Aged 34 years

## **The Kelley Plot**

### **Judith**

THIS MARBLE SLAB  
Is placed over the mortal remains of  
JUDITH KELLEY,  
Who was Judith Campbell  
By JAS. Kelley, her only surviving  
Child in token of his filial affection  
For a fond Mother while she lived &  
His affectionate & cherished remembrance  
of her worth now that She is dead.  
She was born Feb'y 25th 1756:  
& died in March 1802:  
In the 54th year of her age.

Blessed are the dead which die in the  
Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the  
Spirit that they may rest from their  
Labours and their works do follow them.  
Rev. 14 13 v.

### **James**

THIS MARBLE SLAB  
Is placed here by Jas. KELLEY, the only  
surviving child of James & Judith Kelley,  
IN MEMORY OF  
JAMES KELLEY,  
His Father, over whose mortal remains it  
Is placed. Who died about the year 1795;  
Aged about 60 years.  
ELIZABETH C. KELLEY,  
A sister, Who died in infancy.  
ARMISTEAD KELLEY,  
A Brother, Who was born Sep't 16th 1784;  
& died in Feb'y 1825:  
& was Interred in the County of Essex.

### **David**

DAVID KELLEY  
A Brother, Who was born Dec'r 12th 1788  
& died in the State of Mississippi,  
about the year 1827.

### **Robert**

ROBERT KELLEY  
A Brother, Who was born April 20th 1793:  
& also two Infants born afterwards, Who  
all died in infancy.

### **James**

In memory of  
JAMES KELLEY  
Who died Feb'y 1st. 1856  
In the 73d. year  
of his age.

### **William**

BENEATH  
THIS MONUMENTAL SLAB  
Is deposited the mortal remains of  
WILLIAM KELLEY  
Son of James & Judith Kelley  
Who was born in the County of Lancaster  
March 22nd. 1781  
& died in the City of Baltimore (whither  
he had gone for Medical aid.)  
May 18th 1848  
In the 68th. year of his age  
After a protracted sickness which he  
Bore with much patience & resignation  
& died peacefully in the hope of a  
blessed immortality.

### **Charles**

IN MEMORY OF  
CHARLES KELLEY  
Son of  
James & Judith Kelley  
Who was born July 25th. 1786;  
& died at Kilmarnock, Lancaster  
County August 8th. 1833  
In the 47th. Year of his age  
& is interred beneath this Slab.

**John**  
IN MEMORY OF  
JOHN KELLEY  
Son of  
James & Judith Kelley  
Who was born 1790  
& died in the County of  
Northumberland in May, 1821  
In the 31st. year of his age  
& is interred beneath this Slab.

**Charles Taylor**  
In memory of  
Dr. CHARLES TAYLOR  
Born in the County  
Of Orange.)  
Died in the County of  
Lancaster [in the] year  
1825

REVOLUTIONARY SOLDIER  
CHARLES TAYLOR, M.D.  
1755 – 1821  
Placed by  
COBBS HALL CHAPTER  
VA. D.A.R.  
  
S.A.R. 1775

## **Other Parishioners**

**Ann E. R. Christopher**  
ANN E. R.  
Wife of  
JOHN R. CHRISTOPHER Died Oct'r 1867  
In the 49th year  
Of her age  
She sigheth as that summer flowers  
Fade from the field away  
Her spirit passeth to heaven upon  
The wing of parting day.

**Nathan M. Oyler**  
SACRED  
To the memory of  
NATHAN M. OYLER  
A member of  
Wicomico Lodge No. 99  
I.O.O.F.  
Who died  
July 24th 1853

**Melville B. Noell**  
Fond Mother places this  
Stone in memory of a dutiful  
Son  
MELVILLE B. NOELL  
Who was born in Bedford  
County. Va. 25th Febr. 1810  
& died 20th. Septr. 1834

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## SECTION III: PARISH ORGANIZATION

**Theme:** Christ Church Parish epitomizes colonial Virginia's political, social, economic and religious institutions.

### 1. Timeline

### 2. Introduction

### 3. The Church of England in Colonial Virginia

Overview of the Established Church

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The Parish Grows

1670 Church

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1670 and 1735 Churches—Construction Details: Table

### 5. Dissent, Revolution and Disestablishment

Act of Toleration (1689)

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Virginia Declaration of Rights (1776)

Great Assessment Debates (1784-1785); Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom (1786)

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Dissent and Disestablishment in Lancaster County

### 6. Reconstitution of Christ Church

1805-1832

1832-1852

1852-1897

Establishment of Grace Church (1851-1852)

## **1. Timeline**

### **The First Church**

- 1665 John Carter I swears in first vestry. Vestry orders the building of a church.
- 1669 John Carter I dies.
- 1670 First church completed, having been built under the direction of John Carter I.
- 1670-82 Benjamin Doggett is minister of Christ Church Parish.
- 1686-1710 Andrew Jackson is minister of Christ Church Parish.
- 1712-43 John Bell is minister of Christ Church Parish.
- 1724 John Bell writes his Report to the Bishop of London.

### **The Second Church**

- 1723-26 Robert Carter establishes brickyards south of church site. Brickmaker James Bryan makes 400,000 bricks for Carter between 1724-1726.
- 1726 Robert Carter provides £200 in his will and several hundred thousand bricks for a brick church to be built when Christ Church Parish vestry agrees to use site of 1670 church.
- 1730 Robert Carter proposes to build new brick church at his own expense. The vestry accepts.
- 1732 Robert Carter dies. Construction on new church not yet complete. Secretary John Carter, Robert Carter's eldest son, and his brother Charles assume responsibility for completion under terms of father's will.
- 1735 New church is finished early in the year.
- 1743-91 David Currie serves as minister of Christ Church Parish.
- 1752 Christ Church and St. Mary's White Chapel are united as Christ Church Parish.
- 1774 Vestry book records earliest known repairs to church.

### **Disestablishment**

- 1689 Toleration Act passed in England.
- 1699 Virginia recognizes Toleration Act.
- 1776 Fifth Virginia Convention adopts the Virginia Declaration of Rights (June 12, 1776). Article 16 guarantees right to "free exercise of religion, according to dictates of conscience." October 1776: Dissenters exempted from taxation to support Anglican Church. Taxation to support clergy suspended for members of Anglican Church. Anglican Church's property rights in glebes, churches, books, silver, ornaments and other items affirmed.

- 1779 Jefferson's Statute for Religious Freedom first presented to Assembly but is tabled. Assembly ends all forms of religious taxation.
- 1784 Protestant Episcopal Church of Virginia incorporated by General Assembly with its property rights in glebes, churches, etc. reaffirmed. Assembly debates General Assessment proposal, a tax to support *all* Christian denominations and their ministers.
- 1785 Statewide debates on General Assessment proposal. Protestant Episcopal Church of Virginia holds its first convention.
- 1786 Statute for Religious Freedom passed.
- 1786-87 Assembly repeals Act of Incorporation for Protestant Episcopal Church.
- 1799 Laws granting Protestant Episcopal Church property rights are repealed.
- 1802 Assembly authorizes confiscation and sale of glebes. Glebe Act passed. General Assembly declares privately donated churches are not state property. Christ Church is legally declared part of the Carter estate.
- 1816 Christ Church Parish glebe sold.
- 1800-32 Christ Church suffers from neglect, though irregularly served by a number of ministers.

### **Reconstitution**

- 1832 Rev. Ephraim Adams takes over Christ Church Parish. New vestry elected. Regular vestry meetings resume.
- 1836 Carter heirs lease Christ Church to Episcopal Congregation in Lancaster County for 99 years. Vestrymen James and William Kelley fund and oversee repairs to church.
- 1837-38 Bishop William Meade visits, reports on condition of church. Report reprinted in *Old Churches, Ministers, and Families of Virginia* in 1857.
- 1851-52 Grace Church in Kilmarnock is established.
- 1852-75 Christ Church is not regularly used as an active church.
- 1875 Rev. Henry L. Derby begins holding Sunday evening prayer services in Christ Church during summer. Infrequent Sunday services, baptisms, marriages and funerals are held.
- 1890 William Tell Chase gives two parcels of land, one directly north of Christ Church and the other east of church across from today's Route 646, to Protestant Episcopal Church. They are now a part of the protective lands (view shed) around Christ Church.
- 1893 Rev. E. B. Burwell and Christ Church vestry discuss preserving Christ Church.
- 1897 Preservation begins with installation of a slate roof to replace earlier cypress shingle roofs.
- 1935 Christ Church's 99-year lease to Episcopal Congregation of Lancaster expires. A 25-year wait begins before legal ownership of the church can be claimed by the vestry.

## 2. Introduction

This section seeks to familiarize volunteers with the culture of rural colonial Virginia. Colonial Virginia is best understood as a plantation economy supported by distinct social, political and religious institutions. A plantation economy refers to the growing of a cash crop for export. Some plantations were very large, such as Robert Carter's. Others were small farms. Tobacco so dominated Virginia's economy that it became the colony's currency.

### **Plantation**

A landholding primarily used for agriculture. Plantation can mean a single tract of land or the whole of many, not necessarily contiguous, tracts. The word was also used as a general term for an overseas colony such as "Plimouth Plantation."

The economic system in colonial Virginia differed from the pattern in many other colonies. New England, for example, is known for its villages and towns and its subsistence and bartering existence. The colonies differed according to many factors such as the religion, the motive of their founders and the nature of the land and the weather. In Virginia, the British monarchy was interested in maintaining a system of mercantilism whereby the colony exported cash crops to England and imported manufactured goods. Virginia's most

viable cash crop was tobacco, a crop that required large tracts of land and an intensive labor force.

Only about 2% of the population of Virginia would be considered "gentry"—the well-to-do and powerful. Robert Carter was certainly one of the wealthiest of this group. Since this is the group whose houses have remained and whose names have made the history books it is easy to overestimate their number among the population. The gentry and their descendants in Virginia were not hereditary aristocracy but were those who succeeded in the new world of commerce and agriculture.

About 20% of the population was considered "middling." These were crafts people, tradesmen or small landholders who typically lived very simple lives. Their houses were likely to be two-room over two-room clapboard structures and their existence was often at the subsistence level. They were not in a position to purchase imported fabrics or fine wines.

The original workforce in the early years of colonial Virginia consisted primarily of indentured servants from what is now the United Kingdom. These individuals agreed or were forced to work for a number of years in Virginia in exchange for their transport to North America and sometimes a small stake when they set out on their own. Although some of the wealthy continued to import skilled craftsmen from Britain for work such as building Christ Church, most of the labor by the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century was provided by slaves imported directly from Africa or via the West Indies.

The first shipment of slaves was brought to Virginia in 1619 from Angola in West Africa. At first some Africans were indentured but it quickly became evident that permanent ownership was more profitable. Slaves were transported in a pattern similar to that of goods from Europe, that is, up the rivers that are tributaries of the Chesapeake Bay. By the time Christ Church was completed, slaves represented about 50% of the population of the colony of Virginia.

The 28% balance of the population included what we would today call the “working poor,” including tenant farmers, vagrants, and those who could not work due to age or infirmity. In the 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, many, but by no means all, of the latter were supported by their local parishes.

During this period the Church of England was not only the required religious affiliation but was also responsible for many political, social and economic matters. It was, in fact, the arm of the British crown in Virginia. The church building was one of two basic gathering points, or centers, of the parish or community, the other being the county courthouse. Everyone in the community, with the exception of the enslaved population, was required to attend church. The parish included multiple types of residents from the wealthy gentry such as Robert Carter, the builder of Christ Church, through indentured servants and middling residents to the poor and the enslaved. The population was spread throughout the parish on tobacco plantations large and small and in a few villages, so going to church provided an opportunity to socialize, to worship and to fulfill a legal obligation.

### 3. The Church of England in Colonial Virginia

**Overview of the Established Church** Established by law and supported by taxation, the Church of England was the official church of colonial Virginia. From the earliest days at Jamestown to the decades following the Revolution when it was finally disestablished, the Church of England played a fundamental role in Virginians’ daily lives. The church the colonists brought with them to Virginia, however, evolved differently from the Church of England they knew at home. Geography, an economy built around tobacco, political forces and changes in the religious make-up of the colony all shaped Virginia’s established church in important ways.<sup>1</sup>

Church life revolved around the parish, a geographical area that supported a minister and functioned as a unit of local government. For most Virginians, the parish—not the county court or colony government—was the unit of government that had the greatest influence on their day-to-day lives.<sup>2</sup> Residents identified closely with their parish, with many never traveling beyond its boundaries.

Parishes formed in response to population growth and shifts in settlement patterns. Colonists created new counties and parishes as they pushed into unsettled regions. The need for large tracts of land to cultivate tobacco created a dispersed population, with planters scattered across vast tobacco fields and along numerous rivers and creeks. As a result, Virginia’s parishes were

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<sup>1</sup> John K. Nelson, *A Blessed Company: Parishes, Parsons and Parishioners in Anglican Virginia, 1690-1776* (Chapel Hill, 2001), 3, 17-18. Edward L. Bond, “Church of England in Virginia,” (2014, October 3). [www.EncyclopediaVirginia.org/Church\\_of\\_England\\_in\\_Virginia](http://www.EncyclopediaVirginia.org/Church_of_England_in_Virginia). Bond notes that the “Church of England that developed during the seventeenth century evolved out of the adaptation of the colony’s mother church to the peculiar circumstances of the colony.”

<sup>2</sup> Edward L. Bond, “The Parish in Colonial Virginia. (2012, January 31). [www.EncyclopediaVirginia.org/Parish\\_In\\_Colonial\\_Virginia](http://www.EncyclopediaVirginia.org/Parish_In_Colonial_Virginia). The. Bond says “the parish was the layer of government closest to the people, and for many it probably had a greater day-to-day impact on their lives than the county or colony-wide government.” Nelson, *A Blessed Company*, 4, 13-14, 44-45.

geographically much larger and less densely populated than those in England.<sup>3</sup>

With many parishioners living far away from the main church, parishes often built chapels of ease to serve residents in outlying areas.<sup>4</sup> As at Christ Church and St. Mary's White Chapel, the minister rotated between the churches on different Sundays; during his absence the parish clerk read Divine Service from the Book of Common Prayer and a homily (a published sermon).

All Virginians were members of one parish or another. Virginia law required parish residents to attend services at least once a month or face punishment by the county court.<sup>5</sup> Each household had to pay annual taxes to support the parish and the religious and civil functions it carried out in the community. Compared to the county or colony levy, the parish tax was the highest tax Virginians paid each year.<sup>6</sup>

In each parish, a select group of twelve men known as the vestry oversaw church affairs. The vestry hired the minister and other parish employees, constructed and maintained churches and glebe buildings, and set parish taxes. The vestry also outfitted the parish church with Bibles, Prayer Books, pulpit cloths, communion wine and other items needed for Divine Service.<sup>7</sup>

One of a vestry's most important and demanding duties was to oversee the public welfare system. Each year vestrymen authorized parish funds to support the sick, orphaned, widowed and poor in their parish. Christ Church Parish's second vestry book (1739-1786) contains numerous examples of the vestry paying parishioners for providing housing, clothing and other care to needy parishioners, even for burying them.<sup>8</sup>

In addition to social welfare, the parish took on other civic duties, often working in conjunction with the county court. The vestry directed the processioning (marking) of property lines, appointed "hands" to clear and maintain roads, helped place (bind out) orphans with parishioners who would care for them and teach them a trade, and at one point appointed inspectors responsible for counting and viewing tobacco plants. The vestry carried out each of these tasks in response to a specific order from the county court.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Bond, "Church of England in Virginia," *Encyclopedia Virginia*.

<sup>4</sup> Nelson, *A Blessed Company*, 3, 17-30.

<sup>5</sup> William W. Hening, *The Statutes at Large: Being a Collection of all the Laws of Virginia....* (Richmond, Va. and Philadelphia, Pa., 1809-1823), Volume I, 123, 144, 155, 180.

<sup>6</sup> Nelson, *A Blessed Company*, 4, 43-47.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 33-42.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 70-84. *Vestry Book of Christ Church Parish, 1739-1786*, transcribed by Margaret H. Tupper (Irvington, Va., 1990).

<sup>9</sup> Nelson, *A Blessed Company*, 14.

Unlike England, Virginia had no bishops or diocesan administration to oversee the church. As a result, Virginia never had ecclesiastical courts like those in England that tried moral offenses and handled the probate of wills and administration of estates.<sup>10</sup> Regulating moral conduct (as well as will/estate administration) became the responsibility of the county court. Churchwardens presented parishioners who violated legally defined norms of behavior to the grand jury.<sup>11</sup>

The parish and county thus functioned together, sharing civic responsibilities that touched Virginians' lives on many levels. Historian John Nelson argues that local government in Virginia is best understood as *parish-county*. Although the parish was "more immediate to the inhabitants" of the colony, "these two local institutions intermixed personnel, functions and purposes. Neither can be understood without the other." The parish was an "essential partner" of the court, and many vestrymen also served as justices of the county court.<sup>12</sup>

While local control of the parish resided with the vestry, the authorities in both London and Williamsburg played a major role in the church establishment. Because Virginia never had a bishop, responsibility for the Church of England in Virginia and other overseas colonies fell loosely to the Bishop of London, who for much of the 17<sup>th</sup> century neglected the colonists' religious needs.<sup>13</sup>

The appointment of Henry Compton as Bishop of London in 1675 marked a turning point. Compton recruited able clergymen to serve in the colonies, and he appointed a commissary, or representative, to oversee Virginia's religious affairs and its ministers. James Blair, who served as commissary from 1689 to his death in 1743, became the most important of Virginia's commissaries. Blair helped found the college of William and Mary, served on the Governor's Council and in 1696 successfully lobbied the Assembly to raise clergymen's salaries to 16,000 lbs. of tobacco and provide them with glebe lands and housing.<sup>14</sup>

Along with appointing Virginia's commissary, the Bishop of London's most important duty was ordaining and granting licenses to clergymen wishing to serve in a Virginia parish. Prospective ministers living in Virginia had to travel to London to be ordained and then make the dangerous trip back across the Atlantic to the colony.

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<sup>10</sup> Nelson, *A Blessed Company*, 273-274.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 273-281.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 4, 13-14. For most colonial Virginians, Nelson argues, "the parish-county provided. . . the context in which occurred virtually all of their contacts and interrelationships beyond the immediate family, household, and kinship networks. It would scarcely be stretching the truth to describe the parish-county as the vital center of colonial Virginia: not the parish alone, not the county alone, not one or the other deemed the more vital element but they were linked in the minds of contemporaries."

<sup>13</sup> Edward L. Bond, *Damned Souls in a Tobacco Colony: Religion in Seventeenth Century Virginia* (Macon, Ga., 2000), 185-215.

<sup>14</sup> Bond, "Church of England in Virginia." *Encyclopedia Virginia*.

With a shortage of clergymen and no bishop in the colony, vestries in Virginia early on assumed enormous powers in parish life. Chief among these was the right to choose their own ministers, which the Assembly confirmed in 1642/43. Vestries guarded this and other powers as legal (granted by the Assembly) and customary rights, especially when faced with intrusion by colonial governors or ecclesiastical authorities in England. In the process, vestries championed independence and the right to local rule and self-governance. Governor Alexander Spotswood called them the “Twelve Bishops.” A minister in Elizabeth City Parish complained that the “Clergy-men here have 12 Lay patrons whom we must humour or run the risque of Deprivation.”<sup>15</sup>

Lay control of the church in Virginia became one of its distinguishing features. Virginia’s unique characteristics, historian Edward Bond argues, created “a new form of church government in which local vestries shared authority with bishops in England. By the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, one could argue that the church in Virginia was English in theology and colonial in form.”<sup>16</sup>

Virginia’s governor also played a role in the Church of England. With the commissary, the governor helped oversee the colony’s religious affairs—but in broad terms only. Real power remained in the hands of the local parish vestry. Governors had the power to inspect ordination papers from prospective clergymen. Through the clerk of the county court, governors had authority to grant marriage licenses. Governors also had the power to induct, or grant lifetime tenure to, parish ministers but only upon presentation by the parish itself. To preserve local control, many vestries kept their clergymen on annual contracts rather than present them to the Governor for induction.<sup>17</sup>

The General Assembly, the colony’s governing body comprised of the Governor, Governor’s Council and the House of Burgesses (in turn comprised of two elected representatives, or Burgesses, from each county) formally established the Church of England as Virginia’s official religion during its first meeting in 1619. Over the next century and a half, the Assembly enacted a series of laws that shaped the colony’s religious establishment in many areas such as parish taxes, the role of the vestry and the formation of parishes.<sup>18</sup> These laws laid out the duties and specific prescriptions according to which each parish vestry, minister, churchwarden, clerk, and, where they overlapped,

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<sup>15</sup> Nelson, *A Blessed Company*, 35, 343, n.11. Reverend James Wallace of Elizabeth City Parish quoted in Edward L. Bond, *Spreading the Gospel in Colonial Virginia: Preaching Religion and Community* (Lanham, Md., 2005), 23. Christ Church Parish’s vestry offers one example of this independent nature and commitment to self-governance (as embodied in the laws of the Assembly) in its response in 1704 to Governor Nicholson and England’s Attorney-General Sir Edward Northey on the question of appointing and inducting ministers. See Vestry of Christ Church Parish, Lancaster County, to Governor Nicholson, April 11, 1704, in his *Virginia’s Mother Church and The Political Conditions Under Which It Grew*, 2 vols. (Richmond, Va. 1947-1952), I: Appendix VIII, 517, 531-532.

<sup>16</sup> Bond, “Church of England in Virginia,” *Encyclopedia Virginia*.

<sup>17</sup> Nelson, *A Blessed Company*, 5, 127-129, 222.

<sup>18</sup> These laws all appear in William W. Hening, *The Statutes at Large: Being a Collection of all the Laws of Virginia...* (Richmond, Va. and Philadelphia, Pa., 1809-1823). A digest of laws for each topic appears in this *Red Book*, Section VII: Additional Resources.

county court governed local life. The Assembly also passed laws that created new parishes and defined parish boundaries, set clergymen's salaries, established requirements governing church attendance and moral behavior, and required parishes to purchase glebe lands and construct glebe buildings.<sup>19</sup>

**The Vestry** Like other elements of the parish system, Virginians brought the concept of a vestry with them from England. There, a vestry was a meeting of all taxpayers to discuss parish affairs and church property. In 1598, Parliament passed an act requiring vestries to take care of the parish poor at public expense. Recognizing the difficulties of administering poor relief through a vestry meeting of all parishioners, English parishes instead elected a “select vestry” of leading men to oversee care of the poor between regular meetings of the full vestry.<sup>20</sup>

Virginia vestries took on the composition and duties of these “select vestries.” In each parish, a select group of twelve men governed church affairs. In his *The Present State of Virginia* (1724), Hugh Jones said the vestry consisted of the minister and “twelve of the most substantial and intelligent persons in each parish.” Virginia laws in 1661/62 called for “twelve of the most able men of each parish” to be chosen.<sup>21</sup>

Though initially elected by parish freeholders, vestries practiced co-optation, meaning when a vestryman resigned, died or moved away, the other vestrymen selected his replacement. Many vestrymen served for decades, and gentry families saw the position as an important local office. Robert Carter served as a vestryman of Christ Church Parish from 1690 to his death in 1732.

Specific duties of the vestry included:

**Hiring the Minister** Virginia law in 1642/43 gave vestries the right to select and hire the parish minister. Ministers had to be ordained by the Bishop of London. Instead of presenting them to the governor for induction, or life tenure, most vestries kept ministers on annual contracts. Christ Church Parish did this with Andrew Jackson, John Bell and David Currie. Of its four main colonial ministers, the vestry presented only Benjamin Doggett to the governor for induction.

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<sup>19</sup> Bond, “Church of England in Virginia.” *Encyclopedia Virginia*

<sup>20</sup> Nelson, *A Blessed Company*, 34, 343, n.7-8. Bond, “Church of England in Virginia,” *Encyclopedia Virginia*. Robert Prichard, *A History of the Episcopal Church: Complete Through the 78<sup>th</sup> General Convention* (Harrisburg, Pa., 2014), 9. Nelson points out the term vestry meant “a place—the ‘vestry’—where vestments, utensils, and vessels used in worship were stored, where clergy (and choir, where provided) robed, where the parish’s official records ordinarily would have been housed, and where official meetings would have been held. ‘Vestry’ as the site of official parish business became adopted as the term appropriate to those who transacted the business.” Before 1598, monasteries oversaw poor relief.

<sup>21</sup> Hugh Jones, *The Present State Of Virginia*, ed. Richard L. Morton (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1956), 96. Hening II, 44. Robert Beverley, Virginia’s first native-born historian, said “Vestries consist of twelve Gentlemen of the Parish.” Robert Beverley, *The History and Present State of Virginia*, ed. Louis B. Wright (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1947; reprint, Charlottesville, Va., 1968), 262.

Commissary James Blair and others complained of this practice, calling it “a Name coarse enough, viz. Hiring of the Ministers.” Despite such “Precariousness in their Livings,” colonial ministers—like Jackson (24 years at Christ Church Parish), Bell (31 years) and Currie (48 years)—typically served one parish most of their career.<sup>22</sup>

***Hiring Clerks (Readers) and Sextons*** Each year vestries hired a clerk (also known as a reader) and a sexton. Clerks assisted with Divine Service and kept parish records. Because most parishes typically had more than one church or chapel but only one clergyman, a minister rotated where he preached on different Sundays during the month. In his absence, the clerk read Divine Service and a homily, or “off-the-shelf” sermon.

Clerks also led the congregation in lining out the psalms, and they read laws from the General Assembly, proclamations from the Governor, and other public news. Clerks were lay persons and male. Christ Church Parish’s two clerks—one at Christ Church and one at St. Mary’s White Chapel—each earned 1,200 to 1,400 lbs. tobacco annually, compared to the 16,000 lbs. (and glebe) the minister made.<sup>23</sup>

Sextons cleaned church buildings and churchyards. They could be either male or female. A number of female sextons took over their duties from husbands who served in the position before them. Elizabeth McGrigor served as sexton at Christ Church from 1767 to 1773. Her husband John, a former overseer for Robert Carter, held the position for at least eight years before Elizabeth took it over. Elizabeth earned 800 lbs. of tobacco a year, 100 lbs. more than that earned by John Robinson, sexton at St. Mary’s White Chapel.

***Constructing and maintaining churches*** Building a new church was one of the most important decisions a vestry could make. It required an enormous commitment in time, planning, and financial resources. Vestries undertook new building campaigns to replace older churches that were deteriorated or no longer large enough for an increasing parish population. Parish creation led to new churches, as did settlement patterns within a large parish, where vestries sometimes constructed smaller, secondary churches, or “chapels of ease,” to serve those living far from the main church.<sup>24</sup>

Vestries levied taxes on parishioners to fund construction and maintenance of churches. John Carter received 30,000 lbs. of tobacco and cask for building the first Christ Church. The 1735 brick church his son Robert built, however, was unique as a private gift not funded by parish levies. In 1751, vestrymen at St. Mary’s White Chapel paid William Bertrand 850 lbs. of tobacco for “Taring

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<sup>22</sup> Henry Hartwell, James Blair, and Edward Chilton, *The Present State of Virginia and the College*, ed., Hunter Dickinson Farish (Colonial Williamsburg, 1940; reprint, Charlottesville, Va., 1964), 66-67. Nelson, *A Blessed Company*, 5, 132. Beverley, *The History and Present State of Virginia*, 264. Blair later would change his view on induction and side with the vestry. Bond, “Church of England in Virginia,” *Encyclopedia Virginia*. Vestries in England never had the right to select their own clergymen.

<sup>23</sup> See *Vestry Book of Christ Church Parish, 1739-1786*.

<sup>24</sup> Dell Upton, *Holy Things and Profane: Anglican Parish Churches in Colonial Virginia* (Cambridge, Mass., 1986), 11-13.

y<sup>e</sup>. Church & putting in Shingles where there out.” In 1774 the vestry of Christ Church Parish authorized the churchwardens to “See the necessary Repairs to both Churches done.”<sup>25</sup>

Some parishes constructed a vestry house at the church site where vestrymen could hold their regular meetings and supplies for church services such as vestments could be kept. Christ Church had a vestry house by 1713. The vestry of St. Mary’s White Chapel agreed to build a 16 x 20 foot vestry house in 1743.<sup>26</sup>

Vestries also cared for the churchyard. Virginia law and Canon Laws required that churches be enclosed or paled in. Vestries were responsible for constructing the wall or fence (with gates) and for keeping the yard clean.<sup>27</sup>

***Glebe Lands and Housing*** Virginia law required vestries to purchase a glebe and construct a dwelling house and outbuildings on it for the minister’s support. By law glebes had to be at least 200 acres. Christ Church Parish’s glebe was 839 acres. Parish taxes supported the purchase of glebes and their maintenance.

Vestries were responsible for maintaining and repairing the glebe lands and buildings. In their reports to the Bishop of London in 1724, many Virginia clergymen complained about the poor condition of their glebes. One noted the parish was “backward in making repairs.” In 1744, the vestry of Christ Church Parish authorized extensive repairs to the glebe for new minister David Currie.<sup>28</sup> In 1748 the Assembly ordered vestries to add kitchens, barns, stables dairies, meat houses, corn houses and gardens to their glebes.

***Churchwardens*** Churchwardens carried out much of the day-to-day work ordered by the parish vestry. Each year a vestry chose two of its members to serve in this role. Churchwardens had to know their parish and its people well, and they worked hard to ensure orders from the vestry and county court were carried out properly.<sup>29</sup> Robert Carter served as a churchwarden of Christ Church Parish for four decades. His good friend Thomas Carter served as a churchwarden with him in the 1720s and up to Robert’s death in 1732.

***Outfitting Churches for Divine Service*** Vestries outfitted parish churches with articles needed to carry out Divine Service, including items such as bibles, prayer books and books of

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<sup>25</sup> *Vestry Book of Christ Church Parish, 1739-1786*, 31, 64.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 11, 14. The *Processioners’ Returns for Christ Church Parish 1711-1783* document a vestry meeting at the vestry house in June 1713. These records do not provide a description of the house.

<sup>27</sup> The vestry of St. Mary’s White Chapel paid R. Mitchell 150 lbs. of tobacco in 1743 for “levelling the Churchyard”. Specific date unknown but year is 1743 in *Vestry Book of Christ Church Parish, 1739-1786*, 10.

<sup>28</sup>*Ibid.*, 12-21.

<sup>29</sup> Nelson, *A Blessed Company*, 41, 70-72.

homilies.<sup>30</sup> Sometimes items like this were donated by parishioners. In December 1732, David Ball left “one large bible, one large common Prayer book and one good service book” to St. Mary’s White Chapel.<sup>31</sup> In 1773 the vestry of Christ Church Parish ordered the churchwardens to “provide Cushions for the Communion table at Lower Church and bring in their acco<sup>l</sup>. to the next Vestry.”<sup>32</sup> Churchwarden Robert Carter ordered a flagon and communion plate through London merchant William Dawkins in July 1720. The vestry levied two hogsheads of tobacco to cover the cost and requested the pieces be engraved.<sup>33</sup> Each year the vestry reimbursed parishioners for wine used for communion, as it did in 1759 when it paid vestryman Martin Shearman 300 lbs. of tobacco for 12 bottles.<sup>34</sup> In his report to the Bishop of London in 1724, Reverend John Bell reported that the vestry provided “all things” for the performance of Divine Service, especially at Christ Church, the “surplice only excepted.”<sup>35</sup>

***Assigning Seats*** On any given Sunday in colonial Virginia, parishioners did not simply walk into their local church and take a seat anywhere they liked. Rather, where one sat depended on where one stood economically, politically and socially in the parish community. Churchwardens assigned seats according to wealth, office holding, and family lineage. Local gentry took private pews or seats in the most prized locations, such as near the chancel or in private galleries.<sup>36</sup> Sex could also determine seating: Bruton, Truro and other parishes split men and women into different pews on opposite sides of the aisle.<sup>37</sup>

The only reference to seating arrangements at Christ Church comes from a vestry order in August 1771 instructing the “Church Wardens [to] place the People in Each of the Churches as they think

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<sup>30</sup> See laws from March 1661/62 in Hening, II, 52.

<sup>31</sup> Nelson, *A Blessed Company*, 361, n.71.

<sup>32</sup> After their union as one parish—Christ Church Parish—in 1752, St. Mary’s White Chapel and Christ Church were designated the upper and lower church respectively.

<sup>33</sup> Robert Carter to William Dawkins, July 23, 1720, *The Diary, Correspondence, and Papers of Robert “King” Carter of Virginia, 1701-1732*, ed. Edmund Berkeley, Jr., [www.carter.lib.virginia.edu/index.html](http://www.carter.lib.virginia.edu/index.html).

<sup>34</sup> October 29, 1759, *Vestry Book of Christ Church Parish, 1739-1786*.

<sup>35</sup> Nelson, *A Blessed Company*, 66 and 361. n.70: “A minister wore the surplice when reading the service, administering the sacraments of baptism and Holy Communion, and conducting marriages and burials. He customarily removed the surplice before preaching and donned a black scholastic gown.”

<sup>36</sup> Upton, *Holy Things and Profane*, 178-183. Upton adds: “In fact, the parish church was a place where social hierarchy was elucidated and affirmed by the assignment to individual parishioners of seats distinguished by size, comfort, and visual elaboration. Pew allocations by the church wardens constituted the parish’s official assessment of the relative standing of its members.” Ball family members constructed their own private galleries at St. Mary’s White Chapel in 1740-1741. See *Vestry Book of Christ Church Parish, 1739-1786*, 3, 6.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 180. Seating charts survive for St. George’s Parish, Accomack County and Stratton Major Parish, King and Queen County.

Proper.” No doubt wardens John Chinn and Hugh Brent used the same criteria as their counterparts at Fairfax (“allot the seats for the parishioners according to dignity”) and Truro (“place the people, that are not already placed, in Pohick and the new Churches, in pews, according to the several ranks and degrees).”<sup>38</sup>

The size, placement, and elaboration of Christ Church’s pews affirmed these hierarchies: the Carter pew is the largest and is set near the chancel; the Carter and the two other “great” pews across from it have raised paneling on both the inside and outside. The rest of the pews (double and single) have flat or recessed panels inside; the farther they are from the chancel, the smaller, and the seats more narrow.

Not everyone was content with his or her pew assignments. On a Sunday morning at St. Mary’s White Chapel in November 1671, Lancaster County resident Richard Price “did after a rude irreligious & uncivill manner intrude himself” into the seat reserved for justices of the county court. Joining two of the justices was Lancaster County’s sheriff Edward Dale, whom Price forced “backwards upon his seate” as Dale tried to keep Price out. The court deemed Price’s actions “tending to ye dishonor of God Almighty, ye contempt of his Ma[jes]ties Mynistres, offence of ye Congregation, scandall to religion & evil example of others.” The Lancaster court appealed to the Governor and General Court, which forced Price to apologize. That July, Price appeared in Lancaster County Court to “aske forgiveness for his turbulent & contemptuous carridge” against the court and for “affronting” Dale inside the church.<sup>39</sup>

**Monitoring behavior** Because the colony had no ecclesiastical courts, Virginia law charged churchwardens with presenting to the county courts those who violated legally defined norms of behavior. Twice a year (May and November) churchwardens appeared before grand juries to present residents for moral offenses such as swearing, fornication, drunkenness, having children out of wedlock, adultery, not attending church, disturbing the Sabbath, gambling, and cohabitating with and having children by someone of a different race.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Vestry Book of Christ Church Parish, 1739-1786, 58. Fairfax and Truro parishes quoted in Upton, *Holy Things and Profane*, 180.

<sup>39</sup> November 8, 1671 and July 10, 1672, *Lancaster County Order Book 1666-1680*, 206, 234. Upton, *Holy Things and Profane*, 194. The court noted that the seat was “purposely designed & made use off by his Ma[jes]ties: Justices of ye Peace for this County.”

<sup>40</sup> Justices of the peace, sheriffs, constables, other vestrymen and ordinary parishioners could also present moral offenders to the grand jury. See Nelson, *A Blessed Company*, 274. Persons presented would not always be convicted. The Lancaster County court order books show many presentations for non-attendance that were dismissed in later sessions of the court. Presentments also included non-moral offenses such as not reporting tithables/paying insufficient taxes, failing to maintain roads, letting animals run wild and growing tobacco seconds.

***Social Welfare*** One of a vestry's most important duties was to care for the parish poor, sick, widowed, orphaned and needy. A substantial part of its annual budget—typically a quarter to a third—went to caring for the poor. The vestry of Christ Church Parish regularly paid parishioners for “keeping” in their homes orphans, sick adults and others unable to support themselves. The vestry also made payments to those who provided “Diet” or “cloathing” to needy parishioners. On other occasions vestry records simply listed payments as “for his Subsistence” or “for her relief.”<sup>41</sup>

Miriam Wilcox, who resided in St. Mary's White Chapel, went on parish relief at least as early as 1739, receiving aid in the form of clothing, food, housing and direct payments of tobacco. She continued to be supported by the parish for an astonishing 44 years. In 1783 the vestry of Christ Church Parish made its last entry concerning her, paying Charles Rogers 500 lbs. tobacco for “keeping and Buring Miriam Wilcocks.”

*Vestry Book of Christ Church Parish, 1739-1786*

When necessary, vestries called upon doctors to treat parishioners, paying them for providing various cures and treatments, such as “Sallevating,” administering “physick,” or prescribing “medsons.” Sallevating involved giving a patient mercury to produce an unusual secretion of saliva; doctors gave doses of “physick” most likely as a cathartic or purge.<sup>42</sup> When the poor or needy died, the vestry paid parishioners to bury them.

Vestries also worked with the county court to bind out children whose parents were deceased or could not care for them. Parishioners provided housing, food, and clothing, taught the child how to read and write and taught him or her a trade; in return the bound child worked for the parishioner until the age of 21 (males) or 18 (females). The goal was to create a master-apprentice relationship where the child learned a trade and did not become a financial burden on the parish. When freed, the master would be obligated to pay “freedom dues” as by law allowed to servants.<sup>43</sup>

“Charles Russell orphan of Charles Russel dec<sup>d</sup>. eight years old in August next on the prayer of the Churchwardens of Christ Church parish in this County is by the Court bound to John Rutter ‘til he attains the age of twenty one years his s<sup>d</sup>. master is to teach him to read & write and the trade of a Barber & wig maker and to find & provide him with sufficient & Cleanly dyet Lodging & apparel and at the Expiration of his servitude to pay & allow him as is appointed for servants by Indenture or custome”

*Lancaster County Court*  
*February 8, 1739/40*

<sup>41</sup> Payments for “Keeping” appear numerous times in the vestry book. See *Vestry Book of Christ Church Parish, 1743-1786*. For examples of other payments see November 19, 1770 (“cloathing”); November 22, 1764 (“keeping an Orphan”); November 4, 1751, November 20, 1752 and October 29, 1753 (“Subsistence”); and October 29, 1759, October 30, 1760 and November 7, 1763 (“relief”). On several occasions the vestry paid rents for those in need. See October 13, 1746 and November 22, 1764 for examples.

<sup>42</sup> Nelson, *A Blessed Company*, 78, 367, n.53. See *Vestry Book of Christ Church Parish 1739-1786* for examples of “Sallevating” (November 26, 1739) and “physick” (October 13, 1746). For “medsons” see November 6, 1741.

<sup>43</sup> Nelson, *A Blessed Company*, 75.

In May 1755, noting that “the number of poor people hath of late years much increased throughout this colony,” the Assembly gave vestries the right to construct poor houses “for the lodging, maintaining, and employing of all such poor people as shall be upon the parish.” The law permitted vestries to appoint one or more persons to oversee the house and put the poor living there to work.<sup>44</sup>

In November 1764 the vestry of Christ Church Parish authorized its churchwardens to “build a House or provide the same to receive the Poor of this Parish in & employ some Person to overlook them &<sup>c</sup>.” The poor house operated for the next decade, with the vestry paying several people to oversee the inhabitants and try to get them to produce cloth and other goods for themselves.<sup>45</sup> Christ Church was one of more than twenty Virginia parishes that constructed a poor/work house, but these never became the one-stop solution to the colony’s poor that legislators had hoped.

***Processioning Property Lines*** Every four years vestries oversaw the processioning, or marking, of property lines in their parish. As directed by Virginia law and the county court, vestrymen divided their parish into a number of precincts and ordered “two intelligent honest freeholders” in each precinct to walk and record the property lines of landowners (with the landowners themselves present). Processioners compiled their “returns” in a book that became part of the parish records. Christ Church Parish has its processioners’ returns from 1711-1783.

***Additional Duties with the County Court*** In addition to processioning, vestries undertook other duties in their relationship with the county court as a unit of local government. Although county courts appointed surveyors of the highways, the courts charged vestries with assigning the “hands” to clear and maintain these roads. During the 1720s, as Virginia attempted to regulate tobacco (by controlling the quantity and quality of the crop), vestries appointed “tobacco viewers” to inspect planters’ crops.<sup>46</sup>

***Parish Taxes*** Every fall, vestries across Virginia met to set their annual parish budgets. In line-item fashion, the clerk of the vestry listed the various parish expenses for the year and the amount paid for each in pounds tobacco. The vestry then divided the total expenses by the total number of tithables in the parish to determine the tax to be paid by heads of households on each poll (tithable person) in their household. The vestry paid the Lancaster County clerk of the court for copies of the tithables lists he compiled every year for the court.

The parish tax was consistently the highest tax Virginians paid each year. In most years it was more than twice that paid to the county, which was the other annual tax all freeholders paid in Virginia.

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<sup>44</sup> Hening, VI, 475-478.

<sup>45</sup> *Vestry Book of Christ Church Parish 1739-1786*, November 22, 1764.

<sup>46</sup> Nelson, *A Blessed Company*, 14. Bond, *Spreading the Gospel in Colonial Virginia*, 21.

The county figured its tax the same way as the parish, dividing total county expenses by total number of tithables to set a per poll rate.<sup>47</sup>

#### **What was a tithable?**

Many people today think of the term tithable in connection with tithing, or giving 10% of one's income to a church. In 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century England, the term tithe did mean a tax, to support the church and clergy, of one tenth of a parishioner's income in products like corn, hay, wood, wool, milk, eggs, and livestock, as well as profits from a man's labor and industry, primarily milling and fishing.<sup>48</sup>

In colonial Virginia, however, the concept did not mean one tenth of someone's income. Rather, a tithable was a taxable person, someone on whom a head of household paid taxes. The colony's legal definition of who was tithable changed a number of times over the 17<sup>th</sup> century. In its revision of the laws in 1705, Virginia established that all males age sixteen and over and all black, mulatto, and Indian females age sixteen and over who were not free were tithable.<sup>49</sup>

Virginians' most common tax was a poll tax, or a set rate per tithable person, paid annually to their parish and county and periodically to the colony. The county court compiled tithables lists for use in setting annual taxes. The parish and county each tallied its total yearly expenses and divided that figure by the total number of tithables (in the parish, county, or in years the Assembly set a tax, colony). That amount was what each head of household paid per tithable to the parish, county, and colony.

For example: A 40-year old free man (1 tithable for himself) living with his 36-year old free wife, 16-year old son (1), 14-year-old daughter, one male slave age 26 (1), one male slave age 8, one female slave age 22 (1), one female slave age 16 (1), and one indentured servant age 20 (1) paid six tithables. If his parish tax were 25 lbs. tobacco "per pole" (as it was often written), then he owed the parish 150 lbs. tobacco total.

The 1705 law on tithables required that children imported into the colony be brought into the county court by their masters (if the child were a slave or servant), parents, or whoever imported them to have their ages adjudged and recorded. The law also directed that justices post notices on church or chapel doors to inform residents of the location where the tithable lists would be collected for each precinct in the parish. On June 10<sup>th</sup>, each master or mistress (or their overseer or attorney in their absence) brought to the justices a list of those tithable persons in his or her household. The clerk of the county court posted these lists at the courthouse for everyone to inspect. Not reporting a tithable person was punishable by a fine of 1,000 lbs. of tobacco.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Nelson, *A Blessed Company*, 43-47. Virginians also paid a public or colony levy, but this was not an annual tax. See *ibid.*, p.348, n. 3.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 349, n.1.

<sup>49</sup> Henning, III, 258-261.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 258-261.

At a Vestry held for Christ Church Parish in Lancaster County the 19<sup>th</sup> Day of  
Nov<sup>r</sup>. 1770

| Christ Church Parish                                                                             | Dr                     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| To the Treasurers Mr David Currier for his salaries                                              | 16000                  |
| To 8 p <sup>ce</sup> on the said salaries                                                        | 1280                   |
| To James Vandy for his and reader at the upper Church                                            | 1400                   |
| To Bailey George for his and reader at the lower Church                                          | 1400                   |
| To Dale Warner for his of this Vestry                                                            | 600                    |
| To John Robinson for being sexton at the upper Church                                            | 700                    |
| To Elizabeth M <sup>r</sup> Griger for being sexton at the lower Church                          | 800                    |
| To M <sup>r</sup> Thomas R. Griffin for 6 lists of Tithables at 10 <sup>th</sup> p <sup>ce</sup> | 108                    |
| To Capt. Payne for cloathing Parish                                                              | 200                    |
| To Jesse George for cloathing Chan <sup>l</sup> Wood                                             | 200                    |
| To Wm Hains acc <sup>d</sup> . - 1- 16- 3 and                                                    | 1600                   |
| To Mr Myers - 1- 6- 0.                                                                           |                        |
| To M <sup>r</sup> B. Haynie - 6- 12- 8 <sup>h</sup>                                              |                        |
| To M <sup>r</sup> James Seldon - 2- 10- 0 for 4 Danb <sup>l</sup> Corn                           |                        |
| To Rob <sup>t</sup> Menning Jun <sup>r</sup> . - 2- 8- 0 for a Beef                              |                        |
| To Capt. Lapcott - 4- 2- 7 <sup>h</sup> - 18- 9                                                  | 200                    |
| To George Baster for cloathing M. Wilcox                                                         |                        |
| To M <sup>r</sup> Rob <sup>t</sup> Gilmour & - 2- 15- 0                                          | 15                     |
| To Peter Garton for 1 ewe overcharged                                                            |                        |
| To M <sup>r</sup> Mingo Harvey - 6- 0- 4 <sup>h</sup>                                            |                        |
| To M <sup>r</sup> G. Heale for his acc <sup>d</sup> . - 8- 13- 0                                 |                        |
| To Wm Scholfield Jun <sup>r</sup> for his acc <sup>d</sup> . - 2- 0- 0                           |                        |
| To Wm. Nichol for his acc <sup>d</sup> . - 2- 0- 0 - 48- 4 <sup>h</sup>                          | 400                    |
| To Eliz <sup>a</sup> M <sup>r</sup> Griger for keeping Betty Dayochill last year                 | 200                    |
| To Wm Scholfield Jun <sup>r</sup> for keeping Sarah Ann Mayne                                    |                        |
| To M <sup>r</sup> R. Mitchell - 0- 14- 9                                                         | 6000                   |
| To Rob <sup>t</sup> to be lev <sup>d</sup> for the above Cash                                    | 30- 18- 8 <sup>h</sup> |
| To 6 p <sup>ce</sup> on 29669 <sup>h</sup> lev <sup>d</sup> for the collection                   | 1086                   |
|                                                                                                  | 32809                  |

Christ Church Parish Vestry Records November 19, 1770 - Page 79  
Christ Church Parish Vestry Book 1739-1786 (original at Library of Virginia)

## THE VESTRY OF CHRIST CHURCH PARISH IN 1770

At A Vestry held for Christ Church Parish in Lancaster County the 19<sup>th</sup> day of  
Nov<sup>r</sup> 1770

| Christ Church Parish                                                                                      |                                                                                                   | Dr.<br>Tob <sup>o</sup> .   |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Salaries:</b> Minister, clerk-readers, and sextons at CC and SMWC. Sexton at CC is Elizabeth McGrigor. | To the Reverend M <sup>r</sup> David Currie for his sallarie                                      | 16000                       |
|                                                                                                           | To 8 P <sup>r</sup> C <sup>t</sup> on the said sallarie                                           | 1280                        |
|                                                                                                           | To James Newby Clk and reader at the upper Church                                                 | 1400                        |
|                                                                                                           | To Bailey George Clk and reader at the Lower Church                                               | 1400                        |
|                                                                                                           | To Dale Carter Clk of this Vestry                                                                 | 600                         |
|                                                                                                           | To John Robinson for being sexton at the upper Church                                             | 700                         |
|                                                                                                           | To Elizabeth McGriger for being sexton at the Lower Church                                        | 800                         |
| <b>Tithables Lists:</b> Vestry pays Lancaster County clerk Thomas Griffin for tithables (tax) lists.      | To M <sup>r</sup> . Thomas B. Griffin for 6 lists of Tithables a 18 <sup>th</sup> tobo            | 108                         |
|                                                                                                           | To Cap <sup>t</sup> . Payne for cloathing Patrick                                                 | 200                         |
|                                                                                                           | To Jesse George for cloathing Fran <sup>s</sup> Wood                                              | 200                         |
|                                                                                                           | To W <sup>m</sup> Rains acco <sup>t</sup> .                                                       | £ s d<br>1. 16. 3 and 1500  |
| <b>Social Welfare:</b><br>Payments for "Cloathing" and "keeping" the needy                                | To M. Myers                                                                                       | 1. 6. 0                     |
|                                                                                                           | To M <sup>r</sup> . B. Haynie                                                                     | 6. 12. 8 ½                  |
|                                                                                                           | To M <sup>r</sup> James Seldon                                                                    | 2. 10. 0 for 4 Barrels Corn |
|                                                                                                           | To Rob <sup>t</sup> Henning Jun <sup>r</sup> .                                                    | 2. 8. 0 for a Beef          |
|                                                                                                           | To Cap <sup>t</sup> . Tapscot                                                                     | 4. 2. 7 18.15.7             |
|                                                                                                           | To George Carter for Cloathing M. Wilcox                                                          | 200                         |
|                                                                                                           | To M <sup>r</sup> . Rob <sup>t</sup> Gilmour &                                                    | 0. 15. 0                    |
|                                                                                                           | To Peter Garton for 1 levie overcharged                                                           | 15                          |
|                                                                                                           | To M <sup>r</sup> . Mungo Harvey                                                                  | 6. 0. 4 ½                   |
|                                                                                                           | To M <sup>r</sup> G. Heale for his accot.                                                         | 6. 13. 0                    |
| <b>Accounts:</b> Payments for various goods and services to the parish                                    | To W <sup>m</sup> Scholfield Jun <sup>r</sup> . for his acco <sup>t</sup> .                       | 2. 0. 0                     |
|                                                                                                           | To W <sup>m</sup> Nicken for his acco <sup>t</sup> .                                              | 2. 0. 0 19.8.4 ½            |
|                                                                                                           | To Eliz <sup>a</sup> . M <sup>c</sup> .Griger for keeping Betty Day & child last year             | 400                         |
|                                                                                                           | To W <sup>m</sup> Scholfield Sen <sup>r</sup> for keeping Sarah Ann Hayse                         | 200                         |
|                                                                                                           | To M <sup>r</sup> R Mitchell                                                                      | 0. 14. 9                    |
|                                                                                                           |                                                                                                   | 38.18.8 ½                   |
|                                                                                                           | To tob <sup>o</sup> . to be lev <sup>d</sup> . for the above Cask                                 | 6000                        |
|                                                                                                           | To 6 P <sup>r</sup> C <sup>t</sup> . on 29669 <sup>th</sup> tob <sup>o</sup> . for the Collectors | 1886                        |
|                                                                                                           |                                                                                                   | <hr/> 32889                 |

**Tax:** Parish expenses ÷ number of tithables in parish = tax of 18 lbs. tobacco per tithable

|                                                                                                               |                  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| P <sup>r</sup> Contra                                                                                         | C <sup>r</sup> . |
| By a depositum in the Collect <sup>rs</sup> . hands last year after deducting 6 P <sup>r</sup> C <sup>t</sup> | 1334             |
| By 1749 tith <sup>s</sup> . a 18 tob <sup>o</sup> . is                                                        | 31482            |
| By a depositum to be p <sup>d</sup> . to the Colect <sup>r</sup> . next year                                  | <u>73</u>        |
|                                                                                                               | 32889            |

Ord<sup>d</sup>. that the Church Wardens sell the 6000<sup>th</sup> tob<sup>o</sup>. pay the cash Cred<sup>rs</sup>. and accot. for the same to the next vestry

Ord<sup>d</sup>. That Cap<sup>t</sup> James Kirk be appointed vestryman in the Room of Col<sup>o</sup> Wm Tayloe decd

Ord<sup>d</sup>. That the Clk of this Vestry give Capt Kirk notice to appear at next Court to Quallify himself

Ord<sup>d</sup>. That the Church Wardens make all necessary repairs to upper Church and bring in their acco<sup>t</sup>. to the next Vestry.

Ord<sup>d</sup>. That Joseph Shearman & Baylie George Collect the psh Levie & Pay the same to the Several Psh Crd<sup>rs</sup>. & give Bond & security to the Church Wardens for the faithfull performance of their duty

Ord<sup>d</sup>. that Rob<sup>t</sup>. Henning keep the poor of this Psh to make mend & wash for them for two thousand pounds of tob<sup>o</sup> the ensuing year

Ord<sup>d</sup>. that Mr. Jn<sup>o</sup>. Chinn & Cap<sup>t</sup> Hugh Brent be Church Wardens for the Ensuing year

John Chinn }  
Hugh Brent } Church Wardens

David Currie  
Geo Heale  
Merryman Payne  
Rich<sup>d</sup>. Mitchell  
Ja<sup>s</sup>. Ball  
M. Shearman  
John Fleet  
Nicholas Currell



**The Clergy: John Bell's Report** In 1724 John Bell, the third rector of Christ Church Parish, completed a report to his superior, the Bishop of London. This series of form questions and Bell's concise answers have left a remarkable picture of Christ Church Parish, a snapshot of how the parish looked and operated in its prime.<sup>51</sup>

The first four questions and answers in the report demonstrate some of the organizational issues facing the Church of England in its colonial outposts: John Bell had no previous experience as a rector and had not been inducted, that is, granted tenure in that post; he was, however, licensed as a missionary. Without a resident bishop in the colony, supervision of individual parishes by ecclesiastical authorities was intermittent at best and left room for power to be exercised, at different levels, by the lay vestry and the House of Burgesses.

*Q. How long is it, since you went over to the Plantations as a Missionary?*

A. Twelve years and four months.

*Q. Have you had any other Church, before you came to that which you now possess; and if you had, what Church was it, and how long have you been removed?*

A. No other church before I came to that which I now possess.

*Q. Have you been duly Licens'd by the Bishop of London to officiate as a Missionary, in the Government where you now are?*

A. I have been duly Licensed by y<sup>e</sup> Bishop of London to officiate as a Missionary, in the Government where I now am.

*Q. How long have you been Inducted into your Living?*

A. I-m not Inducted into my Living.

But John Bell lived in his parish, which was not always the case in colonial or even English parishes. His domain was extensive both in acreage and in the time it would take in conditions of the day to travel its length and breadth. He served 300 white families and as many black parishioners as circumstances allowed. Note that the bishop's 1724 form still asks about the number of conversions to Christianity despite the law passed in 1667 by the House of Burgesses disallowing baptism as grounds for emancipation.

*Q. Are you ordinarily Resident in the Parish to which you have been Inducted?*

A. I-m ordinarily Resident in y<sup>e</sup> Parish to w<sup>ch</sup> I have not been inducted.

*Q. Of what Extent is your Parish, and how many Families are there in it?*

A. 40 Miles in lenth and 8 in br[eath]. Families about 300.

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<sup>51</sup>Edmund Gibson, who had just been appointed Bishop of London in May 1723, sent the questionnaire that November to Church of England ministers serving in the colonies. The printed, two-page document contained a list of questions related to clergymen's time and place of ministry, the parish community each served, frequency of Divine Services and communion, and condition of the glebe. Gibson hoped their responses would help him attain a "competent Knowledge of the Places, Persons, and Matters entrusted" to his care. 28 reports from Virginia ministers survive, including John Bell's from Christ Church Parish. Each minister hand wrote his responses in the printed form.

*Q. Are there any Infidels, bond or free, within your Parish; and what means are us'd for their conversion?*

A. a great many Black bond men and women Infidels that understand not our Language nor me theirs: not any free. The Church is open to them; y<sup>e</sup> word preached, & the sacraments administred with Circumspection.

Bell portrayed a church filled with parishioners on Sundays and a good number of communicants on the holy days of the church year. He also had most of what he needed to provide a quality service. He did find it difficult to get to St. Mary's White Chapel as often as he might have wished.

*Q. How oft is divine Service perform'd in your Church? And what Proportion of the Parishioners attend it?*

A. Once evry Sunday & on Good Fridays; not so often indeed for W<sup>t</sup> Chapell by reason it is 20 miles distant, & y<sup>e</sup> weather sometimes bad: The Church is thronged and almost all whyte Persons in y<sup>e</sup> parish (not necessarily hindered) attend divine Service.

*Q. How oft is the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper administer'd? And what is the usual Number of Communicants?*

A. at Christmas, Easter, and Whitsunday. The usual Number of Communicants is about 60, 70, or 80.

*Q. At what times do you Catechise the Youth of your Parish?*

A. In Lent: would Parents, Mrs [Masters] & Mss [Mistresses] be admonished to bring y<sup>e</sup> Youth to Church!

*Q. Are all things duly dispos'd and provided in the Church, for the decent and orderly Performance of divine Service?*

A. all things; at Chr: Ch: especially: the surplice only excepted.

Bell told his bishop that Christ Church Parish supported his efforts with a living, i.e., a financial arrangement and a glebe, i.e., a real estate settlement.

A glebe was a parcel of land provided to the parish minister to help support himself and his family. The first glebes appeared in Virginia in 1619 and continued until disestablishment of the church after the American Revolution. The British king's regulations required that the glebe be a minimum of 200 acres and that the minister could call upon his parishioners to help with needed labor. A statute adopted by Virginia's Assembly in 1656 stipulated that funds to purchase the glebe and livestock would come from parish levies.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>52</sup>See Hening I: 400, 478-479; II: 30, 45; and III: 152.

By 1668, Christ Church Parish had acquired 839 acres to serve as its glebe.<sup>53</sup> The land was located south of the Church, along Carter's Creek. Exactly when a house was constructed on the property and which rectors, besides John Bell and David Currie, lived on the glebe is not known. If the minister was in residence, the house also served as a place for the extension of his religious duties including writing sermons and entertaining prominent visitors. Whether or not parish ministers lived on the land, they still profited from its cultivation.



*Q. Of what Value is your Living in Sterling-Money, and how does it arise?*

*A. Under 80£ p[er] ann[um]. It arises from 16,000 lbs. Arenok<sup>o</sup> Tobacco Levied on 1100 Tythables or thereabouts.*

*Q. Have you a House and Glebe? Is your Glebe in Lease, or let by the Year? Or is it occupied by yourself?*

*A. I have both a House & Glebe. my Glebe is not in lease, nor let by the year: but occupied by myself.*

*Q. Is due Care taken to preserve your House in good Repair? And at whose Expence is it done?*

*A. Due care is taken. at expence of both Parishes: or, (what they say comprehends both) of Trinity Parish.*

The bishop's questions did not give Bell the opportunity to mention all the assets of his parish. However, in Robert Carter's diary in December 1722 the following entry is evidence of an important outbuilding on the site: "I began the frame for my stable at the Church 16<sup>th</sup> of this mo [month]"<sup>54</sup>

The first record of a vestry house in the parish is in 1713. The inventory of Carter's estate lists the goods in the vestry house in 1732-33:

For the use of the Church Workmen  
Criss a Young Negro Wom. Cook  
2 ffeather beds, 2 bolsters & 2 pillows  
2 Ruggs & 2 p<sup>r</sup>. Blanketts & a Rugg

<sup>53</sup>The Parish had purchased 500 acres from William Chapman, who had patented the land in May of 1657. The other 339 acres came from an order of the General Court dated November 1, 1666. Governor William Berkeley formally granted the Parish all 839 acres in a patent issued September 29, 1668. See Nell M. Nugent, *Cavaliers and Pioneers: Abstracts of Virginia Land Patents and Grants*, Volume II: 1666-1695 (Richmond, Va., 1977), 47, and *Patent Book 6* (1666-1679): 182; see also "Notes from the Council and General Court Records, 1641-1672," *VMHB* 8, 3 (January 1901), 239.

<sup>54</sup> *Robert Carter Diary*, 18 December 1722, typed transcript in FHCC Research Files.

A large pott & hooks  
A Frying pan  
2 Pewter Dishes  
1 D°. Small bason  
8 Plates<sup>55</sup>

The bishop did ask about other responsibilities that Bell had, including the cure (or care) of other churches, the schooling of parish children and maintenance of a parish library.

*Q. Have you more Cures than one? If you have, what are they? And in what Manner serv'd?*

A. St. Mary's W<sup>t</sup> Chapell Parish is one more. served evry other Sunday, & on all occasions; as This. Their clark's they will have read y<sup>e</sup> Common Prayer; & an Homilie, or Sermon; in my absence.

*Q. Have you in your Parish any publick School for the Instruction of Youth? If you have, is it endow'd? And who is the Master?*

A. Not any publick School in my Parish for y<sup>e</sup> instruction of Youth.

*Q. Have you a Parochial Library? If you have, are the Books preserv'd, and kept in good Condition? Have you any particular Rules and Orders for the preserving of them? Are those Rules and Orders duly observ'd?*

A. Not any parochial Library.

John Bell's report shows an active parish with adequate facilities and good financial support. It implies that most parishioners attended church willingly but does not offer reasons for this.

## The Colonial Era Service

***Divine Service*** Sundays were a major event in the life of colonial Virginia. People of all sorts came together in their parish churchyards to exchange news and socialize with friends and relatives. They read notices posted on church doors,<sup>56</sup> shared information on tobacco crops or politics, and admired the latest fashions and goods imported from England. In a rural landscape such as Christ Church's, where vast tobacco fields and numerous rivers and creeks created a dispersed population, the church, like the county courthouse, served as a vital center of the community.

Philip Vickers Fithian, a New Jersey native who served as tutor in 1773-1774 to Robert Carter III's children at Nomini Hall in Westmoreland County, Virginia, provides several descriptions of church life as it played out in parishes across the colony:

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<sup>55</sup> Inventory of Robert Carter, typed transcript in FHCC Research Files.

<sup>56</sup> "Advertisement at the Church door dated Sunday Decemr 12<sup>th</sup> Pork to be sold to-morrow at 20/. Per Hundred." Hunter D. Farish, ed. *Journal and Letters of Philip Vickers Fithian: A Plantation Tutor of the Old Dominion, 1773-1774* (Charlottesville, Va., 1957), 29.

A Sunday in Virginia dont seem to wear the same Dress as Our Sundays to the Northward—Generally here by five o-Clock on Saturday every Face (especially the Negroes) looks festive and cheerful—All the lower class of People & the Servants, & the Slaves, consider it as a Day of Pleasure & amusement, & spend it in such Diversions as they severally choose--The Gentlemen go to Church to be sure, but they make that itself a matter of convenience, & account the Church a useful weekly resort to do Business. July 10, 1774

. . . three grand divisions of time at the Church on Sundays, Viz. before Service giving & receiving letters of business, reading Advertisements, consulting about the price of Tobacco, Grain &c. & settling either the lineage, Age, or qualities of favourite Horses. 2. In the Church at Service, prayers read over in haste, a Sermon seldom under & never over twenty minutes, but always made up of sound morality, or deep studied Metaphysicks. 3. After Service is over three quarters of an hour spent in strolling round the Church among the Crowd, in which time you will be invited by several different Gentlemen home with them to dinner. August 12, 1774

Divine Service usually began at 11:00 a.m. Parishioners took their seats as assigned to them by churchwardens, who placed them according to where they ranked in the parish community. Fithian observed that “It is not the Custom for Gentlemen to go into Church til Service is beginning, when they enter in a Body, in the same manner as they come out; I have known the Clerk to come out and call them in to prayers.”<sup>57</sup>

Divine Service proceeded according to the texts and forms of instruction found in the 1662 Book of Common Prayer. Lasting perhaps 1½ to 2 hours, the service consisted of the following:<sup>58</sup>

§ *Morning Prayer* – Confession, Absolution, Psalms, Collects, Lessons, Responses, Prayers, and Reading of Apostles’ Creed and Lord’s Prayer<sup>59</sup>

§ *Litany* – Petitions read by minister or clerk with congregational responses; supplications for those in power and for the spiritual and physical health of the parish community

§ *Ante-Communion* – Collects, prayers, responses, scripture readings; recitation of the Ten Commandments; collect for the monarch and royal family; reading of that day’s Epistle and Gospel lessons; recitation of Nicene Creed

§ *Sermons* – Only took place when the minister was present. Typically centered on one or two Biblical verses. Influenced by and portions often copied from published sermons by English clergymen like John Tillotson. Rational, reasoned “Discourse” that focused

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<sup>57</sup> Farish, *Journal and Letters of Philip Vickers Fithian*, 29.

<sup>58</sup> This description of the different parts of Divine Service comes from John K. Nelson, *A Blessed Company* (Chapel Hill, 2001), 187-199.

<sup>59</sup> Nelson says that lectionaries “prescribed the passages to be read on consecutive Sundays as well as those for daily use. This assured systematic and broad coverage of the scriptures; it also meant that on any given Sunday all across Virginia attendants heard the same texts.” *Ibid.*, 192.

on “Practical Godliness” and the responsibility to live a moral life in conformity with the natural order and harmony of the universe.<sup>60</sup>

§ *Closing Prayers*—Set out in Prayer Book.

***Public Announcements*** Following Divine Service, parishioners gathered at the church door to hear any number of public announcements. Clerks and ministers read marriage banns, notices of elections, calls for days of thanksgiving and fast, laws passed by the Assembly and proclamations by the governor.<sup>61</sup> With church attendance mandatory, pleading ignorance to a new law or order from the governor was not an excuse. Proclamations like the one William Gooch issued in August 1737 prohibiting the exportation of corn, wheat and other grain out of the colony contained similar language: “And to the end none may pretend Ignorance herein I do appoint this Proclamation to be forthwith Read and Published at the several Court Houses Churches & Chappels within this Dominion and that the sherifs of the respective Counties take care the same be done accordingly.”<sup>62</sup>

***Psalmody*** Parishioners in colonial Virginia did not sing hymns during Divine Service. Instead they sang the Psalms of David in metrical fashion, repeating each line as sung by the parish clerk. Advertisements for parish clerks, like one placed in the *Virginia Gazette* in August 1774 by Elizabeth River Parish’s minister Thomas Davis included signing psalmody in a list of qualifications for the position: “. . . none need apply, unless he produces a recommendation of his good character, who can read tolerably, and perform psalmody well.”<sup>63</sup>

Only five or six churches in the colony had organs, including Bruton Parish in Williamsburg and Stratton Major in King and Queen County. It was not until 1808 that the Episcopal Church adopted its first hymn book.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Nelson, *A Blessed Company*, 200-210. Robert Carter read Tillotson’s sermons on days he did not attend church. Carter’s view of religion conformed to these notions of reason and practical godliness: “the high flown <sup>up</sup> Top notions & the great Stress that is laid upon Ceremonies any farther than decency & conformity are what I cannot come into The reason of, Practical Godliness is the Substance these are but the Shell.” Robert Carter to William Dawkins, July 14, 1720. *The Diary, Correspondence, and Papers of Robert “King” Carter of Virginia, 1701-1732*, ed. Edmund Berkeley, Jr., [www.carter.lib.virginia.edu/index.html](http://www.carter.lib.virginia.edu/index.html). Fithian recorded sermons under twenty minutes, but Nelson says some surviving manuscripts from Virginia clergymen as well as printed sermons from the period could have run closer to 45 minutes to an hour. See Nelson, *A Blessed Company*, 420, n.48.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 194, 222.

<sup>62</sup> H.R. McIlwaine, ed., *Executive Journals of the Council of Colonial Virginia*, Volume IV (1721-1739), 473.

<sup>63</sup> *Virginia Gazette* (Rind), August 4, 1774, 3:2.

<sup>64</sup> Nelson, *A Blessed Company*, 193-194, 412-413, n.42-43. David Holmes, *A Brief History of the Episcopal Church* (Valley Forge, Penn., 1993), 100, 103.

*Communicants and Communion in Colonial Virginia* April 10, 1726 was Easter Sunday. Traveling up from Corotoman, Robert Carter joined his fellow parishioners for services at Christ Church, where they heard the Reverend John Bell preach an “Excell[en]t Serm[on].” After the sermon, Bell took his place at the altar to administer communion, a sacrament he and other parish ministers in colonial Virginia typically performed only three or four times a year. On this day, spots at the communion rail may have been unusually hard to come by, as Robert Carter reported in his diary “the greatest Numb[e]r of Communicants that ever I saw.”<sup>65</sup>

Such large numbers of communicants were not typical in colonial Virginia parish churches, and Carter’s diary entry reveals his surprise. As historian John Nelson illustrates in his acclaimed work *A Blessed Company: Parishes, Parsons, and Parishioners in Anglican Virginia, 1690-1776*, most Virginians and Englishmen alike did not take communion. “Communicants,” Nelson says, “were a minority of parishioners.” One explanation for such low participation, he suggests, could have been parishioners’ feelings of “unworthiness” and the fear of damnation that would strike those who took the sacrament without first repenting; others may have refrained as an “intellectual dissent” borne out of the Enlightenment and its faith in reason, not ceremony and superstition.<sup>66</sup>

Whatever the cause, ministers across the colony reported low numbers of communicants.<sup>67</sup> In his response to the questionnaire from the Bishop of London in 1724, John Bell, who served Christ Church and St. Mary’s White Chapel from 1712-1743, estimated his “usual Number of Communicants” at “about 60, 70, or 80.” Bell’s two parishes stretched forty miles long and eight miles wide and included some 300 families and more than 2,600 residents.<sup>68</sup> Many of Bell’s parishioners, of course, were children and slaves, both of whom were unlikely to take communion or even attend services. Children first needed proper instruction in Christian principles, and most enslaved people in early 18<sup>th</sup>-century Virginia were not Christian. On the three Sundays he typically administered communion—Christmas, Easter and Whitsunday (Pentecost)—Bell could count on only a relatively small percentage of his parishioners coming to the communion rail.

Even those enslaved who had embraced the Christian faith through baptism were reluctant to take communion. From October 1725 to July 1732, for example, John Garzia of North Farnham Parish

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<sup>65</sup> Robert Carter Diary, April 10, 1726. For Carter’s diaries and letter books, see Ned Berkeley’s excellent site, *The Diary, Correspondence, and Papers of Robert “King” Carter of Virginia, 1701-1732*, [www.etext.virginia.edu/users/berkeley/](http://www.etext.virginia.edu/users/berkeley/). For the average number of times communion took place annually in Virginia parishes, see George M. Brydon, *Virginia’s Mother Church and The Political Conditions Under Which It Grew*, 2 vols. (Richmond, Va. 1947-1952), I: 372-373 and John Nelson, *A Blessed Company*, 199.

<sup>66</sup> Nelson, *A Blessed Company*, 194-199. Nelson cautions against a blanket association of a belief in Enlightenment principles and a refusal to take communion. Virginians like William Byrd, a member of the Royal Society, and Robert Carter, who owned works by Newton and other Enlightenment thinkers and had a disdain for the Church of England’s exaggerated ceremonies, participated in communion.

<sup>67</sup> Brydon, *Virginia’s Mother Church and The Political Conditions Under Which It Grew*, I: 372-373.

<sup>68</sup> John Bell to the Bishop of London, *Fulham Palace Papers XII*, 46-47, Lambeth Palace Library, London. The 2,600 residents is an estimate based on tithable lists from Christ Church Parish and Lancaster County and other demographic research in the Historic Christ Church archives.

in nearby Richmond County baptized 354 slaves, including 103 owned by Robert Carter. According to Garzia, only eight of the 354 took the sacrament.<sup>69</sup>

Exactly what one had to do to become a “communicant” in colonial Virginia is unclear. The colony never had a bishop. Thus most Virginians, except for those who had been born in England or traveled there later, never had the opportunity to be confirmed. In *The Present State of Virginia* (1724), Hugh Jones acknowledged that Virginia’s special circumstances meant “persons are admitted to the Lord’s Supper there, that never were confirmed by the bishop.”<sup>70</sup>

Virginia’s ministers may have seen instruction in the catechism, coupled with a profession of the faith and a commitment to living moral lives through Christian principles, as sufficient (in lieu of confirmation) to admit persons to the sacrament. As a clergyman, Jones argued that if ministers had to give brief examinations to communicants “before their first admittance,” parents and guardians would make sure their children learned the appropriate Christian teachings. Such education, he argued, would help colonists “attain to better notions of religion” and lead more to partake of communion; as it was, Jones observed, many “abstain totally through fear or ignorance.”<sup>71</sup>

One of those who did not abstain was Robert Carter. In taking communion that Easter Sunday, Carter joined but a minority of his fellow Virginians in one of the church’s principal sacraments.

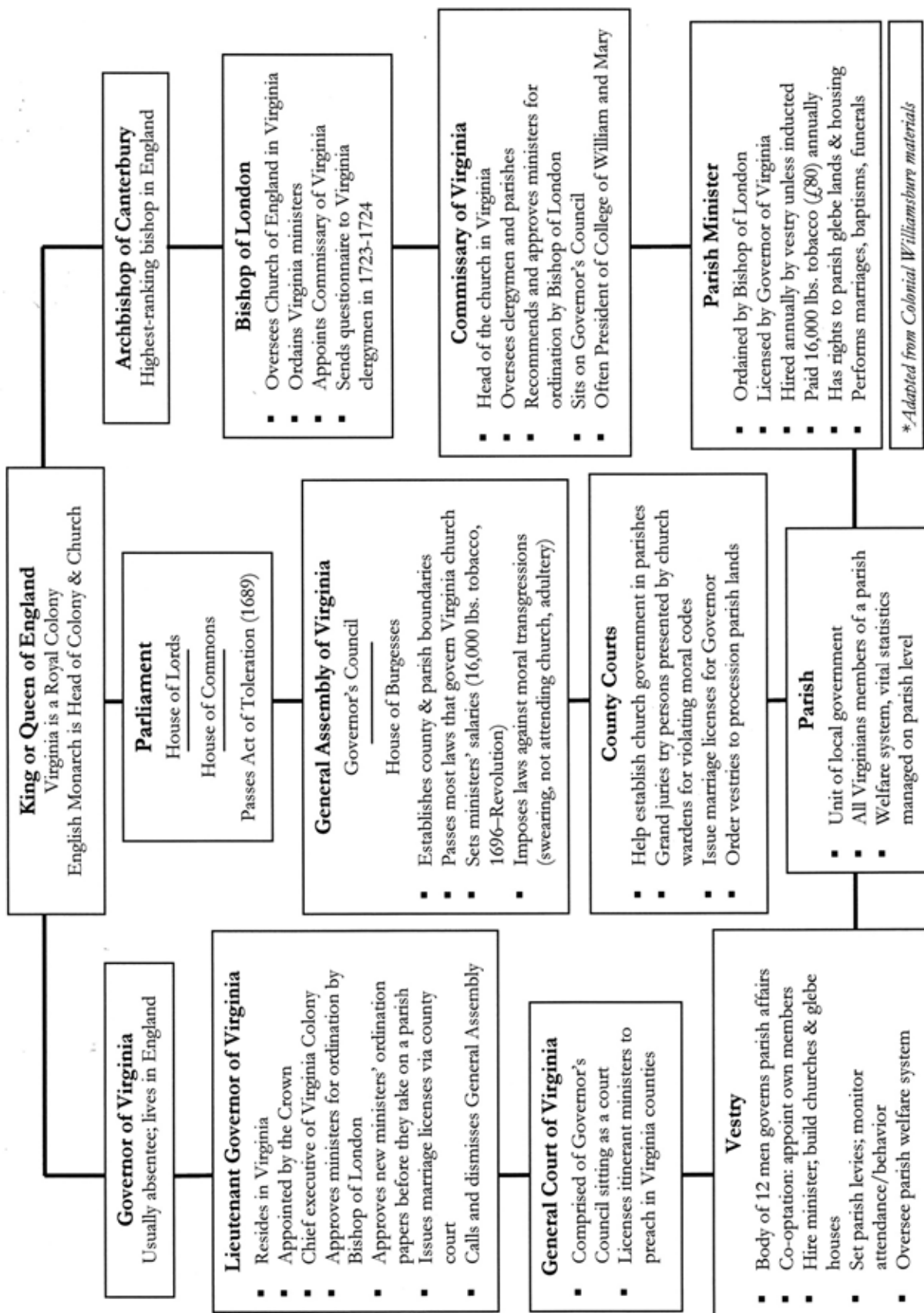
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<sup>69</sup>List of Negroes Instructed and Baptized by John Garzia, October 3, 1725-July 9, 1732, *Fulham Palace Papers XII*, 194-197.

<sup>70</sup> Hugh Jones, *The Present State Of Virginia*, ed. Richard L. Morton (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1956), 97.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid*, 97.

## Church and State in Colonial Virginia\*



**Parish/County/Colony: Who Did What?**

| DUTY                                    | PARISH | COUNTY | COLONY | NOTES                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|-----------------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Levied Taxes                            | X      | X      | X      | <i>Parish/County:</i> Annual<br><i>Colony:</i> As ordered by Assembly, which did not meet annually<br><i>Other taxes:</i> importation of slaves; liquor; quit rents on land                                               |
| Kept Ferries<br>Appointed Ferry Keepers |        | X      |        | Counties paid ferry keepers to operate<br>Assembly established rates and locations<br>Robert and John Carter operated Corotoman River Ferry                                                                               |
| Built Courthouses                       |        | X      |        | County levies fund construction<br>Lancaster County Courthouses:<br>1655 - John Carter helped plan<br>1698 - Robert Carter undertaker (Queenstown)<br>1741 – James Jones undertaker (Lancaster)                           |
| Built Jails                             |        | X      |        | 1698 – Robert Carter builds prison at Queenstown as part of his work with county on new courthouse                                                                                                                        |
| Maintained Roads                        | X      | X      |        | Courts appointed Surveyors of the Highway. Vestries appointed “hands” to work on roads.                                                                                                                                   |
| Maintained Bridges                      |        | X      |        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Ordered/Paid for Coroner Inquests       |        | X      |        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Paid Wolf Bounties to Citizens          |        | X      |        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Processioned Lands                      | X      | X      | X      | <i>Colony:</i> Per Assembly, courts to undertake every 4 years<br><i>County:</i> Ordered vestry to procession parish by precincts<br><i>Parish:</i> Appointed 2 freeholders to procession each precinct. Compiled records |
| Held Elections of Burgesses             |        | X      |        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Received Legislative Petitions          |        |        | X      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Appointed Tobacco Inspectors            | X      | X      | X      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Reimbursed Masters of Executed Slaves   |        |        | X      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Issued Marriage Licenses for Governor   |        | X      |        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |

| DUTY                                           | PARISH | COUNTY | COLONY | NOTES                                                                                                                                                                 |
|------------------------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Posted Marriage Banns                          | X      |        |        |                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Reported Those Who Violated Moral Codes        | X      | X      |        |                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Adjudged Slaves' and Servants' Ages            |        | X      |        |                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Recorded Wills, Deeds & Estate Inventories     |        | X      |        |                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Provided Relief to Poor, Sick, Widows, Orphans | X      |        |        |                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Bound Orphans Out to Learn a Trade             | X      | X      |        |                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Paid Burgesses to Go to Meetings at Capital    |        | X      |        |                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Hired Clergymen                                | X      |        |        |                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Authorized Building of Poor Houses             | X      |        | X      |                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Examined New Ministers' Ordination Papers      |        |        | X      | Governor and Commissary                                                                                                                                               |
| Heard Cases on Debt and Other Civil Matters    |        | X      | X      |                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Reported to Bishop of London                   | X      |        | X      | 1724 Virginia ministers' reports<br>Commissaries' reports<br>Governors' reports                                                                                       |
| Licensed Ordinaries and set ordinary prices    |        | X      |        | Court set rate for food, drink, lodging<br>Required to post                                                                                                           |
| Ordered Fences to be Kept Up                   |        | X      | X      |                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Compiled Tithables Lists                       | X      | X      | X      | Virginians reported every June 10<br>Clerk of County Court posted at courthouse<br>Parish purchased lists from county clerk                                           |
| Regulated Tobacco                              | X      | X      | X      | Court orders vestry to appoint "tobacco viewers."<br>Vestry appoints freeholders in each Precinct to inspect and count plants. Tobacco Inspection Acts of 1713, 1730. |



#### 4. Building Christ Church, Lancaster County

**The Parish Grows** Christ Church Parish in 1724 was a busy and active place, fulfilling many of its parishioners' spiritual and worldly needs. How did the Parish come to exist in the woods and fields of colonial Virginia? What gave it its shape and name?

The Indian territory of Chickacoan, located between the Rappahannock and Potomac Rivers, was formally established as Northumberland County in 1648. Lancaster County was formed out of Northumberland and York counties in 1651 and included lands on both the north and south sides of the Rappahannock River.

In the colonial period the House of Burgesses typically designated two or at most three parishes for each county. In 1657, Lancaster County was divided into two parishes—one on the north side and one on the south side of the Rappahannock River. Soon after, these parishes divided further, so that there were two parishes on the north side and two parishes on the south side of the river. The upper parish on the north side eventually became known as St. Mary's White Chapel. The lower parish took the name Great Christ Church Parish, but the "Great" was soon dropped. On the south side of the river, the upper parish became known as Lancaster Parish, while the lower was called Piankatank Parish. In 1666, Lancaster and Piankatank parishes united as one parish called Christ Church Parish. In 1669 Middlesex County was formed from the part of Lancaster County on the south side of the Rappahannock; this parish was referred to as Christ Church Parish, Middlesex County.<sup>1</sup> This left Lancaster County, now encompassing lands on only the north side of the Rappahannock, with two parishes—Christ Church and St. Mary's White Chapel.

Though Christ Church and St. Mary's shared the same minister and glebe, they considered themselves separate parishes. Each had its own vestry and churchwardens, but they met as a general vestry to consider issues related to both parishes, such as the minister, the glebe, and the glebe house.

Eventually, in 1752, Christ Church and St. Mary's petitioned the Assembly to unite as one parish. The Assembly concluded that no act of the legislature or order from the county court had ever created St. Mary's White Chapel as a parish or legally divided Christ Church Parish and thus the whole of Lancaster County was included in one parish—Christ Church Parish. A general vestry held on November 17, 1752 accepted the Assembly's report and formally united the two parishes as Christ Church Parish.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Charles F. Cocke, *Parish Lines: Diocese of Virginia* (Richmond, Va., 1967), 141-143 and 152-155; see also *Lancaster County Order Book*, May 8, 1661; January 11, 1664; September 9, 1668; "Extracts from Virginia County Records: Order by Lancaster County Court in Regard to Ministers, October 23, 1661," *VMHB* 12, 3 (January 1905), 289-290.

<sup>2</sup>H.R. McIlwaine, *Journals of the House of Burgesses 1752-1758* (Richmond, Va., 1908), 39, 77-78 and *Vestry Book of Christ Church Parish, 1743-1786*, transcribed by Margaret H. Tupper (Irvington, Va., 1990), 32.

**The 1670 Church** By 1669, when the parishes in Lancaster and Middlesex counties finally achieved their colonial-era outline, the first building to be called Christ Church, in Lancaster County, was nearing completion. Four years earlier, on September 23, 1665 the first parish vestry had met and ordered the construction of a church. It was built under the direction of John Carter I, the father of Robert Carter, and completed in 1670.

John Carter had also provided the land for the new church. The site lay in a 560-acre tract that John Carter had acquired in 1660,<sup>3</sup> which was originally granted to a shipwright named John Meredith on October 10, 1652, by Governor Richard Bennett. By April 1, 1654, Meredith had sold the land to George Marsh, a merchant. Marsh, in turn, sold the 560 acres to John Carter on March 14, 1660, as recorded in a deed by the Lancaster County Court.<sup>4</sup>

The basic facts of the creation of Christ Church Parish can be determined from county records; its colonial-era outline covered most of today's Lancaster County. But these records do not identify the location or the builder of the first church on the site. This information would have come from another source, one that is missing to this day: the first vestry book of Christ Church Parish.

The first vestry book for Christ Church Parish encompassed the period September 23, 1665 to February 8, 1759. This book disappeared around the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, but it documented some of the most important periods and events in the history of the parish. Most significantly, this vestry book would have described the building of the two churches that have stood on the site of Historic Christ Church.

Some documentary sources commenting on the first vestry book do survive and it is these sources that provide some of what is known about the early parish. They include a letter dated February 3, 1835 and sent to St. Leger Landon Carter of Cleve, King George County, by Joseph Ball of Ditchley, Lancaster County that reports the discovery of this vestry book in a collection of books once belonging to David Currie, minister of Christ Church from 1743 to 1791:

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<sup>3</sup> John Carter I first acquired lands in what became Lancaster County in 1642. This 1,300 acre tract included the "Corotoman" property which John Carter, as well as his sons, John II and Robert, used as their home plantation. Carter added another 300 acres to this tract in May of 1652, received as headrights (50 acres per person) for the importation of six persons. A renewed patent issued 24 January 1663 joined these 1,600 acres with 560 acres Carter had purchased. On October 12, 1665, by order of the General Court in Jamestown, Carter was granted some 4,000 acres for the importation of 80 persons into the colony, bringing his total land holdings, accumulated from 1642 to 1665, to 6,160 acres. See Nell M. Nugent, *Cavaliers and Pioneers: Abstracts of Virginia Land Patents and Grants, Volume I: 1623-1666* (reprinted, Baltimore, Md., 1974): 132, 256, 295, 504, and 536, and II:37.

<sup>4</sup>Nugent, *Cavaliers and Pioneers*, I 504, and Volume II: 1666-1695, 37. For the deed from Marsh to Carter, see *Lancaster County Deed and Will Book* 2:209. See also "Land Acquisition for 1670 Church" file in HCC Research Files. Special recognition goes to Joan Alford and Dr. Marcus Key, HCC volunteers, for their work in mapping John Carter's land grants and confirming that the site of the 1670 church was included in this 560-acre tract.

Dear Sir, There has been discovered among the books of the Revd David Currie, dec'd a record of Christ Church Parish, beginning the 23rd of September 1665 and ending the 8th of Feby 1759.

Ball's letter remains the best source of information available on the construction of the first church and John Carter's role in building it. The letter notes:

On the 23rd Sept 1665 the first vestry was sworn by John Carter Esqr.

2nd of December 1666 John Carter, Jr. sworn in. The first vestry had ordered a church to be built.

4th of July 1670 the church was delivered to the vestry by Capt. John Carter with the acknowledgement that his father had received 30000 pounds of Tobacco & casks for the building of the said church in full.<sup>5</sup>

These entries cited by Ball are supported by Bishop William Meade's references to the lost vestry book. Writing in 1857 in his *Old Churches, Ministers, and Families of Virginia*, Meade recalled seeing the first vestry book sometime around 1837, and again, he believed, some three years later. However, Meade states that the book disappeared shortly after this and, though searched for carefully, it could not be found.

In his discussion of John Carter's role in building the church Meade states:

The father, who died in 1669, had previously built, by contract, the first church standing on the spot where Christ Church now is, and the vestry received it at the hands of his son John, in six months after the father's death.<sup>6</sup>

**The 1735 Church** Joseph Ball's letter also notes, "The present church was built on the site of an older one, which was completed in the year 1670, under the direction of Mr. John Carter, the first of that name, and the great ancestor of many bearing that name in Virginia." There are no visible remains of this first church or the glebe of Christ Church Parish. The current church is the second to be built on the site and stands today much "as it came from the hands of its builders."

The decision to build this new, second church for Christ Church Parish was, as for any parish vestry in colonial Virginia, a monumental undertaking. Most often, the decision was the result of one or more factors such as a growing congregation and a deteriorating, older church building.

The vestry of Christ Church was motivated by a combination of these and other factors. The first church built for Christ Church Parish at this site, completed in 1670, was most likely a wood-framed structure. By 1730, its condition, notwithstanding any repairs the vestry had ordered over the years, may have warranted construction of a new church. As Dell Upton points out, most vestries

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<sup>5</sup>Joseph Ball to St. Leger Landon Carter, February 3, 1835, *Carter-Minor-Blackford Papers*, Box 8, James Monroe Law Office, Museum and Memorial Library, Fredericksburg, Va.

<sup>6</sup> William Meade, *Old Churches, Ministers, and Families of Virginia*, 2 Vols. (Baltimore, Md., 1966), II, 110, 117.

committed to building a new church “about once a generation,” with an average life span for colonial Virginia churches of about 36 years.<sup>7</sup>

At the same time, Bishop Meade noted, the parish’s population growth also played a role:

The church being too small for the increasing population, a larger one was meditated, and some change in its location talked of, when Mr. Robert Carter offered to build one at his own expense, saying that in consequence of his large possessions, increasing family, and number of tenants, he had intended for some time to build a larger one for the parish.<sup>8</sup>

Meade’s observations raise another motivating factor in the vestry’s decision to build a new church—Robert Carter’s offer to fund it. Typically, vestries taxed parishioners to raise the required resources for church construction.<sup>9</sup> Carter’s proposal to the vestry in 1730 to build the church at his own expense, along with his earlier bequests of £200 and more than 400,000 bricks for the church, undoubtedly convinced the vestry to move forward with the project.

Carter’s offer to build Christ Church reflected his desire to leave a monument to God, his parish, and its people. What is also significant, however, is what Christ Church said about the emerging values of early 18<sup>th</sup> century Virginia. The wood-frame church completed in 1670 was appropriate for an infant county in a developing colonial society. By 1730, however, a range of impressive brick structures, public (Capitol, Governor’s Palace, the college building at William and Mary) and private (Corotoman, Rosewell, the Thomas Nelson House), had sprung up or were in the process of being constructed around the Tidewater. In them, as in Christ Church—one of the most important of the new buildings—colonial Virginians expressed the ideals of hierarchy, authority, and order that men like Robert Carter had consolidated in Virginia’s government, religious, economic and social order.<sup>10</sup>

We do not know just when the church building was begun. We do know that it was completed early in 1735. In August of 1734 John Carter, Secretary of the Colony and an executor and the eldest son of Robert Carter, wrote to a London merchant that he hoped to finish the church soon after Christmas.

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<sup>7</sup>See Dell Upton, *Holy Things and Profane*. Upton shows that of the eleven churches known to have been built between 1660 and 1679, nine were frame construction. Throughout the colonial period, frame churches remained the most popular: From 1607-1789 there were 66 brick churches built, as well as 113 framed, 7 other, and 4 of unknown construction.

<sup>8</sup> William Meade, *Old Churches, Ministers, and Families of Virginia*.

<sup>9</sup> Upton argues that Carter’s legacy of £200 sterling would not have covered the roughly £800 sterling he estimates it cost to build Christ Church, though he is careful to point out it is unknown how much Carter’s family may have contributed after his death. See Upton, *Holy Things and Profane*, 15. In his will Carter bequeathed for the church building £200 sterling and 400,000 bricks that brickmaker James Bryan had produced in 1724-1726.

<sup>10</sup>See Rhys Isaac, *The Transformation of Virginia, 1740-1790* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1982): 34-68.

It is certain that Robert Carter never saw the church completed and probably never attended a service within its walls. But he did spend his last years causing it to be built as a living tribute to his God and to his place in the new society of Virginia.

**Who Built Christ Church?** *Visitors often ask, “Who built Christ Church?” —“Who was the architect?” —“Did slaves or indentured servants work on the building?” —“How long did it take to build?”*

Many people—some of whom we know and others we do not—helped Robert Carter build Christ Church. His sons John and Charles, free artisans like brick maker James Bryan, indentured craftsmen like glazier George Brackenrigg, enslaved carpenters and sawyers like Dick and Stephen, enslaved cooks like Criss and many unnamed others all played a role in creating this extraordinary building.

As far as is known, no one styled an “architect” was involved. Rather, Christ Church stands as the culmination of Robert Carter’s building career, one that spanned four decades and included courthouses, tobacco houses, wharves, mills, stables, slave quarters, mansion houses, overseer’s houses, outbuildings, and the church. Carter had the knowledge, experience, and resources to undertake a building the scale of Christ Church.

***Robert Carter the Builder*** By the time he began Christ Church in 1730, Robert Carter was an accomplished builder. Carter’s experiences as a youth provided his earliest understandings of architecture. He watched his father construct the first Christ Church when he was about six or seven.<sup>11</sup> From age nine to about sixteen, Robert Carter studied in London, where he observed Christopher Wren’s rebuilding of many of the capital city’s churches following the Great Fire of London (1666). In London, Carter saw buildings like Inigo Jones’ Banqueting House (1619-1622), which surpassed anything he had seen in Virginia. London’s buildings stood in stark contrast to those Carter knew at Corotoman.

Carter took on his first major building project in 1698 with Lancaster County’s second courthouse.<sup>12</sup> In November of that year, justices ordered the courthouse moved to a port (later named Queenstown) across the Corotoman River from Robert Carter’s home plantation. Carter agreed to build the new brick courthouse and jail for 45,000 lbs. tobacco. One of just a handful of brick

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<sup>11</sup> Three generations of Carters were involved with building courthouses and churches: Robert Carter’s father John helped plan Lancaster’s first courthouse, a frame structure built in 1655. John initially agreed to serve as undertaker, but court payments to William Neesum indicate he built the courthouse. Robert Carter built a courthouse and church for his parish/county, as did his son Landon Carter with Lunenburg Parish Church and the Richmond County courthouse.

<sup>12</sup> Carter was involved with a “new house” at Corotoman in 1690, but it is unclear if this was his brother John Carter II’s house or his. In John Carter II’s estate inventory, Carter notes among things he borrowed (“made use of...and not returned”) from his brother’s estate were lead for gutters and “some nailes for the Covering the Clossets at the end of the new house.” By terms of John Carter I’s will, John Carter II would inherit the Corotoman estate and Robert a thousand acres elsewhere. Carter had married Judith Armistead in 1688. Was he also building at Corotoman instead of on the 1,000 acres, or was he taking over a “new house” his brother had been constructing when he died? For John Carter II’s inventory see *Lancaster County Inventories and Wills, Number 8 (1690-1709)*, 22-29 and 32-34.

courthouses in the colony at that time, the structure measured 33 x 23 ft. with a 10-foot square porch. Paving stones lined its aisles and it had plaster walls.<sup>13</sup> In 1713 Carter constructed a tobacco warehouse and wharf at Queenstown.<sup>14</sup>

A year after beginning the courthouse, Carter was elected for a second time as Speaker of the House of Burgesses; the same year, he was also appointed treasurer of the colony. The capital had just moved from Jamestown to Williamsburg, and in 1699 the Assembly ordered construction of a new building befitting the new capital. As speaker, Carter led his fellow burgesses in their plans for a new “Capitol;” as treasurer, he oversaw the funds raised to finance this ambitious new building. Constructed between 1701 and 1705, it stood as one of the colony’s most impressive structures. Among its distinctive features was an arcaded piazza, which Carter would make a prominent part of his Corotoman mansion. The Capitol also included paving stones and newly stylish compass-headed sash windows, both of which Carter used at Christ Church.<sup>15</sup>

Along with his involvement in the Capitol, Carter’s time in Williamsburg drew him into other important building projects. In the summer of 1700, Carter received appointment to the Governor’s Council. With no state buildings yet constructed, lawmakers met in the “College” building (Wren building) at William and Mary, erected between 1695 and 1700 and rebuilt after a fire destroyed much of it in 1705. Carter knew the building well, both from attending Council meetings there and from his service on the College’s Board of Visitors. Along with sash windows and rubbed brickwork, the College included an arcaded piazza similar to those Carter added along his river façade at Corotoman.<sup>16</sup>

Down Duke of Gloucester Street Carter attended church at Bruton Parish. Built in 1715 to accommodate the bustling city and its government officials, students and visitors, Bruton became the colony’s first cross-plan church. Its compass-head sash windows, refined Flemish bond

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<sup>13</sup>*Lancaster County Order Book*, November 24, 1698. The prison was also brick and measured 16 by 12 feet. The court left some details, like the rails, bannisters, seats and King’s Arms, “to the discretion of the undertaker.” This courthouse would serve Lancaster until 1740, when James Jones built a new one at the present court house district. Carter was a justice of the court in 1698.

<sup>14</sup>*Lancaster County Order Book*, March 10, 1713/14.

<sup>15</sup>This was the first building in America to use the designation “Capitol.” For a description of the building and Robert Carter’s appointment as treasurer see William W. Hening, *The Statutes at Large: Being a Collection of all the Laws of Virginia*. . . (Richmond, Va. and Philadelphia, Pa., 1809-1823), Volume III, 193-194, 197-199, 419-422. See also Carl R. Lounsbury, *The Courthouses of Early Virginia: An Architectural History* (Charlottesville, Va., 2009), 116-117.

<sup>16</sup>James D. Kornwolf, “So Good a Design:” *The Colonial Campus of the College of William and Mary: Its History, Background, and Legacy* (Williamsburg, Va., 1989), 32-57, 73 n.55, 158 n.62. E.G. Swem, “Some Notes on the Four Forms of the Oldest Building of William and Mary College,” *William and Mary Quarterly*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Series, 8, 4 (October 1928), 217-237. The yard at the college also included the Brafferton, built in 1723 to house an Indian school, and the President’s House, the foundation of which was laid on July 31, 1732, only four days before Carter’s death.

brickwork and cross-plan design all influenced Carter's ideas about architecture and church building. Christ Church would become the colony's fourth cross-plan church in 1735.<sup>17</sup>

Carter also involved himself with smaller projects that were no less important to his daily business. His diary and letterbooks reveal that he sent craftsmen to repair buildings at the glebe, and he gave detailed instructions for work on tobacco, overseer and slave houses at his plantations.<sup>18</sup> He also acquired several mills in Lancaster and other counties which he rebuilt and repaired. By 1713 Christ Church Parish had built a vestry house, work that he no doubt oversaw and perhaps undertook in his role as churchwarden.<sup>19</sup> In December 1722, Carter began building a stable at the church site.<sup>20</sup>

Around 1720, Carter began building a new house at Corotoman. Completed five years later, the single-pile brick structure measured 90 ft. long by 40 ft. wide and rose two stories above a raised basement. A second-story gallery ran the full length of the river façade and sheltered an arcaded piazza embellished with a central pavilion and smaller end pavilions.

Rubbed brick pilasters, pediments, and arches highlighted doorways and windows. Marble mantel surrounds and delft fireplace tiles adorned the interior. Imported white and black marble paved the central passage, and the basement had an elaborate drainage system that directed water through tunnels into Carter's Creek to the east. The Corotoman complex included nearly twenty outbuildings: a brick house, storehouses, cellars, a kitchen and pantry, offices, dairies, cider houses, a spinning house, a blacksmith shop, coach houses, a slave quarter, a nailstore and a house at the landing.<sup>21</sup>

Carter also took an interest in building projects his children and in-laws were involved in, such as Rosewell in Gloucester County. As Carter was finishing Corotoman his son-in-law Mann Page was

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<sup>17</sup> Carl R. Lounsbury, "Bruton Parish Church" in *The Early Architecture of Tidewater, Virginia* (Williamsburg, Va., 2002), 5-7. Dell Upton, *Holy Things and Profane* (Cambridge, Mass., 1986), 81-85. "Bruton Parish Church—A Brief History," [www.bruntonparish.org/history](http://www.bruntonparish.org/history).

<sup>18</sup> Carter ordered "very good Cabbins" to be built for his slaves, instructing overseer Robert Jones to build slave beds "a foot and a half from the ground." He also ordered Jones to build the quarter and overseer's houses with lofts "not only for the warmth of the houses but to lay the peoples corn up in." Carter ordered Jonathan Shaw to repair the glebe kitchen in September 1723. In 1727 he directed overseer William Camp in Gloucester County to "take care that the Tobbo: house at rippon [Rippon Hall, York County] be very well built." See Robert Carter to Robert Jones, October 10, 1727; Robert Carter Diary, September 30, 1723; and Robert Carter to William Camp, July 15, 1727, Edmund Berkeley, Jr., ed., *The Diary, Correspondence, and Papers of Robert "King" Carter of Virginia, 1701-1732*, [www.carter.lib.virginia.edu/index](http://www.carter.lib.virginia.edu/index) (hereafter *The Papers of Robert "King" Carter*).

<sup>19</sup> The vestry for Christ Church Parish met at the vestry house on June 6, 1713. See *Christ Church Parish Processioners' Returns, 1711-1783*, p.14.

<sup>20</sup> Robert Carter Diary, December 18, 1722, Berkeley, Jr., ed., *The Papers of Robert "King" Carter*.

<sup>21</sup> Carter L. Hudgins, *The "King's" Realm: An Archaeological and Historical Analysis of Robert Carter's Corotoman* (Fredericksburg, Va., 1984). For Carter's inventory see Berkeley, Jr., ed., *ibid*.

beginning what became the most ambitious house in colonial Virginia. The three-story mansion featured two cupolas, exceptional brickwork and a full, classical entablature matched only by the one Carter would put on Christ Church. Carter's church would also feature large, compass-headed windows with keystones like those Page incorporated into Rosewell. Carter considered Mann Page one of his favorite sons-in-law, and the two surely exchanged ideas on architecture and construction. They may have even shared workmen. In his will, Carter left his daughter Judith Carter Page £300 sterling towards "furnishing" the house.<sup>22</sup>

With Corotoman complete, Carter turned his attention to another building project, this one in Williamsburg. In July 1726, Governor Hugh Drysdale died in the capital. As senior member of the Governor's Council, Carter became acting governor of the colony. Sometime in 1726-1727, he built a two-story house adjacent the Governor's Palace for use during his frequent trips to the capital.<sup>23</sup>

Back in Lancaster County, Carter's Corotoman mansion towered above most Virginians' small, earthfast houses. The mansion's extraordinary scale and refinement conveyed Carter's power and gave him an imposing space for entertaining guests and conducting business. It affirmed his status as a builder and proclaimed his position atop Virginia society—economically, politically, socially and architecturally. But in late January 1729, a fire destroyed the mansion and likely much of its contents, including Carter's stock of wine.<sup>24</sup> Robert Carter lived his remaining years in the "old house" he (or his brother) had built there around 1690.

After losing Corotoman, Carter decided not to rebuild but to work on one final project, a building he had been planning for several years and one that would leave an enduring legacy to his parish and family. In June of 1729, a sickly Carter wrote to an old friend in London expressing his desire that the two of them "make use of the remaining time God shall please to allow us to the best Purposes for his glory and our Comfort."<sup>25</sup> Carter used his remaining time to build Christ Church as a monument to God and a gift to Christ Church Parish.

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<sup>22</sup>Edward Chappell, "Rosewell," in *The Early Architecture of Tidewater, Virginia* (Williamsburg, Va., 2002), 19-20. For Carter's Will, see Berkeley, Jr., ed., *The Papers of Robert "King" Carter*. Like Corotoman, several of Rosewell's larger rooms had closets that contained small, inner rooms with fireplaces that offered space for privacy and study. In 1726 Carter's daughter Anne and husband Benjamin Harrison finished Berkeley, which featured pedimented doorways similar to Christ Church's. It is likely other buildings that Carter encountered in this architectural landscape, such as the Nelson House in Yorktown, with its refined rubbed and gauged brick frontispieces, also influenced him.

<sup>23</sup>Michael J. Worthington and Jane I. Seiter, Oxford Tree-Ring Laboratory, "The Tree-Ring Dating of the Robert Carter House, Williamsburg, Virginia," (December 2015). Carter became acting governor on July 23, 1726. It is not known if the house was already under construction at this point or not.

<sup>24</sup>Robert Carter to Micajah Perry, July 2, 1729, Berkeley, Jr., ed., *The Papers of Robert "King" Carter*. Carter noted the fire in a letter to London agent Micajah Perry in July 1729: "The terrible disaster I Underwent by Fire of which you will hear Among many Other great destructions consum'd All my Stock of Old wines Of which I had pretty good Store."

<sup>25</sup>Robert Carter to John Pratt, June 27, 1729, Berkeley, Jr., ed., *ibid.*

**Construction History** By the early 1720s, Robert Carter and the vestry had begun planning a new church to replace the one built by John Carter a half century earlier. One of Carter's first steps was to establish a brickyard in an area south of the church site. In September 1723, Carter agreed with brick maker James Bryan to construct the yard and make him 200,000 bricks by the following summer.<sup>26</sup>

The same month Carter agreed with Bryan for 200,000 bricks he wrote to his agents in London and Glasgow in search of tradesmen. Along with a "Barber Surgeon [who] Can Bleed & Shave & Dress Sores," Carter asked Micajah Perry to find him a bricklayer and "a good Carpenter that is Capable of Frameing a large building." Carter wanted the men to serve for five years, noting they "would very well Sute my occasions." With Corotoman well under construction and due to be completed by the time these tradesmen made it to Virginia, it is likely Carter wanted them for another large project, perhaps the church.<sup>27</sup>

In July 1725, Carter and Bryan contracted for another 200,000 bricks. Carter paid Bryan three shillings per thousand for Bryan "well making & well burning them." Bryan was to make Carter "as many as ever he can this summer & the rest next spring." Bryan's work continued into the summer of 1726.<sup>28</sup>

That August an ailing Robert Carter first signed his will. In it Carter set these bricks aside for use in the construction of Christ Church. He also included a bequest of £200 to help finance the building whenever the vestry undertook construction:

It is my Will and I do ordain that whenever the Vestry of Christ Church Parish shall undertake to build a brick Church in the place where the present Church Stands that there be paid out of my estate by my three elder sons & Extors the sum of two hundred pounds sterling money one half part of this money is to be paid out of my son John's estate the other half is to be equally paid by my son Robert & my son Charles out of their part of my estate this money to remain in my Extors hands until one half of the work is compleated provided alwaies the Chancel be preserved as a burial place for my family as the present Chancel is, and that there be preserved to my family a commodious pew in the new Chancel and it is my further Will that the bricks that are now made & burnt shall be appropriated to the Building of the said Brick Church or as many thereof as will perfect the building and likewise the bricks that shall be made and be there at my decease and if my son John shall have occasion to make use of any of the said bricks then he be obliged to make & burn as many more for the use aforesaid.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>Robert Carter Diary, September 12-13, 30, 1723, Berkeley, Jr., ed., *The Papers of Roert "King" Carter*, ibid.

<sup>27</sup>Robert Carter to Micajah Perry September 17, 1723 and Robert Carter to John Stark, September 17, 1723, ibid.

<sup>28</sup>Robert Carter Diary, July 2, 1725, March 28, 1726, April 2, 10, 1726, May 11, 1726, August 9, 1726, ibid.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid. Carter first signed his will on August 22, 1726. Originally, it contained some 27 pages; however, over the next four years Carter added four codicils: October 11, 1726; September 12, 1728; June 9, 1730; and July 23, 1730. These expanded the will to 40 pages. Carter died on August 4, 1732. The will was presented to the colony's General Court in Williamsburg on October 16, 1732, whereupon it was ordered to be recorded.



This bricklayer likely worked on the church alongside several indentured and enslaved craftsmen identified in Carter's estate inventory. Among the 17 indentured servants at Corotoman in 1732-1733 were carpenters James Robb and John Seaton, glazier George Brackenrigg, blacksmith Andrew Edwards, and bricklayers Lawrence Thompson and John Palley.<sup>33</sup> Carter's inventory shows the "Church Workmen" lived in the vestry house, where an enslaved woman named Criss cooked for them. The inventory also identifies at least nine of Carter's enslaved men as sawyers, five of whom, like Stephen from Indian Town Quarter, lived on plantations near Christ Church. These men would have cut much of the wood from the glebe land used to construct the church. Several of Carter's slaves, including Mulatto Billy who lived at Corotoman and Dick from Changelins Quarter, also worked as carpenters, and it is possible they also worked on the building.

In addition to bricks, money, labor and a plan, Carter provided building materials from his Corotoman estate. Carter's nail store contained an assortment of materials used in the church's construction: carpenter's and blacksmith's tools, rubbing stones, brick molds, bars of iron and steel, staples and nails, flooring brads, and sash glass.<sup>34</sup> From the ruins of his Corotoman mansion, it is likely Carter salvaged the Purbeck stone pavers from the basement and used them to pave the aisles of the new church (see "Stone Pavers" in Section VII: Additional Resources—Topical Papers in this book).

#### **Dendrochronology**

A 2012 dendrochronology study (analysis of tree rings to determine age) of the church's roof timbers dates the trees as saplings in 1511 – 1515 that were felled as trees in the fall of 1731 and spring of 1732.

Oxford Dendrochronology Laboratory, *The Tree Ring Dating of Christ Church, Weems, Lancaster County, VA*, 2010.

Carter's plans for carrying out rubbed work in the winter of 1731-32 and dendrochronology samples from the church's roof that indicate the timbers were cut in the fall of 1731 and winter of 1732 make it likely that when Carter died in August of 1732 the church's brick walls were going up or nearly complete, bricklayers were putting up the rubbed work around the doors, and carpenters were framing the massive roof truss system. Interior elements like the plaster

walls, pews, pulpit, sash windows, and altarpiece paneling and tablets would come next.

**Finishing The Church** After their father's death on August 4, 1732, John, Charles and Landon Carter oversaw completion of Christ Church. John and Charles ordered items for the

<sup>33</sup>Inventory of Robert Carter's Estate [1732-1733], Berkeley, Jr., ed., *The Papers of Robert "King" Carter*. Carter's inventory also lists Barnaby Burch as ship carpenter, but whether he would have worked on the church would appear doubtful. In February 1725 Carter described him as "an idle Roug ever Since he came here the work he has don hath not answerd." That July Carter took Burch and another servant (Archibald Campbell) to court for running away. Burch confessed "that he is totally ignorant of and unable to perform the trade & misteries of a house carpenter for which he entered into Covenant with his sd Master." The court added time to both men's terms of indenture for running away and ruled that Burch was "not to have or receive any wages Contracted for by his Indenture." In his diary, Carter reported that "Birch ownd himself no Carpenter that he ca[lled?] himself a Carpenter when he was bound by mr Perry he was adjudgd to be under the Circumstances of a Common Servant by importation." See *Robert Carter's Diary*, February 6 and 24, March 4, 18, 19, June 18, July 14, 1724/25 and *Lancaster County Order Book*, July 4, 1725.

<sup>34</sup>Inventory of Robert Carter's Estate [1732-1733], Berkeley, Jr., ed., *The Papers of Robert "King" Carter*.

church in 1733 and 1734 from London agents Micajah Perry and Robert Lidderdale. In the summer of 1734, John Carter wrote to Perry for “some things for the Church” which he did not identify. John lamented the building’s “very considerable” costs but took pride that there was “none in this Country to be compared to it.” He reported that he hoped to finish the church “soon after Christmass.”<sup>35</sup>

A newspaper account of Carter’s death also reported that he was constructing the church. Virginia did not have a paper until the *Virginia Gazette* began publication in 1736, but the *American Weekly Mercury* in Philadelphia printed this obituary:

Virginia, Aug. 24. We have the following Account from Virginia, of the Death of the Honourable Robert Carter, Esq; late President of the Council in Virginia, who departed this Life on the 4th of August, 1732, in the 69th Year of his Age, he died immensely Rich, he has left among his Children above 300,000 Acres of Land, and above 1000 Negros, besides 10000 Pounds in Cash, &c. He was building a very handsome Brick Church in his own Parish, at his own Expence, which will be finished by his Sons; and ‘tis said he has by his Will, ordered all his Debtors to be forgiven their Debts, and many other generous Acts he has done, being too tedious here to insert.

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<sup>35</sup> John Carter to Micajah Perry, September 4, 1733 and John Carter to Micajah Perry, August 8, 1734, in Lloyd T. Smith, Jr. *The Executors’ Letters of Robert Carter of Corotoman 1732-1738: Settling a Very Large Estate in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century* (Irvington, Va., 2010), 12-13, 16; Robert Lidderdale to Charles Carter, December 12, 1734, *Carter-Minor-Blackford Papers*, Box 8, James Monroe Law Office Museum and Memorial Library, Fredericksburg, Va.

### **Timeline: Robert Carter, Builder**

|           |                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-----------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1670      | First Christ Church completed.                                                                                                                                                     |
| 1672-79   | Robert Carter studies in London. Witnesses Christopher Wren rebuilding London's churches after the 1666 Great Fire.                                                                |
| 1690      | Carter works on "new house" at Corotoman, borrowing lead and nails from his deceased brother John Carter II's estate.                                                              |
| 1695      | Carter purchases mill in Lancaster County from Rev. Andrew Jackson and rebuilds it.                                                                                                |
| 1698      | Carter undertakes brick courthouse and jail for Lancaster County for 45,000 lbs. tobacco at what became Queenstown.                                                                |
| 1699      | Robert Carter elected Speaker of the House of Burgesses, appointed Treasurer of Virginia. Helps plan Capitol building at Williamsburg; oversees funds from taxes for construction. |
| 1695-1700 | College building (Wren) constructed at Williamsburg. Carter attends meetings there as member of colonial government.                                                               |
| 1705      | College building rebuilt following fire.                                                                                                                                           |
| 1713      | Carter builds tobacco warehouse and wharf at Queenstown.                                                                                                                           |
| 1715      | Bruton Parish Church, colony's first cross-plan church, completed. Carter attends church there while in capital.                                                                   |
| 1720      | Carter begins Corotoman mansion.                                                                                                                                                   |
| 1722      | Carter begins building stable at church site.                                                                                                                                      |
| 1723      | Carter establishes brickyard at church site; hires brickmaker James Bryan to make 200,000 bricks.                                                                                  |
| 1723      | Carter writes to London for tradesmen, including a bricklayer and a carpenter capable of framing a large building.                                                                 |
| 1725      | Carter completes Corotoman mansion.                                                                                                                                                |
| 1725      | Mann Page I begins Rosewell in Gloucester County.                                                                                                                                  |
| 1725-26   | James Bryan makes another 200,000 bricks for Carter.                                                                                                                               |
| 1726      | Robert Carter first signs his will: leaves 200£ sterling and bricks "now made & burnt" towards building brick church at site of 1670 church.                                       |

- 1726 Carter builds two-story house adjacent to the Governor's Palace in Williamsburg.
- 1729 Corotoman burns.
- 1730 Robert Carter proposes to build brick church at his own expense. Vestry accepts, gives Carter right to timber from glebe lands and use whatever of old church he likes.
- 1731 Robert Carter builds mill at Rippon Hall in York County and hires bricklayer from John Tayloe in Richmond County to do rubbed brickwork for church.
- 1731-32 Timbers for Christ Church's roof framing felled.
- 1732 Robert Carter dies.
- 1733-34 Robert Carter's sons John and Charles order items for church.
- 1734 John Carter writes that he hopes to finish church "soon after Christmass."
- 1735 Christ Church completed.

### 1670 and 1735 Churches: Construction Details

| Christ Church<br>Lancaster County,<br>Virginia | 1670 Church                                                                                                                                                                                    | 1735 Church                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Year Started</b>                            | First vestry of Christ Church Parish sworn in by John Carter on September 23, 1665. Vestry orders church to be built; unsure when construction begins                                          | 1730: Vestry of CCP accepts Robert Carter's proposal to build a new brick church                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Completed</b>                               | July 1670: Ball letter says John Carter II delivers church to vestry on July 4, 1670                                                                                                           | 1735: Robert Carter's son John says in August 1734 he hopes to finish church "soon after Christmass"                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Undertaker</b>                              | John Carter I<br>John Carter II finishes                                                                                                                                                       | Robert Carter<br>Secretary John Carter and Charles Carter finish                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Cost</b>                                    | 30,000 lbs. tobacco and cask (packaging tobacco)                                                                                                                                               | Robert Carter donates:<br>£200 sterling (1726 will)<br>400,000 bricks made 1724-26<br>Craftsmen<br>Materials and Tools<br>RC gets timber from glebe lands per agreement with vestry<br>Secretary John Carter orders furnishings  |
| <b>Craftsmen</b>                               | Unknown but likely mix of John Carter's enslaved and indentured labor force                                                                                                                    | <i>Free:</i> Brick maker James Bryan<br><i>Indentured:</i> tradesmen at Corotoman (glazier, bricklayers, carpenter, blacksmith)<br><i>Enslaved:</i> carpenters, sawyers, Chriss (cook for church workmen living in vestry house) |
| <b>Architectural Features</b>                  | <i>Construction:</i> Wood<br><i>Windows:</i> Casement<br><i>Floors:</i> Ceramic (Clay) Paving Tiles<br><i>Shape:</i> Most likely rectangular<br><i>Size:</i> not known but perhaps 40 x 20 ft. | <i>Construction:</i> Brick<br><i>Windows:</i> Compass Headed Sash<br><i>Floors:</i> Purbeck Stone Pavers<br><i>Shape:</i> Cross-Plan<br><i>Size:</i> 70 x 70 ft.                                                                 |
| <b>Churches from same period or style</b>      | - St. Mary's White Chapel (1669)<br>- St. Luke's (1682; brick)<br>- Jamestown (1639/76; brick)<br>- Bruton Parish (1681-83; brick)<br>- Poplar Spring (1677; frame)                            | Bruton Parish (1715; first cross-plan church in Virginia)                                                                                                                                                                        |



## 5. Dissent, Revolution and Disestablishment

Over the 18<sup>th</sup> century, dramatic changes swept across Virginia's religious landscape. What was a royal colony with few dissenters and a well-established Church of England became an independent commonwealth that declared religious freedom to be a natural right of mankind.

Disestablishment was a long and contentious process, pitting different groups of Virginians against one another in dramas played out in the General Assembly, the Governor's Palace, parish churches, courthouses, meetinghouses, outdoor preaching stations, slave quarters, jails and everyday households. Dissenters' struggles for religious liberty became an important part of the Revolution, bringing about a radical social transformation and an end to Virginia's religious establishment not seen in any of the other colonies.<sup>36</sup>

**Act of Toleration (1689)** For much of the 17<sup>th</sup> century and into the early 18<sup>th</sup>, the Church of England encountered little opposition except for a few small communities of Puritans and Quakers.<sup>37</sup> In 1689 England passed the Act of Toleration, which allowed Protestant dissenters to establish their own places of worship and use their own ministers. Toleration, not religious freedom, was the key: Meetinghouses and dissenting ministers had to be registered and licensed, and dissenters still had to pay parish taxes.<sup>38</sup> The act excluded Catholics and Quakers, and dissenters were still barred from holding public office. In the colony, Virginians debated whether and to what extent the Act of Toleration applied, but Presbyterian ministers early on began using it to petition for the right to set up meetinghouses.<sup>39</sup>

**Great Awakening** In 1739, the evangelical Church of England minister George Whitefield arrived in America to begin his first preaching tour of the colonies, igniting what would become known as the Great Awakening. Characterized by emotional, "enthusiastik" preaching and the importance of a "new birth" conversion experience, the Great Awakening grew into a cultural movement that challenged the Church of England's authority and traditional role in Virginia society.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>36</sup>Rhys Isaac, *The Transformation of Virginia, 1740-1790* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1982), 148-295 and 310-321.

<sup>37</sup>Kevin Butterfield, "Puritans and Religious Strife in the Early Chesapeake," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 109, 1 (2001): 5-36. Edward Bond, ed., *Spreading the Gospel in Colonial Virginia: Preaching Religion and Community* (Lanham, Md.; Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 2005), 28-30.

<sup>38</sup>Robert Beverley, *The History and Present State of Virginia*, ed. Louis B. Wright (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1947; reprint, Charlottesville, Va., 1968), 261. Robert Beverley declared that "The People are generally of the Church of *England*, which is the Religion establish by Law in that Country, from which there are very few Dissenters. Yet liberty of Conscience is given to all other Congregations pretending to Christianity, on condition they submit to all Parish Duties."

<sup>39</sup>Thomas S. Kidd, "Act of Toleration (1689)," (2016, October 25), in *Encyclopedia Virginia*. [www.EncyclopediaVirginia.org/Act\\_of\\_Toleraton\\_1689](http://www.EncyclopediaVirginia.org/Act_of_Toleraton_1689). In 1699 Presbyterian Francis Makemie in Accomack County became the first dissenter minister to receive a license to preach in Virginia under the Toleration Act.

<sup>40</sup>Thomas S. Kidd, *The Great Awakening: The Roots of Evangelical Christianity in Colonial America* (New Haven, Conn., 2007), 40-54. Kidd, "The Great Awakening in Virginia," (2013, July 11), in *Encyclopedia Virginia*. [www.EncyclopediaVirginia.org](http://www.EncyclopediaVirginia.org)

A focal point for dissenters became Hanover County, where in 1743 bricklayer Samuel Morris led a group of worshippers who began skipping services at their local Anglican churches and meeting in their own houses. In 1747 the followers got Samuel Davies, a Presbyterian clergyman from Pennsylvania, to serve as their minister. Davies obtained licenses for a number of meetinghouses and would spend more than a decade spreading the faith of his “New Light” Presbyterians across Virginia. He would come to Lancaster County in 1757.<sup>41</sup>

At first, officials did little to check Presbyterians in Hanover and several surrounding counties other than fine them for non-attendance at parish churches. As the movement grew, however, and Samuel Davies and others secured licenses for more than a half dozen meetinghouses, leading clergymen and government officials became alarmed. Governor William Gooch and Church of England defenders saw “itinerant” ministers like Davies as “false teachers” who drew people away from the established church and threatened the traditional authority and social order it embodied.<sup>42</sup> They argued the Toleration Act only allowed a dissenting minister license for *one* meetinghouse instead of any number he wished to serve as an itinerant. Gooch issued proclamations against itinerant ministers, and the General Court revoked a license granted to a New Kent County meetinghouse. This battle over licenses would come to Lancaster County in 1757.

While Presbyterians gradually gained acceptance in Virginia society, the Separate Baptists who followed them emerged as a distinctive counterculture to the Anglican establishment. Baptists advocated baptism not of infants—like the Church of England—but rather of persons old enough to make the choice themselves and by full immersion. Thousands gathered at their emotional, communal services where “hearers” rejoiced spontaneously, wept openly, convulsed and sang. Baptists rejected the idea that the state had any authority over religious matters; the Bible provided the sole authority they needed to preach and worship. Many did not request licenses to preach and were fined, beaten and put in jail, where they preached from windows to congregations gathered outside despite authorities’ best efforts to deter them.<sup>43</sup>

Baptists also rejected the ostentation of gentry culture and its displays of horseracing, card playing, gambling and cockfighting. They referred to each other—black and white—as brothers and sisters, drawing converts from the common sorts and the enslaved through a more egalitarian religious

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/ Great\_Awakening\_in\_Virginia\_The. Whitefield had visited Savannah in 1738.

<sup>41</sup>Isaac, *The Transformation of Virginia, 1740-1790*, 147-157.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., 149-152. Isaac argues that itinerancy was “anathema” to the traditional authority conferred on Anglican clergymen. Bond, ed., *Spreading the Gospel in Colonial Virginia*, 37-39.

<sup>43</sup>Isaac, *The Transformation of Virginia, 1740-1790*, 161-163. Kidd, *The Great Awakening: The Roots of Evangelical Christianity in Colonial America*, 246-249. Jewel Spangler, “Baptists in Colonial Virginia,” (2012, January 20), in *Encyclopedia Virginia*. [www.EncyclopediaVirginia.org/Baptists\\_in\\_Colonial\\_Virginia](http://www.EncyclopediaVirginia.org/Baptists_in_Colonial_Virginia). Opponents of Baptist minister James Ireland urinated on him as he tried to preach.

community than that articulated in parish church buildings like Christ Church. Baptists grew rapidly: in 1769 only seven congregations existed in Virginia; by 1774 there were some 54.<sup>44</sup>

By the Revolution, dissenters made up anywhere from one-fifth to one-third of Virginia's population.<sup>45</sup> The war gave dissenters, especially the Baptists, the opportunity to push for greater religious freedoms. But as late as 1782—a year after the American victory at Yorktown—the Assembly still imposed restrictions on dissenting clergymen's right to perform marriages and the established church continued to enjoy special privileges guaranteed by the legislature.<sup>46</sup> It would take until the early 19<sup>th</sup> century to completely disestablish the church in Virginia.

***Virginia Declaration of Rights (1776)*** The Revolution created a new political culture in Virginia that helped end the established church and bring forth religious liberty. In May 1776, delegates to the fifth Virginia Convention met at Williamsburg. Along with drafting a constitution for Virginia and instructing representatives to the Continental Congress to propose a declaration of independence from Great Britain, on June 12 the Convention adopted the Virginia Declaration of Rights. Article XVI guaranteed the “free exercise of religion, according to the dictates of conscience.” Though it did not abolish the established church, it did halt prosecutions on religious grounds and it removed religious beliefs from qualifications for office holding.<sup>47</sup>

Article XVI encouraged dissenters to petition for complete religious liberty. When Virginia's first independent legislature met that October in Williamsburg, petitions poured in from Baptists, Presbyterians and others calling for the end of religious taxation and dissolution of the established church.<sup>48</sup> Petitioners from Prince Edward County cited Article XVI as “the rising Sun of religious Liberty, to relieve us from a long Night of ecclesiastic Bondage.” They demanded that Virginia's lawmakers “pull down all Church Establishments [and] Abolish every Tax upon Conscience and private Judgment.” That session the Assembly passed a bill that suspended taxation for ministers' salaries and exempted dissenters from all taxes to support the established church.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>44</sup>Kidd, *The Great Awakening: The Roots of Evangelical Christianity in Colonial America*, 247. Bond, ed., *Spreading the Gospel in Colonial Virginia*, 41. Isaac, *The Transformation of Virginia, 1740-1790*, 173.

<sup>45</sup>John Ragosta, *Wellspring of Liberty: How Virginia's Religious Dissenters Helped Win the American Revolution and Secured Religious Liberty*, (New York, 2010), 20.

<sup>46</sup>Ragosta, “Virginia Statute for Establishing Religious Freedom (1786),” (2014, July 2), in *Encyclopedia Virginia*. [www.EncyclopediaVirginia.org/Virginia\\_Statute\\_for\\_Establishing\\_Religious\\_Freedom\\_1786](http://www.EncyclopediaVirginia.org/Virginia_Statute_for_Establishing_Religious_Freedom_1786).

<sup>47</sup>Isaac, *The Transformation of Virginia, 1740-1790*, 279-280.

<sup>48</sup>*Ibid.*, 280, 292. One petition “Subscribed by near 10,000 Freemen” asked that the ecclesiastical “yoke may be broken, and that the oppressed may go free.”

<sup>49</sup>*Ibid.*, 281. Hening IX, 164-165. Virginia's Religious Petitions may be found at [www.virginiamemory.com/collections/petitions](http://www.virginiamemory.com/collections/petitions) and [www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/connections/early-virginia/](http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/connections/early-virginia/).

## **General Assessment Debates (1784-1785)**

### ***Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom (1786)***

Virginians had debated a general assessment since the Assembly suspended religious taxation in October 1776. Under this plan, citizens were taxed not to support one established church but rather ministers from all Christian denominations, with each person free to choose which religious group received his payments.

Proponents argued that since the Revolution and the end of state support of religion, public morality and virtue had declined considerably. Some form of financial support for religion would benefit society by promoting morality, social order, and stability. Opponents countered that religion, and the morality and virtue it promoted, could only prosper if freed from all civil control.

The debate intensified in 1784 when Patrick Henry sponsored an assessment bill “Establishing a Provision for Teachers of the Christian Religion.” Henry’s bill almost passed initially, but opponents led by James Madison delayed a final reading until November 1785. By that point, Madison’s landmark “Memorial and Remonstrance against Religious Assessments” had helped mobilize public opinion against the bill, which died quickly in the House.

Madison seized the opportunity to reintroduce Thomas Jefferson’s *A Bill for Establishing Religious Freedom*, which Jefferson had first drafted in 1777.<sup>50</sup> On January 16, 1786 the Assembly adopted Jefferson’s bill, known today as the *Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom*.

**Glebe Act (1802)** Despite the *Virginia Declaration of Rights* Article XVI and the end of religious taxation, the established church—now the Protestant Episcopal of Virginia—still enjoyed special privileges. In 1784 the Assembly had incorporated the church and reaffirmed its property rights in glebe lands, churches, books, silver and other holdings. A year after Jefferson’s *Statute for Religious Freedom*, however, the Assembly repealed this act.<sup>51</sup>

Virginians now debated who should be the rightful owner of these properties. Led by the Baptists, dissenters argued that church properties had been purchased, constructed and maintained by public taxation under colonial rule. With the end of establishment and formation of an independent state, these should revert to the people of Virginia. By giving them to the Episcopal Church, the Assembly had unfairly transferred property owned by the people to one religious group. Opponents countered that glebe lands were private property guaranteed to the Episcopal Church under Virginia laws.<sup>52</sup>

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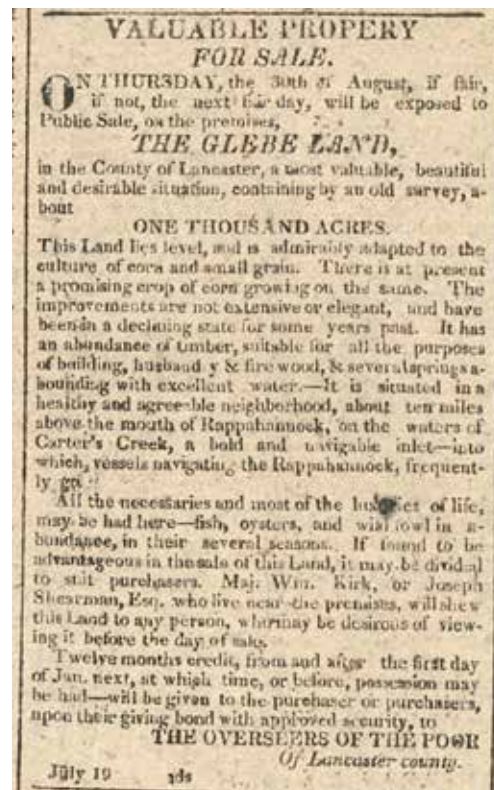
<sup>50</sup>Ragosta, “Virginia Statute for Establishing Religious Freedom (1786),” (2014, July 2), in *Encyclopedia Virginia*. [www.EncyclopediaVirginia.org/Virginia\\_Statute\\_for\\_Establishing\\_Religious\\_Freedom\\_1786](http://www.EncyclopediaVirginia.org/Virginia_Statute_for_Establishing_Religious_Freedom_1786).

<sup>51</sup>Thomas E. Buckley, “Evangelicals Triumphant: The Baptists’ Assault on the Virginia Glebes, 1786-1801,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 45, 1 (January 1988), 36-48. See also George M. Brydon, *Virginia’s Mother Church and the Political Conditions Under Which It Grew*, II, 492-512; Appendix VIII, 603-608, 623.

<sup>52</sup>Buckley, “Evangelical Triumphant,” 38. Baptists argued this violated the fourth article of Virginia’s *Declaration of Rights*, which stated that “no man or set of men, are entitled to exclusive or separate emoluments or privileges from the community, but in consideration of public services.” In November 1786, members of Christ Church Parish petitioned

In January 1802, Virginia passed the *Glebe Act*. The act authorized the confiscation and sale of glebe lands and buildings by county officials known as the Overseers of the Poor in parishes already vacant or upon the resignation or death of an incumbent minister. Only the lands and buildings considered part of the glebe were affected: churches, churchyards, books, communion silver, and other ornaments were excluded.<sup>53</sup>

The *Glebe Act* led to the collapse of Virginia's Episcopal Church. As glebe lands were confiscated, many vestries and their congregations dissolved after finding themselves unable to support their ministers. Numerous churches suffered in the wake of the *Glebe Act*. Many were plundered or taken over by other denominations as they, too, came to be seen as public property once abandoned by Episcopalian congregations.<sup>54</sup>



The end of Christ Church's glebe came in 1815. That year, Lancaster County's Overseers of the Poor put the land up for sale, advertising it in the *[Richmond] Enquirer* as "a most valuable, beautiful and desirable situation." In the spring of 1816, Walter B. Waddey purchased the land for

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the Virginia legislature against the proposed *Glebe Act*, arguing their glebe land had been a "free Gift" and should stay with the parish. They pointed out that a minister had used the glebe ever since it first became parish property, and that since repairs to the buildings in the 1740s, there had been little cost to the parish to maintain the glebe.

<sup>53</sup>See Buckley, "Evangelicals Triumphant," 50-54. See also Brydon, *Virginia's Mother Church*, II, 501-503, 509 n. 23; Appendix IX, 642. Overseers of the Poor replaced churchwardens as heads of the county's welfare program following disestablishment.

<sup>54</sup>Holmes, *A Brief History of the Episcopal Church*, 24-26.

\$7,169.40.<sup>55</sup> The nearly 160-year-old relationship between Christ Church Parish and its glebe was over.

**Dissent and Disestablishment in Lancaster County** Change came to Christ Church Parish in 1757. That May, John Mitchell and Thomas Carter, with the backing of Presbyterian minister Samuel Davies, informed the Lancaster County court of their intention to build a meetinghouse on Mitchell's land as permitted under England's *Toleration Act* of 1689. Though the court initially recorded the petition, less than a year later it reversed itself and said the *Toleration Act* was an act of Parliament only, not the Virginia Assembly, and therefore was not binding in the colony. Arguing that the petition had been approved "Unadvisedly and by Surprise" and that the meetinghouse would cause "Great Divisions and Confusion" in the county, the court in April 1758 prohibited anyone from constructing such a building.

Leading Lancaster County's opposition to the meetinghouse was Edwin Conway (1681-1763), a prominent planter and former vestryman, justice of the peace and member of the House of Burgesses. On March 3, 1758, Conway wrote Williamsburg officials about Samuel Davies, who had come to preach in Lancaster County after helping Mitchell and Carter petition the court for permission to build a meetinghouse. Conway warned of the "evil consequence" of Davies' preaching, hinting that his work with slaves fostered insurrection.

Conway argued he knew of but two dissenters in the county, and even they had taken Holy Communion in the parish church. In a petition drafted to the General Assembly around this same time, Conway and other Lancaster residents said dissenters' preaching had "Occasion'd Contention & great uneasiness among the People." They feared this "Dissension may be the fore-runner of Rebellion; a fatal Consequence!"<sup>56</sup>

Conway helped rally opposition against the Presbyterians. Two weeks after his letter to Dawson, the Lancaster County court revoked the license for the meeting house. Within a few years, however, opposition waned and Presbyterians built a meetinghouse near Lancaster courthouse.

Threatened by what he saw as a dangerous challenge to the traditional social and religious order, Christ Church Parish's minister, David Currie, who served from 1743 to 1791 as the fourth colonial-era minister, defended the established church in the face of increasing Presbyterian sentiment in Lancaster County. Presbyterians' rapid growth had alarmed Currie and John Leland, minister at Wicomico parish in Northumberland County, who long feared such powerful dissent would "give a

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<sup>55</sup>[*Richmond*] *Enquirer*, July 15, 1815. For Wadley's purchase of the glebe tract, see *Lancaster County Deed Book* 26: 154 and Glebe research report in files of HCC Research Room.

<sup>56</sup>Edwin Conway to Commissary Thomas Dawson, March 3, 1758, *Dawson Papers, Manuscripts and Rare Books*, College of William and Mary; Edwin Conway, Richard Boatman and Richard Lewis petition to the General Assembly 1758 (transcription of original by Wesley M. Gewehr), Library of Virginia.

mortal wound to the purest and most edifying Worship of the Church of England.”<sup>57</sup> In a letter to Thomas Dawson, Commissary to the Bishop of London, Currie and Leland observed that the “Progress of this new Sect, as we may call them, in this Part of the Country, has been so rapid, that in Lancaster County a meetinghouse is actually a building of 60 feet by 30. . . .” They argued that only a handful of people there had been raised as Presbyterians and thus Davies was intent on “drawing off the People from their established Church” and their “Lawful Pastors.”<sup>58</sup>

As the appeal of Presbyterianism grew, so too did the critics of the established church and its clergy. A resident of the Northern Neck reported that since Davies started preaching in the area, he had “heard more said against the Bishops & Clergy of the Church of England, than ever he had against the Bishop of Rome.” Many felt the Anglican clergy had become deficient in both its morality and religious doctrines.<sup>59</sup> Currie argued this was due to the “Arts and Insinuations” of those who had attacked the clergy as a whole for the flaws and shortcomings of a few. At the same time, the emotional and communal nature of Davies’ evangelicalism attracted many who rejected the formalized ceremonies and hierarchy of the established church. One of Currie’s parishioners lambasted his “weakness and absurdity” for his attempts “to explain things which are mysteries, and consequently, incomprehensible, and above all explanation.” He suggested Currie promote the morality and virtue embodied in Christ instead.<sup>60</sup>

One of Currie’s biggest critics was Colonel James Gordon, a Scotch-Irish Presbyterian who had come to Virginia in 1738. In his journal, Gordon frequently noted his dissatisfaction with Currie’s preaching. Gordon observed that the “sermons we hear in Church have no tendency to lead us to Christ or vital religion.” Gordon described one of Currie’s funeral sermons as “but a superficial discourse,” adding that the minister did not “touch upon real religion.” He complained regularly that there was “little or no instruction at Church,” and on many Sundays he preferred simply to read religious works at his home. Gordon also railed against Currie’s use of the pulpit to disparage Presbyterians. At a service at St. Mary’s White Chapel in October 1759, Gordon noted there was “much against Presbyterians—so that I was much disappointed, for it was misspending the Lord’s Day. How I lament the want of a good minister for our own church.” He took more comfort at home with his family “than going to Church to hear the ministers ridiculing the Dissenters.”<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>57</sup>George M. Brydon, *Virginia’s Mother Church and The Political Conditions Under Which It Grew*, II (Richmond, Va., 1953), 170 and Lohrenz, “An Analysis of the Life and Career of the Reverend David Currie,” 153-154. See also Isaac, *The Transformation of Virginia, 1740-1790*, 161-177. For Currie’s quote see his and Leland’s letter to Dawson.

<sup>58</sup>David Currie and John Leland Sr., to Thomas Dawson, April 12, 1758. *Dawson Papers, Manuscripts and Rare Books*, College of William and Mary. Note that before Davies petitioned the courts of Northumberland and Lancaster counties to erect meetinghouses, he had preached in orchards, woods, and the Lancaster courthouse and courtyard.

<sup>59</sup>Isaac, *The Transformation of Virginia*, 155 and Holmes, *A Brief History of the Episcopal Church*, 23.

<sup>60</sup>Currie and Leland to Dawson, April 12, 1758; *Virginia Gazette* (P and D) May 28, 1767; Lohrenz, 151.

<sup>61</sup>Entries for 17 June 1759, 26 August 1759, 7 October 1759, 8 June 1760, 6 September 1761, 20 September 1761, 30 November 1761 in “Journal of Col. James Gordon, of Lancaster County, Va.,” *William and Mary Quarterly*, 1st. Ser., XI (1902), 105, 108-109, 200 and XI, 4 (1902), 223-226.

Currie recognized the threat men like James Gordon and other dissenters posed for Virginia's established church and the clergy who represented it. He sensed a decline in the authority he and the church exercised over the community. "When the People's Affections are alienated from their Teachers," he said, "they are likely to give but little heed to any Advices they may offer. . . ." From here, it would not take long for them to be "brought to the greatest Contempt both of their Parsons & Doctrine."<sup>62</sup>

Though Currie, Leland, and other Anglican ministers tried to curtail their activities, the Presbyterians established meetinghouses in Lancaster and Northumberland and began to draw large crowds of people—white and black.<sup>63</sup> Currie warned that the "Consequences of such Proceedings, may in Time be more dangerous than at present generally imagined." He called upon "all the Clergy here so to behave that we may Stop the Mouths of our Adversaries. . .and continue to be one Flock."<sup>64</sup>

Currie's efforts to keep his parishioners together as one flock under the established church proved difficult in the years ahead. Although Lancaster's Presbyterians faded out almost completely when their popular minister, James Waddell, left in 1778, their rise marked only the beginning of what was a larger movement away from the established church. As Virginia approached the Revolution, new challenges to the church came in the form of Baptists and Methodists. Currie long feared such powerful dissent would "give a mortal wound to the purest and most edifying Worship of the Church of England."<sup>65</sup>

The mortal wound Currie feared came initially in 1776, when Virginia suspended public taxation to support the Church of England and its clergy. Ten years later, the legislature passed Jefferson's *Statute for Religious Freedom*. Currie had supported independence. On July 20, 1777, as required by the legislature, Currie gave his oath of allegiance to the new Commonwealth of Virginia; four years later he contributed a gray horse to the war effort.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>62</sup>Currie and Leland to Dawson, April 12, 1758.

<sup>63</sup>Currie contended the *Toleration Act* did not extend to America, and, therefore, the Presbyterians did not have the right to build meetinghouses. Lancaster County Court had initially prohibited the meetinghouse on March 17, 1758. See "Lancaster County Virginia Court Records," *Northern Neck of Virginia Historical Magazine*, 13, 1 (December 1963), 1212. James Gordon noted in his journal on January 9, 1759 that Benjamin Waller, clerk of the General Court in Williamsburg, informed one Lancaster resident who opposed the meetinghouse that the dissenters did have the right to construct one under the *Toleration Act*. Currie and Leland to Dawson, April 12, 1758; entry for 9 January 1759 in "Journal of Col. James Gordon," *William and Mary Quarterly*, XI (1902), 99. Gordon's journal provides numerous references to both black and white attendance at the meeting house and the overall numbers involved.

<sup>64</sup>Currie and Leland to Dawson, April 12, 1758.

<sup>65</sup>George M. Brydon, *Virginia's Mother Church*, II: 170 and Lohrenz, "An Analysis of the Life and Career of the Reverend David Currie," 153-154. See also Isaac, *The Transformation of Virginia*, 161-177. For Currie's quote see his and Leland's letter to Dawson.

<sup>66</sup> See Lohrenz, "An Analysis of the Life and Career of the Reverend David Currie," 159.

But deprived of public support and leading a church many had abandoned for other denominations, Currie and the parish faced an uncertain future. Beginning in January of 1777, he no longer received the annual salary of 16,000 lbs. tobacco he had been guaranteed before disestablishment. The vestry and churchwardens of Christ Church Parish relied instead on parishioners' voluntary contributions to raise money for their minister. Currie continued to have the support of the glebe, but he feared it, too, would be taken from him as property of the new state of Virginia. A petition in 1786 by various Lancaster residents called for the sale of the glebe lands, though others in the county voiced their opposition. As it turned out, Currie, who died in 1791, did not live to see the confiscation of the glebes, which came in 1802 and dealt a final, devastating blow to the church he had served so faithfully for nearly a half-century.<sup>67</sup>

## **6. Reconstitution of Christ Church**

**1805-1832** In the years following the Glebe Act, the Episcopal Church virtually collapsed throughout Virginia. Like many parishes, Christ Church struggled to find capable ministers and maintain its dwindling congregation. In 1821, Bishop William C. Moore stated that in the Northern Neck “occupying a space of more than one hundred miles, they have not one clergyman of the church to officiate regularly among them in the churches.”

Only twice in the period 1812-1832 did a minister represent Christ Church Parish at Virginia's Annual Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church: Samuel Low in 1813 and Ira Parker in 1824. Parker had been hopeful an “increased attention to religion” and a “growing respect manifested for the liturgy” would help build up his congregations. By 1832, however, the Episcopal Church in the Northern Neck was described as “nearly extinct.” Only 13 communicants could be counted in Lancaster and Northumberland counties. Used sparingly and maintained poorly, Christ Church had suffered a considerable decline.<sup>68</sup>

**1832-1852** By the early 1830s, however, Christ Church (and the Episcopal Church in Virginia as a whole) had begun to recover from the desolation it faced earlier in the century. In 1832, Rev. Ephraim Adams took over the parish. Adams reported some 63 families belonged to the

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<sup>67</sup> See the *Vestry Book of Christ Church Parish, 1739-1786*, 70-92, for information on the vestry's attempts to raise subscriptions for support of the church. On Currie's fears concerning the glebe, Charles Carter informed Currie on May 12, 1790 that “no power that I know of can deprive you of your right to the glebe.” See Meade, *Old Churches, Ministers, and Families of Virginia*, II: 112. See also Lohrenz, 160.

<sup>68</sup> See *Journal of the Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the Diocese of Virginia, 1785-1835* (Richmond, Va.), 87, 89-90, 151, 168, 172, and 291; see also Katharine L. Brown and Nancy T. Sorrells, *Christ Church: Lancaster County, Virginia* (Irvington, Va., 2001), 45-46. William Meade recalled Ira Parker as “an ignorant and incompetent minister” who left the parish soon after he took charge and was later dismissed from the ministry. See William Meade, *Old Churches, Ministers, and Families of Virginia*, II: 124. Christ Church Parish did send lay delegates to the Conventions in 1812 and 1813.

congregations of Christ Church and St. Mary's White Chapel. Over the next four years, Adams helped reinvigorate church life. By 1835, the number of communicants had grown from 13 to 40.

Confirmations and baptisms, the latter including many black children, increased dramatically. A Bible class of some two dozen members and Sunday schools were established. And two societies—a “Protestant Episcopal Female Society for the spread of the Gospel” and a “Protestant Episcopal Prayer-Book and Tract Society” (formed by the gentlemen of the parish)—contributed much, Adams said, “towards strengthening the bonds of union among the members of the church and, we trust, towards the advancement of the cause of religion generally.” Visits from Bishop Richard Channing Moore and his assistant, William Meade,<sup>69</sup> who replaced him in 1841, helped revive the parish as well.<sup>70</sup>

1832 also marked an important year for the vestry of Christ Church Parish. There are no vestry records for the period 1786-1832, which suggests either that body's minimal role or even dissolution in the wake of disestablishment, or that any records kept were lost. (We do have the vestry books from 1739-1786 and from 1832-1869).

With Ephraim Adams' arrival in 1832, however, a new election of vestrymen took place and the vestry began to take a more active role in church affairs. Most significantly, in 1836 they helped secure a 99-year lease of the Christ Church building and churchyard from the Carter heirs to the Episcopal congregation in Lancaster County. As required by the deed, the vestry then undertook substantial repairs to the church, which they completed in late 1838 or early 1839.

Around the same time, they purchased a tract of land in Lancaster known as “White Cottage” to be used as a parsonage for Christ Church Parish. The vestry kept in touch with the Episcopal community across the state by sending one vestryman to represent the parish as lay delegate at Virginia's Annual Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church. The parish also made annual contributions to various institutions connected to the Episcopal Church in Virginia.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Bishop Meade's report is included in its entirety in Section VII of this 2016 edition of *The Red Book*.

<sup>70</sup>See Adams' reports for 1832-1836, *Journal of the Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the Diocese of Virginia, 1785-1835*, 274, 291, 305, 324 and *Journal of the Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the Diocese of Virginia, 1836-1849* (Richmond, Va.), 29. From 1832-1836, Adams added 39 communicants to the parish; baptized more than 137 persons (the majority being black); confirmed 35; and performed a host of marriages and funerals.

<sup>71</sup>See *Vestry Book of Christ Church Parish, 1832-1869*, transcribed by Margaret H. Tupper (Irvington, Va., 1993), 1-15 and passim; see also *Journal of the Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the Diocese of Virginia, 1836-1849*, 34 and passim. The deed for the 99-year lease stipulated that within five years, \$1,000 should be raised and appropriated towards repairing Christ Church. William Bryant, who took over the parish in December 1838, reported to the Episcopal Convention in May of 1839 that the repairs to Christ Church had been completed “in a style at once substantial and neat, and at an expense of more than \$1,200.”

After Ephraim Adams left Christ Church in June of 1836, the problem of finding a capable minister who would serve for any extended period continued to plague the parish. From 1836-1852, no less than five ministers served Christ Church, a stark contrast to the total of four who led the parish from 1670-1790. Some, like John B. Richmond and R. S. Nash, proved good leaders who earned the praise and admiration of the vestry. Others, however, were far from satisfactory. In April of 1848, the vestry forced Thomas W. Flower to resign after just over a year due to “charges of a grave character, deeply + vitally affecting the interest + prosperity of the Church.” On at least two occasions during this time, the parish was vacant for more than a year and a half.<sup>72</sup>

**1852-1897** In June 1852, Reverend Edmund Withers took over Christ Church Parish, which, with the addition of Grace Chapel in 1851-52, now included three churches. Withers, who served until 1867, found the parish “suffering from the effects of frequent ministerial changes during the last fifteen years [since Ephraim Adams], and from the occasionally entire absence of any pastor.” He was hopeful, however, of the church’s prospects for recovery, observing that “There are still left in it some genuine church people, who are truly pious Christians, who love God, and are very kind to their pastor.”<sup>73</sup>

With the establishment of Grace, services were now held alternately there and at St. Mary’s White Chapel. Bishop Meade noted in 1857 that because many parishioners found Grace to be much more accessible “but few attend generally at the old and venerable one, by reason of its inconvenient location.”

That Christ Church had been *completely* abandoned at this point, however, seems unlikely. Throughout his ministry, Withers, as did his successors, George May and Henry L. Derby, continued to list Christ Church among his churches in his annual parochial reports to the Diocese of Virginia. And on several occasions in the 1850s, such as in 1852, 1854, 1855, and 1858, Bishop Meade or Bishop Johns reported preaching in Christ Church. What is not clear, however, is if the church was used regularly for normal services.<sup>74</sup>

Rev. Withers’ hopes of reviving Christ Church Parish suffered considerably with the outbreak of the Civil War. By January 1862, Withers was working with sick and wounded soldiers in Richmond hospitals, leaving the parish without a minister for most of the war. The vestry did not meet again from this point until July 6, 1865, after the conclusion of the war. By December 1865, Withers had returned as rector of the parish, but he reported that the “casualties of war have left us in an

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<sup>72</sup>See *Vestry Book of Christ Church Parish, 1832-1869*, 8-38. The vestry book provided no detailed information on what Flower’s offenses may have been.

<sup>73</sup>Rev. Edmund Withers’ report for 1853, *Journal of the Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the Diocese of Virginia* (Baltimore, Md., 1853), 51-52. In 1854 Withers reported “Our prospects are encouraging; congregations large. . .”

<sup>74</sup> See “Establishment of Grace Church” section in this book; see also Meade, *Old Churches, Ministers, and Families*, II, 124; and *Journal of the Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the Diocese of Virginia*, 1853:20, 1855:21, 1856:40-41, 1859:27.

enfeebled and embarrassed condition. A tone of vital piety is increasing among us, and for this we thank God and go forward.” Financial difficulties, already present in the 1850s, were augmented by the war, leaving the vestry in a constant struggle to pay the minister’s salary.<sup>75</sup>

Withers left Christ Church Parish sometime after July 1867. He was succeeded by George May, who served from 1869-1871. During this time, the “Ladies Protestant Episcopal Aid Society,” which had formed in 1868, used fairs and other means to provide critical support to the church. Much of the money they raised went to repairing and furnishing the rectory, but at various points the Ladies Aid Society also helped the vestry pay the rector’s salary and on one occasion they even outfitted him with a horse and carriage. Although he did not remain with the parish long, May observed that “a kinder and more loving people I never expect to serve.”<sup>76</sup>

After a vacancy of two years, Rev. Henry L. Derby took over Christ Church Parish in October 1873. In his fifteen years of service, Derby helped revive the life of the church, more than doubling the number of communicants from 36 to 87. Sunday schools now thrived in the parish, counting as many as 104 “scholars” and 15 teachers at one point (1885). In 1884-85, the parish added yet another church with the construction of Trinity Church in Lancaster.<sup>77</sup>

Derby is best remembered, however, for resuming services in Christ Church on a regular basis in the summer. This began no later than 1875 and apparently continued throughout his ministry. Just as importantly, toward the end of Derby’s tenure the first serious discussions of preserving Christ Church took place. Derby reported to the Diocese in May 1885 that “steps are being taken to preserve and revive Christ Church.” That year the parish spent \$25 on repairs to the building, and 1886 saw another \$20 expended on repairs. Though these were relatively minor sums compared to the money and efforts the parish put into maintaining and repairing the rectory, St. Mary’s White Chapel, and Grace, as well as to building Trinity, the work of saving Christ Church had begun.<sup>78</sup>

Preservation work started in earnest under Derby’s successor, the Rev. E. B. Burwell, who took over the parish in 1891. At a vestry meeting in 1893, Burwell raised the issue of repairing Christ Church, “at that time in a very dilapidated condition.” The vestry responded by publishing an appeal in the

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<sup>75</sup> *Vestry Book of Christ Church Parish, 1832-1869*, 47-62. After the war, the vestry paid Withers in both money and kind, including corn, wheat, and pork.

<sup>76</sup> See *Vestry Book of Christ Church Parish, 1832-1869*, 63-66; Records of the Ladies Protestant Episcopal Aid Society, Grace Episcopal Church Papers; and *Journal of the Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the Diocese of Virginia*, 1869, 146. In 1871, May had noted that in spite of the financial difficulties “of the people of this county,” the church “is in a prosperous condition, and perhaps in no previous period in the history of this parish a brighter prospect for an increase ever existed.”

<sup>77</sup> See Derby’s reports to the Diocese, *Journal of the Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the Diocese of Virginia, 1873-1888*.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid*, 1885:190, 1886:196, 1888:196-197.

*Southern Churchman* to both the public as a whole and the descendants of Robert Carter “in particular, to come to the rescue of this historic old Church, from its decayed and time worn condition.”

By May 1897, with their funds growing and a \$500 donation in hand from the APVA (Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities), the vestry began several important preservation projects. In addition to putting up the first slate roof, workmen painted all the woodwork on the church’s exterior, reglazed the windows and covered them with galvanized wire screens, repaired the doors, and enclosed the churchyard with a “substantial wire fence.” In 1901, the vestry continued these efforts with preservation work on Christ Church’s interior.<sup>79</sup> The stage had been set for the preservation initiatives of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries.

### **Establishment of Grace Church (1851 - 1852)**

Grace Episcopal Church in Kilmarnock was founded in 1851. The chapel was completed in 1852.<sup>80</sup> The decision to build Grace reflected changes in Lancaster’s settlement patterns. In the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, the county’s population center began to shift towards what became Kilmarnock. In fact, Bishop Meade tells us that during this time the vestry of Christ Church actually considered Kilmarnock the best place to construct a new church until Robert Carter made his offer to build one for the parish at the site of the 1670 church.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, residents who attended services at Christ Church found the location very inconvenient and often inaccessible, particularly when roads were in poor condition. By 1852, it was determined that a new church in Kilmarnock would be much more convenient to the majority of parishioners.

Two sources from the 19<sup>th</sup> century help document this: 1) Bishop William Meade’s observations in his *Old Churches, Ministers, and Families of Virginia*, and 2) Reverend Henry Landon Derby, who served as rector of Christ Church from 1873-1888.

Bishop Meade observed that:

With the last few years a small church has been built at Kilmarnock, about four miles from Old Christ Church. It being more convenient to the majority of the people in that region than the old one, services are held there alternately. . . but few attend generally at the old and venerable one, by reason of its inconvenient location. . . .

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<sup>79</sup>Typed transcript of Christ Church Parish Vestry Minutes, January 11, 1899; April 9, 1901; October 1, 1901, Research files of HCC. The vestry reported on January 11, 1899 that \$1,042.17 had been raised for preservation work, of which \$981.73 had been expended to that point.

<sup>80</sup> Rev. R. S. Nash, who took over Christ Church Parish in October 1849, noted in his report to the Episcopal Convention in 1851 that "About \$1,000 have been subscribed in the parish and immediate vicinity, towards the erection of a church edifice now in progress of construction, and estimated to cost about \$1,200 or \$1,400." Bishop Meade helped consecrate Grace on November 18, 1852. See *Protestant Episcopal Church, Diocese of Virginia, Journal of Annual Council* (Baltimore, Md., 1850-1859), 1850:75; 1851:60; 1852:55; 1853:20, 51-52.

It is somewhat remarkable that Kilmarnock is the very spot on which the vestry determined to build a new church nearly one hundred and fifty years ago, deeming it the most central and convenient place, when Mr. Carter offered to build one at his own expense, if allowed to locate it nearer to his residence at Corotoman.<sup>81</sup>

Under Derby, services were held at Christ Church during the summer:

A few years since, this church not being accessible to a larger portion of the congregation, (especially during the winter season, when the roads leading to it are almost impassable), it was deemed best to erect a chapel in the village of Kilmarnock, four miles distant from Christ Church, and four miles nearer White Chapel. This, we find, a more central and accessible spot. Here I hold services every second and fourth Sundays, whenever not convenient to hold them in Christ Church.

This sacred and time worn building is now used only in the summer season on the second and fourth Sundays, it being too large to be made comfortable for the small number that could attend during cold weather.<sup>82</sup>

The active church in Christ Church Parish had now become Grace Church in Kilmarnock.

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<sup>81</sup>Meade, *Old Churches, Ministers, and Families of Virginia*, II, 124. As early as 1844 Meade had observed that “at present this church is inconveniently situated for the Episcopal population.” See *Journal of the Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the Diocese of Virginia*, 1844, 14.

<sup>82</sup>Derby, "Extracts from the Report of the Missionary at Christ Church Parish, Lancaster County, *Diocesan Messenger* (Richmond, Va., 1876). Typed transcript in HCC research files.

## SECTION IV: PARISH LIFE

**Theme:** Christ Church Parish epitomizes colonial Virginia's political, social, economic and religious institutions.

### 1. The Parishioners

Ministers of the Colonial Church

Benjamin Doggett

Andrew Jackson

John Bell

David Currie

The Lay Parishioners

### 2. Demographic Views of the Parish

Population Size

Wealth in Labor

Wealth in Land: 1715-1750 (Lancaster County)

Value of Estates

Increase in Slave Ownership, 1680-1740 (Lancaster County)

### 3. The Labor Force in the Parish

The Labor Force in the Parish: FAQs

Edward Nicken, a Second Generation Colonial Free Black Man

### 4. Labor Force of the Corotoman Estate, 1652-1732

Corotoman under John Carter I, 1652-1669

From Servants to Slaves: Corotoman under John Carter II, 1670-1690

The Return of the Servants: Corotoman under Robert Carter, 1691-1720

Slave Ships at the Landing: Corotoman under Robert Carter, 1721-1732

Robert Carter and Slavery: FAQs

## 1. The Parish and Its Parishioners

Much information is available about who worshipped here, who worked here, and who visited here when the site was not Historic Christ Church but simply Christ Church Parish.

**Ministers of the Colonial Church** Four ministers served during the colonial period: Benjamin Doggett (1670-1682) and Andrew Jackson (1686-1710) served in the first, wooden church; John Bell (1712-1743) served in both the first and second churches; David Currie (1743-1791) served in the second, brick church. The details of their lives reveal much about the changing character of Christ Church Parish during that time.

*Benjamin Doggett* was born in Ipswich, Suffolk, England where his father worked as a woolen draper. He attended St. John's College, Cambridge from which he received both his BA and MA. Before immigrating to Virginia, Doggett served as a curate and schoolmaster.<sup>1</sup>

Doggett arrived in Virginia sometime before 1670. In that year, he was presented to Governor Berkeley for induction as minister of Christ Church and St. Mary's White Chapel<sup>2</sup> and served both parishes until his death in 1682. Doggett was the only minister of Christ Church Parish in the colonial period to be presented for induction (lifetime tenure).

Doggett's family included his wife, Jane, three sons and two daughters. An inventory of Doggett's estate revealed a very ordinary household. Items the family used daily, many of which were described as "old," dominated the list: beds; iron pots and pans; linens; a rug; some pewter, tin ware, and earthenware; and a few chests, tables, and trunks. A parcel of carpenter's tools, some old hoes, and one old grindstone comprised Doggett's basic tools. He also owned one still, which he used to produce cider with the products of his orchard. His more valuable possessions included ten head of livestock, three horses, and two servants, one male and one female, but both had less than two months to serve. Compared to the holdings that ministers Andrew Jackson, John Bell and David Currie would later accumulate, Doggett's estate was rather modest, worth only 11,617 lbs. tobacco or about £58, just slightly above the median or average estate for Lancaster County households in the period 1680-1710. In his will, Doggett requested that his body "be decently buried before y<sup>e</sup> pulpit in W<sup>ht</sup> Chapell Church."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Edward Lewis Goodwin, *The Colonial Church in Virginia* (Milwaukee, 1927), 265. Goodwin lists Doggett as teaching at Stoke in Suffolk, England in 1662. It is not known how long he was in this position.

<sup>2</sup>"Notes from the Council and General Court Records, 1641-1672," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 8, 3 (January, 1901), 244.

<sup>3</sup>Inventory of Benjamin Doggett, 20 September 1683, *Lancaster County Will Book* 5:89-90. Carter L. Hudgins judges the estate median during 1680-1710 to be about £53. See his "Patrician Culture, Public Ritual, and Political Authority in Virginia, 1680-1740," (Ph. D. Dissertation, College of William and Mary, 1984), 217. Tobacco was calculated at roughly 10 shillings (a .5 £) per 100 lbs. in the period 1660-1700. See Edmund S. Morgan, *American Slavery, American Freedom: The Ordeal of Colonial Virginia*, (New York, 1975), 204, n29.

**Andrew Jackson** served as minister of Christ Church Parish from 1686-1710. An Irish Presbyterian who was never ordained by a bishop, Jackson was one of a handful of Presbyterian ministers who led parishes of the established church in late 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> century Virginia. During his 24 years of faithful service, the “well beloved” Jackson proved to be a capable minister who endeared himself to his congregation. In 1704 the vestry of Christ Church observed how fortunate it was to have him lead the church:

. . . our present Minister although not Quallified with Episcopall Orders and Entertained at first. . . hath Continued amongst us Eighteen Years without the least discord or disagreement with the Vestry...that upon removall of our present Minister we shall embrace it as a Singular blessing of heaven both upon our Selves and posterity to be Supplied with another good one in his room whose Conversation as well as Doctrine may become his Character. . . .<sup>4</sup>

Jackson’s Presbyterian origins made his tenure at Christ Church all the more noteworthy. Despite legislation requiring a minister to be ordained by a bishop in England,<sup>5</sup> an extreme shortage of ministers in the colony led some vestries, Christ Church’s included, to employ men who were not necessarily so ordained rather than have no minister at all. This followed the early custom in Virginia, where ministers of Presbyterian ordination who took the oath of conformity to the Canon Laws of the Church of England and used the *Book of Common Prayer* were allowed to serve a parish of the established church.<sup>6</sup>

For his part, Jackson found his position at Christ Church quite agreeable. He preached to the congregations at both Christ Church and St. Mary’s White Chapel. As minister, Jackson made many friends and enjoyed a comfortable living. Through the 16,000 lbs. tobacco he earned annually and the profits he reaped from the glebe’s cultivation, Jackson prospered. The vestry noted “by his Sallary and Improvement on our Gleab [he] hath Acquired to himself a Very good estate.”<sup>7</sup> In the tithable list for Christ Church Parish in 1702, Jackson was one of only 12 men out of the 115 heads of households who had eight or more tithables. Many of the other leading planters on that list, such as Robert Carter, John Turberville, John Grason, and Capt. Henry Fleet II, were not only Jackson’s parishioners but also his close friends.<sup>8</sup>

Jackson farmed the glebe, as well as land in other parts of Lancaster and Northumberland counties. He acquired some tracts through both his wife, Dorothy Lister Lawrence, who had inherited

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<sup>4</sup>Vestry of Christ Church Parish, Lancaster County, to Governor Nicholson, April 11, 1704, in George M. Brydon, *Virginia’s Mother Church and The Political Conditions Under Which It Grew*, (Richmond, Va., 1953), II, Appendix VIII, 531-532. The “well beloved” comes from parishioner Henry Bell’s will, *Lancaster County Deed Book*, 8:51. James Phillips called Jackson his “loveing Frend.” See *Deed Book* 8:2. Both men appointed Jackson guardian of their children.

<sup>5</sup>See William Waller Hening, *The Statutes at Large: Being a Collection of all the Laws of Virginia*. . . . (Richmond, Va. and Philadelphia, Pa., 1809-1823), II, 46. See also Brydon, *Virginia’s Mother Church*, I, Appendix VI, 457.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, 28-29 and Appendix VI, 457-458, and 479, n.17 and n.19.

<sup>7</sup>Brydon, *Virginia’s Mother Church*, I, Appendix VIII, 531.

<sup>8</sup>*Lancaster County Order Book* 5:12-13.

property from two earlier husbands, and through his relationship with her son, William Lister, one of the most prominent men in the county.<sup>9</sup>

The inventory of Jackson's estate (lands not included) was valued at over £291. Like other colonial Virginians, Jackson recognized that, besides lands and livestock, the route to affluence included slaves. He owned five female slaves, four male slaves, and one servant girl. In addition to the more than 50 bulls, cows, and pigs he had in St. Mary's White Chapel Parish, Jackson owned three horses and a yoke of oxen in Christ Church Parish. These holdings in slaves and farm animals constituted nearly 80% of the total value of Jackson's inventory. Other prominent items included 12 leather chairs, several beds, bedsteads, blankets, and rugs, a silver headed cane, a silver sword, a cart, a plush sidesaddle, nearly 200 lbs. of leather, a boat with sails, and assorted pots, pans and culinary accoutrements.<sup>10</sup>

Jackson did not forget the parish he had led for 24 years. He directed that his books, some 114 Latin and 73 English, be given to Christ Church for the use of the incumbent. At the same time, he left £10 sterling to a Presbyterian meetinghouse in Dublin, Ireland.

*John Bell* succeeded Andrew Jackson in 1712. Whether Bell was an Englishman or a Scotsman is unknown. Ordained by the Bishop of London, Bell received the King's Bounty, a royal grant which paid the clergyman's passage to the colonies.<sup>11</sup>

Bell served Christ Church Parish from 1712 to 1743. He served in the first church and became the first rector of the new brick church when it was completed in 1735. He preached at Christ Church once every Sunday and on Good Fridays. He was also responsible for conducting services at St. Mary's White Chapel where he preached every other Sunday and on all special occasions. Three times a year, at Christmas, Easter, and Whitsunday (Pentecost), Bell administered the Holy Sacrament to communicants numbering between 60 and 80.<sup>12</sup>

For his services, Bell earned 16,000 lbs. tobacco each year, a salary established by the House of Burgesses in 1696.<sup>13</sup> In addition to his salary, Bell earned small amounts for performing marriages,

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<sup>9</sup>Prior to marrying Jackson, Dorothy Jackson had been married to Edmond Lister, then Thomas Lawrence, a merchant of Fleet's Bay, Lancaster County.

<sup>10</sup>Inventory of Andrew Jackson, *Lancaster County Will Book* 10:144. The inventory listed Jackson's possessions by rooms. His house was a typical 1½ story layout of a hall-chamber (or parlor) on the first floor (which included a closet), with a chamber upstairs over the hall, and a kitchen which could have been separate from the dwelling.

<sup>11</sup>Edward Lewis Goodwin, *The Colonial Church in Virginia* (Milwaukee, Wis., 1927), 249-250. 25. For Bell's English or Scottish origins, see the cameo of John Bell in Katharine L. Brown and Nancy T. Sorrells, *People in Profile: Christ Church Parish 1720-1750* (Staunton, Va., 2002), n.4 and n.1 respectively.

<sup>12</sup>John Bell, 1724 Report to the Bishop of London. See Katharine L. Brown and Nancy T. Sorrells, *Christ Church: Lancaster County, Virginia*, (Staunton, 2001), Appendix II. At Easter services on April 10, 1726, parishioner Robert Carter noted that "Mr. Bell preachd an excellent sermond. The greatest number of communicants that ever I saw."

<sup>13</sup>Hening, ed., III, 151-152. The vestry of St. Mary's made payments of 4% or 320 lbs. "on M<sup>r</sup>. Bells Tob<sup>o</sup>. for Caske," which, when combined with Christ Church, would have raised Bell's salary to 16,640. See *Vestry Book of Christ Church Parish, 1739-1786*, transcribed by Margaret H. Tupper (Irvington, Va., 1990), 1-4. In 1748, the Assembly reaffirmed the

baptisms, funerals, and churchings, a service for women that took place after the birth of a child. Bell supplemented his salary by preaching sermons at neighboring parishes in need of a minister. He preached over 40 such sermons from 1723-1727, earning 400-450 lbs. tobacco for each one.<sup>14</sup>

Bell and his wife Elizabeth lived at the glebe. They had five sons and four daughters. By the time of his death in 1743, Bell had accumulated a substantial estate. His inventory was appraised at just under £730. Bell owned 26 slaves and more than 85 head of livestock and three horses in Lancaster County. His landholdings there consisted of some 395 acres. Bell's estate also included 2,470 acres in Prince William County. The inventory from this tract showed 17 slaves, 58 head of cattle and pigs, and a handful of tools.<sup>15</sup> Such considerable holdings in land, slaves, and farm animals placed Bell among Lancaster's gentry.

Bell's will divided his extensive landholdings among his children.<sup>16</sup> Bell's estate also included a huge library. A highly educated man serving a parish where many were illiterate, Bell's collection of nearly 180 books contained works of sermons, several bibles and English dictionaries, a history of the Reformation of the Church of England, a commentary on the book of Revelations, *Aesop's Fables*, and a large number of Latin treatises. His household furnishings included some luxury goods such as a three-pint silver tankard, silver spoons and salt cellars, a pair of silver shoe and knee buckles, and a silver watch.<sup>17</sup>

It is unlikely Bell was ever officially inducted, or granted tenure, as rector of Christ Church Parish. In his report of 1724, after some 12 years with the parish, Bell stated he had not been inducted. But his 32 years of service clearly attest to his popularity among the parishioners. From all accounts, Bell enjoyed a good relationship with Robert Carter, who served as a vestryman and churchwarden throughout Bell's ministry. Bell married at least one of Carter's children, performing the wedding ceremony for Ann and Benjamin Harrison on October 3, 1722. Carter's diary shows that Bell, occasionally accompanied by his wife, made social visits to Corotoman regularly, at times joining Carter in one of the gentry's favorite pastimes, gambling. In January of 1727/28, for example, Carter noted, "Mr. Bell & his wife came here. I sat up till almost 12 at play, lost 7 bits." For his part, Carter made scattered trips to the Bells, and from time to time called upon the medical advice of

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1696 law setting ministers' salaries at 16,000 lbs. and added an allowance of 4% for "shrinkage of the tobacco." See Hening, VI, 88-89. "Aranoko" refers to (a type of) Oronoco, one of the two varieties of tobacco grown in colonial Virginia. The other, known as sweetscented, was the more valuable grade, at least through the early 18<sup>th</sup> century. See Arthur Pierce Middleton, *Tobacco Coast: A Maritime History of Chesapeake Bay in the Colonial Era* (Newport News, Va., 1953), 109-111.

<sup>14</sup>*Vestry Book of St. Stephen's Parish, Northumberland*, quoted in William Meade, *Old Churches, Ministers, and Families of Virginia*, Vol. II (Baltimore, 1966), 467. See *Vestry Book of Wicomico Parish, 1703-1795*, in John L. Overholt and Arthur C. Johnson, *The History of Wicomico Parish, including 1703-1795 Vestry Minutes* (Wicomico Parish Church, Va., 1998), 32-33, 36-37, 44, 72-73.

<sup>15</sup>Inventory of Rev. John Bell, 12 February 1744, *Lancaster County Will Book* 14:46. Typed inventory in HCC research files courtesy of Ginny Wagener.

<sup>16</sup>Will of John Bell, 10 June 1743, *ibid.*, 13:334. Typed copy in HCC research files courtesy of Ginny Wagener.

<sup>17</sup>Inventory of Rev. John Bell.

Bell's brother, Dr. Alexander Bell, for himself or his family. Their friendship, however, did not prevent Bell from offering spiritual guidance to Carter where he saw fit. Such was the case in July, 1723, when Carter recorded that "Mr. Bell in his discours about Envy had sevl plain innuendos at Tho Edwds & my differences. . . ."<sup>18</sup>

Bell's years at Christ Church were seemingly productive and happy ones. He could count his successes on two fronts: he proved a capable spiritual leader of a burgeoning parish, and he used income raised from his salary and the glebe to leave sizable inheritances to his wife and children. Just as significant for his career, however, was the completion of the present Christ Church in 1735. In it, Bell had the opportunity to serve God in a monument of unrivaled architectural and spiritual character. His legacy as first minister of this great church endures today.

*David Currie* succeeded John Bell as minister of Christ Church Parish in 1743. Currie was originally from Edinburgh, Scotland, and likely attended one of the leading universities there, such as Glasgow. He first came to Virginia sometime in the late 1730s, serving as tutor to the prominent Lee family at Stratford Hall. By 1742, Currie had traveled to England to seek ordination into the Church of England, which he received from the Bishop of London in December.<sup>19</sup>

Currie returned to Virginia shortly after his ordination. He did not have to wait long to find appointment to a parish. In all likelihood, his familiarity with the Northern Neck made him aware of the vacancy in Christ Church Parish upon Reverend John Bell's death in the spring of 1743. As was customary, Currie offered to the churchwardens and vestry a letter of recommendation, which described him as "ordained by the Bishop of London and a person of Good Life[,] Conversation[,] Merrit & Esteem. . . ." On July 18, 1743, a general vestry for Christ Church and St. Mary's White Chapel chose Currie to serve as their new minister, a position he held for 48 years, the longest tenure in parish history.<sup>20</sup>

Like John Bell, Currie preached at both Christ Church and St. Mary's White Chapel, which were formally united as Christ Church Parish in 1752. As had Bell, Currie helped fill the vacancy at neighboring Wicomico Parish, preaching a dozen sermons there from 1744-45.<sup>21</sup> And finally, also like Bell, Currie lived on and farmed the glebe. During the first three years of Currie's tenure, the

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<sup>18</sup>Robert Carter Diary 1722-1728, typed transcript in HCC research files. For Ann and Benjamin Harrison's wedding, see October 3, 1722. For the Bells' visits, see July 30, 1723 and January 2, 1727-28. For Carter's visits to Bell, see December 5, 1722 and September 14, 1723. For Dr. Bell's services to Carter, see July 23, 1724 and October 13, 1727. For Bell's sermon on envy, see July 21, 1723.

<sup>19</sup>See Otto Lohrenz, "An Analysis of the Life and Career of The Reverend David Currie, Lancaster County, Va., 1743-1791," *Anglican and Episcopal History* LXI, 2 (June, 1992), 143-144. Lohrenz notes that a David Currie is listed among the members of the Logic Class at Glasgow in 1727, but it is unknown if he graduated or even if this is the same Currie who came to Christ Church. Charles Carter of Corotoman and later Shirley referred to Currie's Scottish origins when he mentioned him as of the "Caledonian race." See Meade, *Old Churches, Ministers, and Families of Virginia* II, 112.

<sup>20</sup>*Vestry Book of Christ Church Parish, 1739-1786*, 9.

<sup>21</sup>See *Vestry Book of Wicomico Parish, 1703-1795*, in John L. Overhold and Arthur C. Johnson, *The History of Wicomico Parish*, 78-80. Currie earned 300 lbs. tobacco for each sermon, plus an allowance for cask.

vestry undertook extensive repairs to the glebe. Workmen expanded the dwelling house, constructed several new outbuildings (including a dairy, a meat house and a “necessary” house) and repaired the kitchen. Currie resided on the glebe throughout his entire career of service to Christ Church.<sup>22</sup>

Currie made the glebe a diversified operation. In addition to tobacco, he farmed wheat and corn. Currie’s slaves also produced flax, spun wool, and made cider. Currie owned at least one servant, Sarah Knox, a widowed convict from Yorkshire, who ran away in May of 1752.<sup>23</sup>

David Currie’s first wife, whom he married sometime before May 1745, was Ann Corbin Allerton, the widow of Isaac Allerton of Westmoreland County. The marriage helped Currie acquire interests in various properties. The couple had two daughters.<sup>24</sup>

Ann Currie died sometime around 1769. In the spring of 1770, Currie married Elizabeth Armistead of York County.<sup>25</sup> With the much younger Elizabeth, Currie had four children. Years later, Bishop Meade noted that Currie’s descendants were “numerous and respectable and have adhered to the Church of their worthy ancestor.”<sup>26</sup>

Like his marriage to Ann Corbin Allerton, Currie’s union with Elizabeth Armistead gave him strong ties to another of Tidewater’s leading families. Currie’s position as rector of Christ Church also insured his close association with some of his parish’s more prominent men, many of whom served on the vestry. Through these connections, his inheritances, his salary of 16,000 lbs. of tobacco, and profits from the glebe, Currie joined the ranks of the county’s gentry. In 1783, Currie was one of just 15 Lancaster residents who owned more than 30 slaves. With 38, Currie was the eleventh largest slaveholder in the county. Four years later only seven planters in Lancaster owned more than

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<sup>22</sup>*Vestry Book of Christ Church Parish, 1739-1786*, 11-21, 30. Currie’s will makes no mention of other lands he owned or on which he may have resided. The Virginia House of Burgesses passed laws in 1748 requiring vestries to build a kitchen, barn, stable, dairy, meat house, corn house, and garden on glebe lands at parish expense, many of which the vestry of CCP had already added by this point.

<sup>23</sup>See Currie’s inventory, April 18, 1791, *Lancaster County Will Book* 22:301-302, especially the list of “Plantation Utinsels,” for information on slave work at the glebe. Currie advertised for Knox’s capture in the July 3, 1752 issue of the *Virginia Gazette*. Currie noted that Knox “pretend[ed] to be a dancing Mistress,” and he stated that anyone who found “her qualified to teach Dancing, or to serve in any other way,” could purchase between five and six years of her service. Perhaps Currie had employed Knox in one respect to give his children dancing lessons.

<sup>24</sup>Lohrenz, 161, n.55. For Currie’s sale of Allerton’s property see *Virginia Gazette* (P and D) November 9, 1769. Lohrenz also notes that in 1766, Currie went before Lancaster court to recover more than £760, a substantial sum, from three groups indebted to him.

<sup>25</sup>On April 19, 1770, the court recorded a marriage contract between Armistead and Currie. The marriage contract guaranteed Elizabeth, who may have been as young as twenty while Currie was in his fifties. See Lohrenz, 162.

<sup>26</sup>Meade, *Old Churches, Ministers, and Families of Virginia*, II, 112,123. Currie’s grandchildren served as vestrymen at Christ Church Parish.

Currie. At the time of his death in the spring of 1791, Currie owned 43 slaves, the same number his predecessor John Bell had owned.<sup>27</sup>

The inventory of Currie's estate shows his family enjoyed a comfortable lifestyle at the glebe. Seven bedsteads, 8 bolsters and pillows, and a nice collection of blankets, quilts, and linens provided the family's bedding. Three dozen chairs, a couch, 5 tables, 3 looking glasses, 2 desks, and more than a dozen trunks and large chests comprised their other basic furnishings. A mixture of tea, coffee, and cream pots, several silver tea spoons, a sugar dish, a tea board and tea chest, 24 cups and saucers, and a coffee mill, indicated tea and coffee played an important role in the Currie household. Along with an assortment of dishes, plates, bowls, mugs, drinking glasses, and other items, David and Elizabeth Currie could entertain their parishioners in a very respectable manner. Currie's library included 219 volumes. For those who enjoyed a little gaming, Currie owned a backgammon board.<sup>28</sup>

Currie's will left most of his property to his wife, Elizabeth, whom he named his sole executor. He empowered Elizabeth to sell any part of his property that would enable her to purchase a settlement for her and the children. He also left each of his four children one slave. Currie requested that their "worthy friend" Charles Carter of Shirley, as well as Rev. Samuel Smith McCroskey, whom Currie had mentored, and Ellyson Armistead, Elizabeth's brother, advise and assist his family after his death. Charles Carter did more than that. He provided some 800 acres at Nantepoison Creek for Elizabeth and her family during her natural life. Elizabeth lived there at least until 1807, when their son Ellyson Currie purchased 465 acres on the tract.<sup>29</sup>

During Currie's tenure as rector of Christ Church the movement to overthrow the role of the established church began to be felt by clergy and lay people alike. When he took over the parish in 1743, the Church of England had long been the established church in Virginia. About this same time, however, Presbyterians began organizing in the colony in unprecedented fashion as part of the larger movement known as the Great Awakening. By 1757, they had begun preaching in Lancaster County. As Virginia approached the Revolution, new challenges to the church came in the form of Baptists and Methodists. Currie long feared such powerful dissent would "give a mortal wound to the purest and most edifying Worship of the Church of England."<sup>30</sup>

Despite such adversities, Currie's loyalty and devotion to Christ Church never wavered. He continued to serve the parish until his death early in 1791. Currie asked to have his dust buried in

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<sup>27</sup>Inventory of David Currie, April 18, 1791; Heads of Families, Lancaster County, 1783, in *Heads of Families at the First Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1790 and Records of the State Enumerations: 1782 to 1785* (Baltimore, Md. 11986), 55-56. Lohrenz, *ibid.*, 164.

<sup>28</sup>Inventory of David Currie, April 18, 1791. As requested by his will, Currie's estate was not appraised, but Lohrenz estimates it at about £ 2,000. See p. 164.

<sup>29</sup>Will of David Currie, March 21, 1791, *Lancaster County Will Book* 22:300-301; Lohrenz, 156, 163; Charles Carter's will in *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* XXII, 4 (October, 1914), 380-382, n.3; Meade, *Old Churches, Ministers, and Families of Virginia*, II, 112. Charles Carter and Elizabeth Armistead Currie may have been related through Carter's paternal grandmother, Judith Armistead Carter, Robert Carter's first wife.

<sup>30</sup>George M. Brydon, *Virginia's Mother Church*, II (Richmond, Va., 1953), 170 and Lohrenz, *An Analysis*, 153-154. See also Isaac, *The Transformation of Virginia, 1740-1790*, 161-177. For Currie's quote see his and Leland's letter to Dawson.

the yard of Christ Church, returning to the place he had led for so many years. To some, Currie was “greatly beloved,” a leader of his parish community and a faithful minister to the Church of England. Others, however, criticized Currie’s preaching and turned away from the established church. Nevertheless, Currie helped sustain his church through the tumultuous years of the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. In the end, his 48 years of service to one parish were matched by few ministers in colonial Virginia.

Over the colonial period, the lifestyles of the rectors at Christ Church reflected different segments of the parish community. Their lives showed both increasing wealth and identification with the gentry class. Although an educated man, Benjamin Doggett’s marriage brought him no gentry connections. His modest estate put him in the ranks of “the middling sort” of planter; he had servants but no slaves. Like Doggett, the remaining colonial rectors were well-educated men, leaving large libraries to their successors. Each of them married well and had family connections to important Tidewater residents.

As the make-up of the colony’s labor force changed, so did the clergy. Andrew Jackson’s inventory listed 9 slaves but only one servant; John Bell’s inventory listed a total of 43 slaves in two counties and no servants; all of David Currie’s 43 slaves resided in Lancaster making him one of the top slave owners in the county.

The monetary value of the rectors’ estates in slaves and livestock shows this upward spiral:

|   |      |                  |             |
|---|------|------------------|-------------|
| · | 1682 | Benjamin Doggett | £58         |
| · | 1710 | Andrew Jackson   | £291        |
| · | 1743 | John Bell        | £730        |
| · | 1791 | David Currie     | £2000(est.) |

**The Lay Parishioners** The parish community was a hierarchical one based on perceived wealth and community status. Seating in colonial Virginia churches reflected the Church of England tradition that disallowed seating by choice. Parishioners:

. . .took their place in church according to their age, sex, race, and political and social status. . . . [They] believed that their world was an orderly hierarchical system created by God in which everything and everyone had a natural and proper place. Nowhere was rank made more visibly manifest or more clearly delineated than in the seating of the congregation.<sup>31</sup>

At Christ Church the Anglican tradition was obvious. Symbolically, the minister ranked highest, standing as he did under the high point in the church, the type or ceremonial sounding board of the pulpit. Diagonally across from the pulpit was the “commodious” pew belonging to the Carter family, the pew in the chancel of his new brick church that Carter specified as a condition for his funding the building of the church.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Carl Lounsbury, *Take a Seat, But Not Just Any Seat*, Colonial Williamsburg *The Interpreter* 12, 4 (November 1991), 4.

<sup>32</sup> Robert Carter’s Will, page 27 of typed transcript in the HCC research library. The will is also reproduced in the *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 5, 4 (April 1898): 408-428 and 6, 1 (July 1898): 1-22.

The missing vestry book might identify those who sat in the remaining pews. Ranking families in the congregation sat surrounding the Carters in pews with interior and exterior raised paneling and on seats 14 inches in depth. Those of less stature sat in pews with unpaneled interiors and seats one inch narrower. Knowing who sat where every Sunday morning—men, women, families, individuals, free, enslaved, white, black—would bring that community to life.

The missing vestry book may yet appear but other sources, both narrative and numerical, do provide a look at the parishioners of Christ Church. One concise narrative description can be found in the first book of the Foundation for Historic Christ Church's Heritage Series: *Christ Church: Lancaster County, Virginia*. The authors describe the congregation graphically, beginning with the landed, wealthy planters. They were:

... [the] small tip of a large pyramid. In the middle of the pyramid were the small landholders who were wedged between the wealth and power of the few large plantation owners, and the larger number of landless individuals. At the base of the pyramid were the laboring classes: white indentured servants, black slaves, landless white laborers, black and white craftsmen, and a very few free blacks and Native Americans.

... The landless residents included not only the slaves with their African roots, but also most persons of English background ... most of those who [did own] land had tracts of 200 acres or less and were considered middling planters. ... [These] landed families lived in poorly constructed houses that had one or two rooms on each floor. ... the majority of Christ Church parishioners lived in conditions that would be considered poverty level by today's standards.<sup>33</sup>

A further narrative description of the parishioners of Christ Church can be found in the second Heritage Series book, *Robert "King" Carter: Builder of Christ Church*.<sup>34</sup> The authors point to Carter's dependence on his staff of indentured workers, much as his father did in the previous generation. Some were children who arrived without an indenture, a contract for years of work that would have specified their age. Others were skilled laborers whom Carter ordered for specific abilities; in 1727, for instance, he needed a tailor, a gardener, a bricklayer and a "barber surgeon." Preferably, he told the Scottish merchant who would procure the servants for him, he would like them to be Scottish but he would accept even Irishmen.

Literate servants served as accountants, bookkeepers, clerks and secretaries. Others were skilled in construction trades and worked as joiners, carpenters, bricklayers and blacksmiths. These men were often let as contract labor when not needed on Carter property. The third book in the Heritage Series, *People in Profile: Christ Church Parish, 1720-1750, Lancaster County, Virginia*, highlights some 15 parishioners from all walks of life.<sup>35</sup> The manumitted slave James Wright and the landless Thomas Perkins both worked the waters of the Northern Neck as mariners. Former servants who made something of their lives when their indentures were up include carpenter James Rob who became a

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<sup>33</sup>Brown & Sorrells, *Christ Church: Lancaster County*, 22-23.

<sup>34</sup>Brown & Sorrells, *Robert "King" Carter: Builder of Christ Church*, (Foundation for Historic Christ Church, Va., Irvington, 2001), 20-24.

<sup>35</sup>Brown & Sorrells, *People in Profile*.

landowner and tailor Robert Anderson who did not. Also included are women of the parish like Priscilla Palmer whose ancestry was unknown and Mary Swan, related by marriage to Robert Carter. Among families are the Irish Maughons, a “close-knit but poor” family who typified small planters at the margins of parish society; the Conways and Gordons, both squired by the best sort of planter gentry, one who supported the established church and one who questioned it; and families like the Chichesters who descended from prominent English gentry and found friendship among residents of different social standing.

## 2. Demographic Views of the Parish

Numerical descriptions also suggest the shape and substance of the congregation. John Bell's Report, for example, pinpoints a congregation of 300 families in the year 1724. Other sources enhance the demographic viewpoint over the time span of the colonial parish and beyond. These sources, which include lists of tithables, estate inventories, and various other county, colony and, eventually, state and federal records, provide estimates of the size of the population, its composition by wealth in labor and land, and its racial background.

**Population Size** The population counts below show a steadily growing parish and county. The 1783 calculations are especially interesting. By that date Christ Church and St. Mary's White Chapel had been officially recognized as one parish, making the population count for parish and county almost equal.

| <b>Population</b> <sup>36</sup> | <b>1699</b> | <b>1720</b> | <b>1746</b> | <b>1783</b> | <b>1790</b> |
|---------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Christ Church Parish            | 1130        | 1510        | 1810        | 3767        | —           |
| Lancaster County                | 2093        | 2775        | 3847        | 4108        | 5638        |

**Wealth in Labor** The core of colonial Virginia's agricultural economy was labor to till the soil and produce a viable export crop. Labor, or the ability to control it, was seen as a measure of wealth and therefore taxable. Tithables, or taxable persons, included all males, white and black, over age 16, and all black, mulatto, and Indian women over age 16. These constituted the recognized labor force of the colony. White women and all children under 16 were untaxed.<sup>37</sup> Three levies were charged per tithable person: a public levy for colony-wide expenses such as construction of official buildings, a county levy to meet local expenses such as construction and upkeep of courthouses, jails and roads,

<sup>36</sup>A list of tithables and untithables taken in 1699 for Lancaster County forms the basis for these statistics of total population in the county and parish through the colonial period. For the post-Revolutionary period, the estimates are based on enumerations taken by the state of Virginia in 1783 and in the first Federal Census of 1790. For 1699, see also Edmund Morgan, *American Slavery*, 413, 418-419, and *Lancaster County Order Book* 4.

<sup>37</sup> Linda Rowe, “Questions & Answers: Church and State,” *The Interpreter*, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation (April, 1983), 4-5.

and a parish levy to support the minister and relieve the “worthy” poor. Tithing in colonial Virginia did not refer to a pledge of one-tenth of earnings to support the church.

By the 1740s, there were more than 1,000 black tithables in Lancaster County. 53% of them were male, a number which provided for the development of a more stable family life for Lancaster County slaves. By 1746, 83% of all non-householders in Lancaster County were black.<sup>38</sup>

| <b>Households / Tithables, Christ Church</b> | <b>1720</b> | <b>1746</b>           |
|----------------------------------------------|-------------|-----------------------|
| Households                                   | 144         | 166                   |
| Tithables                                    | 624         | 752 (519 were slaves) |

**Wealth in Land: 1715-1750 (Lancaster County)**<sup>39</sup> Looking at those Lancaster County residents who owned land gives numerical substance to the population pyramid described by Brown and Sorrells in *Christ Church: Lancaster County*. As the wealthier planters grew more so and increased the size of their holdings between 1715 and 1750, the group to decline most in their share of the landowner population was the small planter class, the small farmers whose labor force included themselves and perhaps a son or one indentured or enslaved worker.

| <b>Group</b>            | <b>Tithes</b> | <b>Land Owned</b>             | <b>% of Landowners</b> |             |
|-------------------------|---------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|-------------|
|                         |               |                               | <b>1715-1719</b>       | <b>1746</b> |
| Small Planters          | 1 – 2         | 80% less than 150 acres       | 64%                    | 47%         |
| Lower-middling Planters | 3 – 4         | 70% between 150 and 249 acres | 20%                    | 19%         |
| Upper-middling Planters | 5 – 7         | Average of 260 acres          | 8%                     | 18%         |
| Substantial Planters    | 8+            | Average of 552 acres          | 7.5%                   | 15%         |

**Value of Estates** Another way of looking at the increase in wealth of the large planters in the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century is to study the value of their estates. Estate inventories and valuations demonstrate an individual’s wealth only at the time of death but they offer good comparisons across time for the population in general.<sup>40</sup> Data from various decades show both the top and bottom of the estate range:

<sup>38</sup>Notes from Parish Profile Project, Research Files at HCC; and Robert Wheeler, *Lancaster County Virginia, 1650-1750: The Evolution of a Southern Tidewater Community* (Ph.D. Dissertation, Brown University, 1972), 128, 142.

<sup>39</sup>*Ibid.*, 126, 133.

<sup>40</sup>*Ibid.*, 148; and Carter Hudgins, *Patrician Culture, Public Ritual, and Political Authority in Virginia, 1680-1740* (Ph.D. Dissertation, College of William and Mary, 1984 ), 216-219

- Between 1720 and 1750, for example, 50% of all estates were valued at less than £50 while 71% were valued less than £100.
- Between 1731 and 1740 60% of estates were valued at less than £80, which was the annual salary of the Rev. John Bell, minister of Christ Church Parish. 29.5% were valued at less than £30.
- Across the period, the median or average value of estates remained just over £50, but the mean or midpoint value increased by over 1/3 from £89.9 to £120.55, pointing to a rise in the wealth of the large planters. The number of estates valued over £200 and £400 increased in the period.

**Increase in Slave Ownership, 1680-1740 (Lancaster County)**<sup>41</sup> At the same time that the proportion of wealthy to small planters was increasing, the proportion of enslaved to indentured workers was also increasing, a process that goes back to the period when John Carter, the immigrant founder of the Carter dynasty, was an early investor in slave labor.<sup>42</sup> Some relevant figures include:

- The 1720s were a period of dynamic population growth in Lancaster County due to lower mortality rates and rising slave importations. The number of tithables increased from 1147 to 1488, a jump of 30%.
- By 1731-1740, 50% of Lancaster County's probated wealth was in labor (indentured and enslaved), an increase of 26% from the period 1680-1710.
- The average investment in slave labor per estate grew from £17.51 in 1680-1710 to £54.95 in 1731-1740. Investments in livestock and movable property declined in the same period as planters put more capital into acquiring slaves.
- The percentage of estates containing slaves rose from 16.5% in the period 1680-1710 to 55.70% in the period 1731-1740. This was matched by a simultaneous decline in the percentage of estates containing servants, from 30.6% to 15.19%.

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<sup>41</sup>Hudgins, "Patrician Culture, Public Ritual, and Political Authority in Virginia, 1680-1740," 211-223; Wheeler, "Lancaster County Virginia, 1650-1750," 148.

<sup>42</sup> Brown and Sorrells, *Robert "King" Carter*, 49.

### 3. The Labor Force in the Parish

All of these narrative and numeric sources show that the parishioners of Christ Church came from every level of society. They had European, African and American antecedents. Some of these parishioners worked and worshipped there, building the church and its grounds at the direction of the Carter family. Their stories are available to those who can comb the documentary evidence and, happily, to those who read the results of that diligent study. One group in particular has needed intensive data collection, the enslaved workers who, by the time of the American Revolution, comprised more than half of the population of the Northern Neck.<sup>43</sup>

In 1725, Virginia was a rural agrarian colony with only three villages, Williamsburg, Yorktown, and Norfolk. Two settlements were classified as hamlets, West Point and Hampton. By 1750, the population had grown and Virginia boasted one large town, Norfolk, and two small towns, Williamsburg and Yorktown. Alexandria, Fredericksburg, and Hampton were classified as villages, and Port Royal, Urbanna, Tappahannock, and Richmond were hamlets. Lancaster County had only small settlements at tobacco ports, crossroads, and the courthouse. The numbers of residents for each urban level were: hamlet 100–250; village 250–500; small town 500–1,000; large town 1,000+.

#### Indentured Servant

A person who had made a written contract for labor for a term of years in return for passage to the colonies and certain other benefits such as freedom, clothing, land, training, or food upon fulfillment of the term. The other party to the contract was the master.

Each party received a signed original of the contract, one edge of each of which was cut with a matching, tooth-like edge. These signed originals were then filed in the appropriate courthouse and became the only form of the contract that could be used as evidence in court.

Many servants arrived in the colonies without an indenture. The master who imported them or purchased them then took them into court for certification of their age and term(s) of service.

The remaining developed land was used primarily for agricultural purposes with tobacco being the main crop through the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Because one adult male could cultivate only three acres of tobacco, there was a high demand for labor.<sup>44</sup>

Lancaster County and the Carter family used a labor force that followed the pattern set by the large planters of Tidewater Virginia. As the 17<sup>th</sup> century ended and the 18<sup>th</sup> began, these large planters committed “irrevocably” to slave labor.<sup>45</sup> Instead of the labor force composed mainly of white indentured servants working as field hands that marked the plantations of large and middling planters in the mid-1600s, the first quarter of the 18<sup>th</sup> century saw the development of an enslaved agricultural work force.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>43</sup> Thomas K. Wolf, ed., *Historic Sites in Virginia's Northern Neck and Essex County*, (Warsaw, VA, 2011), 10.

<sup>44</sup> Allan Kulikoff, *Tobacco and Slaves: The Development of Southern Cultures in the Chesapeake, 1680-1800* (Chapel Hill, 1986), 106, 126.

<sup>45</sup> Lorena S. Walsh, *Motives of Honor, Pleasure & Profit: Plantation Management in the Colonial Chesapeake, 1607-1763*, (University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 201.

<sup>46</sup> Wolf, *Historic Sites*, 10.

Several reasons spurred this change. There were fewer immigrants coming from England as wages and employment, especially in the military, increased there. Trade in slaves increased at the same time as slaves were brought into the Chesapeake from the depressed sugar islands of the Caribbean. Combined with the end in 1698 of the Royal Africa Company's monopoly of the slave trade that opened African waters to competition among independent ship owners and captains, these factors changed Virginia's labor force from primarily indentured to primarily enslaved during the period 1680-1729.<sup>47</sup>

The Carters of Lancaster County demonstrate the changeover. By 1656, John Carter I owned ten slaves;<sup>48</sup> his will, probated in 1670, showed a labor force of 34 indentured servants and 43 slaves.<sup>49</sup> His sons John II and Robert inherited both servants and slaves and increased the use of slave labor. When Robert Carter died in 1732, his estate inventory contained 17 indentured servants and 734 slaves.<sup>50</sup> Like the rest of Tidewater Virginia, the lands farmed by the Carter family, whose workers were part of the Christ Church Parish community, were maintained by a labor force that was primarily but not entirely enslaved.

### **The Labor Force in the Parish: FAQs**

**Q:**     *What is a plantation?*

**A:**     During the earliest years of settlement, a plantation was a region inhabited by colonists in which they “planted” a residential community, as in “her Majesties Plantation called Virginia.” Eventually, the term was used throughout the colonial era into the 19<sup>th</sup> century for a tract of cultivated land owned or rented by an individual. The term also designated the component “quarters” of large holdings.

**Q:**     *What were quarters or a quarter?*

**A:**     A quarter was a domestic structure for the accommodation of slaves or a group or cluster of houses occupied by slaves. The term also referred to part of a larger landholding devoted to agricultural production, components of a plantation or farm, or an outlying plantation or farm. Robert Carter's enslaved workers lived on 48 quarters, including the home quarter of Corotoman.<sup>51</sup>

**Q:**     *What was a quartering house or quarter?*

**A:**     These terms referred to the accommodations for workers in a quarter. They were usually earth-fast, frame, single story buildings with a loft and gable, and chimney(s) made of clay or brick. They had one or two rooms (16 x 16 ft. or 20 x 16 ft.), an earthen floor and shuttered windows.

**Q.**     *How many other colonies besides Virginia allowed slavery?*

**A.**     Slavery was a legal institution in all thirteen American colonies.

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<sup>47</sup> Walsh, *Motives of Honor.*, 201-202.

<sup>48</sup> Brown and Sorrells, *Robert “King” Carter*, 49.

<sup>49</sup> Walsh, *Motives of Honor*, 256.

<sup>50</sup> Brown and Sorrells, *Robert “King” Carter*, 24.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.

Q. *When did slaves first appear in the New World?*

A. African slaves first came to the New World around the time of Columbus' voyages. They provided most of the labor on which the settlement and development of the New World depended. The Spanish and Portuguese colonies in the West Indies and the Americas, as well as those colonies of the English, French, and Dutch which followed, used slaves to produce sugar, tobacco, rice coffee, and cotton on their plantations.<sup>52</sup>

Q. *Where did the slaves come from?*

A. Some of the first blacks in Virginia, the "20. And Odd Negroes" reported by John Rolfe to have arrived in 1619, came from Angola in West Africa. Most other slaves brought to Virginia in the first three quarters of the 17<sup>th</sup> century came from Barbados and other colonies in the West Indies or from the Dutch colony of New Netherlands (New York). By the mid-1670s, slave traders had begun to ship slaves directly from West Africa.<sup>53</sup>

Both Robert Carter and his son John Carter imported slaves from Gambia. John also brought slaves in from the Gold Coast, one of the most prominent regions for the transatlantic slave trade.<sup>54</sup>

In Lancaster County, blacks appeared as early as 1652. The estate inventory of Epaphroditus Lawson, taken June 2, 1652, listed "Peter a Negro" as an indentured servant with seven years' time remaining; a mulatto boy named Tom also appears in Lawson's inventory.<sup>55</sup>

Q. *When did slavery replace white indentured servitude?*

A. By the mid-1660s, the influx of white indentured servants to the Chesapeake region failed to match planters' increasing needs for labor. As their numbers diminished and their prices rose, planters responded by importing more slaves, who became the better investment as Virginia's high mortality rates declined in the second half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The long-established system of procuring and transporting captive Africans ensured Virginia's planters a more dependable supply of black laborers for their plantations. By the 1690s and early decades of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the slave trade to Virginia began to flourish and slavery became more entrenched in society.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> David Brion Davis, *Slavery in the Colonial Chesapeake* (Williamsburg, Va., 1986), 1-2.

<sup>53</sup>Engel Sluiter, "New Light on the "20. And Odd Negroes" Arriving in Virginia, August 1619," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Series 54, 2 (April 1997), 395-398; John Thornton, "The African Experience of the '20. and Odd Negroes' Arriving in Virginia in 1619," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Series 55, 3 (July 1998), 421-434; Davis, *Slavery in the Colonial Chesapeake*, 8.

<sup>54</sup> Philip D. Morgan, *Slave Counterpoint: Black Culture in the Eighteenth Century Chesapeake & Lowcountry* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1998), 65.

<sup>55</sup>Inventory of Epaphroditus Lawson, 7 August 1652, *Deed Book* 1:10-11.

<sup>56</sup> Davis, *Slavery in the Colonial Chesapeake*, 7; Edmund Morgan, *American Slavery*, 299; Allan Kulikoff, *Tobacco and Slaves*, 37-41.

Q. *Who imported the slaves?*

A. In the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, slave traders sold Africans at various points along Virginia's four main rivers—the Potomac, Rappahannock, York, and James. Slave ships stopped at small ports and towns like Yorktown in addition to selling their cargos directly from the waters near homes of the colony's largest planters, like Robert Carter. It often took about 2 ½ months to sell the supply of slaves. Planters like Carter, Wormley, Page, and Tayloe, whose standing afforded them knowledge of neighboring planters' interest in and ability to pay for slaves, inspected the slaves on board the ships before deciding to act as middlemen and sell them for an 8 to 10 percent commission.<sup>57</sup>

Q. *What about the Christianization of slaves?*

A. During the 17<sup>th</sup> century, a small number of planters baptized their slaves and provided them with basic teachings in Christianity. In 1667, Virginia's Assembly passed legislation stating that baptism did not alter a slave's status, an act designed to protect masters' property more than promote Christianity. In the early 1700s, the Church of England sent a small number of missionaries to the colonies to Christianize slaves (and others whom they considered heathen), though most planters resisted their efforts.<sup>58</sup> In 1724 Virginia parsons reported to the Bishop of London that efforts to convert blacks and Indians were often opposed by slave owners.

Most slaves remained distant from Christianity until the Great Awakening began to attract blacks to the Presbyterian, Baptist, and Methodist folds in the mid to late 18<sup>th</sup> century. During the late 1750s, Col. James Gordon of Lancaster County reported large numbers of slaves baptized at Presbyterian meetings.

Q. *Did slaves attend Christ Church?*

A. There is no documentation, but in his 1724 report, Bell noted that the church was open to enslaved people. It is likely that some attended, but they were most likely not seated in the pews. The gallery was not built for a “slave balcony,” a 19<sup>th</sup> century custom. It was most likely built to handle overflow as the parish grew.

Edward Nicken and James Wright are two examples of free black Christians who lived in Christ Church Parish during the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and probably attended services at the church.

Q. *Were slaves ever educated?*

A. Nearly all slaves were unlettered, but there were some exceptions. Samuel Davies, the Presbyterian revivalist, trained many slaves to read and write in the 1750s, and 30 slave children attended the Bray school in Williamsburg between 1765 and 1770.

Q. *Were there any free blacks?*

A. In the mid to late 17<sup>th</sup> century, a significant number of free blacks lived in Northhampton County on the Eastern Shore. They became landowners as well as slaveowners, and they testified in court and willed property to their descendants.

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<sup>57</sup> Davis, *Slavery in the Colonial Chesapeake*, 12-13.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.

In Lancaster County, several free black families established themselves in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, one of which was connected to the Carters. Black Dick and his wife, Criss, who had been freed and given land, cattle, and corn by John Carter II's will in 1690, headed what became the Nickens family, one of Lancaster County's oldest free black families. As a whole, though, free blacks were few until the late 1700s.

### **Edward Nicken, A Second Generation Colonial Free Black Man**

By Dr. Robert D. Lumsden, FHCC Research Committee Chair

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*Citations of the documentary evidence are available on request.*

In his last will and testament, John Carter II, son of John Carter the immigrant and half-brother of Robert Carter, explicitly and for an unknown reason, freed "Black Dick" and his wife Chriss as the first item in his will:

First. I doe give Black Dick and Chriss his Wife after the finishing of the Crop that is now on the Grounde their Freedom, and I doe give each of them a Cow and Calfe and three barrels of Corn a peece, and I doe likewise give them so much ground upon the land I bought of Nicholas Wren and old Clapham, for their lives so they may tend with houses convenient for them and timber for casques, And Likewise Chrisses youngest Daughter, I st free along with her, and likewise, I doe give Diana and Little Criss; their Freedom when they come to the age of Eighteen yeres, and that they in the meantime remaine with my Wife, And I doe give each of them a yearling heifer with heir increase until they come to halfe a dozen to run along with my Weifes stock of cattle, and all the rest of their encrease I give unto my Wife. . . .

The reason for this unequalled gift of freedom may never be known, but this act began a succession of generations of free blacks that evolved into the Nicken family that to this day is a part of the Lancaster County community.

In 1735, Edward wrote his Last Will and Testament. The inventory of his estate, quite extensive for the time, included considerable livestock, a saddle and bridle; furniture including beds, chests, a trunk, benches, stools, chairs, a spinning wheel and a looking glass; pewter, a tankard, spoons, jugs, a punch bowl, an iron pot, skillet, a spit, meat fork, a skimmer, fire tongs, a sugar box, wooden ware, tubs, earthen pots, a pestle, bottles, tables and a frying pan; tools such as hoes, axes, wedges, rope, wool carders, a draw knife and fishing lines and hooks; linen, "Duroy," Virginia cloth, coarse linen and clothing. The total worth of his estate was £ 55, 1 shilling, 9 pence, not a small sum for the time.

Edward's will, recorded in November 1735, mentions his wife Mary and sons. He signed the will—the original is at the Library of Virginia, and his estate inventory lists among the household items a Bible and a pair of old books, suggesting that he was literate. He was also a Christian, and it is certainly possible he would have attended Christ Church before his death in 1735. Edward Nicken was an accomplished man in spite of the prejudice he must have encountered.

Q. *How were slaves trained?*

A. New immigrants learned on the larger, more diversified plantations from Virginia-born slaves, slave foremen, and overseers. On smaller plantations, masters often directed the work of their slaves. White artisans also trained slaves, and skilled slaves acted as teachers to new immigrants and older male children.

Robert Carter apprenticed some slaves to learn skilled trades such as coopering. In his will, Carter requested that some of the “young negroes” he willed his son George be “bred up [as] Trades men Carpenters & Coopers.”

Q. *How many slaves were there in the colony during the Historic Christ Church interpretive period?*

A. Blacks numbered about 26,000 in 1720. By 1756, Governor Dinwiddie estimated 120,000 blacks and 173,000 whites in Virginia. In 1750, black slaves comprised between 50%-59% of Lancaster's population.<sup>59</sup>

#### **4. Labor Force of the Corotoman Estate, 1652-1732**

During its first 80 years the workforce on the Corotoman plantation changed from entirely white indentured servants to entirely black slaves. FHCC researcher Patrick Heffernan has written a detailed account of this transition, *The Servants and Slaves of the Corotoman Estate—1652 to 1732*, which is available on the Foundation's website, along with his *Corotoman Slave Histories* and *Corotoman Servant Database* on which his study was based. The following is a summary written for *The Red Book*, with his original text extensively used with his permission.

Who were the indentured servants?

“Indentured servants were men and women who signed a contract (also known as an indenture or a covenant) by which they agreed to work for a certain number of years in exchange for transportation to Virginia and, once they arrived, food, clothing and shelter. Adults usually served for four to seven years and children sometimes for much longer, with most working in the colony's tobacco fields. With a long history in England, indentured servitude became, during most of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the primary means by which Virginia planters filled their nearly inexhaustible need for labor.” *Encyclopedia Virginia*.

Indentured servants who traveled to Virginia fell into three groups:

1. Those who came of their own free will, looking to achieve a better life in the colony than they could expect at home, but who were unable to pay their own way.
2. Involuntary emigrants sent for their punishment and reform, or simply to remove them as a financial burden upon some authority in England, such as Parliament, the courts, or the parishes. This broad group was made up of vagrants, paupers, convicts, orphans, and prisoners-of-war.
3. Those who had been kidnapped or “spirited,” as the practice was then termed. These emigrants were vulnerable or desperate individuals who were lured, tricked or forced onto ships bound for the colonies. Upon arrival they were sold by the sea captains, who did so

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<sup>59</sup> Morgan, *Slave Counterpoint*, 98.

for their own gain, if they had purchased the victims, or on commission for the traffickers who had paid for their passage.

The great majority of English emigrants were the first group, the only voluntary sojourners. But thousands were also banished to the colony from British prisons and poorhouses. The Scots, Irish and other Europeans who appear in the records came largely from the two involuntary groups (2 and 3 above), particularly prisoners taken in English wars, who were sent to the colony to serve their time.

Who were the slaves?

The slaves who lived and worked on the Corotoman estate fell into four groups:

1. Those transported on slave ships (often termed “Guineamen”) directly from Africa to Virginia.
2. Those first transported from Africa to islands in the Caribbean, primarily Barbados and Jamaica, then sold to local slave traders whose business consisted of transporting them, in smaller numbers and in smaller ships, for final sale in destinations along the entire Atlantic coast of North and South America. The majority of the African slaves purchased in Virginia arrived in this way, on coastal (as distinct from ocean-going) sloops that traveled up the James, York, Rappahannock and Potomac rivers. This is referred to as the Intercolonial Slave Trade, as distinct from the Transatlantic Slave Trade (above).
3. Those who were captured by pirates and privateers from either transatlantic or intercolonial slave traders and then carried to Virginia for sale.
4. Those who were born in Virginia.

These distinctions regarding the origins of the servants and slaves who arrived in the colony of Virginia contribute to an understanding of the ebb and flow of the two groups in the fields of Corotoman.

**Corotoman under John Carter I, 1652-1669** In the 17 years of his ownership John Carter I's workforce grew from one white servant to 34 servants and 43 slaves. The records reveal that over 100 servants came and went during his tenure. All but four were men, reflecting Carter's constant need for more field workers on his burgeoning plantation. How many of them may have been recruited for him in England and arrived bearing their indentures is harder to determine. Only nine were brought to court to have their ages adjudged and terms set because they had arrived without an indenture. But on a 1665 patent 50 others are simply named. Nine appear with first names only, some with added descriptions that they were Scots, Welsh and French. These men were surely involuntary immigrants, though never brought to court. We thus have evidence that at least one in five of the servants held by John Carter I arrived without indentures. The number could be much higher.

The origin of the slaves also emerges from analysis of the records. They began with a group of eleven (5 men, 4 women, 2 children) that Carter inherited in 1656 upon his marriage to Eleanor, the widow of William Brocas. Because only one man and woman in the group were *not* described as “old,” “very old” or “diseased,” this group did not add significantly to his workforce. But the arrival of two mothers with children did signal the beginning of Corotoman as a nursery for slaves.

When Carter applied for a land patent in 1665, 13 of the 21 slaves listed on it were female, a surprisingly high ratio given that Virginia planters usually purchased two men for every woman. Thus, Corotoman, at the very start of its development acquired a significant number of enslaved women, and thereby established one of the conditions for its population of slaves to grow significantly through natural increase. And that is what the enslaved population did.

Of the 43 slaves named in the inventory of his estate, not only were 14 of them children, but we are left in no doubt about their newness to the world. Nine are described as “young,” three as “younger,” one as “now weaned,” and finally a “sucking boy.” In short almost a third of the slaves held captive at Corotoman when it passed to John Carter II were Virginia-born. By contrast, only one of the 34 servants was a woman, and there were no servant children. Indentured servants were forbidden by law from marrying and would have their terms greatly extended were they to have a child.

All of the slaves purchased by John Carter I and John Carter II would have made their way directly or indirectly to Corotoman via the intercolonial slave trade, from pirates, or from privateers. Only three transatlantic slave ships made Virginia their principal place of first landing before 1700, with none coming directly to the Rappahannock. It is thus most unlikely that any of these imported slaves arrived directly from Africa, but most likely that all were born there.

With regard to the composition of the workforce at this time, an estimated 31 servants and 25 slaves labored in the tobacco fields of Corotoman in 1670. These figures need not be exact for the general idea to hold true: that white indentured servants were the predominant labor force at Corotoman during its charter years under John Carter I, but that in less than 15 years they were nearing parity with the black slaves. This set Corotoman in the direction of changing from one labor force to the other, and John Carter II continued in the direction that his father had set.

**From Servants to Slaves: Corotoman under John Carter II, 1670-1690** John Carter II’s tenure at Corotoman lasted just 20 years but was decisive with regard to the servants and slaves. When the inventory of his estate was taken in 1691, only four servants remained and two of those had only twelve days left to serve. The number of slaves had soared to 107. The change from a white servant to a black slave workforce was almost complete.

John Carter II did not, however, start off in that direction. Rather, in the first five years of his ownership, he entered into 15 new agreements with servants who arrived without indentures. Five more were adjudicated after that, with the last in 1685. These 20 indenture agreements with servants who had arrived without them show at least that if John Carter II was intent upon replacing servants

with slaves, he either could not do so, or chose not to do so, all at once. They also reflect the fact that the flow of voluntary immigrant servants from England to the colonies had practically dried up. John Carter II bought most of his servants from the pool of criminals and others who had arrived without indentures.

In 1686 he turned to the Lancaster court seeking to undo a group of ten existing and pending indentures he had entered into, in both England and Virginia. They were declared “null and void” on grounds of not meeting the proper legal form. For a planter to turn to the court to get out of agreements with indentured servants, rather than find a way to extend them, was exceptionally rare. Among the possible explanations is that John Carter II was finding more than enough unskilled laborers to choose from among those sent to the colonies for their punishment by the British.

With regard to the slaves, the great increase from 43 on the estate at the start of his tenure to 107 by the end was the result of both purchases and births. Analysis of a variety of documents suggests that the composition of the 107 inventoried slaves of 1691 was this:

- 6 African-born adults named earlier, dating back to John Carter I
- 31 African-born adults, named for the first time and purchased by John Carter II
- 39 Virginia-born adults, mostly children born on the estate who had reached adulthood
- 31 Virginia-born children, recently born on the estate and named for the first time

Thus, by 1691 Corotoman-born slaves made up a large majority of the plantation’s slave population and a fair majority of what may have become an entirely slave workforce. With only four servants remaining in John Carter I’s inventory, there is a chance that none were working in the tobacco fields.

Under John Carter I the workforce at Corotoman had started to change from servants to slaves, and under John Carter II it very nearly did so entirely. This transition was the product of both decisions and circumstances, with the fertility of the slave mothers and the hardiness of their children the most salient of those circumstances. Blacks may have been, in the words of the colony’s Secretary, Nicholas Spencer, “cheaper than Whites” to purchase, but it was cheaper still if they were added to the estate through childbirth as most were under John Carter II. Whether or not building slave families was his intent we cannot know, but we do know it was the result.

**The Return of the Servants: Corotoman under Robert “King” Carter, 1691-1720** It is helpful to consider Robert Carter’s 40-year tenure at Corotoman in two periods, with the first ending in 1720. When he took over Corotoman in 1691 he inherited a community of enslaved families and only four indentured servants (at most) working as field hands. He also faced an immediate and significant loss in his slave workers, because 38 were given away by bequest to John Carter II’s widow, who had remarried. Robert’s response to this great decrease in laborers was to replace them with whatever workers he could get.

Documents show that during this period a total of 82 indentured servants and 21 adult slaves were purchased for Corotoman. With respect to the servants, the majority arrived with indentures, for only ten were brought to court to have their ages adjudged. Robert differed from his older brother not only by resuming the purchase of indentured servants but in favoring voluntary immigrants among them.

With respect to the purchased slaves, there is insufficient information to determine their source. The slave trade around Corotoman had increased dramatically, with seven transatlantic slave ships and 18 intercolonial slave trade boats arriving in the Rappahannock between 1701 and 1720. The slaves purchased by Robert Carter at this time could have come from any combination of them.

In 1707, when many of the recently contracted servants' terms had ended or soon would, Carter brought 18 black slave children to court to have their ages adjudged. With their purchase, the era of white servants working in the tobacco fields at Corotoman again started to come to an end. So too, for the most part, did the purchase of either servants or adult slaves to maintain the workforce.

During the last decade of this period (1711-1720) the records show just four imported servants and three imported slave children brought to court to have their ages adjudged. These small additions were incidental to, if not a consequence of, the final change that was underway. The composition of the workforce and the source for its renewal were returning to what they were in 1690 when interrupted by the large removal of slaves bequeathed to the widow of John Carter II. Corotoman-born adult slaves were again on their way to becoming the majority of the fieldworkers—and their Corotoman-born children were again becoming the only source needed to sustain their numbers.

**Slave Ships at the Landing: Corotoman under Robert Carter, 1721-1732** In the closing decade of his life Robert Carter became actively involved in the African slave trade. He bought hundreds of African slaves for his own plantations. He also sold hundreds to others on commission from various London- and Liverpool-based slave merchants. Of the approximately 2400 African slaves sold from ships anchored in the Rappahannock during this decade, many are likely to have first stepped ashore, following their horrid journey, upon the soil at Corotoman.

But few stayed there, for Robert Carter added relatively few African slaves to his home plantation, even during these peak years of his involvement in the slave trade. Though no Lancaster tithable records survive for this decade, other records indicate that the number of tithable slaves at Corotoman was slightly lower at the end of it. Carter was not clearing new fields at Corotoman but opening new ones in other counties. The great majority of his newly purchased slaves were needed and sent elsewhere.

At this time Carter also brought 17 recently imported slave children to court to have their ages adjudged. He was again acting on opportunities to add African-born children to Corotoman, as he had in 1707. Then as now, he had the mothers and established families who could bring them up in the language and culture of the estate. That Carter saw his home plantation as both a workplace and a birthplace for slaves is evident. The number of enslaved workers did not grow during this decade—probably because of two epidemics among the slaves in 1721 and 1727 (which also heavily

impacted the non-slave population of the county)—but it sustained itself, as it had started to do around 1690, through its own families bringing their own children into the world.

With regard to the servants during this last decade, five were brought to court for various offenses, and a few others appeared to record mutual agreements with Carter to extend their terms of service in exchange for not having to work in the fields. Of the seventeen indentured servants living at Corotoman at the time of his death, fifteen were men and all but three were listed with a trade. By contrast, no servants were brought to court to have their ages adjudged, making it clear that the days of purchasing involuntary immigrants to be ordinary workers in the tobacco fields were over. The last servant to work as a Corotoman field hand quite certainly did so in 1729. The skilled servants carried on for a few more years.

It was also at this time that Carter built a brick mansion for his estate, completed in 1725 only to be consumed by a fire just four years later. For this project he entered into numerous indenture agreements with servants skilled in the building trades as carpenters, bricklayers, and glaziers, in addition to the usual blacksmiths, tailors, cooks and others normally needed for the operation of the plantation.

Then, around 1730, Carter began the construction of a new brick church for Christ Church Parish, having offered to the vestry to do so at his expense. There is every reason to believe that many of the skilled indentured servants who had built his home were subsequently employed in the construction of the new church. And it is as certain that many slaves were engaged in the construction as well. One we know of by name, a woman named Criss, who was assigned to serve as a cook for the workforce dwelling at the adjacent vestry house.

Robert Carter began and ended his tenure at Corotoman with no servants working in the fields, but the forty years in between saw more new servants than slaves being purchased and more slaves being born than bought into a lifetime of labor. From its beginning in the 1650's Corotoman was an entirely different workplace for the slaves, bound to it for life, than for the servants working on it for a few years before obtaining their freedom. For the slaves Corotoman continued to be both their prison and their home for another 130 years, until 1863. In that year, the last section of the original Corotoman estate was sold—and the Emancipation Proclamation was issued.

### **Robert Carter and Slavery: FAQs**

*Q. How many slaves did Carter really own?*

A. The inventory taken after his death enumerates a total of 734 slaves located throughout his quarters/plantations. It is likely Carter owned more but had already given some to his children before his death and subsequent inventory.

*Q. How many quarters did he own, and where were they located?*

A. Carter owned some 47 quarters in nine counties, plus three mills, two stores, and the home plantation. The Virginia counties were Lancaster, Northumberland, Richmond, Westmoreland,

Caroline, King George, Stafford, Spotsylvania, and Prince William. The average number of slaves per quarter was 15.

Q. *Who ran the plantations?*

A. Overseers were managers of agricultural operations at a quarter. Carter's overseers were all white men. Foremen helped direct and set the pace of work under the direction of the overseer. 42 of Carter's 44 foremen were slave men (the other two were indentured servants).

Of the 734 slaves counted in Carter's inventory, only 390 were working age; the rest were children or "past labor." Two thirds of his artisans were slaves, but Carter also employed white indentured servants as tailors, blacksmiths, bricklayers, butchers, and glaziers at his home plantation in addition to the slaves who served in skilled positions there. 86% of Carter's slave men worked in the fields: 69% were field hands, while 17% served as foremen, working alongside and directing the hands. The other 14% of males served in skilled or semi-skilled positions, such as sawyers, carpenters, coopers, boatmen, or carters. Only 2 of the 178 adult females worked outside of the fields—Criss a young woman who served as a cook at the vestry house, and another Criss, a cook at Carter's home quarter of Corotoman.<sup>60</sup>

Q. *How did Carter treat his slaves?*

A. The concept of slave treatment must be considered on three levels:

1. day to day material conditions--food, clothing, shelter
2. conditions of life--stability of family; breakup, separation, or sale of family members; access to family members on other plantations; levels of physical and mental exploitation; customary rights to gardens, raising chickens, etc.
3. access to freedom—likelihood of manumission or ability to work self out of slavery

As a businessman who had a vested interest in the health and reproduction of his slaves, Carter worked to ensure his slaves had adequate material provisions. In a letter to one of his overseers, Carter noted that he had "ordered very good cabbins to be made for my people, that their beds may lye a foot and a half from the ground." Carter ordered slaves' quarters and overseers' houses to be lofted, as "It is very necessary not only for the warmth of the house, but to lay the people's corn up in." Carter also expressed concern about getting corn, beans, pork, and other foods to his slaves in anticipation of winter months so that "the people may live as comfortable as they can."

Carter's letterbooks indicate he frequently ordered bolts of coarse cloth for slave clothing, rugs (blankets), and shoes (about which he complained due to the lack of large sizes shipped to Corotoman), as well as woolen caps and stockings from Kilmarnock, Scotland. A diary entry for October 7, 1724, reveals that Carter's sloop set out for the falls carrying 12 recently imported

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<sup>60</sup> See Inventory of Robert Carter, typed transcript in research files of HCC; Morgan, *Slave Counterpoint*, 207-211; and Kulikoff, *Tobacco and Slaves*, 384-385.

Africans who were “all well clothed & bedded.” Carter understood the relationship between providing sound housing and clothing and the health of his labor force:

“if wee can but find a way to keep the people warm with warm hous's warm bedding and warm cloaths I cant beleive but wee should have fewer mortalitys. I am sure I have done my part if the overseers do but theirs.”<sup>61</sup>

Carter imported many Africans in the 1720s, and he often tried to ensure they would receive good treatment at the hands of both overseers and experienced African and Virginia-born slaves alike. Carter cautioned an overseer to be “kind to all the Negros, but especially to the new ones.” Later, recognizing that there were “a great many new hands” on his quarters, Carter directed overseers to ensure that the “old hands” did not abuse the newly arrived Africans.<sup>62</sup>

Carter encouraged marriage among his slaves and allowed husbands, wives, and children to live together in family units. His will directed that many of these family units stay with the plantations bequeathed to his children. In several cases, he paid the slave's worth in pounds sterling to his children in lieu of the slave in order to preserve a family unit. His will also directed that family units stayed with the lands bequeathed to his children. In July of 1723 Carter expressed an interest in buying some slaves who were “very much Related to Severall of my families of Slaves.” But there were exceptions to this effort to keep families together, as in several instances in his will Carter separated children from their parents when dividing his slaves amongst his children.<sup>63</sup>

Unlike his half-brother John II, who freed several slaves in his 1690 will, there is no record of Robert Carter manumitting any of his slaves. Even if he had wanted to, Carter would have found it difficult to manumit a slave. In 1691, the Assembly prohibited masters from freeing slaves unless the master paid to transport the freed slave out of the colony, a statute in effect until 1705. In 1723 the Virginia Assembly forbade manumission altogether, except in cases where a slave had performed some exceptional act of public service, such as revealing a slave conspiracy, in which case the governor and council would authorize the emancipation.<sup>64</sup>

One way Carter's slaves attempted to gain their freedom was by running away. From 1725-1727 some 33 slaves ran away from Carter's quarters, including seven who used a canoe to escape for more than a week in July of 1727. Running away, however, often was only a temporary escape from the realities of enslavement. Carter noted that one female runaway, “now she hath tasted of the hardships of the woods. . .will go near to stay at home where she

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<sup>61</sup>See Robert Carter to Robert Jones, October 12, 1727, *Carter Letterbook*, VHS; and Robert Carter to [?], fall 1728, *Carter Letterbook*, VHS; and *Carter Diary*, October 7, 1724.

<sup>62</sup> Robert Carter to Robert Jones, October 12, 1727, *Carter Letterbook*, VHS; Robert Carter to [?], fall 1728, *Carter Letterbook*, VHS; and Morgan, *Slave Counterpoint*, 459.

<sup>63</sup> See Robert Carter Will, typed transcript in research files of HCC; Robert Carter to Micajah Perry, July 13, 1723, *Carter Letterbook*, VHS.

<sup>64</sup> Morgan, *American Slavery, American Freedom*, 337.

can have her belly full.” Moreover, punishments Carter inflicted for running away were severe. On at least two occasions Carter petitioned Lancaster court for permission to dismember slaves by cutting off their toes, something which Carter claimed “cured many a Negro of running away.” Other slaves suffered similar punishments, such as Billy, who was “whipt & branded.”<sup>65</sup>

Carter’s interest in providing for the physical welfare of his slaves should be viewed as part of good management practices any large planter would have wanted to maintain in early 18<sup>th</sup> century Virginia. While Carter took great care to feed, clothe, and house his slaves, and while he encouraged family units to live together on his quarters, his “treatment” of his slaves must also take into account the severity of the punishments Carter meted out to slaves who attempted to run away or resisted in other forms. In the end, Carter must be understood as a man of his time, dedicated to developing a productive and profitable labor force through effective management tactics and, if required, ready and willing to use the force of the whip as sanctioned by law to ensure control over his enslaved labor force.

Q.      *What was Corotoman, the home plantation, like?*

A.      Corotoman was, in fact, a small hamlet. Carter’s inventory lists two dwelling houses, kitchen, office, spinning house, dairy store, new and old dairy, two “cyder” houses, slave quarter, blacksmith shop, still house, old and new coach houses, sloop landing house, and several different stores (office store, nail store)—a total of nineteen buildings.

The 37 slaves living at Corotoman included 23 adults, one “past labor,” and 14 children. Their occupations included cook, butcher, tailor, carpenters, sailors, and carters. They lived in the quarter and lofts of the various outbuildings. The labor force also included 17 white indentured servants (15 men, two women) who served as carpenters, glaziers, tailors, gardeners, blacksmiths, bricklayers, sailors, and seamstresses and who also would have lived in lofts and rooms of various outbuildings. Carter had no black personal servants and only one black domestic. No coachmen, grooms, etc. were specifically mentioned, but Carter surely must have had them.

Q.      *What were Carter’s quarters in Lancaster County called?*

A.      In addition to Corotoman, the home plantation, the others were: Old House Quarter, Indiantown Quarter, Changelins Quarter, Wolf House Quarter, Hills Quarter, Brick House Quarter, Gibson’s Plantation, Office Quarter, Morattico Quarter, Corotoman Quarter, Poplar Neck Quarter, and the Vestry House tract near the church. The location of some of the quarters is unknown and research is ongoing. The largest quarter, Old House, had 31 slaves (one served as foreman) and an overseer. Gibson’s Plantation and Poplar Neck Quarter were the smallest; each had six slaves (one served as foreman) and an overseer. The vestry house listed only Criss, the cook, for the church workmen, who were not listed.

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<sup>65</sup>Robert Carter to Robert Jones, October 10, 1727, *Carter Letterbook*, VHS; *Lancaster County Order Books* 5:189 and 7:59; Morgan, *Slave Counterpoint*, 447; *Robert Carter Diary*, November 26, 1722.



## SECTION V: THE CARTER FAMILY

**Theme:** The story of the Carter family, from the immigrant John through the second generation Robert and into the third generation of Robert's sons and daughters, is the story of America's change from colony to nation.

1. **Introduction**
2. **Generation I: John Carter I (1613-1669)**
3. **Generation II: John Carter II (c. 1641-1690)**
4. **Generation II: Robert “King” Carter I (1663-1732)**  
Robert Carter Timeline
5. **Generation III: Children of Robert Carter I**
6. **Notable Grandchildren of Robert Carter I**  
Robert Carter III: Author of the Deed of Manumission  
Other Notable Grandchildren of Robert Carter I
7. **Notable Descendants Robert Carter I**
8. **Corotoman**  
The Mansion  
The 1977-1980 Corotoman Dig  
Timeline
9. **Principle Resources**

## **1. Introduction: The Carter Family of Lancaster County, Virginia**

The Carters—John the emigrant from England, John II his eldest son and Robert “King” Carter, the second son—inspire very mixed feelings among people in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Robert Carter is especially perplexing. He was a devout member of the Church of England who provided the funds for the building of the brick Christ Church, but he was also a slave holder and trader. He became one of the richest individuals in Virginia, but found time to hold several important religious, civic and government positions. He built an enormous mansion, but did not rebuild it after it burned. He made sure that all of his children, sons and daughters, were provided land either in his will or upon marriage although the English custom was for the first son to inherit the estate.

To understand the family, one needs to understand the context of 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> century Virginia. The Virginia colony began primarily as an economic venture, established to provide income to the English crown and nobles, most of whom never laid eyes on North America. The individuals who chose to immigrate as did John Carter I were by and large from middle class families or subsequent, rather than first, sons of upper class families. Certainly, those who came were risk takers who were prepared to work hard to improve their prospects in life.

Although an ocean away from England, the early settlers measured and showed their success by accumulating material goods and building large mansions reflecting the English aristocracy. They sought leadership positions in the colonial civil hierarchy. Since the Church of England was an important arm of the British crown in North America as a social, religious, political and economic institution essential in keeping British subjects in rural Virginia informed of laws, taxes and policies coming from London or Jamestown or Williamsburg, aspiring settlers also sought leadership positions as laypeople.

The Carters were clearly brave, intelligent and entrepreneurial individuals. They were men of their time, only more so.

## **2. Generation I: John Carter I (1613-1669)**

John Carter I was born in Christ Church Parish, Newgate Street, London, England in 1613. Sources suggest that he was the son of a London vintner named John Carter and his second wife, Bridget Benion Carter. John I sailed to Virginia in 1635 at the age of 22. He was the first Carter from this line to immigrate to Virginia. He first settled in Upper Norfolk County (later Nansemond County), which he represented in the House of Burgesses in 1641-1643 and in 1649.

In 1642, John I patented 1,300 acres on the north side of the Rappahannock River in what would become Lancaster County on the Northern Neck. He continued throughout his life to add to his holdings, eventually acquiring more than 6,100 acres in Lancaster County.

Conflict with the native peoples delayed settlement of the Northern Neck for much of the 1640s. By 1651, however, Lancaster County was specifically named in land grants, and in 1652-53, John Carter I settled on his prime land grant on the Rappahannock River, establishing his home plantation, Corotoman. By 1654, he became one of the justices of the Lancaster County Court, a position he retained for the rest of his life. John also represented his new county in the House of Burgesses and held several other significant public offices, including colonel of the county militia and member of the Governor's Council (1658 and 1663-1669). He was clearly a member of the prerevolutionary gentry.

Cultivating his increasingly large land holdings, Carter became one of the colony's leading tobacco planters and traders. He made several trips back and forth to England establishing his trading business. He also acquired one of the colony's largest labor forces. His estate inventory from July 1670 listed 34 servants and 43 slaves, or about two percent of all the slaves in Virginia. He married five times and fathered six children, four of whom survived to adulthood.

John I also played a leading role in Christ Church Parish. John Carter I swore in the first vestry for Christ Church Parish in 1665. He provided the land and became the "undertaker" (builder) of the first Christ Church, a wooden structure completed in July 1670 some six months after his death. He was buried with four of his five wives and two of his children in the chancel of this first church. His last wife survived him and returned to England. At his death his estate was valued at about 2,250 pounds sterling.

### **3. Generation II: John Carter II (c. 1640-1690)**

The first son of John Carter I to survive infancy, John Carter II was born c. 1640 in Upper Norfolk County (later Nansemond County), where John Carter I made his first home in Virginia. John II's mother was Jane Glyn, the daughter of Morgan Glyn of Wales, from whom John II would inherit £50 and a "great table diamond ring." John II spent the latter part of his childhood on the Lancaster County plantation of Corotoman. Upon his father's death, he expanded and developed the family holdings. He also served in numerous public offices, as had his father, including as a representative in the House of Burgesses, a justice of the Lancaster County Court, a colonel in the county militia, and a vestryman for Christ Church Parish. Upon his father's death he became the guardian of his much younger half-brother, Robert. John II also served as the guardian of the daughter of David Miles. John Carter II died without male issue in 1690, leaving behind a daughter named Elizabeth.

### **4. Generation II: Robert Carter I ("King" Carter) (1663-1732)**

Robert Carter was probably born on the grounds of Corotoman plantation on the Rappahannock River in Lancaster County, Virginia. His mother was John Carter I's fourth wife, Sarah Ludlow Carter. She died when Robert was about five.

John I also died when Robert was a young child, leaving adequate funds in his will for Robert to be educated. Around 1672-73 Robert's half-brother John II sent him to grammar school in London, where he boarded with Arthur Bailey, a tobacco merchant with family connections to the Carters. In addition to the classical education he received, Carter learned the business of the transatlantic tobacco trade from Bailey. Young Robert also was exposed to the arts and culture of the large European city and possibly to the architectural accomplishments of Christopher Wren and others. He returned to Virginia around 1679.

Upon the death of his half-brother John II in 1690, Robert Carter inherited the bulk of the Corotoman estate. He continued to amass land and fortune throughout his life, becoming one of Virginia's largest tobacco planters, merchants and slave owners. At his death in 1732 Carter owned 48 plantations, nearly 300,000 acres of land, several mills and storehouses, and more than 700 slaves.

Carter also acted as an agent for slave traders and was a merchant, financier and entrepreneur. He maintained a small fleet of his own vessels and was a major shareholder in an ocean-going ship. He also explored successfully for copper and maintained gristmills for corn and wheat.

Another lucrative activity was Carter's position as Proprietary Agent for Lord Fairfax, who had received by inheritance the grant of the over 6 million acre Northern Neck Proprietary from King Charles II. Carter oversaw collection of rents and issuing of patents for land grants and obtained favorable patents for himself, his children and grandchildren during his two terms as agent (1702-1711 and 1722-1732).

Robert Carter engaged in public service as had his father and brother before him. He became a vestryman for Christ Church Parish in 1690, a position he held for the rest of his life, and Justice of the Peace in 1691. He held many other important positions in his life, including colonel of the local militia, representative and Speaker of the House of Burgesses, Treasurer of the colony, and member of the Governor's Council. As President of the Council, Carter served as Acting Governor of the Virginia colony following the death of Governor Hugh Drysdale in July 1726 until the arrival of his successor, William Gooch, in September 1727.



*Copy of the portrait of Robert Carter in Carter Reception Center, Historic Christ Church, from original at Sabine Hall. Carter noted in his diary on September 1, 1727 that he had "sat to the Paintr." The portrait captures Carter in the final weeks of his term as Acting Governor of the Virginia colony (William Gooch took office September 11, 1727) during a time when he suffered from gout and other maladies.*

*Photograph by Gary Andrashko.*

Robert Carter married twice. He wed Judith Armistead in 1688 and Elizabeth (“Betty”) Landon Willis in 1701. He had five children with Judith, and ten with Betty. Ten of the children survived to adulthood and nine married into other wealthy Virginia families. Numerous prominent Americans are Carter descendants. Today his descendants number upwards of 40,000.

Toward the end of his life, earthly matters seemed to take a down turn for Robert Carter despite his wealth and power. The huge and luxurious mansion he had built at Corotoman had burned to the ground in 1729. His second wife and other close relatives had died. His health was poor. Late in his life Carter had allocated funds for the construction of a brick church to replace the wooden church constructed by his father. He closely followed the construction process but died in 1732 at the age of 69, three years before the completion of Christ Church. He was buried in the churchyard with his two wives.

At his death in 1732, Robert Carter was one of the wealthiest, most powerful men in North America. The nickname “King,” which his contemporaries used, may have referred not only to his wealth but also to his demeanor and love of power. His will ran to 18,000 words. His generous grants of land, slaves, money and other gifts to his sons, daughters and grandchildren made them some of the wealthiest people in Virginia and carried the Carter legacy into succeeding generations.

## **Robert Carter Timeline**

|         |                                                                                                                 |
|---------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1663    | Born at Corotoman.                                                                                              |
| 1669    | Father John Carter I dies.                                                                                      |
| 1672/73 | Attends grammar school in London. Lives with tobacco merchant Arthur Bailey.                                    |
| 1678/79 | Returns from London.                                                                                            |
| 1688    | Marries Judith Armistead.                                                                                       |
| 1690    | Inherits Corotoman estate on death of his half-brother, John Carter II.                                         |
| 1690    | Becomes vestryman for Christ Church Parish.                                                                     |
| 1691    | Named churchwarden for Christ Church Parish. Elected to House of Burgesses.                                     |
| 1696    | Elected Speaker of the House of Burgesses (serves as speaker in 1697, 1699).                                    |
| 1698    | Undertakes construction of Lancaster County's second courthouse (a brick structure) and a prison at Queenstown. |
| 1699    | Judith Armistead Carter dies.                                                                                   |
| 1699    | Appointed Treasurer of the colony.                                                                              |
| 1700    | Joins Governor's Council (remains on Council until his death in 1732).                                          |
| 1701    | Marries Betty Landon ("widow Willis").                                                                          |
| 1702-11 | First term as Agent for the Northern Neck Proprietary.                                                          |
| 1715-20 | Begins building Corotoman mansion.                                                                              |
| 1719    | Betty Landon Carter dies.                                                                                       |
| 1722-32 | Second term as Agent for. the Northern Neck Proprietary.                                                        |
| 1725    | Completes Corotoman mansion.                                                                                    |
| 1726    | First will. Leaves 200£ sterling and bricks for construction of Christ Church.                                  |
| 1726-27 | Acting Governor of Virginia.                                                                                    |
| 1729    | Corotoman burns.                                                                                                |
| 1730    | Offers to fund construction of Christ Church.                                                                   |
| 1732    | Dies at Corotoman.                                                                                              |
| 1735    | Christ Church completed.                                                                                        |

## 5. Generation III: Children of Robert Carter

### Surviving Children by Judith:

|                           |                                                                                                                                        |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Elizabeth (ca. 1692-1734) | Married 1) 1709 Nathaniel Burwell (1680-1721) of Fairfield, Gloucester County; 2) 1724 Dr. George Nicholas (1695-1734) of Williamsburg |
| Judith (1695-1750)        | Married 1718 Mann Page I (1691-1730) of Rosewell, Gloucester County                                                                    |
| John (1696-1742)          | Married 1723 Elizabeth Hill (c. 1708-1771) of Shirley, Charles City County                                                             |

### Surviving children by Betty:

|                       |                                                                                                                                                                        |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Anne (1702-1743)      | Married 1722 Benjamin Harrison IV (1695-1745) of Berkeley, Charles City County                                                                                         |
| Robert II (1704-1732) | Married 1725 Priscilla Churchill (1705-1757) of Bushy Park, Middlesex County                                                                                           |
| Charles (1707-1764)   | Married 1) 1728 Mary Walker (? – 1742); 2) 1742 Anne Byrd (1725-1757) of Westover, Charles City County; 3) 1762 Lucy Taliaferro (ca. 1746-47 - ?)                      |
| Landon (1710-1778)    | Married 1) 1732 Elizabeth Wormeley (1713-1740) of Rosegill, Middlesex County; 2) 1742 Maria Byrd (1727-1745) of Westover, Charles City County; 3) 1747 Elizabeth Beale |
| Mary (1712-1736)      | Married 1732 George Braxton II (c. 1705-1749) of Newington, King & Queen County                                                                                        |
| Lucy (1715-1763)      | Married 1) 1730 Henry Fitzhugh (1706/7-1742) of Eagle's Nest, King George County; 2) 1748 Nathaniel Harrison II (1713-1791) of Brandon, Prince George County           |
| George (1718-1742)    | Died unmarried in England; buried in the churchyard at the Middle Temple                                                                                               |

## 6. Generation IV: Notable Grandchildren of Robert Carter I

**Robert Carter III (1728-1804)** From grandson of Virginia's largest slave owner to emancipator, "inconceivably illiterate" youth to classical scholar, political figure to private citizen, Church of England devotee to religious dissenter and mystic: these were Robert Carter's extraordinary journeys.

Born February 9, 1728, Robert Carter III, also known as Councillor Carter, inherited from his grandfather Robert "King" Carter over 65,000 acres of land and more than one hundred slaves. His father Robert Carter, Jr. died in May 1732, three months before his grandfather, Robert "King" Carter. In August 1734 his uncles John and Charles pushed a special act through the Assembly that allowed him to inherit the estate that his grandfather had left his father.

After his father's death Carter spent his youth in Gloucester County with his mother Priscilla Churchill Carter and step-father, John Lewis of Warner Hall. He attended grammar school at the College of William & Mary. In 1749, the same year he turned 21 and took over his estate, Carter traveled to London to study law at the Inner Temple. Taking in too many of the city's "gratifications," as he put it, Carter returned home according to a cousin "inconceivably illiterate. . . corrupted and vicious."

He settled as a tobacco planter at Nomini Hall in Westmoreland County. In 1754 he married Frances Ann Tasker of Maryland, a union which brought important political and financial connections. The couple had 17 children, 12 of whom survived to adulthood.

Carter twice ran unsuccessfully for a seat in the House of Burgesses, but his wife's uncle helped him get appointed to the Governor's Council, on which he served from 1758-1776. In 1761 he moved his family to Williamsburg, where he played music with Thomas Jefferson and conversed with Enlightenment scholars like Governor Francis Fauquier and Jefferson's teacher Professor William Small. The same cousin who called Carter "inconceivably illiterate" stated that during his time in Williamsburg Carter "derived great advantages."

A decade later Carter family tutor Philip Vickers Fithian observed that Carter "seems to be a good scholar, even in classical learning, and is [a] remarkable one in english grammar." When Fithian cataloged Carter's library in June 1774 he called it "over-grown," counting 641 titles in more than 1,000 volumes. Fithian added that Carter had another "458 volumes besides Music & Pamphlets" back in his Williamsburg house.

Carter returned to Nomini Hall in 1772. Carter had been raised in the Church of England and served as a vestryman for Cople Parish in Westmoreland County. But on June 12, 1777, overcome by what he called a "Fever Heat" from a smallpox inoculation, Robert Carter experienced a "most gracious Illumination." Rejecting the Church of England's practice, Carter embraced evangelical Christianity, traveling Virginia to hear sermons from Baptists, Methodists and Presbyterians. He attended services and took communion alongside common people white and black, including his enslaved valet-barber Sam Harrison and laundry maid Sarah Johnson.

On September 6, 1778 Carter joined Morattico Baptist Church following his baptism by Lewis Lunsford in Totuskey Creek off the Rappahannock River. Carter financed Lunsford and helped build Baptist churches; he opened his great house at Nomini Hall and the weaving factory at his Aries plantation to religious services marked by spontaneous outbursts, cries, convulsions and song.

Carter's embrace of the Baptist faith contributed to his growing antipathy towards slavery. He wrote queries regarding emancipation, prohibited overseers from indiscriminately whipping his enslaved workers, and sent his sons to school in Rhode Island where they could be free from the "Example and Custom in this Neighbourhood," which Carter felt to be "very destructive both to the Morals and advancement of youth."

In 1782 Virginia passed legislation that allowed owners to emancipate slaves provided they were of "sound mind and body" and that any over age 45 or younger than majority age (18 for females; 21 for males) would be supported by the person manumitting them or by his or her estate. Influenced by antislavery Baptists and frustrated at his state's inability to formulate a plan to emancipate all slaves, Carter devised a gradual plan to free the more than 500 enslaved people he owned. He declared that he had "for some time past been convinced that to retain them in Slavery is contrary to the true principles of Religion & justice & that therefore it was my duty to manumit them."

In a remarkable document presented to the District Court in Northumberland County, Virginia on September 5, 1791, Carter stated that beginning in 1792 fifteen of his oldest slaves under age 45 would be freed each January for the next ten years; females and males not yet 18 or 21 and those yet to be born into slavery would be liberated when they reached those ages. Persons over age 45 Carter freed in special deeds in 1793-1794.

Though the document was designed to withstand resistance from his heirs and the community, Carter's children and his neighbors fought his plan fiercely in public and the courts. The document, however, withstood these challenges. Several decades after his death, Carter's executors were still carrying out manumissions. Today thousands of people in Virginia and other states trace their ancestry to the more than 500 individuals ultimately emancipated by Carter's deed.

Carter eventually grew disillusioned with the Baptist Church, particularly its increasing accommodation of slavery. In May 1793, now a widower isolated from society, he moved to Baltimore to follow the teachings of Emanuel Swedenborg, a Swedish mystic who believed that he could communicate with angels and devils and that the Second Coming had occurred in 1757. In Baltimore Carter hosted prayer meetings, read sermons and even performed baptisms in a quest for salvation that turned apocalyptic as his life drew to a close. Carter died in obscurity in Baltimore in March 1804.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This information comes from FHCC's temporary exhibition *Robert Carter III's 1791 Deed of Emancipation*, on display in the Carter Center in 2016-2017. Sources for this text include: John Barden, *Flushed with Notions of Freedom: the Growth and Emancipation of a Virginia Slave Community, 1732-1812*," (Duke University, 1993); John R. Barden and the *Dictionary of Virginia Biography*, "Robert Carter" in *Encyclopedia Virginia* (2013, November 21), [www.encyclopediavirginia.org/Carter\\_robert\\_1728-1804](http://www.encyclopediavirginia.org/Carter_robert_1728-1804); Andrew Levy, *The First Emancipator: The Forgotten Story of Robert Carter, the Founding Father Who Freed His Slaves* (New York, 2005); Shomer S. Zwelling, "Robert Carter's Journey: From Colonial Patriarch to New Nation Mystic," *American Quarterly* 38, 4 (Autumn 1996): 613-636; *Journal and Letters of Philip Vickers Fithian, 1773-1774: A Plantation Tutor of the Old Dominion*, edited by Hunter Dickinson Farish (Williamsburg, 1943); Louis Morton, *Robert Carter*

## Other Notable Grandchildren of Robert Carter I

Carter Braxton (1736-1797): Son of Mary Carter Braxton. Signer of the Declaration of Independence.

Carter Burwell (1716-1756): Son of Elizabeth Carter Burwell. Builder of Carter's Grove near Williamsburg.

Elizabeth Burwell (1718-?): Daughter of Elizabeth Carter Burwell. Mother of Thomas Nelson (1738-1789), signer of the Declaration of Independence and Governor of Virginia.

Charles Carter (1732-1806): Son of John Carter ("Secretary") of Shirley. Took over Corotoman after father's death before moving to Shirley in mid-1770s.

Robert Carter III (1728-1804): Son of Robert Carter II. Lived at Nomini Hall, Westmoreland. Freed what became more than 500 slaves with Deed of Manumission filed September 1791. Known as Councillor Carter.

Benjamin Harrison V (1726-1791): Son of Anne Carter Harrison. Signer of the Declaration of Independence and Governor of Virginia.

Mary Walker Carter (1736/7-1770): Daughter of Charles Carter. Wife and cousin of Charles Carter of Corotoman and Shirley. Buried in the Christ Church yard.

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*of Nomini Hall: A Virginia Tobacco Planter of the Eighteenth Century* (Charlottesville, 1964); and John R. Barden, "Reflections of a Singular Mind: The Library of Robert Carter of Nomony Hall, *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 96, 1 (January 1988): 83-94.

## 7. Notable Descendants of Robert Carter I

|                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|---------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Signers of the Declaration of Independence: | Carter Braxton<br>Benjamin Harrison V<br>Thomas Nelson                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Presidents of the United States:            | William Henry Harrison (9th)<br>Benjamin Harrison (23rd)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Governors of Virginia:                      | Lewis Burwell (1750-51)<br>Thomas Nelson, Jr. (1781)<br>Benjamin Harrison V (1781-1784)<br>John Page (1802-1805)<br>Peyton Randolph (1811-1812)<br>Wilson Cary Nicholas (1814-1816)<br>Fitzhugh Lee (1886-1890)<br>Harry Flood Byrd (1926-1930)                                           |
| Other National Figures:                     | Robert E. Lee (Confederate General)<br>Edward D. White (Chief Justice U.S. Supreme Court, 1910-1921)                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Last Residents of Corotoman                 | Mary Walker Carter Cabell (1788-1862)<br>Dr. Charles Carter (1786-1825)<br>( great-great grandchildren of Robert Carter I)<br>were the last of the family to own and reside<br>at Corotoman prior to the 1836 lease of<br>Christ Church to the Protestant Episcopal<br>Church, Lancaster. |

## 8. Corotoman

John Carter I first sailed from England to the Virginia Tidewater in 1635. By 1652-1653 he had settled on land that he acquired in Lancaster County. The original property was located on a point overlooking the Rappahannock River between the Corotoman River and Carter's Creek. John Carter improved and increased his land holdings and constructed the first buildings on the property before his death in January 1669/70.

**The Mansion.** Corotoman came into the hands of Robert “King” Carter in 1690, inherited from his half-brother, John Carter II. Robert Carter began construction of a large Georgian mansion

there about 1720. Corotoman set a standard for mansions built by the colonial Virginia elite and confirmed Carter's status as the most powerful and wealthy of Virginia plantation owners. The building was a two story brick edifice over an English basement with an arcaded gallery known as a piazza running along the river facade. The entrance hall was paved with black and white marble imported from England. Carter completed the mansion around 1725.



*Conjectural Drawing of Corotoman by Alan McCullough, 1985*

Corotoman's designer is unknown, but it is likely that the British educated Carter had a great deal to do with the

plans, influenced by the Georgian architecture then in vogue in London. Carter imported indentured tradesmen from England and hired craftsmen in Virginia to construct Corotoman; he also used carpenters, sawyers and other workmen from his large slave force. He imported paving stones from the Isle of Purbeck in England and used local lumber and oyster shells for mortar. His diaries reveal that the construction process was protracted and frustrating.

In addition to the mansion, more than 20 outbuildings made up the plantation, including the “Brick House Store,” which housed the goods Carter imported from Europe for his own use or resale, and the “Spinning House,” a frame building whose remnants stood until the 1930s. The plantation complex also featured a kitchen, an office, two dairies, two cider houses, slave quarters, a blacksmith shop, a still house, coach houses and a sloop landing house, among others. It was a veritable village.

The mansion burned to the ground in 1729, four years after its completion. Robert Carter never chose to rebuild but lived in the “Old House” (a house constructed at Corotoman ca. 1690) until his death in 1732. Corotoman remained in the Carter family until 1860 when it was sold.

**The 1977-1980 Corotoman Dig.** By the 1960s, the Rev. Conrad H. Goodwin and his wife Henrietta, who became a leading member of the FHCC Research Committee, had acquired Corotoman. The Goodwins were instrumental in preserving the site by helping nominate it to the National Register of Historic Places and putting it under easement. In partnership with the Foundation for Historic Christ Church and the Virginia Department of Historic Resources Virginia, the Goodwins helped initiate an archaeological dig at Corotoman.

From 1977 to 1980, archeologists led by Dr. Carter Hudgins excavated the site of Robert Carter's mansion and the "Spinning House." They determined that the house was 40 by 90 feet with foundations 30 inches thick. Artifacts included building materials, fragments of Chinese porcelain and other ceramics, tankards, furniture hardware, sword pieces and evidence of a wine collection numbering more than 900 bottles. Some of these artifacts are on display in the museum of Historic Christ Church.

After the excavation, the site was re-covered and the original foundations and floor plan were outlined with bricks. The Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities (now Preservation Virginia) acquired the property in the Spring of 2000. Today some 6 ½ acres of the original Corotoman plantation remain. In 2016 Preservation Virginia sold Corotoman to private owners.

*Archaeological Excavation at  
Corotoman, 1978*



## Corotoman Timeline

|         |                                                                                                          |
|---------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1635    | John Carter I sails from England to Virginia aboard the <i>Safety</i> .                                  |
| 1641/42 | John Carter I becomes burgess for Upper Norfolk (later Nansemond) county.                                |
| 1642    | John Carter I acquires 1,300 acres in what became Lancaster County.                                      |
| 1652-53 | John Carter I settles in Lancaster County.                                                               |
| 1663    | Robert Carter born at Corotoman.                                                                         |
| 1669    | John Carter I dies after adding more landholdings and buildings to the Corotoman plantation.             |
| 1690    | Robert “King” Carter inherits Corotoman from his half-brother John II.                                   |
| 1715-20 | Robert Carter begins building his Corotoman mansion.                                                     |
| 1725    | Mansion completed.                                                                                       |
| 1729    | Mansion burns.                                                                                           |
| 1732    | Robert Carter dies at age 69 without rebuilding Corotoman.                                               |
| 1860    | Property passes out of hands of Carter family.                                                           |
| 1977-80 | Archeological dig at site.                                                                               |
| 2000    | Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities (now Preservation Virginia) acquires Corotoman. |
| 2016    | Corotoman sold to private owners.                                                                        |

## 9. Principle Resources

*The Red Book*, 2001 edition.

Brown, Katharine L., *Robert “King” Carter, Builder of Christ Church*, Foundation for Historic Christ Church Heritage Series, revised edition, 2010.

Jett, Carolyn M., *Lancaster County Virginia*

[www.encyclopedia virginia.org](http://www.encyclopedia virginia.org)

## SECTION VI: FOUNDATION FOR HISTORIC CHRIST CHURCH

**Theme:** Historic Christ Church is a national treasure both for the quality of its architecture and the state of its preservation.

### 1. Who Owns Christ Church?

### 2. The Foundation for Historic Christ Church, 1958-Present

1958-1963: Founding

1963-1975: Flowering

1975-1990: Consolidation

1990-2000: Professionalization

21<sup>st</sup> Century: Expansion

### 3. Foundation Policies

Interpretive Period and Themes

Interpretive Methods and Media

Archaeological Policies and Findings

Timeline

Churchyard Wall – 1959

Brick Kilns – 1979, 2002

Phase I Archaeological Survey – April 1999

The Search for the First (1670) Christ Church

Review of Investigations and Results

### 4. Foundation Timeline



## 1. Who Owns Christ Church?

When Christ Church Parish was dissolved circa 1972 by order of the Circuit Court of Lancaster County, the title to Christ Church, including its churchyard (the land within the wall), was transferred to the Trustees of Grace Episcopal Church, Kilmarnock. Previously, the Foundation for Historic Christ Church was established in 1958 with the purpose of preserving and maintaining the 1735 Church and its immediate surroundings. In 2002, an agreement was created between the Foundation and Grace Church to formalize the relationship between the two organizations.

Entitled *The Agreement Between the Trustees and Vestry of Grace Episcopal Church and the Board of Directors of the Foundation for Historic Christ Church*, its purpose was to entrust the preservation, maintenance, management, interpretation and all costs of Christ Church and its churchyard to the Foundation. It also established a number of other clauses:

- The Foundation has unrestricted and sole authority with respect to the above functions, while ownership is retained by Grace Church.
- Standards, policies and procedures for all religious activities in the Church are established by the rector of Grace. It is considered a chapel of Grace and used for worship services and rites.
- Four communicants of Grace Church, at least two of whom are vestry members, will serve as elected members of the Foundation Board.
- The rector of Grace Church is the *ex officio*, voting chairman of the Foundation Board.
- The bishop of the Diocese of Virginia is an *ex officio*, non-voting member of the Foundation Board.

The *Agreement* began January 1, 2003 for a 99 year term. The property is approximately one acre encompassed by, and including, the brick wall. The balance of the lands, including the parking lots, contemporary buildings, modern burying ground, and surrounding parcels are owned by the Foundation—a total of 42.824 acres. The one acre property and church are also bound by a Deed of Easement and Agreement granted to the Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Historic Resources.

What does this mean? The Foundation has sole responsibility and authority for the preservation, maintenance, management and interpretation of the Church without approval of the trustees or vestry of Grace Church. Maintenance and repairs must be performed to the highest preservation standards. It also means that the Foundation does not receive any financial support from Grace Church or the Diocese. The Foundation pays for all insurance (except for the Grace use of the Church for summer services), routine maintenance, repairs, and major capital projects.

And what about that modern burying ground? It was incorporated in 1965, titled to the Foundation and divided into three sections, containing 1,452 burial sites. Until 2002, licensure

and oversight was required by the Commonwealth of Virginia Cemetery Board; however changes that year exempted the Foundation. This is one reason it is referred to as a “burying ground” and not a cemetery.

Most burying ground management functions such as grounds maintenance are outsourced. Functions performed by staff include interface with family/representatives of the deceased, custody and maintenance of cemetery records, coordination with funeral directors, marking grave sites for burials and purchase of markers.

## **2. The Foundation for Historic Christ Church, 1958-Present**

The story of inspired dedication and generosity that characterizes the Foundation for Historic Christ Church is written in the lives of its members and friends. Across the span of many years Christ Church has inspired hundreds upon hundreds of people to give liberally of their time and talent and generously of their treasure. The records of the Foundation include all these people. Some of their names are on signs and plaques on and in foundation buildings, and the commemorative brick courtyard. The names of current volunteers, board members and donors are published annually in the FHCC newsletter. Appropriately, the most frequently heard words around today’s campus are “Thank You.”

The Foundation for Historic Christ Church has organized and channeled this outpouring to the end of rescuing and sustaining the venerable old building, creating one of Virginia’s premier preservation organizations, and welcoming the world to share in learning from this National and Virginia Historic Landmark. The following summary and timeline highlight Foundation “firsts.”

**1958-1963: Founding** For a century starting in the mid-1800s Christ Church, while never completely abandoned, was infrequently used, often neglected and occasionally “patched and mended.” By the mid-1900s Christ Church parish senior warden C. A. Gridley Dawe declared the building unfit for use.

The Foundation for Historic Christ Church was formed in June of 1958 to meet the challenge of bringing the building back into use both as a church site and an historic site. The friendship of two women, Louise Dawe, wife of the senior warden, and Helen Bullock, historian of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, sparked the Christ Church mission of preserving the building to the highest standards while keeping it accessible to parishioners and visitors alike. Gridley and Louise Dawe were visionaries capable of seeing what was possible and Helen Bullock had the relationships at the National Trust to bring those possibilities to life.

Supporting these founders were the first board of directors with Ennolls A. Stephens as president, Laura Virginia Francis as vice president, and Mitchell J. Alga as treasurer. Equally important were the Rev. James E. Ferneyhough, rector of Grace Episcopal Church; Mrs. Jessie Ball duPont; a family of Robert Carter’s descendants led by Robert Carter of Redlands, Dr. Nicholas Carter, II, and

Beirne Blair Carter; descendants of William Tell Chase; and a large group of charter members that included many members of Grace as well as of the community at large. Mitch Alga served as treasurer from 1958 to 1970, overseeing the development of a strong financial base for the preservation and education activities of the Foundation.

**1963-1975: Flowering** During this period, the Foundation evolved into what it is today. Richard T. Herndon, board president from 1963 to 1975, was an effective leader who identified what needed to be done to preserve the church and acquired the resources and brought in the people to do the work. Robert Sheeran, rector of Grace Church in Kilmarnock and thus of Christ Church as well, ably supported Dick Herndon's efforts.

One of these efforts was the acquisition of "amenity lands," properties that touched Foundation grounds or were visible from the site. Dick Herndon saw how the visual integrity of the church required clear sightlines from the churchyard and so began the process of obtaining these properties.

The beauty of the grounds themselves was ensured through their restoration in 1966-67 by the Garden Club of Virginia. This restoration relied entirely on native plantings common in the eighteenth century.

In 1972, the Volunteer Council was created to organize and manage a growing group of volunteers. The first chair of the Council was Barnette Kreiser who, with the first eleven committee chairs, oversaw a group of 77 volunteers.

**1975-1990: Consolidation** John Edmonds stepped into the board presidency in 1975 and was the classic "hands-on" leader, given to sawing, hammering and painting his ideas into reality. But he was also business-oriented and initiated the idea of long-range strategic planning, then a new concept for non-profit groups.

During this period, the structure of the organization was strengthened by the contributions of Madeline Hooper and Jane Sheeran, who saw themselves as "paid" volunteers and served as the Foundation's first office staff. The first executive secretary of the Foundation (later to be designated executive director), Mimi Beckwith, came on board in 1985. Louise Denegre became the first woman president of the board in 1983.

**1990-2000: Professionalization** The Foundation's fourth decade saw additional professional positions added to the organizational structure. Robert A. Cornelius was employed as executive director and Robert J. Teagle as education director.

Other aspects of modern non-profit operation appeared during this decade as well. In 1993 the first long-range strategic plan was actually written and implementation begun. In 1994 historical architect and Foundation board member Nathaniel Palmer Neblett completed the *Christ Church Historic Structure Report*, which became the agenda for future preservation projects. Finally, in 1996, the first

annual appeal was launched to provide funds for current programming. This fundraising activity complements the Foundation's other efforts in this area, including life memberships, bequests and other planned gifts, and private foundation grants.

**21<sup>st</sup> Century: Expansion** In the new century, the Foundation for Historic Christ Church has sought a broader presence through publications in print and online. In 2002, for example, the Foundation published *People in Profile* and *Landholders and Landholdings*, the third and fourth books in its Heritage Series, which introduced to the public members at all levels of society in the eighteenth century parish and identified and mapped who owned what lands in that period. Based on exhaustive work in original sources by the Foundation's Research Committee, the books were an extension of the research ethic begun five decades earlier by volunteers such as Louise Dawe, Henrietta Goodwin and Margaret Tupper and professionals such as University of Virginia architectural historian Dr. Elizabeth Coleman and architect Dr. Frederick Nichols, and National Trust archaeologist J. C. "Pinky" Harrington. The Research Committee continues this tradition of scholarship today with print and online projects.

The Foundation has also cooperated with local colleges, high schools and historical societies to offer first rate programming to young people and adults.

In 2008 the Foundation celebrated its fiftieth anniversary with a \$2.1 million initiative led by Anne Dickerson and the Cultural Resources Management Committee. The brick-and-mortar aspect of the initiative resulted in a completely renovated Carter Center that includes a 21<sup>st</sup> century museum, a newly built Chase Center for administrative services, a totally remodeled research room and extensive parking and visitor amenities to render the site more accessible to all. In the two-page document, *Interpretive Period Themes and Interpretive Media*, the committee defined how Christ Church is to be interpreted to the public in the future.

The history of the Foundation for Historic Christ Church continues to be made daily by its members—volunteers, Life Members and donors—and staff who remain committed to its mission of "Preservation. Education. Inspiration."

\*This summary is based on materials prepared by Robert A. Cornelius, then executive vice president of the Foundation, for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration. More detailed information can be found in the Foundation newsletter, *TimeLines*, for Spring and Fall, 2007 and 2008.

### 3. Foundation Policies

#### INTERPRETIVE PERIOD AND THEMES

##### THE INTERPRETIVE PERIOD

1. The period of time researched and interpreted is 1624 (establishment of Anglican Church in Virginia) to 1802 (Glebe Act).

##### THE PRIMARY AND CENTRAL INTERPRETIVE THEME

2. Christ Church and Christ Church Parish as a center of the religious, social, and economic life in colonial Virginia.

##### COLLATERAL INTERPRETIVE THEMES

3. **Robert Carter.** The ancestors, life, achievements, and notable descendants of Robert “King” Carter, the visionary and sole benefactor of Christ Church.
4. **The Church.** The original 1670 wood church and the present building, highlighting the architecture, appurtenances, construction methods and materials, with emphasis on the bricks and their on-site manufacture.
5. **The Parish.** The role and functions of the colonial Anglican parish, including those of the vestry, in general, and, Christ Church Parish in particular; treatment of the theological premises and liturgical forms then prevalent; and, the consequences of the American Revolution and disestablishment for the established church.
6. **The Clergy.** The role and functions of colonial Anglican clergy in general, the clergy of Christ Church Parish during the interpretive period in particular (Doggett, Jackson, Bell, Currie), and the role of the glebe in compensating clergy.
7. **The People.** The people, social order, culture, as well as the pattern of landholdings and the landholders of Christ Church Parish.
8. **The Economy.** The role and influence of agriculture, labor (enslaved, free, indentured), and transportation in the development and economy of colonial Virginia in general and the Northern Neck Proprietary and Carter empire in particular.
9. **External Influences.** The influence on colonial Virginia of the political, economic, and religious developments in England and Scotland during the Stuart reigns, the Republic, and the Whig ascendancy under George I and II.
10. **Dissenters.** The emergence and presence of “Dissenters” in colonial Virginia in general and Christ Church Parish in particular.

FHCC Interpretive Period and Themes

June 25, 2004  
Reviewed June 24, 2010  
Reviewed 11-05-2014



## **INTERPRETIVE METHODS AND MEDIA**

1. Trained volunteer docents serving casual visitors.
2. Trained costumed volunteer docents for special groups and events.
3. Trained volunteer docents assisting the education director with school programs.
4. Signage and/or markers on the grounds, e.g., depicting brick making, the original wood church, and the vestry house.
5. An expanded gallery providing additional permanent exhibit space and adequate space for temporary exhibits.
6. An introductory video reflecting current research and archaeological findings.
7. A video especially designed for children grades K through 6, reflecting the standards of learning and other desires expressed by teachers and curriculum planners.
8. Digital representation of selected interpretive themes available through terminals in the gallery (that provide more depth and detail than the introductory video.)
9. Digital access to the research archives and Carter family history through terminals in the gallery.
10. Numbers 8 and/or 9 as above, through the website, or other Internet portal(s).
11. Printed material and publications for internal use and for public dissemination.

FHCC Interpretive Methods and Media

Adopted 06-25-04  
Reviewed 06-24-2010  
Reviewed 11-05-2014



## ARCHAEOLOGICAL FINDINGS

### Timeline

|      |                                                                                                                                            |
|------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1959 | Excavation of the original footings of the churchyard wall (J. C. Harrington, National Park Service).                                      |
| 1979 | Chance discovery of brick kiln site during expansion of Carter Center confirmed by archaeology (Carter Hudgins, Virginia Research Center). |
| 1999 | Phase I archaeological evaluation of the property surrounding Christ Church (John Metz).                                                   |
| 2002 | Phase II investigation of brick kilns at Christ Church (Thane Harpole, <i>et al</i> , DATA Investigations).                                |
| 2005 | Phase II investigation of possible location of the first Christ Church c. 1670 (Thane Harpole, <i>et al</i> , DATA Investigations).        |
| 2006 | Phase III investigation of possible location of the first Christ Church c. 1670 (Thane Harpole, <i>et al</i> , DATA Investigations).       |

### Churchyard Wall—1959

In October of 1959, Dr. J. C. “Pinky” Harrington of the National Park Service conducted archaeological investigations to determine the location and design of the wall which originally enclosed Christ Church. Over the course of a three-day dig, Harrington and his team uncovered the footings of the brick wall, which encompassed an area around the church nearly 200 feet square. Harrington identified the boundaries of the original wall, its thickness, and the bond used in the brickwork: Flemish above the watertable and English below.

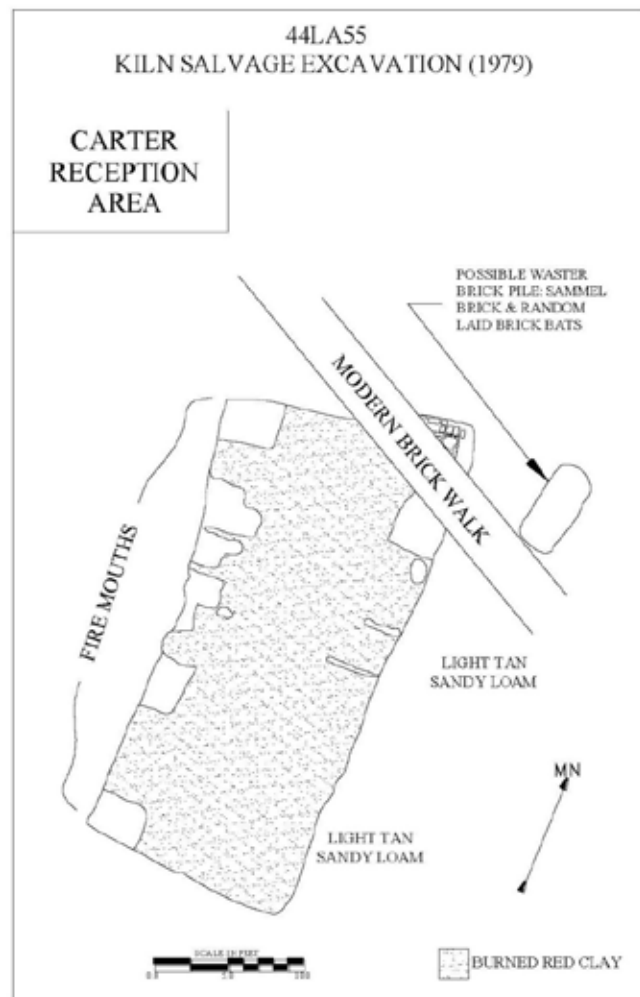
Harrington found specially shaped bricks used to create the watertable, and he confirmed that molded curved coping bricks were used to finish the top. He also found that the four corners of the wall were curved. The bricks used were identical to those in the church itself. Harrington felt they came from the same kiln, supporting the idea that the wall was constructed during the same period as the church.

Harrington’s most important find concerned the west entrance. Although the north side had been used as the main entrance since the nineteenth century, digging revealed that the west side--aside from its obvious architectural significance--had been the primary gateway to the church. Harrington uncovered the original location of the north and south entrances and determined they were 5 ½ feet openings. At the west entrance, however, he found a far more elaborate design: two inward turning ogee curves formed a 10 ft. 10 in. opening flanked by a pair of gates.

Harrington's work provided the impetus for the first major restoration initiative undertaken by the Foundation. The archaeological evidence established a firm basis for reconstructing the churchyard wall. In 1965, the wall was rebuilt on the original brick footings, making it a more accurate reconstruction and enhancing its overall character.

### Brick Kilns—1979, 2002

*In October 1979*, archaeologists discovered just southeast of the present research room the site of one of the brick kilns used in constructing Christ Church. Carter Hudgins, Mac Goodwin, Dennis Pogue and Glyn Ferguson excavated the site in one day after workers initially uncovered it during construction for an addition to the Carter Reception Center.<sup>1</sup> Hudgins and his team uncovered a layer of hard, blackened clay along with heavy concentrations of brickbats<sup>2</sup> in an area that measured 18 x 30 feet. Brick makers used the kiln, or “clamp,”<sup>3</sup> several times over, and its large size suggested they were firing bricks for a substantial building, like the church. A drawing Hudgins made of the dig shows the clamp had five fire tunnels. A plaque marks the site for visitors today.



*In October 2002*, archaeologists David Brown, Thane Harpole and Rob Haas conducted a Phase II excavation of the brick kiln sites.<sup>4</sup> The team dug 18 test units, each 2 ½ feet square, south

<sup>1</sup>Carter Hudgins was leading the excavations at Corotoman at this time for the Virginia Research Center for Archaeology, a division then of the State Historic Landmarks Commission (today the Virginia Department of Historic Resources). Archaeologist Mac Goodwin was the son of Corotoman's owners, the Reverend Conrad and Henrietta Goodwin.

<sup>2</sup>Brickbat: a fragment of a brick. The term is sometimes used as a verb, as “the crowd brickbatted (threw brick fragments at) the assailant.”

<sup>3</sup>Although in his diaries Robert Carter referred to them as kilns, Goodwin and Hudgins think the feature was really a brick clamp, a non-permanent structure used and reused several times to fire bricks.

<sup>4</sup>In a Phase II excavation archaeologists open up test units that measure 2 ½ feet square. This survey of the kiln sites built off of John Metz's 1999 Phase I (shovel test units only) survey of the HCC site and a survey of the old “Parsonage

and southeast of the church site. They found evidence for at least three, and possibly four, kilns or clamps. These were oriented northwest to southeast in the project area, with two located south and east of the Carter Reception Center and one just west of Rt. 646.

The exact size of the kilns could not be discerned from the digs, nor could the overall design of the brickyard or the location of activity areas for mixing and weathering the clay and for molding, drying, and storing the bricks. However, the team did find remains of brick benches used in constructing the kilns, evidence of fire channels, fragments of waster bricks, and a fragment of a coping brick from the churchyard wall. And while the paucity of domestic artifacts speaks to the site's use primarily as a brickyard, Harpole, Brown, and Haas unearthed some tobacco pipe stems, a glass bead, and sand and shell-tempered Native American pottery, some with cord-marked surface treatment.

The Phase II excavations confirmed the existence of a major brick manufacturing operation on the site. Coupled with documentary evidence from Robert Carter's diary, the excavations indicate the area functioned as an industrial site for about ten years (1726-1735), during which time some 400,000 bricks were produced for the church's construction. The findings also revealed that a Native American settlement occupied the Christ Church property before Englishmen began to inhabit the area.

**Phase I Archaeological Survey—April 1999** In the spring of 1999, the Foundation commissioned John Metz to perform a Phase I archaeological survey on 2.8 acres south of the church. A Phase I archaeological survey, also known as an identification survey, provides general information on the location, boundaries, date, and integrity of archaeological resources. Interest in this project grew from the discovery earlier that spring of a substantial amount of brick and charcoal found in trenches dug to disconnect utility lines from a small frame structure located south of the church. When results from the first phase of testing proved promising, Metz expanded his survey to 10 acres, including the churchyard itself and areas to the east, west, and north of the church.

Metz excavated some 331 shovel test pits during the course of this work. Ultimately, he identified nine archaeological sites, five of which were deemed to be *potentially* significant for more extensive research:

- **Site 1** Located east and south of the church. Includes the probable location of three brick kilns and a clay tempering area that pre-date 1750.
- **Site 2** Located south of the Carter Reception Center. Presence of shell-tempered mortar, used brick, ceramics, bottle glass, and table glass suggests a structure or dependency from later in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.
- **Site 5** Located in northeast corner of the churchyard. Appeared to be the site of the original 1670 Christ Church building. Architectural artifacts indicate the structure may have had a

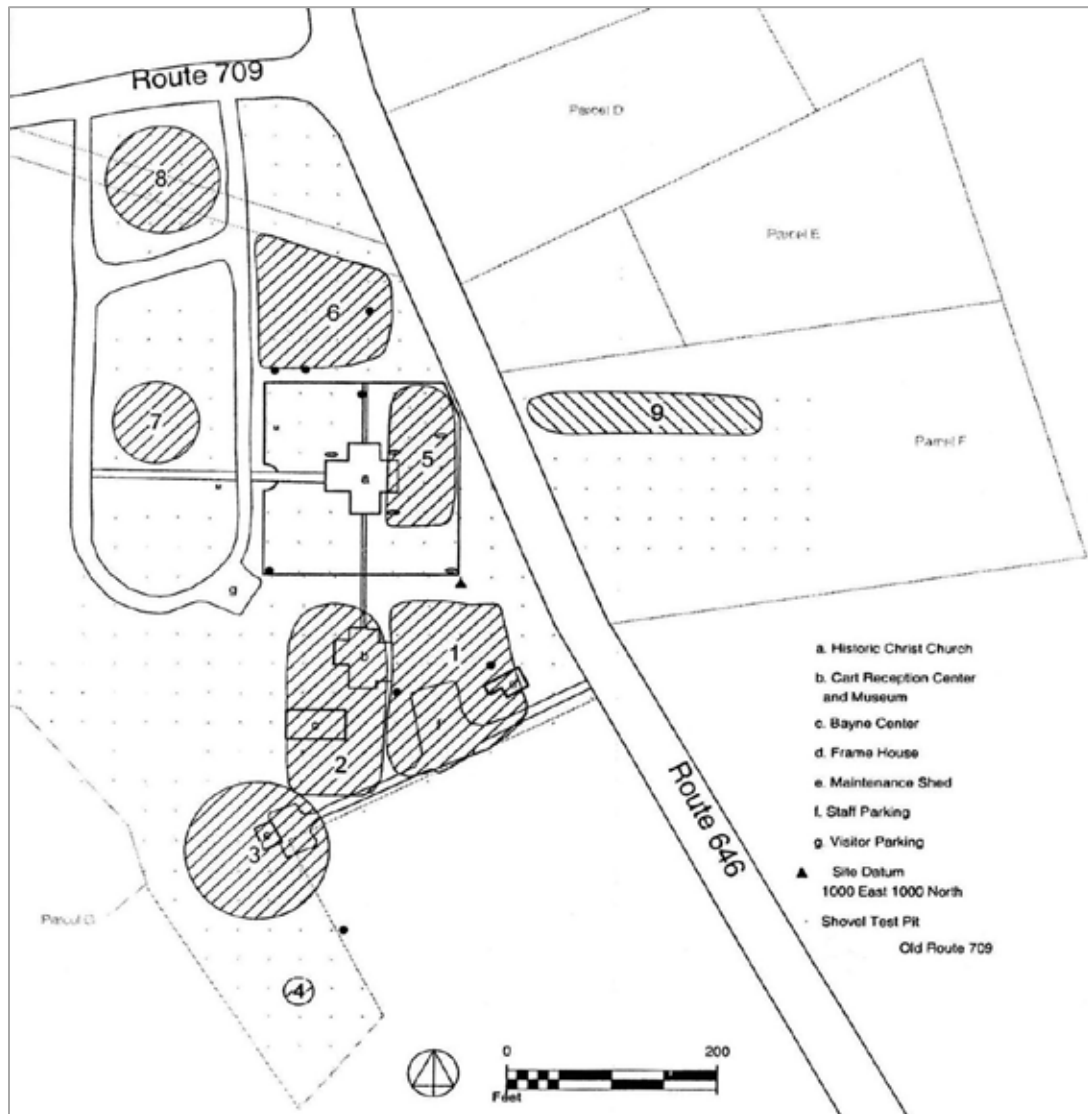
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Lot” (current volunteers/guest parking lot, south of the herb garden) undertaken in February 2002. Brown and Harpole are co-directors of the Fairfield Foundation.

brick foundation, tile floor, and glass windows. Delftware, Sgraffito slipware, case bottle glass, and a domestically made pipe stem suggest dating from the late 17<sup>th</sup> century.

**Site 6** Located north of the churchyard. Artifacts recovered suggest a substantial outbuilding with a brick foundation and windows. Some domestic debris. Slag and sheet iron fragments may be evidence of metalworking.

**Site 7** Located west of the church. Artifacts include brick, window glass, shell mortar, nails, leaded-table glass, and utilitarian, lead-glazed earthenware. Possible outbuilding that may have had a brick foundation and glass windows.



**Location of Shovel Test Pits and Identified Sites, Metz Archaeological Study, 1999**

## **The Search for the First (1670) Christ Church**

**Summary** The outcomes of multiple archaeological investigations (1999 by John Metz; 2005/2006 by Thane Harpole et al, DATA Investigations) into the location and architectural features of the first Christ Church (c. 1670) are interesting and encouraging, but limited and ambiguous. The findings, modest in their number, include floor tiles, window glass, lead and soil stains. It is the position of the Board of Directors of the Foundation:

- that at present the location and architectural features of the first Christ Church building remain unknown;
- that except for future archaeological investigation the churchyard, as well as the areas north and south of the churchyard wall, should remain undisturbed; and,
- that at such time as the Foundation is financially able, or can attract adequate funding from donors or foundations, further archaeological investigation should be undertaken to more fully understand the history of the churchyard and to seek the location and architectural features of the first church, such investigation to include the churchyard, the area under the standing brick church, and Metz sites 6 and 7 outside the churchyard wall.<sup>5</sup>

**Review of Investigations and Results** Determining the location of the first Christ Church and discovering evidence of its architectural features is proving elusive and as much a mystery as surrounds the first Christ Church Vestry Book. Archaeology directed at locating the first church began in 1999.

**Phase I** The 1999 archaeological evaluation (Phase I) by John Metz produced material in the east quadrant of the churchyard (site 5) interpreted at the time as possible evidence of the location of the first Christ Church. This building had been constructed by John Carter, father of Robert Carter, acting as undertaker at the contracted cost of 30,000 lbs. of tobacco. The loss of the first Vestry Book and dearth of other written references deprives us of primary information regarding its location and architectural features. However, references in Robert Carter's diary to the brick manufacturing operation in proximity to the church and the location of the tombs of Robert Carter's wives, Judith and Betty, both of which predate construction of the brick church, are construed to mean the 1670 church stood somewhere in the vicinity of its successor.

Motivated by the prevailing interpretation of the Metz churchyard findings, the notion (albeit unproven) that the tombs were a kind of directional sign to locating the 1670 church, and the recent success in discovering several additional brick kilns, the Foundation commissioned DATA Investigations to carry out a Phase II and then a Phase III investigation of an area largely but not entirely within the churchyard wall, east of the brick church.

### **Phase II**

The objective of the Phase II archaeological investigation was to evaluate the research potential and subsurface integrity of the remains associated with the first church constructed

in Christ Church parish, Lancaster County, in 1670. The site was first identified and delineated during a shovel test of the Foundation for Historic Christ Church property (Metz 1999). Designated by Metz as Loci 5 of site 44LA55, the site is located within the existing churchyard wall. Details about the appearance and design of the 1670 church are unknown from the limited documentation, thus this investigation sought to identify the presence of subsurface features related to the building and their potential to shed light on the architectural nature of this early church.<sup>6</sup>

### ***Phase II Results***

Three units excavated outside the churchyard wall uncovered evidence of a narrow trench or ditch. . .oriented north to south. . .may represent a drainage/boundary ditch or possibly a sill trench associated with the 1670 church. A block of five units was excavated directly east of the Carter tombs. . .there is a linear feature, oriented north to south, that contains charcoal and may be the remains of a burnt ground-laid sill.<sup>7</sup>

Based on this evidence, the authors assert in the next paragraph, “The primary goal of the test excavations, to identify surviving elements of the 1670 church, was achieved, albeit with less than ideal certainty.”

### ***Phase III***

The objective of this limited Phase III archaeological investigation was to identify the location and architectural make-up of the 1670 Christ Church. The Phase II investigation identified intact, stratified deposits contemporary with the 17th-century church along with evidence suggesting the church was situated immediately east of the standing Christ Church building and extended further east, perhaps beyond the churchyard wall.<sup>8</sup>

### ***Phase III Results***

Phase III excavations uncovered five features that may be related to the architecture of the 1670 church. . . .The dates attributed to the five features are based on their stratigraphic relationship within the block excavation and the assemblage of artifacts recovered from their surface. . . .The five features fall into three categories: possible posthole with post mold (Feature 17), possible postholes (Features 19 and 20), and possible burnt sills or framing members Features 15 and 18). . . .The [possible burnt sills or framing members] feature was amorphous in plan, and no clear evidence of a sill timber or other framing was found, besides the charcoal and burnt wood fragments. Given the location and orientation of this feature, it may represent a shallow trench within which a sill or pier was laid, though not necessarily a consistently dug trench running along the entire façade of the church structure. It could also represent sills or other framing lying directly on the ground, or portions of the upper framing of the building that fell to the ground during demolition, and the burning and decay of these elements has resulted in the soil stain visible today. . . .Architectural evidence for the earlier church, particularly ceramic floor tile, appears in highest concentration

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<sup>6</sup>*An Investigation of the 1670 Church at Historic Christ Church, Site 44LA55, Lancaster County, Virginia*, Thane Harpole, et al., 3.

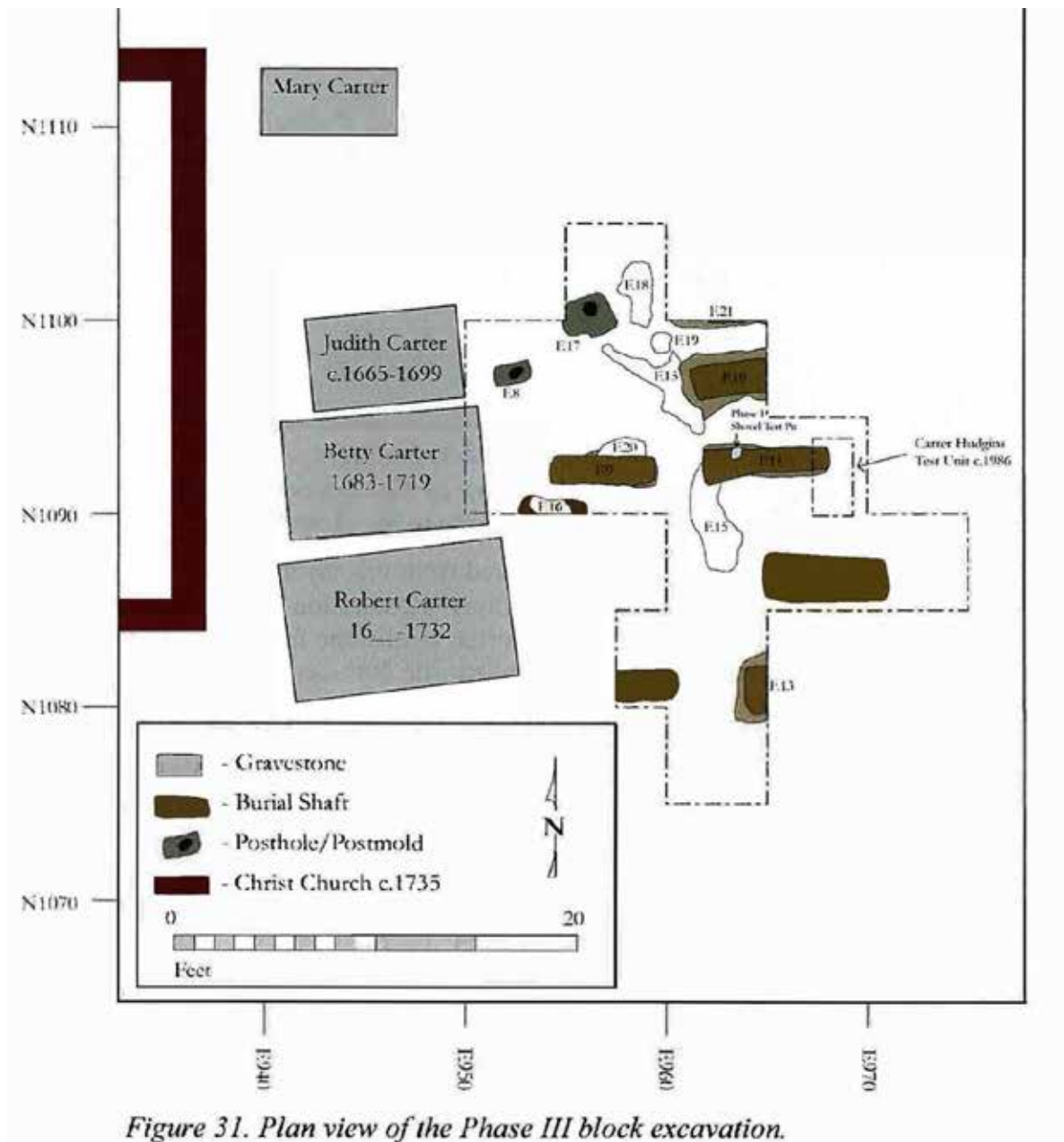
<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, 27.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*, 29.

immediately west of the projected church location (Figure 39). Concentrations of window glass and wrought nails were found across the excavation block.<sup>9</sup>

DATA Investigations concludes “. . .there are strong indications that the 1670 church is located directly to the east of the standing circa 1735 church. . . .”<sup>10</sup>

What can be said with certainty? The evidence offered to support DATA Investigations’ assertion is interesting, but modest at best and inconclusive. The tentative and ambiguous nature of the cited



<sup>9</sup>Ibid., 39-42.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., 56, 57.

features and evidence is demonstrated when contrasted with the representations published by Preservation Virginia concerning discovery of the second church at Jamestowne.<sup>11</sup>

There is nothing about the Christ Church soil stains that is definitive. To characterize them as associated with the first church is speculative. Therefore, pending further investigation, the location of the first church remains unknown. The floor tile pieces, glass and lead are likely artifacts of the original church. However, they are too few and fragmentary to support conclusions regarding its architectural features.

Additional archaeological investigation should be pursued when financial resources are available. The scope of such work should be broadened to create a comprehensive understanding of the history of the churchyard, the location of the first church—should it be discovered—being subordinate to the larger context. Work done to date exposing promising features should be expanded. The pattern and chronology of burials ought to receive particular attention. An effort should be made to determine if the Carter tombs are in their original location. Unexplored areas of the churchyard should be addressed. The area under the existing brick church should be investigated. Sites 6 and 7 identified in the Metz Phase I report should be investigated. These initiatives should be incorporated in the Strategic Plan.

In the meanwhile every effort must be made to assure the churchyard and Metz sites 6 and 7 remain undisturbed until architectural investigation is completed.

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<sup>11</sup>In August 2010 Preservation announced discovery of what is believed to be evidence of the second church at Jamestowne.

It is in length three-score foot, in breadth twenty-four, and shall have a chancel in it of cedar and a communion table of the black walnut, and all the pews of cedar, with fair broad windows to shut and open, as the weather shall occasion, of the same wood, a pulpit of the same, with a front hewn hollow, like a canoe, with two bells at the west end. (William Strachey, secretary of the Virginia colony, described Jamestown's church as such in a letter to an acquaintance in England in 1610.)

The postholes found this month that are possibly part of the second church struck the archaeologists as strikingly deep and unusually wide. This suggested that the posts supported a very substantial building. After the first was found, two more were found 12 feet apart in a straight line to the southwest (for a total of 24 feet, matching Strachey's width observation), similarly deep and wide. A fourth hole, found twelve feet to the northwest of the first, makes a right angle with the line formed by the first three, forming one of the building's corners. The length of the church was described as "three-score foot" or sixty feet. Did the colonists put a posthole at five regular twelve-foot intervals for a total of sixty feet? That is the hope of the *Jamestown Rediscovery* team. They have measured and placed markers where the other postholes should be if their theory were to hold true. *Historic Jamestowne, August 2010*, [www.historicjamestowne.org/the\\_dig/dig\\_2010\\_10\\_21.php](http://www.historicjamestowne.org/the_dig/dig_2010_10_21.php)

Another posthole from James Fort's 1608 church has surfaced at the northernmost extent of the church excavation area. This new posthole is 12 feet from the previous one, continuing a spatial pattern established by the other postholes. A total of eight postholes have now been found. . . . So far, postholes have been turning up at neat twelve-foot intervals. The southeast of the two shorter ends consists of three postholes twelve feet apart, matching Strachey's twenty-four feet description. Neither of the two longer walls nor the shorter northwest wall has been fully discovered yet, but several postholes from the longer walls have been excavated and they are turning up at twelve-foot intervals as was the case with the latest one. *Historic Jamestowne, October 2010* [www.historicjamestowne.org/the\\_dig/dig\\_2010\\_08\\_24.php](http://www.historicjamestowne.org/the_dig/dig_2010_08_24.php).

Elsewhere on the website are descriptions, still pictures and motion pictures of clearly discernable soil stains, cited as evidence of the suspected church and post holes and posts related to other structures in early Jamestowne.

#### 4. Foundation Timeline

- 1958 The Foundation for Historic Christ Church, Inc. is formed. After consultation with the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the Foundation begins the organized work of restoration and preservation.
- 1959 J.C. Harrington of the National Park Service directs archaeological investigations that uncover the footings of the original wall enclosing the churchyard. This discovery provides the basis for reconstruction of the present wall, built in 1965.
- 1960 The 25-year legal wait ends and the church building with its half-acre of yard become the property of the Trustees of Christ Church Parish.
- 1961 Christ Church is designated a Registered National Historic Landmark by the U.S. Department of the Interior.
- 1966 A vestry house, the core of the current reception center, is built. Christ Church is placed on the National Register of Historic Places.
- 1967-68 The grounds inside and outside the churchyard are designed and planted by the Garden Club of Virginia at a cost of just under \$60,000. Proceeds of two annual Garden Weeks in Virginia cover the cost. Ralph E. Griswold, Landscape Architect, keeps the planting flawlessly simple using only indigenous species found here in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.
- 1969 Christ Church is placed on the Virginia Landmarks Register.
- 1971 The National Trust for Historic Preservation recognizes the Foundation's restoration work with its second-ever annual award for excellence in the field of preservation.
- 1972 The Historic Christ Church Foundation Volunteers Organization is formed.
- 1972 The parish system of Episcopal churches in the State of Virginia is abolished.
- c. 1973 The Christ Church building and churchyard become the property of the Trustees of Grace Episcopal Church, Kilmarnock, VA.
- 1975 The Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities (APVA) presents the Foundation the Mary Mason Anderson Williams Preservation Award for restoring, preserving, and maintaining Christ Church.
- 1976 The Carter Reception Center is dedicated. Two new wings are built onto the existing vestry house by Beirne B. Carter in memory of his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Hill Carter of Redlands, direct descendants of Robert Carter. The money to equip the theater is donated by Mr. and Mrs. S. L. Lebovitz of Irvington.
- 1977 A utility building, designed in keeping with the other structures, is built at the rear of the grounds.
- 1979 During work on an addition to the Carter reception center, archaeologists from the Virginia Research Center for Archaeology discover the remains of one of the brick kilns used in building Christ Church.
- 1979-80 The tops of the Carter tombs in the churchyard are replaced with Culpeper black granite from West Virginia. The coat of arms and epitaphs are carefully reproduced.

|         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|---------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|         | The original tops are put in storage. One of two angel heads from the tombs, found in the rubble inside during the restoration process, is put on display in the gallery.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 1980    | The duPont Wing for Volunteers is added to the Carter Reception Center with a grant from the Jessie Ball duPont Religious, Charitable, and Educational Fund.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 1981-82 | To celebrate the 250 <sup>th</sup> anniversary of the building of Christ Church, two living history dramas are performed.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 1981    | Architectural drawings of Christ Church are made by Craig Hudson, AIA.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 1985    | An expert geophysicist surveys the grounds around the church, both inside and outside the churchyard walls, and inside the church building for the possible location of the first church building or for grave sites. The results are inconclusive without further archaeological excavations.                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 1987    | Volunteers complete the herb garden behind the Carter Reception Center.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 1988-89 | Money from a bequest of Edith Jenkins Bayne is used to enlarge the museum in the Carter Reception Center and to build the Bayne Center. The museum is redesigned to better reflect the history of the church to the present time. The Bayne Center provides much needed space for various volunteer activities of the Foundation. The original tops to the Carter tombs (in storage for nine years) are restored and mounted upright on the walls in the Bayne Center. |
| 1990-93 | The Foundation contracts with Nathaniel P. Neblett, AIA, to write a Historic Structure Report to use as a guide for restoration.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 1992    | A memorial stone is placed within the churchyard honoring those who buried there in the past and for whom no evidence of burial remains. The cost of the stone is shared by Grace Episcopal Church and the Foundation.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 1999    | The Foundation commissions John Metz to perform a Phase I archaeological survey of 2.8 acres surrounding the church. A Phase I, or "identification," survey provides general information on the location, boundaries, date, and integrity of archaeological resources. Several sites of <i>potential</i> significance are identified.                                                                                                                                  |
| 2002-03 | Phase II archaeological investigation of possible location of brick kilns begins by David Brown and Thane Harpole.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 2003    | Agreement between the Foundation and Grace Episcopal Church which delineates ownership of the church (Grace), description of the property(s), uses and responsibilities for its care (the Foundation) begins January 1.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 2004-06 | Carter tombs stabilization performed by Tidewater Preservation.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 2005-07 | Phase II and Phase III archaeological investigations of possible location of the first Christ Church, c 1670. Some objects and soil markings are discovered but inconclusive (Brown and Harpole).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |

|         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|---------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2007    | Groundbreaking for 50 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Initiative. At a cost of \$2.1 million, this site improvement project completely revamps and enlarges the Carter Reception Center, builds the Chase Administrative Center and provides a major new paved parking area. Additionally, all buildings become fully accessible. |
| 2008    | 50 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration of the Foundation for Historic Christ Church.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 2008    | Chase Administration Center completed.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 2009    | Expansion and renovation of Carter Reception Center completed.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 2011    | Mortgage for 50th Anniversary Initiative burned.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 2012    | 2012 Condition Survey by the firm of Mesick, Cohen, Wilson, Baker Architects identifies and prioritizes long term preservation goals.                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 2012    | Dendrochronology study dates the roof timbers as saplings in 1511-15 and felled in 1731-32.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 2014-15 | Buckingham slate roof is replaced using at least 60% of the original slate.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |



## **SECTION VII: ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

### **1. Topical Papers**

- Bishop William Meade's Report
- Horological Study
- Christopher Wren
- Window Glass
- Stone Pavers
- Taxation in Colonial Virginia
- General Assembly Laws for the Established Colonial Church
- Historic Christ Church Landscape Plantings Map

### **2. Practical Guidance for Volunteers**

- Crafting a Tour
- Talking Points for Volunteers: A Variety of Approaches
- Additional Readings



## 1. Topical Papers

### Bishop William Meade's Report

Ordained in 1811 and elected assistant Bishop of Virginia in 1829, William Meade (1789-1862) succeeded Richard Moore as Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church of Virginia in 1841. Probably more than any one figure, Meade played a central role in reviving the Episcopal Church in 19<sup>th</sup> century Virginia. As an evangelical Christian, Meade had difficulty understanding the nature of Virginia Anglicanism in its 18<sup>th</sup> century context, but as the first historian of that church, his writings are invaluable.<sup>1</sup>

Meade initially published observations on Christ Church in a report to the Episcopal Convention in 1838. In 1857, he completed *Old Churches, Ministers, and Families of Virginia*, in which he reprinted those observations and added discussions of major events in Christ Church's history, including the formation of Christ Church Parish and St. Mary's White Chapel, John Carter's role in building the first church in 1670, and the ministers who served Christ Church and St. Mary's over the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.

While Meade's writings offer both the earliest known description of Christ Church (and its condition in the mid-19th century) and insights into the now lost vestry book, some of his observations are inaccurate. In addition, there are minor discrepancies between his report to the Convention in 1838 and what he reprinted in *Old Churches, Ministers, and Families of Virginia* in 1857. Footnotes have been added to point out these errors and/or discrepancies.

The following extract from my report to the Convention in the year 1838, after a visit to the parishes in the Northern Neck, will show what were the impressions made upon me by that venerable building, impressions renewed and deepened by my subsequent visit.

My next appointment was at Christ Church, Lancaster, on the 23rd of June. This was the day appointed by the Convention to be observed as a day of humiliation, fasting, and prayer, on account of the languor of the Church, and the sins and troubles of the nation. No temple of religion, and no spot in the diocese, could have been selected more in accordance with the solemn duty of that day, than the old and venerable church in which three of God's ministers were assembled. I preached a sermon adapted to the occasion, and then proposed that those who were minded to spend the day as the Church recommended should remain for some hours at that place, in suitable religious exercises. A good number complied with the invitation, and after the interval of perhaps an hour, which was spent in surveying the building and the tombs around this ancient house of God, another service was performed, and a second appropriate discourse was preached by the Rev. Mr. Nelson, the service having been performed by Mr. Francis McGuire, the present minister of the parish. The past history and present condition of this hallowed spot and temple deserve a more particular notice. This notice

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<sup>1</sup>See Dell Upton, *Holy Things and Profane: Anglican Parish Churches in Colonial Virginia*, (Cambridge, MA., 1986), xviii-xx and Holmes, *A Brief History of the Episcopal Church*, 61-62.

is derived from the memorials furnished by the house itself, the tombstones around and within, and the vestry-book of the parish, kept from the year 1654 to 1770<sup>2</sup>, to which I had access.

The present church was built on the site of an older one, which was completed in the year 1670, under the direction of Mr. John Carter, the first of that name, and the great ancestor of many bearing that name in Virginia. By the side of the chancel is a large marble slab, on which are the names of John Carter and his three wives<sup>3</sup>, and several children, who all died before him and were buried in that spot.

The church being too small for the increasing population, a larger one was meditated, and some change in its location talked of, when Mr. Robert Carter (since known by the name of King Carter) offered to build one at his own expense, saying that in consequence of his large possessions, increasing family, and number of tenants, he had intended for some time to build a larger one for the parish. The offer was cheerfully accepted, and the present house was completed about the time of Mr. Carter's death, that is, about the year 1732,<sup>4</sup> and exhibits to this day one of the most striking monuments of the fidelity of ancient architecture to be seen in our land. Very few, if any, repairs have been put upon it: the original roof and shingles now cover the house, and have preserved in a state of perfection the beautiful arched ceilings, except in two places which have within a few years been a little discolored by the rain, which found its way through the gutters where the shingles have decayed. The walls of the house are three feet thick, perfect and sound. The windows are large and strong, having probably two-thirds of the original glass in them. The pews are of the old fashion, high-backed, and very firm. A very large one near the altar, and opposite the pulpit, together with the whole north cross of the building, was especially reserved by Mr. Carter for the use of his family and dependents in all time to come.

It deserves to be mentioned, that, in addition to the high backs which always concealed the family and prevented any of them from gazing around when sitting or kneeling, a railing of brass rods with damask curtains was put around the top of the pew, except the part opposite the pulpit, in order, it was supposed, to prevent the indulgence of curiosity when standing. These remained until a few years since, and parts of them may probably yet be found in the possession of neighbors or relatives.

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<sup>2</sup>In his 1838 Report to the Convention, Meade states the vestry book was kept from the year 1665 to 1770. This correlates with Joseph Ball's letter in 1835 in which he says the first vestry was sworn in on September 23, 1665. With some uncertainty, Meade had first cited 1654 on the preceding page of *Old Churches*, where he recalled seeing the lost vestry book: "The vestry-book of Christ Church, Lancaster, before the union of the two parishes, commenced, I think, about the year 1654." This made it necessary for him to change the date in his reprinted 1838 report. Meade may refer to 1654 because that is the year in which a court order first divided Lancaster County into two parishes, or perhaps a vestry book did actually begin in that year.

<sup>3</sup>John Carter had five wives. Four are listed on his tombstone, but Meade counts Eleanor as a daughter instead of a wife. See *Old Churches*, 110.

<sup>4</sup>Meade gives 1731 as Carter's death date in his 1838 report. Carter, of course, died in 1732. The church was completed in 1735 instead of 1732, as Meade reported. Meade also referred to Robert Carter as Robin, a common nickname for that time.

In further evidence of the fidelity with which the house was built, I would mention that the pavement of its aisles, which is of large freestone, is yet solid and smooth as though it was the work of yesterday. The old walnut Communion-table also stands firm and unimpaired, and not a round from the railing of the chancel is gone or even loosened.

The old marble font, the largest and most beautiful I ever saw, is still there; and, what will scarce be credited, the old cedar dial-post, with the name of John<sup>5</sup> Carter, 1702, and which was only removed a few years since from its station without the door, where it was planted in the ground, is still to be seen in its place of security under the pulpit. In such a house, surrounded by such memorials, it was delightful to read the word of God and the prayers of the Church from the old desk, to pronounce the commandments from the altar near which the two tables of the law, the creed, and Lord's prayer are still to be seen, in large and legible characters, and then to preach the words of eternal life from the high and lofty pulpit, which seemed, as it were, to be hung in the air. Peculiarly delightful it was to raise the voice in such utterances in a house whose sacred form and beautiful arches seemed to give force and music to the feeblest tongue beyond any other building in which I ever performed or heard the hallowed services of the sanctuary. The situation of this church, though low, and surrounded on two of its sides by woodland, with thick undergrowth, is not without its peculiar interest. A few acres of open land, with some very large trees, chiefly spreading walnuts, furnish ample room for the horses and vehicles of those who attend it. An old decayed brick wall, with a number of graves and tombstones around the house, adds no little solemnity to the scene.

Among the latter, at the east end of the house, within a neat enclosure, recently put up, are to be seen the tombs of Robert<sup>6</sup> Carter, the builder of the house, and of his two wives. These are probably the largest and richest and heaviest tombstones in our land. A long Latin inscription is to be seen on that of Mr. Carter. While the tomb of the husband is entire, those of the wives appear to have been riven by lightning, and are separating and falling to pieces. Such is the belief and testimony of the neighbors. It is pleasing to know that a considerable sum of money has been subscribed for repairing the roof, which requires a new covering, and for improving the interior of this remarkable building, and that a generous portion of it is contributed by some of the descendants of the original builder, or those connected with them, who, though residing at a distance from the spot, possess the land around it, and have given the best assurance to the remaining families of the church, that it shall ever be continued for its original and sacred purposes. . . .”

To his reprint of his 1838 report, Meade then offered a short anecdote which attested to the architectural strength and character of Christ Church. On the night between Meade's two days at Christ Church, he stayed at a Mr. Tomlin's house, which Meade observed was “a new one scarcely finished.” Meade stated that while resting in bed early in the morning, the plaster ceiling above his bed broke off and fell upon him. Meade felt that he

could not help then and often since instituting a comparison between the fidelity and durability of ancient and modern architecture. Here was the ceiling of a private house, not a year old, tumbling over me, and there was the heavy plastering of an old church, built one hundred and twenty or thirty

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<sup>5</sup>In 1838, Meade had Robin (Robert) Carter instead of John here.

<sup>6</sup>Again, Meade used Robin in his 1838 report.

years before, perfectly sound and impervious to rain, except in one or two small spots where it was a little discolored underneath the gutter, where the shingles had decayed. Where is the house, built in these degenerate days of slight modern architecture, which may compare with Old Christ Church, either within or without? When a few years since it was repaired, as I in my report expressed the belief that it would be, the only repairs required were a new roof, (and but for the failure in the gutters that would have been unnecessary,) the renewal of the cornices, supplying the broken glass, and painting the pews, pulpit, etc. All the rest was in a most perfect state of soundness. The shingles, except in the decayed gutters, were so good that they were sold to the neighbors around, and will probably now last longer than many new ones just gotten from the woods, having become hardened by age on the steep and taunt roofs from which the rains of more than a century rushed downward, not stopping for a moment to settle in the joints. . . .

In all respects the house appears to have been built in the most durable manner, but without any of the mere trinkets of architecture. The form and proportion of the house are also most excellent, and make a deep impression on the eye and mind of the beholder. Though the walls are three feet thick, yet such is their height and such the short distance between the windows and doors, and such the effect of the figure of the cross, that there is no appearance of heaviness about them. The roof or roofs are also very steep and high, and take the place of tower or steeple. A steeple or tower would indeed injure the whole aspect of the building.

For the repairing of this house we are indebted mainly to the liberality of two brothers, Mr. Kelleys, descendants of old Episcopalians of the Northern Neck. Not only did they furnish far the larger part of fifteen hundred dollars required for it, but superintended most carefully the expenditure of the same. Their bodies lie side by side within a strong iron enclosure near the church.

## Horological Study

### Was Historic Christ Church Designed as a Clock or a Calendar?

In March 1988, H. Stephen Stewart of Weems, VA observed that at certain times of the year, sunlight entering the west ox-eye window of Historic Christ Church shortly before sunset casts the shape of the window directly onto the bottom center of the tablets on the east wall in the chancel and on other prominent features of the Church. Mr. Stewart spent many years studying these phenomena, made careful observations and measurements of the dimensions of the Church, and concluded the Church was intentionally and carefully built to create the solar effects which he described in two books on this subject.

In 2011, the Foundation for Historic Christ Church engaged Parabola Architecture to analyze the inter-related horological and architectural claims regarding Historic Christ Church and determine if they reflected intentionality in the construction of the church, or whether they were coincidental with the general east-west alignment. Parabola Architecture is the firm of Kevin and Carrie Burke, highly skilled architects specifically trained in solar geometry, who have designed their own house with sophisticated solar features which allow sunlight to enter in a very precise manner. In undertaking their study, Mr. and Mrs. Burke reviewed Mr. Stewart's two books, cited below, and many others, reviewed much correspondence received by the Foundation over the past twenty years, consulted with Mr. Stewart and twice visited the Church to make personal observations.

Parabola submitted its report to the Foundation in February of 2012 and opens citing Mr. Stewart's two books and framing the question presented to them as follows:

- Stewart, H. Stephen. *Geometry in Motion: A Mathematical Demonstration: A Series of Monographs Describing the Astronomical, Numerological, Geometrical, Pictographical, and Horological Disciplines of Christ Church, Weems, Virginia.* Weems, VA: Stewart Horological Surveys, 1993. Print. ("GIM")
- Stewart, H. Stephen. *Almanacs In Architecture: The Legacy of Sir Christopher Wren and the Freemasons of Virginia.* Weems, VA: Stewart Horological Surveys, 1993. Print. ("AIA")
- *GIM* and *AIA* posit an intricate and compelling theory, asserting that Christ Church was intentionally designed as a horological structure created through the precise alignment of the building's geometries and proportions with the solar seasons. The theory proposes that Christ Church could only have been built in its exact location with a solar orientation of 3.5 degrees west of solar north to create the observed solar effects.

Parabola's conclusion is that the observed solar characteristics are coincidental with the east-west alignment of Christ Church and not the result of an intention of the builder to create particular

sunlight images in the Easter season. Parabola found a number of questionable issues in Mr. Stewart's publications regarding inaccurate measurements, misapprehensions in solar geometry and questions in the actual construction of the building which are detailed in Parabola's 25-page report and which led them to their conclusion.

The Foundation gave Mr. Stewart special access to the building for his measurements and observations, and admires his efforts. It has also conducted its own research into the documented history of the building and looked into findings of scholars in the fields of astronomy, architecture, and the design and construction of buildings to take advantage of solar effects. So far, the documentary records, expert opinions and studies are neither in agreement with Mr. Stewart's theory nor, in many cases, with one another. The one thing no one disputes is that the sunlight does create the beautiful effect Mr. Stewart first observed. The Foundation followed the invitation Mr. Stewart stated in GIM p. viii: "The purpose of this volume is to determine if these disciplines happen as a result of chance or were they predisposed to be as they are? This report makes no final conclusion leaving the answer for you to determine." As always, the Foundation encourages those who are interested to read Mr. Stewart's books, conduct their own research, and follow wherever the facts may lead.

## Did Christopher Wren Design Historic Christ Church?

The evidence that Christopher Wren designed Christ Church simply does not exist. One central problem in attributing Christ Church to Wren is that Wren died in 1723 (1632-1723), some seven years before the vestry of Christ Church Parish accepted Robert Carter's proposal to build a brick church on the site of the 1670 church. That Robert Carter somehow could have received building plans from Wren sometime prior to 1723 only to put them into action in 1730 seems very unlikely.

One study that does attribute Christ Church to Wren, Alan Gowans' *King Carter's Church: being a study in depth of Christ Church, Lancaster County, Virginia....*, offers little to no documentation from the historical record and relies instead on conjecture and very circumstantial evidence which, to say the least, is not convincing.<sup>7</sup>

Wren's association with Christ Church is best understood as an expression of the pervasive influence his architecture had on the English world. As England's greatest architect, Wren undoubtedly influenced colonial builders. In this sense, according to Frederick Nichols, Christ Church is "certainly a product of Wren's thinking," but this is not to say Wren had a direct role or hand in its design. Moreover, Virginia designers and builders may have incorporated stylistic elements from Wren and England, but they adapted them to meet the colony's vernacular building traditions and forms.<sup>8</sup>

As Dell Upton points out, building a church in colonial Virginia was a complex process involving a host of characters, of which (the influence of) Wren is considered only a part: "The Anglican church

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<sup>7</sup>Gowans maintains that Christ Church resembles Farley in Wiltshire, England strongly both in its architecture and symbolic function as a family memorial church. He argues that Wren furnished the building plans for Farley, and because of both the similarities between Farley and Christ Church and Robert Carter's "contacts in London, there is no reason why the same thing should not have happened at Christ Church; and, in view of the unique subtlety of the proportioning and balance, every reason to believe that is exactly what did happen—that plans for Christ Church were in fact furnished by Christopher Wren...."

Such purely circumstantial evidence hardly constitutes "every reason to believe" Wren in fact designed Christ Church. Moreover, Gowans' attribution of Farley to Wren is problematic: Gowans establishes his connection between Wren and Farley through reference to Professor Marcus Whiffen's observation "that Farley is one of only two churches outside London that can without doubt be attributed to Christopher Wren. No one has ever seriously questioned this attribution." As Nat Neblett points out, however, the problem with this is that Professor Whiffen himself later retracted this statement, arguing that the "attribution of Farley to Wren cannot be maintained: it was most probably designed, and built, by Alexander Fort, the King's Master Joiner." Thus, one of the basic tenants upon which Gowans rests his case for the connection between Wren and Christ Church is in fact inaccurate.

See Alan Gowans, *King Carter's Church: being a study in depth of Christ Church, Lancaster County, Virginia....* (University of Victoria Maltwood Museum, 1969), 31-32; Nathaniel P. Neblett, *Christ Church, Lancaster County, VA: Historic Structure Report* (Irvington, Va., 1994), 19. Gowans also argues that both the bricklayers and bricks themselves were imported from England, the latter part of which can be refuted easily by the archaeological evidence of at least three brick kilns at the HCC site and Robert Carter's references to brickmaking in his diary.

<sup>8</sup> For Nichols' comments, see "Christ Church Is Described As Finest Colonial Church," *Rappahannock Record*, October 30, 1980; see also Dell Upton, *Holy Things and Profane: Anglican Parish Churches in Colonial Virginia* (Cambridge, Mass., 1986), 27-28.

is not just Wren and the Renaissance, it is *The Builder's Dictionary*, and the Reformation, and the gentry, and slave and indentured labor, and the taxation system. It is the vestries, and the builders, and the parishioners, and Virginia and England.”<sup>9</sup>

The first vestry book, which most likely would have contained some details of the building process, has been lost, and no other records point to the identity of the designer or builders and those who assisted them. However, as Section III-4 of this Red Book shows, the contributions of Robert Carter and Corotoman workers are undeniable. These builders of Christ Church produced a remarkable building whose craftsmanship was unsurpassed among colonial Virginia's Anglican churches.

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<sup>9</sup> Upton, *Holy Things and Profane*, xxii.

## Window Glass

It is unlikely many of the original glass panes remain in the windows at Christ Church. Though Bishop Meade reported when he visited the church in 1837 that the “large and strong” windows had “probably two-thirds of the original glass in them,” photographs taken in the 1880s show by this point all of the large compass-head as well as the smaller ox-eye windows had few, *if any*, panes present. Two late nineteenth-century observers—Henry Derby, who served as minister of the parish from 1873-1889, and historian William Stanard—also noted that most if not all of the glass had been broken out of the windows by this time.

In 1897, under the direction of Rev. E. B. Burwell and a committee appointed by the vestry to oversee preservation and restoration work on the building, the windows were reglazed and covered with wire screens to protect them. Photographs taken post-1897 show these changes.

Until 2001, panes had been replaced with contemporary glass as needed.<sup>10</sup> During the repair of all the windows in 2001 some glass was replaced with Bendheim glass, manufactured since 1927 as a replacement for glass in historic buildings and identifiable by its wavy appearance.

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<sup>10</sup>Nathaniel P. Neblett, *Christ Church, Lancaster County, VA: Historic Structure Report* (Irvington, Va., 1994), 67; William G. Stanard, “Historical and Genealogical Notes and Queries: Christ Church, Lancaster County,” *VMHB* (1902), 208.



## Stone Pavers

When visitors cross one of the thresholds and enter Christ Church, they typically look up into the awesome space and exclaim, “Wow!” They do not look down at the floor and comment. But, the pavers that cover the floor also tell a story.

In 2010, Marcus M. Key, Jr., Ph.D., conducted a study to determine the provenance of the church's stone pavers. 17<sup>th</sup> century settlers knew that coastal and southern Virginia had no stone suitable for building with one exception—the very soft Aquia sandstone found near Fredericksburg. This was used as building stone from about 1735 to 1840. For example, it was used to construct the White House, a portion of the Capitol Building, and the U.S. Treasury building. Aquia stone is used on Christ Church for decorative features such as keystones and imposts, but is not durable enough to serve as floor pavers.

The 352 limestone pavers in the church are laid directly on the ground without mortar. They cover all of the floor spaces in the church except for the yellow pine pew and chancel flooring, the polished Purbeck stone (“marble”) David Miles marker, and the black marble John Carter I marker in the northeast corner of the chancel. Twenty-seven of the 352 pavers have been repaired and/or replaced. In some cases smaller stones were arranged to cover the area of one large original paver. (These repair pieces were counted as one paver.) Some repairs include the use of mortar in the joints and can be seen along the south transept and by the north door.

Most of the pavers are 4-6 inches thick with the mean size stone being 18.4 inches on a side. Eighteen inches may have been the standard for Virginia builders. Stones adjacent to the pews extend under the wooden pew floors by about two inches and therefore appear smaller than those in the center of the aisles. The wooden pew floors cover a crawl space underneath the pews that parallels the aisles.

The composition of the stones, including the types of oyster and clam fossils they contain, leads one to their source in the Purbeck Limestone Group along the Dorset coast in the south of England. The area, known as “The Isle of Purbeck,” is actually a peninsula containing sub-surface mines and above-ground quarries that still produce replacement stone for repairs to churches and cathedrals today.

The Isle of Purbeck is most famous for its Purbeck marble, as used for David Miles' marker. “Marble” is a builder's term for a slightly softer Purbeck stone that takes a polish and is not considered optimal for pavers. Purbeck marble was first used by the Romans in England. Among its notable later applications is Westminster Abbey.

Purbeck stone was also used in rebuilding London after the Great Fire in 1666. Daniel Defoe reported in 1724, the era in which Corotoman was built, that Purbeck stone was extensively used in London. The stone's popularity stems from the natural thickness of the stone beds which requires minimal splitting for removal from the quarry. A workman chiseled the best face smooth—the opposite side would be placed down at the building site.

The floor of the church includes more than one type of Purbeck stone, as there were many quarries in the Isle of Purbeck. Each quarry produced stone of several different compositions. With the approximately 200 small quarries supplying a dozen different shipping merchants, it was almost certain that there would be a mix of stone types in every shipment.

How did the Purbeck stone pursue its journey from England to Christ Church? During the early 1720s, before undertaking to build Christ Church, Robert Carter was engaged in building his mansion at Corotoman. The structure was majestic, stretching 90 feet in length, 40 feet wide, standing two stories high above an English basement, with an arcaded loggia, or gallery, running the full length of the river façade. Stone pavers were used to pave the basement, front steps, and loggia, and created a functional water drainage system.

In the spring of 1720, Robert Carter ordered 1,000 feet of pavers for his mansion. He then wrote in July asking for 2,000 feet of pavers. The Key study postulates that the Corotoman pavers were probably shipped in the spring of 1721. This assessment is reinforced by reference to a Carter letter of May 27, 1721 reporting that during a 15 week voyage, the ship transporting the stone was forced to jettison 3-4 hundred feet of stones because of bad weather. Research found no further reference to the stones. By December, 1725, it is expected that work on the house was completed; in late January/early February, 1729, the *Maryland Gazette* reported that the house burned down.

In 1730, Carter proposed to the vestry of Christ Church that he build a new church at his expense (he did not intend to rebuild Corotoman.) About two years into the construction, he died, leaving the church's completion to his sons, John and Charles. No correspondence from Robert, John or Charles has been found referring to paving stones for the church.

About 640 pavers were removed from the Corotoman ruins, many more than were required for Christ Church. There is evidence on some of the church pavers that they had undergone fire (e.g., discoloration, melted lead splotches.) The Key report concludes that following a four-year employment at Corotoman, about 352 Purbeck stone pavers were recycled into use at Christ Church where they rest today.

*Source: 2010 Quarterly Bulletin of the Archaeological Society of Virginia, 65: 1-15.*

## Taxation in Colonial Virginia<sup>11</sup>

### Parish Levies

- § Collected annually
- § Levied by vestry
- § Tax rate based on parish expenses divided by number of tithables in parish
- § Fund:
  - o Salaries for minister (16,000 pounds tobacco) and other parish employees
  - o Construction, maintenance and repairs to church buildings
  - o Purchase, construction and maintenance of glebe lands and buildings
  - o Items needed for Divine Service (wine, communion silver, pulpit/communion cloths)
  - o Social Welfare for needy parishioners (housing, clothing, medicine, direct cash payments, burying)

### County Levies

- § Collected Annually
- § Levied by county court (Justices of the Peace)
- § Tax rate based on county expenses divided by number of tithables in county
- § Fund:
  - o Salaries for sheriff, clerk of the court, King's Attorney, constables, tobacco inspectors and other officials
  - o Construction, maintenance and repairs to court house, jail, stocks/pillory, whipping post, wharves and tobacco warehouses
  - o Public Ferry
  - o Coroner Inquests
  - o Burgess service and travel expenses to capital
  - o Wolf bounties

### Colony Levies

- § Collected Intermittently
- § Levied by General Assembly (which did not meet every year)
- § Tax rate based on colony expenses divided by number of tithables in colony
- § Fund:
  - o Construction and maintenance of government buildings
  - o Salaries for minor government officials like clerks
  - o Compensation to masters whose slaves were executed
  - o Salaries for members of the House of Burgesses (18<sup>th</sup> century)

### Quitrents

- § Collected annually
- § Levied by English Crown and Northern Neck Propriety
- § Tax rate is 2 shillings per hundred acres
- § Crown gets quitrents in lands south of Rappahannock River
- § Agent for Propriety collects quitrents in Northern Neck

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<sup>11</sup> Peter V. Bergstrom, "Nothing So Certain: Taxes in Colonial Virginia," (Williamsburg, Va., 1984); John K. Nelson, *A Blessed Company: Parishes, Parsons, and Parishioners in Anglican Virginia, 1690-1776* (Chapel Hill, 2001), 43-47, 348 n.3; Linda Rowe, "Questions & Answers: Church and State," *Colonial Williamsburg Interpreter* (April 1983).

### **Export Duties on Virginia Tobacco**

- § Levied by General Assembly (in place from 1658 to Revolution)
- § 2 shillings on every hogshead of tobacco exported from Virginia
- § Fund:
  - Governor's salary and upkeep of Governor's Palace
  - General Court (made up of the Governor's Council)
  - Clerk of the Council
  - Virginia's Solicitor or Agent in London
  - Portions of salaries for Commissary and Attorney General of Virginia

### **English Export and Import Duties**

- § Manufactured goods, cloth, woolens and other products subject to export/customs duty known as tonnage or poundage; English merchants pay these as part of their mark-up on good shipped to and sold in Virginia
- § Virginians pay duties to England for tobacco, iron (before 1750), lumber and wheat exports

### **Virginia Import Duties**

- § Levied by General Assembly (in place from 1685 to Revolution)
- § Liquor: Tax on rum, brandy, beer and other alcoholic drinks imported into Virginia (except those made in Britain). Tax rate is 1 to 3 pence per gallon. Fund construction of Capitol, Palace and Powder magazine; later just become part of colony's general funds
- § Slaves: 1699-1730 tax rate is two pounds per slave imported into colony; post-1730 tax is 5% of purchase price of each slave. Levied as source of revenue and attempt to limit number of slaves in Virginia. Fund construction of Capitol, Palace and Powder magazine; later just become part of colony's general funds

### **Miscellaneous Taxes**

- § Duty levied by Assembly on exported skins/furs to support the College of William & Mary
- § Castle Duty: In place 1631 to Revolution. Intended to raise funds for coastal defenses in Virginia. After 1680 tax is collected by Naval Officer on each river and tax rate is 1 shilling, 3 pence per ton on every ship arriving in Virginia
- § Port Charge: 6 pence on each person entering Virginia colony (slave, servant, free, travelers, Virginians returning to colony; ship's officers and crew exempt)
- § Special poll, land, coach/carriage and legal document taxes to fund French and Indian War

## General Assembly Laws For The Established Colonial Church

To questions such as, “Was church attendance required?” or “How much was a minister paid?” the general information provided in Section III, Parish Organization, of *The Red Book* answers in terms of the period when the 1735 church was built. Exceptions are noted in the text and in footnotes.

The General Assembly formally established the Church of England as Virginia’s official religion during its first meeting in 1619. Over the next century and a half, the Assembly enacted a series of laws that shaped the colony’s religious establishment in many areas,<sup>12</sup> eventually changing it from an English institution to a Virginia institution with English roots. The following digest offers specifics on this evolution by topic and date:

### Conformity to the Church of England

- § Uniformity to the ecclesiastical laws and orders of the Church of England required (1619, 1623/24, 1632)<sup>13</sup>
- § Ministers to read Divine Service and conform to the Church of England’s canon laws and orders (1619, 1629/30, 1642/43)
- § “orders & constitutions...concerninge the Church government be and remaine in full power, force & vertue” (1642/43)
- § Non-conformists to be compelled by Governor and Council to depart colony “with all conveniencie” (1642/43)
- § Liturgy of the Church of England read by minster or reader every Sunday (1661/62)
- § Vestrymen to take oaths of allegiance and supremacy to Crown and conform to Church of England (1661/62)
- § Anyone who denied the existence of God or the Trinity; denied the Christian religion to be true or the Old and New Testament to be of divine authority; or asserted that there is more than one God cannot hold public office—ecclesiastical, civil or military. A second offense restricted a person’s ability to sue, prosecute or plead in court of law; to be guardian or executor; to receive a deed of gift or legacy; or to hold public office. Also carried a three year prison sentence. (1699, 1705)<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> These laws all appear in William W. Hening, *The Statutes at Large: Being a Collection of all the Laws of Virginia...* (Richmond, Va. and Philadelphia, Pa., 1809-1823). Before 1752, Virginia and England were still on the Julian calendar, under which the new year began on March 25. Dates for January 1 to March 24 were often written with a double year, such as 1661/62.

<sup>13</sup> The law of 1623/24 read “That there be an uniformity in our church as neere as may be to the canons in England; both in substance and circumstance, and that all persons yeild readie obedience unto them under paine of censure.” Church laws in 1632 used similar language: “That there be a uniformitie throughout this colony both in substance and circumstance to the cannons & constitutions of the church of England as neere as may bee and that every person yeild readie obedience unto them upon penaltie of the paynes and forfeitures in that case appoynted.” Historian George Brydon points out that the use of “our” implied that Virginians had begun to conceive of their church (as well as their civil government) as somewhat distinct from England. George M. Brydon, *Virginia’s Mother Church and the Political Conditions Under Which it Grew*, 2 Vols. (Richmond, Va., 1947-1952), I, 123, 155, 180.

<sup>14</sup> Hening III, 169-171. Offenders could acknowledge and renounce their “erronious opinions” and have their full rights restored.

### **Taxation - Clergy Salary**

- § Tax of 10 pounds of tobacco and a bushel of corn for every tithable (taxable) person in the colony to support ministers (ca. 1619)
- § Allowance of calves, goats, and pigs to supplement clergy salaries in response to low tobacco prices (1631/32)
- § Clergymen's salaries set 16,000 pounds tobacco plus cask, an allowance for packing the tobacco (1696). 16,000 pounds tobacco intended to be the equivalent of £80 sterling a year. 16,000 pounds tobacco in place until 1776, when the Assembly officially ends taxation for clergy salaries.<sup>15</sup>

### **Taxation - Glebe Lands and Housing**

- § Glebes to be at least 200 acres (Royal Instructions; 1727, 1748)
- § Each parish to provide a glebe with "convenient houseing and stockes." Parishes without enough tithable persons to support a minister to be united with adjacent parish that could (1656/57, 1661/1662, 1696)<sup>16</sup>
- § Vestries required to add a kitchen, barn, stable, dairy, meat house, corn house, garden, and "such other conveniencies as they shall think fit" on glebe lands at public expense (1748)
- § Minister required to maintain glebe house and outbuildings in good repair (1748)<sup>17</sup>

### **Parish Formation**

- § Counties not yet laid out into parishes should be divided into parishes (1655-58)
- § The Assembly regularly passed laws that created new parishes, defined parish boundaries and formed new parishes out of existing ones, often in response to petitions from parishioners. One example is Christ Church Parish, Middlesex in 1666, which formed on the south side of the Rappahannock River in what was then Lancaster County but would become Middlesex County in 1669.<sup>18</sup>

### **Churches**

- § A building "for the worship of God" or "roome sequestred for that purpose" be built in every plantation and an area be enclosed for the burial of the dead (1623/24)
- § Parishioners taxed for building new churches or repairing older ones (1631/32)
- § Church or chapel of ease to be "decently built" in each parish (1661/62)<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Hening, III, 151-152. Neslon, *A Blessed Company*, 350, n.2. The wording of this law itself alluded to the problems Virginia had in procuring clergymen: "Whereas a competent and sufficient provision for the clergy will be the only means to supply this dominion with able faithfull and orthodox ministers..." In 1748, the Assembly reaffirmed the 16,000 lbs. salary and added an allowance of 4% for "shrinkage of the tobacco." See Hening, IV, 88-89.

<sup>16</sup> Hening, I, 400, 479. The March 1661/62 session repeated this law, calling for glebes to be "laid out in every parish & a convenient house built upon them for the reception and abode of the minister." This March 1661-62 law also ordered that "provision" or salary for the minister be worth at least 80 pounds per year in addition to the glebe and fees ministers collected for various services like marriages, funerals and churchings. See Heninig, III, 30, 45.

<sup>17</sup> Hening, VI, 89.

<sup>18</sup> Hening, II, 252.

<sup>19</sup> The act called for chapels of ease to be built in parishes where by the "fewnes or poverty of the inhabitants" the parish could not afford "soe greate a charge" to build a church. Hening, II, 44.

### **Divine Service**

- § Ministers to read Divine Service according to the Church of England's canon laws and orders (1619)
- § Ministers to catechize youth and "ignorant persons of his parrish" in the ten commandments, the creed and the Lord's Prayer on Sundays before evening prayer (1631/32)
- § Liturgy of the Church of England to be read by minister or reader every Sunday (1661/62)
- § Communion to be administered three times a year with Easter to be one (1631/32)
- § Parishes to provide "a great church bible," two books of common prayer, communion plate, and pulpit cloth and cushion (1660/61)
- § Parishes without a minister to appoint readers to read prayers and homilies and catechize children and servants (1660/61)
- § Anyone disturbing Divine Service to be restrained during service and fined (1680)

### **Parish Register:**

- § Ministers to maintain in each parish a record (register) of christenings, marriages and burials (1619, 1632, 1642/43, 1657, 1661/62)
- § Parish to maintain register of marriages, deaths and births and report to clerk of county (1659/1660)
- § Clerk of parish register to receive five pounds tobacco or sixpence for each birth, burial, or marriage he records (1696)

### **Marriage:**

- § Couple required to have license from governor or publish banns in parish church three consecutive Sundays before minister can marry them (1631/32, 1642-43, 1705).
- § Parental or guardian consent required for persons under age 21 (1631/32, 1705)
- § Only ministers from the Church of England could perform marriages (1661/62)
- § Penalties against servants for secret marriages or for free people secretly marrying servants (1661/62, 1705)

### **Attendance**

- § All persons to attend Divine Service on Sundays, morning and afternoon (1619)
- § All who are fit to bear arms should bring them to church (1619, 1632)
- § Masters of every family to bring to church "one fixed and serviceable gun with sufficient powder and shott." Servants commanded to do so but neglecting to shall receive twenty lashes on bare shoulders by order from county court (1642-43)
- § Penalty of one pound of tobacco for one Sunday's absence and 50 pounds tobacco for a month's (1623/24, 1661/62)<sup>20</sup>
- § Sabbath not to be "profaned by working in any employments or by journeing from place to place" (1629)

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<sup>20</sup> Hening, *The Statutes at Large*, I, 123, 144, 155, 180. Laws in 1632 set the penalty at one shilling per absence.

- § Sabbath to be kept holy: no travels, no goods loaded in boats, no shooting guns (1657/58, 1661/62)
- § Persons who skip church and attend disorderly meetings or gamble, drink, travel or work in corn or tobacco or “any other labour of their ordinary calling, other than is necessary for the sustenance of man and beast” subject to fines or lashes (1705)
- § Five shillings or 50 pounds tobacco fine for missing church for a month. Anyone not paying fine subject to ten lashes “on his or her bare back...well laid on” (1705)<sup>21</sup>

### **Behavior**

- § Ministers and churchwardens to prevent “all ungodly disorders” (1619)<sup>22</sup>
- § Prohibitions against idleness, gambling, swearing and drunkenness (1619)
- § Churchwardens to present parishioners to grand jury for misdemeanors such as swearing, profaning God’s name, Sabbath “abuseing,” and not attending church and also for “those foule and abominable sins” of drunkenness, fornication and adultery (1623/24, 1661/62)
- § Fine of five shillings or 50 pounds of tobacco for swearing, cursing, drunkenness and not attending church. Churchwardens to collect fines and use monies for poor relief in parish. Ten lashes for anyone who cannot pay. Dissenters who attend dissenting meetings are exempt from penalties for not attending parish church (1699)<sup>23</sup>

### **Clergymen**

- § Minister not to be absent from church more than two months or forfeit half his pay (1623)
- § Ministers not to drink excessively nor spend time “idellye” by playing cards, dice or other “unlawfull game[s].” Ministers should read scripture and undertake “honest study or exercise” to benefit church and make them examples to their parishioners (1631/32)<sup>24</sup>
- § Ministers to visit the sick in the parish (1631/1632)
- § Ministers to keep parish register of christenings, weddings and burials (1631/32)
- § Ministers’ fees set for performing marriages, christenings, funerals and churchings, a service for women which took place after the birth of a child (1631/32, 1642/43)
- § Ministers to conform to the Church of England’s canon laws and orders (1642/43)
- § Ministers to be ordained by the Church of England (1661/62)

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<sup>21</sup> This is the only instance where the Assembly allowed for corporal punishment for failure to attend Divine Service. All other laws to this point prescribed fines only in tobacco, shillings or both.

<sup>22</sup> “Ungodly disorders” were considered to be “skandalous offences, [such] as suspicions of whoredoms, dishonest company keeping with weomen and such like.” After two warnings, churchwardens could present offenders to the minister, where they could be suspended from the church. If the offender did not reform and submit to the church, the minister--after consultation with the governor--could proceed with excommunication. Once county courts were established, churchwardens presented offenders of the moral code not to ministers but to the courts.

<sup>23</sup> See “An Act for the more effectuell suppressing of Blasphemy, Swearing, Cursing, Drunkenness and Sabbath breaking,” Hening III, 168-171. This is the first mention in Virginia’s laws of the Toleration Act, which passed in England in 1689.

<sup>24</sup> This law instructed ministers “at all tymes convenient they shall heare or reade somewhat of the holy scriptures, or shall occupie themselves with some other honest study or exercise, alwayes doinge the thinges which shall apperteyne to honesty, and endeavour to profitt the church of God, alwayes haveinge in mynd that they ought to excell all others in puritie of life, and should be examples to the people to live well and christianlie.” Hening, I, 158, 183.

## **Churchwardens**

- § Churchwardens to present parishioners to grand jury for misdemeanors such as swearing, profaning God's name, Sabbath "abuseing," and not attending church and also for "those foule and abominable sins" of drunkenness, fornication and adultery (1623/24, 1661/62)
- § Churchwardens to take oath to present persons who "lead a prophane or ungodlie life" (1631/1632)
- § Two churchwardens to be chosen each year from parish vestry (1642/43)
- § Churchwardens to keep church in repair and provide books and ornaments for service (bible, prayer books, communion cloth, pulpit cushion) (1661/62)

## **Vestry**

- § Vestry created in each parish to set taxes and repair/maintain churches (1642)
- § Vestry has right to elect parish minister (1642)
- § Number of vestrymen set at twelve (1661/62)
- § Vestry has right to choose new members (1661/62)
- § Vestries to procession lands (1661/62)
- § Vestrymen to take oaths of allegiance and supremacy to King and conform to Church of England (1661/62)

## **Baptism**

- § Persons refusing to have children baptized fined 2,000 pounds of tobacco (1662)
- § Baptism does not free enslaved people: "baptisme doth not alter the condition of the person as to his bondage or ffredome" (1667)

## **Dissenters**

- § Non-conformists to be compelled by Governor and Council to depart colony "with all conveniencie" (1642/43)
- § Harsh penalties against Quakers who do not attend parish churches and who meet in unlawful assemblies (1661/62)
- § Dissenters who attend religious meetings as allowed by English Toleration Act of 1689 not subject to fines/lashes for non-attendance at parish church (1699)
- § Dissenters exempted from all taxation to support the church (1776)<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Hening IX, 164-167. This act suspended religious taxation for all Virginians, not just dissenters. The Assembly renewed this suspension of taxation (to support the clergy) several times in 1777-1779 before making it permanent in October 1779. Vestries were authorized to levy and collect taxes for clergy salaries up to January 1, 1777. The act also authorized vestries to continue to levy taxes for support of the parish poor. See Hening X, 197-198.

## PLANTINGS AT HISTORIC CHRIST CHURCH

Since its founding in 1958, the Foundation for Historic Christ Church has acquired 38+ acres of “amenity lands” surrounding the churchyard. One of the first restoration tasks undertaken was to discover and reconstruct the churchyard wall. That done, the next step was to landscape the site and restore the churchyard. In 1967-68, the Garden Clubs of Virginia took on this project as part of its 81-year history of restoring and preserving historic landscapes, designing, grading and planting all areas north of the south churchyard wall. The GCV has been a faithful partner in maintaining that portion of the site ever since. The GCV plantings are numbered on the map that follows.

By 2008, FHCC had acquired the areas south of the south churchyard wall and planned and implemented its 50th Anniversary site improvements. Lettered plantings shown in that area were a part of that project.

The varieties of trees, shrubs and flowers shown on this drawing include the following:

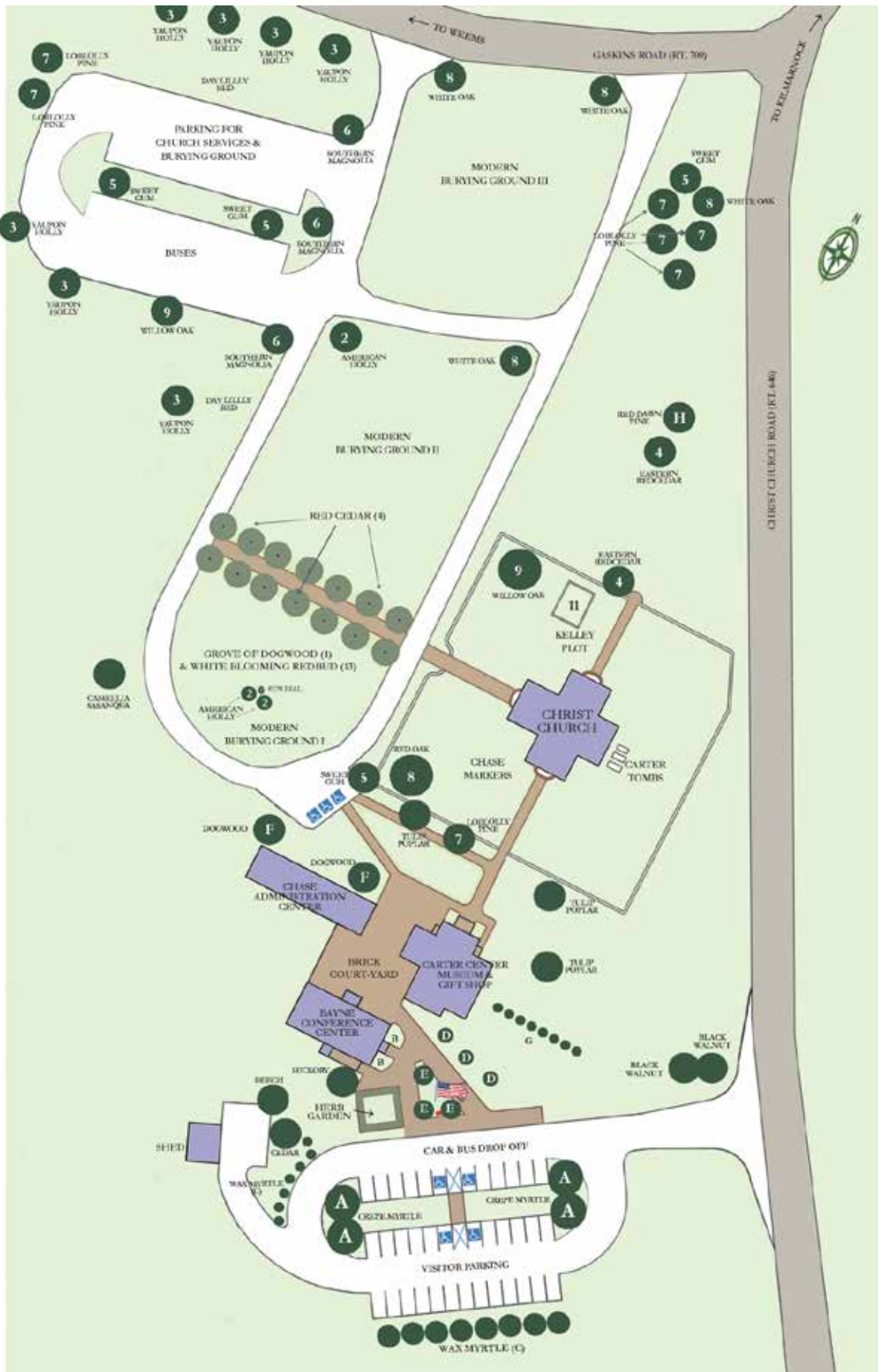
### **From the Garden Club of Virginia (north of the south churchyard wall):**

1. *Cornus florida*—Flowering Dogwood
2. *Ilex opaca*—American Holly
3. *Ilex vomitoria*—Yaupon Holly
4. *Juniperus virginiana*—Eastern Redcedar
5. *Liquidambar styraciflua*—Sweet gum
6. *Magnolia grandiflora*—Southern Magnolia
7. *Pinus taeda*—Loblolly Pine
8. *Quercus falcata*—Southern Red Oak
9. *Quercus phellos*—Willow Oak
10. *Viburnum prunifolium*—Black Haw Viburnum
11. *Hedera helix*—English Ivy
12. *Hemerocallis*—Daylily
13. *Cercis canadensis* “Alba” —White Blooming Redbud

### **Plantings added by FHCC as 50th Anniversary Site Improvements, 2008, or later:**

- A. Crepe Myrtle “Natchez”
- B. Beds planted with *Clethra Alnifolia* , “16 Candles,” *Itea virginica* “Little Henry,” and *Ilex vomitoria* “Nana Dwarf”
- C. Wax myrtle / Bayberry
- D. *Cornus florida* “Cherokee Princess”
- E. *Magnolia Virginiana* “Henry Hicks”
- F. Groves: *Cornus florida*—Flowering Dogwood, *Cercis Canadensis*-Eastern Redbud, and *Ilex opaca*-American Holly
- G. *Ligustrum japonicum*
- H. *Metasequoia glyptostroboides*—Red Dawn Pine

Unnumbered and unlettered flora are examples of varieties that grow naturally on the grounds.





## Historic Christ Church Herb Garden

The Herb Garden provides an educational and ornamental welcome. Its shape does not replicate the very informal, close-to-the-cook-house garden one might have used daily on an 18th century plantation. Rather, its formal boxwood hedge and period bronze bird bath suggest a garden plan that might have graced the mansion of a wealthy planter. Its four quadrants are filled with herbs our volunteers chose each year to represent the four ways colonial Virginians used and thought about herbs in their everyday lives and speech. CAUTION: The 18th century uses for herbs listed below are based on diaries, correspondence, recipe books, medical books and the educated guesses of medical historians, not on 21st century science. Some parts of some of these plants are today known to be poisonous. None should be used today without further research and consultation with 21st century experts.



| <i><b>Biblical Herbs</b></i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Carpet Rose</b> (Rosa) Mentioned first in A.D. 77, reached the New World via the East India Company in 1759. Used in food, medicine, beauty, grace and fragrance.                                                                                              |
| <b>Bay Tree</b> (Laurus nobilis) Used since the days of the early Greeks in temples & churches as a purifier and protector, and to ward off evil spirits.                                                                                                         |
| <b>Catmint</b> (Nepeta cataria) A tithe. Matt. 23:23; Luke 11:42                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Chamomile</b> (Chamamelum) Stress antidote used by missionaries.                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Dianthus</b> (Dianthus) In Greek, literally, “divine flower.”                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Hyssop</b> (Hyssopus officinalis) Used to purify sacred places and cleanse the leper’s medicinal smell. Hys- sop mixed with vinegar on a sponge was said to have been given as an act of compassion to Jesus as he hung on the cross. John 19:29.              |
| <b>Lavender</b> (Lavandula) “The smell of Lebanon.” Song of Solomon, Chapter 4.                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Pasque flower</b> (Anemone pulsatilla) Named by 16th c. herbalist John Gerard: “they floure for the most part about Easter, which has moved me to name it Pasque [paschal]-floure, or Easter floure.” Blossoms yield a green dye once used to dye Easter eggs. |
| <b>Rue</b> (Ruta graveolens ) A tithe: Luke 11:42. Strewn about law courts in parts of Great Britain as a                                                                                                                                                         |

| <i><b>Biblical Herbs</b></i>                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|-------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                       | pre- ventive against diseases carried by criminals. Sometimes associated with witches, but also symbolized grace, repentance & memory. Shakespeare refers to it in Richard II as the “sour herb of grace.”                                  |
| <b>Thyme</b> (Thymus vulgaris)                        | Grown in monastery gardens in southern France, Spain & Italy in the Middle Ages for use as a cough remedy, digestive aid and to treat internal parasites.                                                                                   |
| <b>Yarrow “millefolium”</b> (Achillea fillipendulina) | Stalks used by ancient Chinese sages to consult the ora- cles of the I Ching or Book of Changes. Yarrow’s healing powers were said to have been discovered by the Greek warrior, Achilles. The epithet millefolium means “thousand leaved.” |

| <i><b>Fragrant Herbs</b></i>                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Bee Balm</b> (Bergamot, monarda didyma)     | Aroma resembles that of the bergamot orange (Citrus berga- mia). Florets in potpourris sweetened homes in winter.                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Catmint</b> (Nepeta cataria)                | Bitter, astringent, cooling; camphoraceous, pennyroyal-thyme aroma.                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Dwarf curry</b> (Helichrysum angustifolium) | NOT the source of curry powder (which is made of a number of herb seeds), but it does have the scent of curry.                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Golden sage</b> (Salvia aurea)              | Mintily pungent leaves. Used for potpourri and sachets. Rich harvesting ground for bees and hummingbirds.                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Lime thyme</b> (Thymus x citriodorus)       | Used in potpourris.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Patchouli</b> (Pogostemon cablin)           | Scented leaves, not the creamy flower, are the “spice” of potpourri.                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Curly parsley</b> (Petroselinum crispum )   | A bitter aromatic herb.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Pineapple sage</b> (Salvia elegans)         | Tropical scent used in “keeping rooms” where potpourri was stored.                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Rosemary</b> (Rosmarinus)                   | ungent; somewhat camphoraceous. Used widely in “waters” for handwashing.                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Rue</b> (Ruta graveolens)                   | Strong, musky odor; a good deterrent for insects.                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Green Santolina</b> (Santolina)             | Rough, narrow leaves. A fresh, benzoin-like scent said to repel moths.                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Scented Geranium</b> (Pelargonium)          | Dried leaves used to scent bed pillows and wine. Improved the smell of medicinal ointments. Rose fragrance substituted for the more expensive “attar of rose” in per- fumes. Thomas Jefferson and others planted them in their gardens for their delightful aroma. |
| <b>Thyme</b> (Thymus)                          | Essential oil: Thymol. Smells green, peppery, and of clove.                                                                                                                                                                                                        |

| <i><b>Culinary Herbs</b></i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Basil</b> ( <i>Ocimum basilicum</i> ) Flavoring in vegetables, especially tomatoes.                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Chamomile</b> ( <i>Chamaemelum</i> ) Used in a tea to soothe nerves.                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Chives</b> ( <i>Allium schoenoprasom</i> ) Delicate onion flavor enhances any food except sweets. Used raw.                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Dill</b> ( <i>Anethum graveolens</i> ) Seeds & leaves flavor fish, chicken, sauces, soups, salads, pickles.                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Fennel</b> ( <i>Feoniculum vulgare</i> ) Primarily to flavor fish. Seeds chewed or swallowed to soothe the stomach and freshen the breath.                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Oregano</b> ( <i>Origanum</i> “Herrenhausen”) Important in strongly flavored dishes in which tomatoes onions and beef predominate.                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Curly Parsley</b> ( <i>Petroselinum crispum</i> ) Leaves used as garnishes. Flavor for sauces, butter, dressings, stuffings, and savory dishes.                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Rosemary</b> ( <i>Rosmarinus</i> ) Fresh or dried leaves to flavor meats (especially lamb and kid), sausages, stuff- ings, soups, stews and tea. Small amounts, often ground or powdered, added to cookies or jams. A cordial herb used to flavor ale and wine. |
| <b>Dwarf Sage</b> ( <i>Salvia officinalis</i> ) Cut the fatty taste of meats , i.e., sausages, duck, liver or meat pies.                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>French Tarragon</b> ( <i>Artemesia dracunculus</i> ) Very strong flavor for chicken and fish.                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Thyme</b> ( <i>Thymum vulgaris</i> ) Fresh or dried leaves and flower tops for soups, fish, meat, sausages, mari- nades, vinegar, stuffings and vegetables.                                                                                                     |

| <i><b>Medicinal Herbs</b></i>                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Borage</b> ( <i>Borage</i> ) Fevers, bronchial infections, pleurisy, tuberculosis, mouth & throat infections, dry skin conditions, cirrhosis, rheumatic complaints, pre-menstrual syndrome.                                           |
| <b>Caraway</b> ( <i>Carum carvi</i> ) Indigestion, gas, colic, hiatal hernia, stomach ulcer, diarrhea, menstrual cramps & bronchitis.                                                                                                    |
| <b>Catmint</b> ( <i>Nepeta cataria</i> ) Feverish illnesses, especially colds and influenza, insomnia, excitability, palpi- tations, nervous indigestion, upset stomachs, colic and digestion-related headaches.                         |
| <b>Chamomile</b> ( <i>Chamaemelum</i> ) Digestive problems, colic, diverticulitis, morning sickness, stress induced dyspepsia, painful menstruation, insomnia, feverish illnesses, hyperactivity, temper tantrums in chil- dren.         |
| <b>Coneflower</b> ( <i>Echinacea</i> ) Diseases, fungal infections, septicemia, boils, abscesses, slow-healing wounds, chronic infections, venereal diseases; early stages of coughs and colds.                                          |
| <b>Feverfew</b> ( <i>Tanacetum Parthenium</i> ) Migraine, headache, rheumatic and arthritic complaints, minor fever- ish illnesses; digestive and pre-menstrual problems.                                                                |
| <b>Lamb’s ear</b> ( <i>Stachy officinalis</i> ) Headaches associated with debility and nervous tension, anxiety, neuralgia, sinusitis, upper respiratory tract mucus, gastritis, poor digestion, hypertension and menopausal prob- lems. |
| <b>Lemon verbena</b> ( <i>Aloysia triphylla</i> ) Feverish colds and indigestion. In aromatherapy for nervous or diges- tive problems; in ointment for acne, boils or cysts.                                                             |
| <b>Lovage</b> ( <i>Levisticum</i> ) Indigestion, colic, gas, poor appetite, kidney stones, cystitis, painful menstruation, and slow labor.                                                                                               |
| <b>Marjoram</b> ( <i>Origanum majorana</i> ) Bronchial complaints, tension headaches, insomnia anxiety, minor di- gestive upsets, and painful menstruation.                                                                              |

| <i><b>Medicinal Herbs</b></i>           |                                                                                                                                         |
|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Rosemary</b> (Rosmarinus)            | Depression, apathy, nervous exhaustion, headaches migraines, poor circulation and anxiety.                                              |
| <b>Salad burnet</b> (Sanguisorba minor) | Diarrhea, dysentery, ulcerative colitis, hemorrhoids, hemorrhage, and abnormal uterine bleeding.                                        |
| <b>Scented geranium</b> (Pelargonium)   | Minor digestive ailments; kidney and bladder disorders.                                                                                 |
| <b>Speedwell</b> (Agrimonia)            | Colitis, dyspepsia, food allergies, diarrhea, gallstones, cirrhosis, grumbling appendix, urinary incontinence, cystitis and rheumatism. |
| <b>St. John's Wort</b> (Hypericum)      | Anxiety, depression, nervous tension, insomnia, menopausal disturbances, pre-menstrual syndrome, shingles, sciatica, fibrositis.        |
| <b>Yarrow</b> (Achillea)                | Feverish illnesses, especially colds, influenza & measles; mucus, diarrhea, dyspepsia, rheumatism, arthritis and more...                |



## 2. Practical Guidance for Volunteers

### Crafting a Tour

The joy of guiding visitors at Historic Christ Church comes from the freedom given docents to design their tours in ways that reflect their own interests and knowledge while staying true to the three basic themes that underlie this *Red Book*. There are no scripted tours—every tour should project Christ Church through the docent’s enthusiasm and understanding. Every tour can be seen as unique—an amalgam of docent and visitor interests, and the Christ Church story.

Here is an effective way to begin:

- **Read the *Red Book*.** Some experienced docents read the *Red Book* before every season to refresh their acquaintance with its contents and where they are located. Docents are NOT expected to memorize all the facts and figures in these contents but they must know their general flow and how the pieces of the Christ Church story fit together. Your understanding of the three basic themes will be helpful here.
- **Study the Gallery walls and cases, including the interactives.** This will not only offer you more bits of the story you are telling visitors on your tour; it will also help you find out what those visitors find interesting about Historic Christ Church. A simple question: Did anything in the Gallery exhibits particularly spark your interest? can lead to some of the best tours you will give.
- **Watch the video.** Roger Mudd’s presentation is an outstanding example of how to do a tour based on the three basic themes in a natural and interesting way.
- **In the next section are some suggested “talking points” for giving a tour of Christ Church.** The emphasis here is on the word SUGGESTED because no docent gives the same tour and no visitor gets exactly the same tour. Conditions differ from day to day as do the interests, available time and fitness of each visitor.

**Practical tips:** One cardinal rule is that visitors cannot go into the church without a docent or staff member. Some will say that they know their way around or have been here many times. Simply say that it is a policy made by the Board of Directors and you have no choice. Other volunteers, however, may take visiting friends or family members without a docent.

Most docents take visitors in the West (front) door but if someone has a physical challenge they may wish to use the ramp on the South (vestry) door and/or utilize the wheelchair that is in one of the rear pews. Groups with small children may want or need a shorter or simpler tour. All members of a party should stay together while in the church. Sometimes one or more members will want to wait in the Welcome Center or on one of the outside benches.

When visitors express certain interests, you may want to give special attention to that particular area. Architects and engineers, for example, love the design and construction aspects of the building. If someone asks a question you don't know it is perfectly OK to say so and/or ask another volunteer or staff member when you return to the Reception Center. Here is where your close working knowledge of the *Red Book* will be helpful: you may not know the answer but you know where the answer is.

The weather can impact the length and character of a tour. On very hot days it is useful to move from shade patch to shade patch while outside. If it is pouring rain you may want to use the available umbrellas in Museum foyer, the office or the Research Room. If the grass is very wet visitors may wish to avoid walking on it. It is possible to talk about the Carter grave markers and the marker placed in 1992 by the Foundation from the sidewalk.

You should plan to shadow one or more experienced docents before going it alone. It is certain that you will learn to enjoy seeing our visitors admire the church and grounds, maybe as much as we do.

## **Talking Points for “Volunteers”: A Variety of Approaches**



## Additional Readings

**THE RED BOOK** is the basic source of information on the history of Christ Church and is the most important book for volunteers to read. Books listed below are available in the Volunteer Library in the Chase Center with the exception of that marked \* which is available in the Research Room.

Books published by the Foundation for Historic Christ Church:

*Christ Church, Lancaster County, VA: Historic Structure Report*, Nathaniel P. Neblett

*The Heritage Series:*

*Christ Church: Lancaster County, Virginia*, Katharine L. Brown & Nancy T. Sorrells

*Robert “King” Carter: Builder of Christ Church*, Katharine L. Brown

*People in Profile: Christ Church Parish, 1720-1750, Lancaster County, Virginia*, Katharine L. Brown & Nancy T. Sorrells

*Landholders and Landholdings, Christ Church Parish, Lancaster County, Virginia*, Nancy T. Sorrells

*The Lloyd T. Smith, Jr. Quartet:*

*Robert Carter of Corotoman: An Analysis of His Last Will and Testament*

*The Executors’ Letter of Robert Carter of Corotoman 1732-1738: Settling a Very Large Estate in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century*

*A Ring for Her Finger— An 18<sup>th</sup> Century Prenuptial Agreement: The Jointure Agreement for Betty Landon At the Time of Her Marriage to Robert Carter*

*A Letter from Uncle John: A Nineteenth Century Study on Carter Genealogy*

Other highly recommended books:

*Holy Things and Profane: Anglican Parish Churches in Colonial Virginia*, Dell Upton

*The Transformation of Virginia, 1740-1790*, Rhys Isaac

*A Blessed Company: Parishes, Parsons, and Parishioners in Anglican Virginia, 1690-1776*, John Nelson

*A Brief History of the Episcopal Church* (esp. pp. 1-116), David L. Holmes

*Virginia’s Mother Church, Volumes I & II*, George Brydon

*Freeing Religion*, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation

*Damned Souls in a Tobacco Colony: Religion in Seventeenth-Century Virginia*, Edward L. Bond

*The Journal and Letters of Phillip Vickers Fithian, 1773-1774*, Hunter Farish ed.

*\*George Washington Volume 1: Young Washington 1732-1754, Appendix I-1: The Northern Neck Proprietary to 1745, Douglas Southall Freeman*

*Albion's Seed: Four British Folkways in America, David Hackett Fischer*

Readings in the Architectural History of Colonial Virginia: Selections from reprints prepared for the Historic Christ Church Book Club (file folder located in the file cabinet in the Volunteer Library)