

CHAPTER I

THE COLONIAL PERIOD

ST. GEORGE'S PARISH was created in 1714 by an act of the General Assembly.¹ This law, which received three readings, several amendments and the Governor's signature in the fifteen days from December 10 to December 24, was clearly an administrative measure.² In his opening message to the third session of the 1712-1714 Assembly Lieutenant Governor Alexander Spotswood reported that, with the approval of the Council, he had begun a settlement of approximately forty Protestant Germans on a branch of the Rappahannock some miles beyond the existing frontiers.³ He called these Germans equally as deserving of the Assembly's benevolence as the Huguenots, who in 1700 had been granted a seven-year tax exemption and the right to form a separate parish.⁴

For both public and private reasons, Spotswood was interested in the little band whose settlement on the Rapidan he had named Germanna. As he had advised the Lord Commissioners of Trade in July, these experienced miners were valuable colonists who would protect the part of the frontier that was to have been covered by the Tuscarora Indians. Spotswood had a substantial stake in their venture. He had personally paid for their passage from London when Baron Graffenreid, the Swiss promoter who had induced them to migrate, was unable to meet the transportation costs.⁵

Complying with the Governor's wishes, the legislators had granted the recommended tax exemption; defined the parish

¹ Nicholas Trott, *The Laws of the British Plantations in America, Relating to the Church, and the Clergy, Religion and Learning* (London, Printed for B. Cowse . . . , 1721), pp. 133-134. The text of this law is also in Willis M. Kemper and Harry L. Wright, *Genealogy of the Kemper Family in the United States . . .* (Chicago, George K. Hazlitt & Co., 1899), p. 21.

² H. R. McIlwaine, ed., *Journals of the House of Burgesses of Virginia* (Richmond, The State Library, 1912), V, 87, 101-102, 110, 116. Hereafter this will be referred to as *J. H. B.*

³ *Ibid.*, p. xxv, xxvii, 79; H. R. McIlwaine, ed., *Executive Journal of the Council of Colonial Virginia* (Richmond, Division of Purchase and Printing, 1928), III, 371-372. Hereafter this will be referred to as *E. J. C.*

⁴ *J. H. B.*, V, 79; W. W. Hening, *The Statutes at Large; Being a Collection of the Laws . . .* (New York, Philadelphia and Richmond, R. & W. & G. Bristow, Thomas DeSilver, Samuel Pleasants, W. W. Gray et al., 1814-1823), III, 201. Hereafter this will be referred to as Hening.

⁵ Charles E. Kemper, "The History of Germantown," *Fauquier Historical Society Bulletin*, No. II (July 1, 1922), pp. 125-126; Alexander Spotswood, *The Official Letters of . . . with an Introduction and Notes* by R. A. Brock (Richmond, Virginia Historical Society, 1885), II, 70; Fairfax Harrison, *Landmarks of Old Prince William* (Richmond, Privately printed, The Old Dominion Press, 1924), pp. 207-209.

limits as the town of Germanna and the land next adjoining and extending five miles on each side thereof; and specifically exempted this area from the jurisdiction of St. Mary's Parish, Essex County.⁶

The original St. George's Parish was definitely German rather than Anglican. The families that were planted there in 1714 belonged to the first German Reformed congregation in Virginia; and their septuagenarian pastor, the Reverend Henry Haeger, was the first clergyman to officiate in what was to become Spotsylvania County. In addition to preaching, Mr. Haeger had taught in the Latin School at Siegen, Germany. In fact, he has been characterized as "one of the best educated men" in the colonies in that period.⁷

In 1717 Spotswood imported about twenty families from Alsace and the Palatine and in 1719-1720 he secured an additional forty families. The second and third group of Germans were Virginia's pioneer Lutherans.⁸

A visitor to Germanna in 1715 reported that the inhabitants were devout folk who "sang the psalms well" and had church daily and twice on Sunday. He also noted that their services were conducted entirely in German.⁹ Both the Lutheran and the German Reformed parishioners worshipped in the same pentagonal block-house in the center of the village palisade. The two denominations at Germanna cooperated in sending an agent to solicit funds for a church from well-wishers on the Continent and from the Venerable Society in England. Although the appeal to the Society was seconded by English neighbors of the Germans, it was politely rejected because of that organization's policy of refusing to make grants for missionary work in colonies where the Anglican church was as firmly entrenched as it was in Virginia and Maryland. The Society did, however, promise that envoy twenty-five German language copies of the *Book of Common Prayer*.¹⁰

⁶ For the text of the act of 1714 see Appendix A.

⁷ Kemper, "The History of Germantown," *op. cit.*, p. 129; G. MacLaren Brydon, "The Organization of Religion Among the New Settlers" from the manuscript of his forthcoming *Virginia's Mother Church*, II, 17-18.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 17-19; Harrison, *op. cit.*, p. 216.

⁹ John Fontaine, "Journal of . . .," *Memoirs of a Huguenot Family: Translated and Compiled from the Original Autobiography* by Ann Maury (New York, G. P. Putnam & Co., 1853), pp. 267-268.

¹⁰ C. W. Cassell, *et al.*, *History of the Lutheran Church in Virginia and East Tennessee* (Strasburg, Va., Shenandoah Publishing House, Inc., 1930), p. 188; Brydon, "The Organization of Religion Among the New Settlers," *loc. cit.*, pp. 17, 19-20, note 58; "Case of German Families," William S. Perry, ed., *Papers Relating to the History of the Church in Virginia* (n.p., Privately printed, 1870), pp. 247-248; William Meade, *Old Churches, Ministers and Families of Virginia* (Philadelphia, J. B. Lippincott, 1861), II, 75-76; Kemper, "The History of Germantown," *loc. cit.*, p. 127.

Failing to convince Governor Spotswood that they were entitled to the ore-bearing lands they were improving, the first settlers at Germanna started looking for a place where they might set up for themselves. They finally secured a patent to more than 1805 acres of land on Licking Run and accompanied by the venerable cleric Haeger, they moved to what is now Fauquier County. Appropriately they named their settlement Germantown.¹¹

When their terms of indenture were ended in the middle Seventeen Twenties, the Lutherans also found a permanent home elsewhere, locating on the Robinson River and White Oak Run in the present county of Madison.¹² Apparently they never gave any reasons for their failure to join their compatriots at Germantown, but others have attributed their action to denominational differences, and especially to an unwillingness to settle in the territory of Lord Fairfax. According to this explanation they "preferred to live under the greater freedom and certainty of the Virginia land tenure and tax laws."¹³ In 1725 they founded Hebron, the oldest Lutheran congregation in Virginia.

Several years earlier, in November, 1720, the General Assembly passed an act creating Spotsylvania County from parts of Essex, King William, and King and Queen. A section of the act, which is omitted from the incomplete text in Hening, specifically repealed the 1714 statute and thus ended the seven years' existence of the original St. George's Parish. Instead, the whole county was constituted as a new St. George's Parish. This was truly a vast parochial unit, as it included the frontier sections of St. Mary's Parish, Essex; St. Stephen's Parish, King and Queen; and St. John's Parish, King William, or to put it in modern terms, all of the territory of the present counties of Spotsylvania, Orange, Madison, Culpeper, Greene and Rappahannock and part of the present counties of Page, Rockingham and Warren. All inhabitants were freed from public levies for ten years and foreign Protestants were authorized to employ a minister of their own choosing.¹⁴

The Spotsylvania act became effective on May 1, 1721, the Governor fixed the seat of justice at Germanna and the first court was held there on August 7, 1722. Vestrymen were selected and apparently assumed their responsibilities, as the court records show that Thomas Morley and John Shelton were "committed"

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 129-130.

¹² Cassell, *op. cit.*, p. 187.

¹³ Brydon, "The Organization of Religion Among the New Settlers," *loc. cit.*, pp. 17-18.

¹⁴ Hening, IV, 77-79; Harrison, *op. cit.*, p. 218; Morgan P. Robinson, *Virginia Counties: Those Resulting from Virginia Legislation* . . . (Richmond, Davis Bottom, Superintendent of Public Printing, 1916), pp. 94, 96-98; Meade, *op. cit.*, II, 68.

on the complaint of a churchwarden for the lay baptism of the child of one Ann Alsop. Morley was required to give bond for his good behavior and when Shelton failed to appear at the next term of court on September 1, 1724, he was committed to jail and given thirty-one lashes on his bare back, sixteen in the evening, and fifteen the following morning.¹⁵

There is something puzzling about the conviction of this man, since churches of the Anglican Communion permit lay baptisms in emergencies and they were possible in Spotsylvania in 1724 since a clergyman was not secured for the parish until 1726. A student of the subject suspects that there was something irregular or blasphemous about the baptising which court records fail to show.¹⁶

At least three churches in St. George's Parish were built or under construction before a rector was employed. Rappahannock Church was a simple frame building on the Chancellorsville-Ely's Ford road, approximately ten miles above Fredericksburg, a mile or so from the south bank of the Rapidan and less than five miles from the Rappahannock River.¹⁷

Mattapony Church was on the west side of the present State Route #51 and about six miles south of what is now Spotsylvania Court-house. Court orders prove that this building was commenced in 1724 and put in service in 1725, thus, substantiating George Carrington Mason's annihilation of the Reverend Philip Slaughter's thesis that Mattapony deserved the designation "Mother Church" because it probably antedated the formation of St. George's Parish. Before the first Mattapony Church was erected the inhabitants in that region worshipped in the home of Captain Larkin Chew.¹⁸

According to a contemporary official, work was begun on Germanna Church in 1724, and Colonel Spotswood stated it was "almost completed" before he went to England, probably in 1726.¹⁹ When the work had not progressed beyond the laying of

¹⁵ Henry Howe, *Historical Collections of Virginia* . . . (Charleston, S. C., Published by Babcock, 1845), p. 475; Spotsylvania County Orders, 1724-30, p. 15; Philip Slaughter, *A History of St. George's Parish in the . . . Diocese of Virginia* (New York, Press of John R. M'Gown, 1847), p. 8. Hereafter this will be referred to as Slaughter, 1847.

¹⁶ Letter from G. MacLaren Brydon to Douglas S. Freeman, Jan. 17, 1949; Letter from G. MacLaren Brydon to Carrol H. Quenzel, Jan. 26, 1949.

¹⁷ George Carrington Mason, "The Colonial Churches of Spotsylvania and Caroline Counties, Virginia," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, LVIII, (Oct., 1950), pp. 445-446; Minutes of the Vestry of St. George's Episcopal Church, Fredericksburg, Virginia . . . , [I, 3, 12]. Henceforth this will be referred to as Vestry Minutes. Strictly speaking the title lettered on the photostatic copy is erroneous on several counts and a precise one would be the Minutes of the Vestry of St. George's Parish.

¹⁸ Spotsylvania County Orders, 1724-30, pp. 25, 31; Slaughter, 1847, p. 12; Mason, *loc. cit.*, pp. 446-447; Vestry Minutes, [5].

¹⁹ Commissary James Blair to the Bishop of London in Perry, *op. cit.*, I, 258; *Virginia Gazette*, Dec. 17, 1736.

the foundation, a complaint was made to Lieutenant Governor Hugh Drysdale about Spotswood's use of public funds to build a church in such a remote location. Apparently dissatisfaction with the site persisted, as Colonel William Byrd visited Germanna in 1732 and reported that the chapel had been "lately" burned by persons who wanted one nearer home. Byrd's charge seems established by Governor Gooch's offer of £100 for the apprehension of whoever burnt the parish church.²⁰

To the Reverend Theodosius Staige belongs the distinction of being the first rector of the Anglican St. George's Parish. This Briton had church connections as the son of an Anglican clergyman and as the brother-in-law of the Reverend James Marye, Sr., who was destined to be St. George's fourth rector. On June 4, 1725, he received the subsidy of £20 known as the King's Bounty customarily granted rectors settling in America. Accompanied by an unmarried sister, he moved to Virginia. In 1726 he took charge of St. George's Parish at an annual salary of 16,000 pounds of tobacco—the legally established stipend for Anglican clerics in Virginia from 1696 until the end of the colonial period. In lieu of a glebe, he also received board and expenses.²¹

The Reverend Mr. Staige had hardly become comfortably settled in his work before he applied for a year's leave of absence with pay so that he could go to England. Apparently the vestry did not share his belief that the trip would sufficiently increase his usefulness to justify his employers in paying him while he was away, for they rejected his request on July 16, 1726.²²

In 1727 the General Assembly founded the town of Fredericksburg and named it in honor of Prince Frederick, the father of George III. The next year Mr. Staige left St. George's to accept a call to Charles Parish in York County, where he continued his ministerial labors for nineteen years. He seems to have been somewhat old-fashioned and strict, as the vestry and some of the inhabitants of Charles Parish petitioned the Governor in 1743 to remove him for opposing the singing of the new version of the Psalms and for refusing to baptize a child which he had incorrectly suspected of being illegitimate. After a full hearing the Governor and Council ordered the minister to comply with

²⁰ *Calendar of Virginia State Papers*, I, (Richmond, R. F. Walker, Sup't of Public Printing, 1875), p. 208; William Byrd, *The Writings of "Colonel William Byrd of Westover in Virginia Esqr."*, edited by John Spencer Bassett. (New York, Doubleday, Page & Co., 1901), p. 356; William Gooch Papers, II, Virginia Historical Society, pp. 297-298.

²¹ Edward L. Goodwin, *The Colonial Church in Virginia* . . . (Milwaukee, Morehouse Publishing Co., 1927), p. 308; Vestry Minutes, [I, 1]; R. A. Brock, ed., *Documents, Chiefly Unpublished Relating to the Huguenot Emigration to Virginia* . . . , *With an Appendix to Genealogies* . . . (Richmond, Virginia Historical Society, 1886), p. 183 and 183n.; Vestry Minutes, [I, 1-5]; Hening, III, 151-153.

²² Vestry Minutes, [I, 1].

the vestry's demands or to find another parish within six months. He apparently became reconciled, as he remained in charge of Charles Parish until 1747.²³

In 1728 a formal vestry order assigned one of the sets of "books" imported by Colonel John Waller to Mattapony Church, the second to the Rappahannock Church, and requested that gentleman to secure a third set of books and communion plate for Germanna. On October 7, the vestry included in the parish levy an allotment for the salary of a lay reader and sexton at each of these three churches.²⁴

Hearing of the vacancy created by the departure of Mr. Staige, the Reverend Mr. Lawrence DeButts of Washington Parish, Westmoreland County, advised the vestry of his willingness to move to St. George's. The vestry was agreeable, and asked the Honorable John Robinson, a member of the Governor's Council and one of the original trustees of the town of Fredericksburg, to intercede with the Governor in DeButts' behalf.²⁵ This arrangement was not effected, a fact that may have saved the parish interminable lawsuits similar to those in which DeButts had charged George Washington's father, and other vestrymen in Westmoreland, with depriving him of his rights and perquisites as minister.²⁶ Denied the acting rectorship of St. George's, DeButts officiated in St. Mark's Parish, then in Spotsylvania County, and in Truro Parish, then in Prince William County, before moving to a "better living" in Maryland in 1734.²⁷

St. George's second minister was the Reverend Rodham Kenner, Sr., who presented the vestry with a letter of recommendation from Governor Gooch in March, 1729.²⁸ This man, a connection of the Mary Ball Washington family, was born at Cherry Point, Northumberland County, Virginia, on September 28, 1707. Although he attended St. Bee's Grammar School in England and the University of Glasgow, he returned to his native Virginia with only deacon's orders in 1729 because he was too young to be ordained.²⁹

At first, in the absence of a glebe, the Reverend Mr. Kenner resided at Germanna and received, 4,500 lbs. of tobacco in addition to his salary.³⁰ Later, in 1729, the churchwardens purchased

²³ Hening, IV, 234-239; Edward L. Goodwin, *op. cit.*, p. 308; *E. J. C.*, V, 118-119.

²⁴ Vestry Minutes, [I, 3, 5].

²⁵ *Ibid.*, [I, 7]; Slaughter, 1847, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

²⁶ Douglas S. Freeman, *George Washington . . .* (New York, C. Scribner's Sons, 1948), I, 41.

²⁷ Edward L. Goodwin, *op. cit.*, p. 264.

²⁸ Vestry Minutes, [I, 8].

²⁹ Freeman, *op. cit.*, I, 60; Edward L. Goodwin, *op. cit.*, pp. 284-285; *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, XX (Apr., 1912), 213-214; *ibid.*, XXXII (July, 1924), 230-231, 236.

³⁰ Vestry Minutes, [I, 15].

a glebe on the south side of the Po, about a mile above the falls of that river, for 2,250 lbs. of tobacco. Shortly thereafter the vestry contracted with a Captain William Johnson to build a glebe house twenty-four by forty-eight feet for 4,500 lbs.³¹ Johnson proved to be thoroughly unsatisfactory and unbelievably slow. On March 30, 1734, the Captain promised "to finish the glebe house and glaze the windows in a very short time." On September 28, 1736, the vestry formally spread on its minutes the conviction that the glebe house was poorly constructed and unfinished. Finally on November 8, 1738, the vestry ordered that a suit be brought against William Johnson for not performing the work about the glebe house according to contract.³²

On June 16, 1729, the vestry appointed readers at the Fork Chapel and the Mountain Chapel. The vestry minutes of St. George's Parish contain no orders for the construction of these chapels, or for that matter of the Rappahannock Church. Therefore, Mr. Mason's suggestion that they may have been frontier chapels of St. Mary's Parish, Essex County, prior to the formation of the enlarged St. George's Parish, seems highly probable.³³

The sheer size of the parish resulted in so much inconvenience to both minister and parishioners that the 1730 General Assembly created the parish of St. Mark's from the northern part of St. George's. Fork and Mountain Chapels were included in the new parish. A 1732 act of the General Assembly instructed the St. George's vestry to pay the St. Mark's vestry 11,898 pounds of tobacco, a refund of the levy on St. Mark's tithables for the construction of a glebe house in St. George's Parish. In 1734 St. Mark's Parish was established as Orange County.³⁴

The Reverend Mr. Kenner ceased to be the regular minister of St. George's in October, 1730, but he continued to officiate on a part-time basis for two additional years.³⁵ During this period, when the parish was without a full-time rector, the Reverend Francis Peart also preached eleven sermons. Peart had matriculated at Magdalen Hall, Oxford, in 1719, and eleven years later, when he was thirty, he had received the King's Bounty for Virginia. There is evidence that he officiated in Culpeper and King and Queen Counties and that he was the minister of St. Stephen's Parish, Northumberland County, from 1731 to 1742.³⁶

Most authorities, especially the contemporary ones, give Kenner a "good bill of health" as a minister. In 1731, when Kenner was about to embark for England to receive priest's orders,

³¹ *Ibid.*, [I, 11, 14-15].

³² *Ibid.*, [I, 32, 39, 42-43].

³³ *Ibid.*, [I, 10]; Mason, *loc. cit.*, pp. 445, 449-450.

³⁴ Hening, IV, 305, 365, 450-451.

³⁵ Vestry Minutes, [I, 21, 23, 27]; Slaughter, 1847, p. 17.

³⁶ Edward L. Goodwin, *op. cit.*, p. 298. Peart's name was misspelled as Purit, Pruit, Pert, Pearle and Pearl.

Governor William Gooch informed the Bishop of London that Kenner had always behaved in a "sober and decent manner" and that he was a "very serviceable Minister in the Church." When Commissary James Blair reported this cleric's death in 1734, he described him as a "very good man."³⁷

In January, 1733 the vestry ordered the Churchwardens to notify Kenner "that he need not give himself any further trouble to come to preach in this parish." This action was probably taken because he had been serving on a part-time basis while waiting for a call and the St. George's vestry was appointing a full-time rector. At the time of his death Kenner was rector of St. Mary's Parish.³⁸

More than a hundred years later, Bishop Meade wrote that the vestry was pleased to see this "rolling-stone" type of minister go. A modern church historian believes that Meade may have confused Rodham Kenner, Sr., with his son Rodham Kenner, Jr., the minister of Hanover Parish, Kine George County, who was not of "good character."³⁹

Kenner was succeeded by the Reverend Patrick Henry, the uncle of the orator. The Henry family has been traced to Aberdeenshire, Scotland. Although there is no record of the Reverend Patrick Henry's having attended King's College as did his brother John, his correspondence and other evidence indicates that he had had a thorough classical education.⁴⁰ The Reverend Mr. Henry received the King's Bounty on July 31, 1732. He was induced to come to Virginia by his brother, John, through whose influence he was made minister of St. George's Parish on January 9, 1733. Henry, who was probably the minister of the first church in Fredericksburg, served the parish barely sixteen months and departed on April 28, 1734. He took root, however, in Hanover County where he was the minister of St. Paul's Parish from 1737 until his death in 1777.⁴¹

Even before the Reverend Mr. Henry came to St. George's, the vestry on March 13, 1732, formally resolved to build two new churches, one at Fredericksburg, and the other at Mattapony. The one at Fredericksburg was called Rappahannock Church

³⁷ G. MacLaren Brydon, ed., "The Virginia Clergy . . . 1727-2749," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, XXXII (July, 1924), p. 236; Perry, *op. cit.*, p. 358.

³⁸ Vestry Minutes, [I, 28]; Letter of George MacLaren Brydon to Carrol H. Quenzel, Oct. 13, 1950.

³⁹ William Meade, *op. cit.*, II, 69; Letter of George MacLaren Brydon to Carrol H. Quenzel, Oct. 13, 1950, *op. cit.*

⁴⁰ Vestry Minutes, [I, 28]; Letter from Robert D. Meade to Carrol H. Quenzel, May 3, 1949.

⁴¹ Edward Goodwin, *op. cit.*, p. 278; "Letters of Patrick Henry, Sr., Samuel Davies . . ." *William and Mary College Quarterly Historical Magazine*, 2nd series, I (Oct., 1921), p. 266n.; Vestry Minutes, II, 28, 33; S. J. Quinn, *The History of the City of Fredericksburg, Virginia* (Richmond, The Hermitage Press, Inc., 1908), p. 44.

long after the close of the Colonial period although it stood ten miles from the site of its predecessor by that name.⁴² On April 10, 1732, Churchwarden Henry Willis, the stout, blunt *pater urbis* of Fredericksburg, contracted to build them at a total cost of 150,000 lbs. of tobacco. Incidentally, Colonel Willis was the third husband of George Washington's Aunt Mildred Washington.

According to the specifications, the first church in Fredericksburg, as well as its sister church at Mattapony, was to be sixty feet long and twenty-four feet wide, of wood construction with brick underpinning. The contract stipulated that the builder was to be paid in three installments, but it contained a penalty clause that he was to forfeit the final payment of 50,000 lbs. of tobacco if the churches were not completed at the time the levy was laid in 1734. The vestry engaged George Home, a surveyor, for £100, to set the Rappahannock Church east and west and "to lay off the lots."⁴³

The building of these houses of worship was accompanied by certain vicissitudes. Some of the inhabitants of the southern part of the Parish protested so vigorously against the remoteness from their section of both of the new churches that the Governor temporarily halted construction on the Mattapony Church and held a formal hearing on their complaint in October, 1733. Stating that the petitioners should have filed their protest before the work on the churches was so far advanced, the Council authorized the parish to proceed.⁴⁴ Unfortunately, the Council's ruling was not followed by the immediate completion of either Church. Colonel Willis did not live to complete the job, and on March 31, 1741, the vestry threatened to sue his executors unless they entirely finished the churches by June 30, of that year.⁴⁵

⁴² Vestry Minutes, [I, 22]; Mason, *loc. cit.*, p. 452.

⁴³ Vestry Minutes, [I, 22-23]; Freeman, *op. cit.*, I, 60-61. The complete specifications provide that each church is to "be undepinn'd with brick or stones at Least two foot above the highest part of the Surface of the Earth whereon they stand Eighteen Inches thick, to be fourteen foot pitch from the upper part of the sills to the upper part of the plates, Each Church to have ten windows Seven foot by three Each pain-by—of Good Crown Glass from London to have Eighteen pains in Each window to be well shingled with good cypress shingles the floors of said Churches to be Laid with good pine plank without any Sap. Inch and half thick at Least, all the Rails and Stiles of Doors and pews to be Inch and half Pine. Likewise the Roofs to be overjetted twelve Inches to have a hansom Madilion Cornice the Rafters to be five inches by four; the studs nine by four; the posts nine by twelve; the braces nine square; the plates twelve by nine; the sills twelve square; the summers and girders the same as the sills; the sleepers nine by six and the Summers and Girders of the underfloor to be supported by brick or stone the same as the underpinning, the beams above to be nine by twelve. The Pews to be waincoated and the walls Likewise the hight of the Pews; the Doors, windows and cornice to be three times well painted and Laid with white Lead; all the rest of the outside to be well Tarr'd. Each Church to be well plastered and white washed with Lime and to be sufficiently and Completely Done and finished in a workmanlike manner with the best materials . . ."

⁴⁴ Vestry Minutes, [I, 29-30]; *E. J. C.*, IV, 306.

⁴⁵ Vestry Minutes, [I, 47].

When the Council permitted the completion of Rappahannock and Mattapony Churches, the vestry agreed to erect with "all Convenient Speed" a chapel of ease for the southern portion of the Parish. The building erected to fulfill this promise was named Pamunkey Chapel because it was near East North East Creek, a tributary of the North Anna River, one of the two main head-water forks of the Pamunkey River.

The replacement of Pamunkey Chapel was considered as early as 1745 when it had been used barely ten years. The prospect of a new chapel precipitated a fight over where it should be located. On July 11, 1748 the vestry appointed three of its members, John Chew, Francis Taliaferro and Richard Tutt to view the sites suggested for a new Pamunkey Chapel by the inhabitants of that section, and to select the one they considered the most convenient. Their report was to be definitive. On October 10, 1748 Taliaferro and Tutt recommended that the chapel should be built on William Lee's old field and the contract for its erection was let to George Stubblefield.⁴⁶

The choice of this site was vigorously criticized and stoutly defended. Zachary Lewis on behalf of himself and other taxpayers petitioned the Governor and Council to stop the building of the chapel. This petition was granted on November 8, 1748 and both parties were ordered to attend the Governor in Council at the Court of Oyer and Terminer in June, 1749.

The proponents of this site appealed to the House of Burgesses on March 7 for relief from the executive ban on the construction of the chapel. Ten days later the House followed the recommendation of its Committee on Propositions and Grievances and passed a resolution stating that the "Governor and Council have no power by law to supersede any orders of vestry" relating to the locating and building of churches and chapels. Both sides to the dispute were promised a hearing before the House.⁴⁷

Petitions asking that body to prevent the vestry from erecting the chapel at such an inconvenient site were received on March 18 and April 10. On April 19, 1749, the House agreed to the resolutions of the Committee on Propositions and Grievances that the vestry had acted illegally in appointing a committee to decide upon the site of the new chapel since the law required this duty to be performed by the whole vestry.⁴⁸

Although the House resolution deciding the issue was doubtless little different from the one which would have been adopted by the Governor and Council, the House sharply rebuked them for what it considered their unwarranted assumption of authority over "the temporalities of the Church." This controversy was

⁴⁶ Mason, *loc. cit.*, pp. 452-453; Vestry Minutes, [I, 58, II, 13, 18]; *J. H. B.*, VII, 332.

⁴⁷ *E. J. C.*, V, 263-264; *J. H. B.*, VII, 341.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, VII, 342, 359, 369.

significant. The insistence of the House, elected by the people, that the Governor and Council, appointed by the king, should not encroach upon its authority, indicates, as a distinguished church historian has pointed out, "the drift in the rapidly developing political concepts of the people of Virginia." The incident demonstrated, as this scholar has observed, "that the Established Church of Virginia belonged to the people and not to the king or to the royal government."⁴⁹

In April, 1750, the vestry ordered that a chapel should be built on the disputed site, and the second Pamunkey Chapel was completed promptly enough to be used for services in 1751. A student of the subject contends the name of the owner was misspelled and that it was actually Lea instead of Lee.⁵⁰

To replace the Reverend Patrick Henry, Lieutenant Governor William Gooch recommended one Joseph Smith who had received the King's Bounty for Virginia on September 21, 1727. After hearing him preach twice, the vestry refused to accept him as the parish minister because his sermons were generally disliked. This assertion of independence seems to have been justified, as the Reverend Mr. Smith had been characterized as so "very mean in appearance," so poor in pocket, and with so little to say that for a long time no parish would receive him.⁵¹

Some suspected that the Governor had attempted to impose him on St. George's Parish as punishment for the vestry's insistence on building the churches at Fredericksburg and Mattapony.⁵² Even Gooch subsequently described him in an official report to the Bishop of London as a sot who was "neither fit nor able to serve" as a minister. Charged with "grievous crimes," Smith surrendered his parish rather than submit to a hearing in the Commissary's Court. He died in 1738.⁵³

A brighter day dawned for St. George's in October, 1735, with the induction of the Reverend James Marye, Sr. This native of Rouen, France was educated for, and entered, the priesthood of the Roman Catholic Church. He subsequently moved to England and took Anglican orders. William Byrd asserted that Mr. Marye expected as much respect from his Protestant flock as is paid to the "Popish" clergy. This habitual critic of ministers has recorded an adverse description of Marye's dwelling and farm in Goochland County where he had his first charge in Virginia. Byrd has characterized Mrs. Marye as being

⁴⁹ Letter from G. MacLaren Brydon to Carrol H. Quenzel, Feb. 17, 1951, containing a page of the ms. of his chapter "Commissary William Dawson" from his forthcoming *Virginia's Mother Church*, vol. II.

⁵⁰ Mason, *loc. cit.*, p. 453.

⁵¹ Vestry Minutes, [I, 34]; Edward Goodwin, *op. cit.*, p. 308.

⁵² Freeman, *op. cit.*, I, 61.

⁵³ G. MacLaren Brydon, ed., "The Virginia Clergy," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, XXXIII (Jan., 1925), pp. 51-53.

extravagant, ambitious and "full of discourse but void of discretion."⁵⁴ This stricture shows what most of us have suspected, that criticizing a preacher's wife is an ancient practice. Incidentally, Byrd's was the only unfavorable report this writer has found regarding the elder Marye and his wife, Letitia Maria Ann Staige Marye.

Their five children became successful and useful citizens. The career of James, Jr. will be subsequently discussed in some detail since he was rector of St. George's Parish from 1768 to 1780. William was graduated from the University of Edinburgh in medicine, served as a surgeon for three years on an East India-man, and died unmarried at Gravesend, England, on the eve of his embarkation for Virginia. Peter was graduated from the College of William and Mary and represented Spotsylvania County in the House of Burgesses. Lucy Mary, the eldest child, was born on the Atlantic Ocean. She was married twice, her first husband being the Reverend Mungo Marshall and the second, James Marsden, M.D. The fourth child, Susanna, married Dr. Henry Heath.⁵⁵

When Mr. Marye was inducted in 1735 as minister of St. George's no one could foretell that he would serve the parish for thirty-two years, a record exceeded only by Dr. Edward C. McGuire, who was rector for forty-five years.⁵⁶

Apparently Parson Marye was not always blessed with efficient clerical and custodial assistance. In 1738 the vestry ordered that its clerk be replaced because he had neglected his duties.⁵⁷ Approximately five years later the vestry formally ordered the sextons to sweep the churches and chapel weekly and to wash them four times a year or be displaced by the churchwardens.⁵⁸

On August 29, 1751, the vestry instructed the churchwardens to provide each church with a sun dial nine inches square and inscribed with the letters "St. George's Parish," and also with horse blocks or stonesteps and benches. At the same meeting a formal order was entered in the vestry minutes prohibiting the minister from baptizing Negroes with white children.⁵⁹ At first the wardens apparently ignored the directive concerning the sun dials, as an order was entered almost three years later on May 21, 1754, commanding the wardens to secure a dial apiece for the churches at Fredericksburg and Mattapony. The vestry formally

⁵⁴ Vestry Minutes, [I, 35]; Brock, . . . *Huguenot Emigration to Virginia*, *op. cit.*, pp. 84, 85, 183-184; William Byrd, *op. cit.*, pp. 337-343.

⁵⁵ Brock, . . . *Huguenot Emigration to Virginia*, *op. cit.*, pp. 184-185.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 184.

⁵⁷ Vestry Minutes, [I, 42].

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, [I, 53].

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, [II, 24].

resolved that services were to begin at 11 A. M. from March 10 to September 10 and a half hour later during the fall and winter.⁶⁰

In 1753 a gift from John Spotswood resulted in the first bell being installed in Rappahannock Church.⁶¹ In the same year the vestry authorized the building of a thirty-two foot addition the full width of this church, making it T-shaped. Simultaneously the vestry contracted for a similar addition to the Mattapony Church. Benjamin Davis undertook to build the addition to Rappahannock Church for 25,300 lbs. of tobacco and John Goodloe agreed to build the one at Mattapony for 21,850 lbs. of tobacco. Each contract for the church addition provided that the builder was to be paid in three annual installments, and it further stipulated the final payment was to be forfeited if the contractor had not completely finished his work by October 1, 1756.⁶²

On December 7, 1756, the vestry directed two of its members, Fielding Lewis, George Washington's brother-in-law, and Robert Jackson, to employ a competent workman to number the pews in Rappahannock Church.⁶³ Nearly three years later Mr. Lewis and Charles Dick were granted permission to erect a gallery at their own expense in the west end of Rappahannock Church.⁶⁴

In 1755 the General Assembly passed an act making it mandatory on the vestry of each parish to purchase or rent a tract of land for the maintenance and employment of the poor. Each person receiving public relief had to wear upon the shoulder of the right sleeve of his or her uppermost garment a pauper's badge with the name of the parish in blue, red or green cloth as specified by the churchwardens or by the vestry. The wardens were required to keep a register of the poor.⁶⁵

In 1758 the vestry, pursuant to an act of the General Assembly, sold the parish glebe land to Benjamin Grymes, the highest bidder, for £173 of currency. Then it rented the glebe house plantation of one hundred acres for a year for the use of the parish poor.⁶⁶ On February 26, 1759 the vestry appointed Erasmus Allen as overseer of the poor and ordered seven women, three men and two children to report to the workhouse.⁶⁷

The vestry exempted deserving handicapped and indigent persons from paying the parish levy and in general performed

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, [II, 38].

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, [II, 33].

⁶² *Ibid.*, [II, 36-37].

⁶³ *Ibid.*, [II, 50].

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, [II, 60].

⁶⁵ Hening, VI, 475-478.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, VII, 142-143; Vestry Minutes, [II, 56].

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, [II, 57-58].

many of the functions of a modern public welfare department. The vestry also enforced the law requiring regular church attendance and those prohibiting blasphemy and other moral offenses.⁶⁸

The St. George's vestry, like all others in the colony, was required to have the neighbors in every precinct in the parish "procession their lands" once every four years. This consisted of having all persons, whose property abutted on someone else's land, to walk in procession around the boundaries of each tract, renewing the blazes on the line-trees and replacing the landmarks whenever necessary. As Dr. Brydon has observed, this was not strictly a spiritual duty, but it unquestionably promoted the peace of the community by minimizing the number of boundary disputes.⁶⁹

For a time at least, the vestry had the responsibility of seeing that a tobacco census was taken, as on June 16, 1729, it appointed eight two-man teams to count the tobacco plants in their respective precincts. A similar census had been taken in 1727.⁷⁰

In keeping with a common practice of the time, the Reverend James Marye, Sr., taught a school in Fredericksburg. There is an unconfirmed tradition that Washington studied under Marye.⁷¹

Although the elder Marye never received more than the statutory salary of 16,000 pounds of tobacco plus an allowance for shrinkage, he accumulated some property. According to family tradition he bought a farm at "Fayetteville." This farm may, or may not, have been the eight hundred acres John and Anna Sartin deeded to him for £70 currency in July, 1743. The Colonial Land Patent books show a grant to him of four hundred acres in Spotsylvania County on March 15, 1744. Slightly more than two years later he bought Lot #55 in Fredericksburg. Apparently he kept cattle, as the Spotsylvania County Court recorded his cattle mark as a swallowtail fork in the right ear and a crop in the left ear. Marye died on April 25, 1767, leaving a will by which he bequeathed various tracts of land to his children and grandchildren.⁷²

Even after the division of the parish in 1730, many parishioners felt that it was still inconveniently large. In October, 1762, the vestry voted four to three in favor of dividing the parish. Two years later the vote for the division was unanimous. Finally,

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, [I, 41, II, 66, I, 49].

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, [I, 4, 37-38, II, 70]; Brydon, *Virginia's Mother Church*, *op. cit.*, I, 95.

⁷⁰ Vestry Minutes, [I, 9-10].

⁷¹ Oscar H. Darter, "Doctoral dissertation: Fredericksburg and Vicinity in Perspective: A Study of a Colonial Rural-Urban Neighborhood," (George Washington University Library, Washington, D. C., 1948), p. 118; Freeman, *op. cit.*, I, 64n.

⁷² Brock, *Documents . . . Relating to the Huguenot Emigration to Virginia*, *op. cit.*, p. 184; William Armstrong Crozier, *Virginia County Records, Spotsylvania County, 1721-1800 . . .* (New York, Published for the Genealogical Association by Fox, Duffield & Co., 1905), pp. 24, 163, 173; Freeman, *op. cit.*, I, 179n.

in 1769 the General Assembly formed Berkeley Parish from the area south of the Po River.⁷³ Thus Mattapony Church and Pamunkey Chapel were lost to the mother parish, leaving only Rappahannock and Burbridge Churches.

An advertisement of a lottery to raise £450 to build a new church and to purchase an organ, appeared in Rind's *Virginia Gazette* early in July, 1768, and in every subsequent issue for several months. Mann Page, Fielding Lewis, Charles Dick, Hugh Mercer and Charles Washington were among the lottery managers, who hoped to sell a total of 3,000 tickets at twenty shillings each. They proposed a first prize of £500 and two £250 second prizes. The drawing was originally scheduled for December 28, 1768, but it was first postponed to June 7, 1769, the first day of the Fredericksburg Fair, and then to October, 1769. Furthermore, it is doubtful whether it was held then as none of the issues of the *Virginia Gazette* for October carried any notice of the drawing of this lottery.⁷⁴ In 1770 Rappahannock Church was repaired and a gallery was erected.⁷⁵

The church-yard originally extended from Main Street to Princess Anne Street. At the time of the writing of a historical sketch of the cemetery in 1892, "1752" was the earliest legible date on any marker, but unquestionably burials were made there before that date. In 1756 the cemetery was old enough to arouse sufficient sentimental attachment to cause bodies to be brought a considerable distance to be buried in the "midst of their people." That the cemetery was no local affair was evidenced by the tomb of the father of Martha Washington, Colonel John Dandridge of New Kent County, and that of Carter Beverly of Essex County.⁷⁶

Finally, the vestry petitioned the General Assembly for authority to sell the land on Main Street, characterizing the hilly and broken nature of the churchyard as an impediment to the erection of a much-needed new church, and describing the burial ground as full, except on Main Street. In 1772 the request was granted on the condition that an additional burial plot would be purchased elsewhere. The land was sold, but the proceeds were lost during the Revolutionary War and the "further purchase" was never made. In 1774, £100 was levied to pay Colonel Fielding Lewis for a square of lots on which to erect a new church

⁷³ Vestry Minutes, [II, 68-74]; Hening, VIII, 399-400.

⁷⁴ July-Sept., 1768; Rind's *Virginia Gazette*, Jan. 12, 1769, June 15, 1769, Oct., 1769, *passim*.

⁷⁵ Vestry Minutes, [II, 90].

⁷⁶ William Meade Clark, *St. George's Cemetery, an Historical Sketch*, (Fredericksburg, Ladies Cemetery Guild of St. George's Church, 1892), p. 4.

in Fredericksburg and the following year 10,000 lbs. of tobacco was appropriated as a start on this project, but the war apparently caused its abandonment.⁷⁷

On January 26, 1768, the Reverend James Marye, Jr., was selected by the vestry to succeed his father.⁷⁸ The younger Marye was the only son of a St. George's minister ever to be subsequently appointed rector of that parish. James, Jr., was born in Goochland County on September 8, 1731, and he was baptized by his father about a month later.⁷⁹ His father undoubtedly served as his teacher before he entered the College of William and Mary, where he established a reputation for both scholarship and good conduct. James, Jr., served as a tutor in Colonel William Byrd's family for eighteen months and that worthy has been quoted as giving him an excellent character "in point of virtue and good manners."⁸⁰ He went to England to be ordained an Anglican priest, receiving his license and the King's Bounty for Virginia in December, 1755. He was the minister of St. Thomas' Parish, Orange County, from 1761 until late in 1767, when he accepted the call to St. George's.⁸¹

On April 21, 1769, the vestry ordered that a church should be built convenient to some spring not more than one and half miles from Burbridge's Bridge. This church, which was the last one to be built in St. George's Parish in the colonial period, was variously designated in the vestry minutes as Burbridge's Church, the Upper Church or simply the New Church. Apparently this house of worship was finished by the summer of 1770, as on June 26 of that year the vestry approved paying Robert Smith for its erection. Burbridge's Church is supposed to have been in existence as late as 1847 but at an unrecorded date it became a Baptist shrine. Finally, it was replaced by the Yellow Church on the same site.⁸²

Apparently James Marye II managed his personal finances well and had no scruples against slave-owning, as at his death he bequeathed land and twenty-nine slaves to his children. He was loyal to the American cause during the War for Independence.⁸³

⁷⁷ Hening, VIII, 609-610; Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 4; Slaughter, 1847, p. 23; Vestry Minutes, [II, 105, 107]; Mason, *loc. cit.*, p. 456.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, [II, 80].

⁷⁹ Slaughter, 1847, pp. 22-23.

⁸⁰ Herbert Ganter, ed., "Documents Relating to the Early History of the College of William and Mary and to the History of the Church in Virginia," *William and Mary College Quarterly Historical Magazine*, 2d. ser., XX (Oct., 1940), pp. 533-535; "Notes Relating to Some of the Students Who Attended the College of William and Mary," in *ibid.*, 2d series, I, (Jan., 1921), p. 35.

⁸¹ Edward Goodwin, *op. cit.*, p. 292; Brock, Documents . . . Relating to the Huguenots . . . , *op. cit.*, p. 184.

⁸² Vestry Minutes, [II, 84, 91]; William Meade, *op. cit.*, II, 69; Mason, *loc. cit.*, p. 455.

⁸³ Crozier, *op. cit.*, pp. 35, 313; Edward Goodwin, *op. cit.*, p. 292.

Bishop Meade has written that as far as he could learn, James Marye, Jr., was a man of "evangelical views and sincere piety." Becoming more specific, the bishop reported having seen a manuscript sermon written by Marye on the religious training of children, "which would do honor to the heart of any clergyman," and whose ". . . tone and spirit might well commend it" to all parents and enlightened Christians.⁸⁴

In 1776 the General Assembly repealed all the laws of Parliament requiring conformity to the Episcopal church and specifically exempted dissenters from contributing to its support. The salaries of all Anglican clergy were suspended in 1776.⁸⁵ Thus Marye, in officiating as minister until his death in 1780, served the last three years without pay, except for such salary as was provided by the voluntary gifts of the parishioners.⁸⁶

⁸⁴ William Meade, *op. cit.*, II, 89.

⁸⁵ Hening, IX, 164-167.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, IX, 166, 312, 387, 469, 578-579; G. MacLaren Brydon, "Diocesan Beginnings," *Addresses Delivered at the Centennial Celebration of the Diocesan Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Virginia . . . May 14th and 15th, 1929* (n.p., n.p., n.d.); p. 43.