

1189

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name: ST. GEORGE'S CHAPEL
other names/site number: Norborne Parish Church, 46-JF 161

2. Location

street & number: Off West Virginia State Route 51 not for publication: N/A
city or town vicinity: Charles Town vicinity: X
state: West Virginia code: WV county: Jefferson code: 037 zip code: 25414

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ___ nationally ___ statewide X locally. (___ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Susan M. Pierce
Signature of certifying official

6/12/01
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.
(___ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

Date

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

St. George's Chapel
Name of Property

Jefferson County, West Virginia
County, State

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register

See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the
National Register

See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the
National Register

removed from the National Register

other (explain):

Carl Sage 8/3/01

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

private

public-local

public-State

public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

building(s)

district

site

structure

object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing Noncontributing

_____ buildings

 1 sites

_____ structures

_____ objects

 1 0 Total

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Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

Category:

RELIGION:
FUNERARY:

Subcategory:

Religious Facility
Cemetery

Current Functions

Category:

VACANT

Subcategory:

Ruin

7. Description

Architectural Classification

OTHER: no style/ruins

Materials

foundation	<u>Stone</u>
roof	<u>N/A</u>
walls	<u>Stone</u>
other	<u>_____</u>

Narrative Description -

See continuation pages.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.

Areas of Significance

Archaeology: Historic - non-Aboriginal

Period of Significance: 1771-1817

Significant Dates: 1771, 1817

Significant Person: N/A

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Cultural Affiliation: Euro-American

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance - See continuation sheets.

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.

previously listed in the National Register

previously determined eligible by the National Register

designated a National Historic Landmark

recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # W.VA. #3

recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Name of repository: _____

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10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property: One acre

UTM References

Zone Easting Northing
18 250590 4353160

Quadrangle Map: Middleway

Verbal Boundary Description (See continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (See continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Charles Hulse/Professor of Anthropology

organization: Shepherd College date: February 27, 2001

street & number: Room 11, Snyder Hall telephone: (304) 876-5354

city or town: Shepherdstown state: WV zip code: 25443

Property Owner

name: Mr. and Mrs. Henry Davenport, III

street & number: P.O. Box 27 Altona Farm telephone: (304) 725-2181

city or town: Charles Town state: WV zip code: 25414

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Description of Property:

St. George's Chapel (46JF161) is located approximately 1.5 miles west of Charles Town, West Virginia and 100 yards north of State Route 51, a growing highway corridor in this portion of Jefferson County. The ruins of the chapel are centered on a one-acre parcel of land owned by Mr. and Mrs. Henry Davenport of nearby Altona Farm. This one-acre parcel is an island of lawn and trees surrounded by active agricultural land on all sides. The site is accessible via a gravel road from State Route 51 northwards towards "Piedmont" a prominent National Register property listed as the Robert Worthington House. The first owner of Piedmont helped to establish the chapel. During the winter months, both the chapel and Piedmont are clearly visible from State Route 51.

The ruins consist of a "T" shaped foundation ranging from four to fifteen feet in height which was professionally stabilized by the National Park Service in 1975, as part of a Bicentennial celebration in the county. Piles of stone up to six feet in height ring the stabilized foundation, and represent collapsed stone walls as well as stone removed from the interior of the church during stabilization.

Remnants of a gravel road appear to circle the ruins but grass has recaptured the majority of the graveled area. The gravel road is a modern addition to the site and was created (or redefined) during wall stabilization efforts and to accommodate Bicentennial visitors. Ornamental plantings are still dominant features of the landscape, and they date to relatively recent beautification efforts.

The stone foundation consists of walls more than two feet thick which have been stabilized to varying heights. The footprint of the building measures 52'-9" east-west by 46' north-south. The "T" shape is created by the addition of a 15' x 30' projecting central pavilion to the south side of the main rectangular building. A doorway gap is centered on the south pavilion and this remains as the only access through the foundation walls and into the interior of the chapel.

The archaeological investigation of St. George's Chapel was undertaken in 1999 through a combination of both controlled shovel test units as well as excavation of selected areas. A total of 78 screened shovel tests were placed across the one-acre chapel property. Low densities of artifacts were found in 31 positive shovel tests, with spatial distributions clustering in two locations both north and east of the stone ruins. Subsequent excavation of three 5' x 5' units east of the chapel uncovered a segment of a stone foundation as well as a feature interpreted to represent a segment of a gravesite.

Systematic unit-level excavations were also conducted inside the foundation of the chapel with the placement of two 10' x 10' and one 5' x 10' units within the south pavilion. Excavation of these units located two stone wall supports dating to the original period of Chapel construction. Artifact frequencies were low for material dating to the period of construction and use of the chapel (i.e. 1771-1817) and consisted primarily of building material such as nails, hinges, and window glass. Artifact distributions suggested the presence of a stairway east of the southern door entrance. This

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stairway would have allowed for access to a second story gallery which was common on Anglican churches of this period.

In general, the combination of shovel testing and excavation of areas outside and inside the chapel revealed that the site still retained intact soil stratigraphy as well as intact subsurface features dating to the active period of use. Recovered artifacts demonstrated that the chapel floor was originally tiled in locally produced hand-made bricks and that the chapel had been used in later periods as both a Civil War campsite and as a barn/stable as had been suggested in the documentary record.

Summary:

As an archaeological site, St. George's Chapel has the ability to yield information important to the design, construction, and use of Anglican churches and churchyards of the colonial and early American periods.

St. George's Chapel displays a great deal of integrity as well as a demonstrated ability to yield information. Site integrity consists of intact surface features such as the "T" shaped foundation and walls both inside and outside the main structure. Soil stratigraphy and artifact distributions have also been shown to have integrity and, in combination with features, contain all the necessary components to yield information relevant to the history of Anglican church use and design

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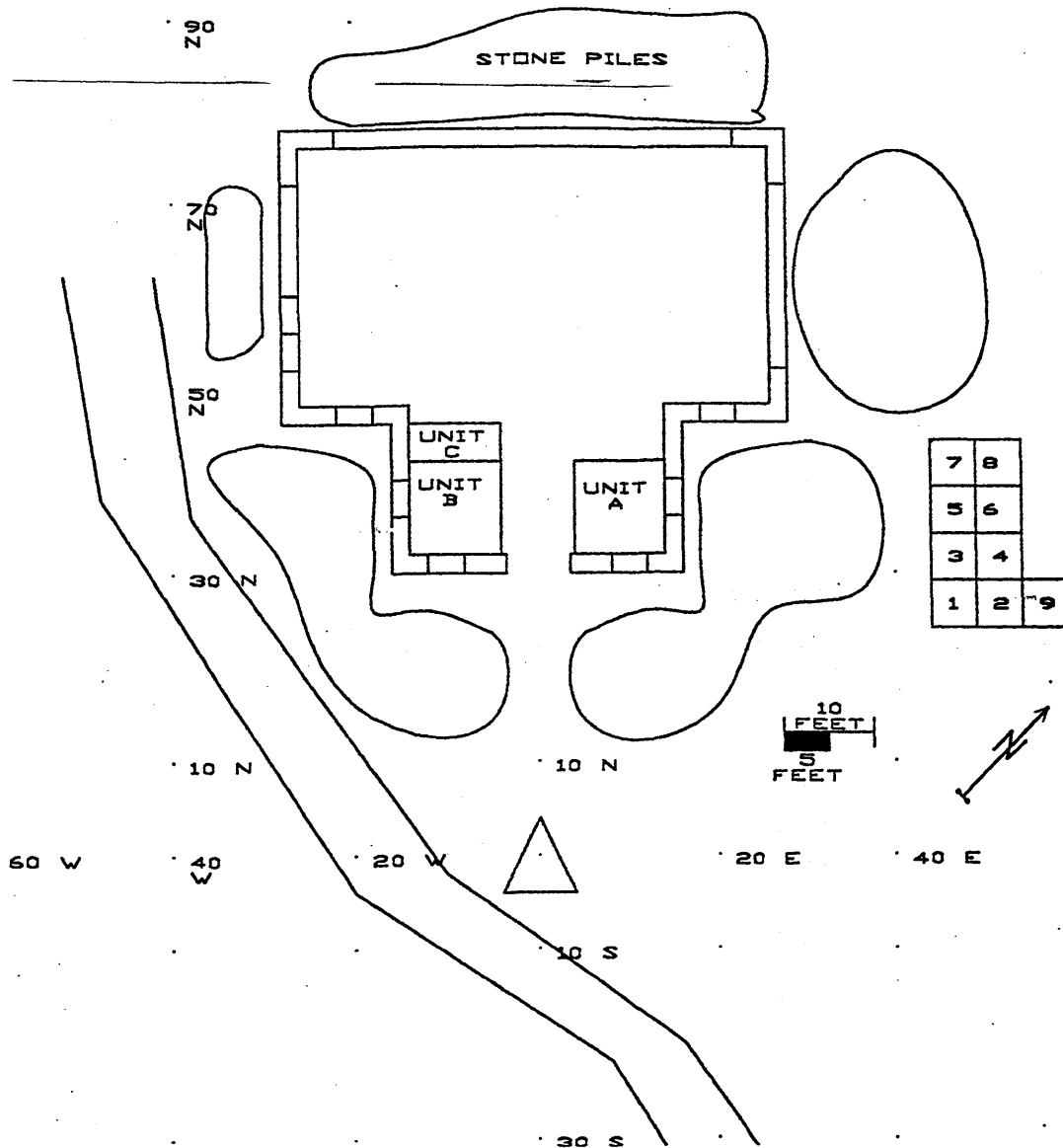
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Description (Cont.)

Location of Excavation Units



7	8	
5	6	
3	4	
1	2	9

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Statement of Significance

St. George's Chapel is being nominated under Criterion D for archaeology and its ability to yield information on its design, construction and use as an Anglican Church in early America, and important to the history of Jefferson County. The period of significance for the site dates from the beginning of chapel construction in 1771 through 1817 when it was abandoned for a newly constructed church in nearby Charles Town.

Historical Context

Norborne Parish was organized in early 1771 and served a large geographic area which today includes all of present-day Jefferson and Berkeley Counties as well as a large portion of Morgan County. The parish was created from the division of an earlier and larger Frederick County so that localized regions of colonial Virginia could expand the number of Anglican churches to keep up with increased settlement in the region.

The Anglican Church was the state sponsored and supported religion of Colonial Virginia and parishes were organized as administrative units for more localized areas. While the church of England's hierarchy was centered in London, the power of local control was maintained by a parish vestry who had substantial power in local affairs. With the creation of Norborne Parish a new vestry, or local administrative body, was elected to carry out the taxation of the local community for the purpose of the development and maintenance of churches and church property. The first vestry of this parish includes many of the most prominent citizens of the area including Samuel Washington (senior warden), William Henshaw (junior warden), Robert Worthington (collector of tithes), Adam Stephen, Thomas Rutherford, James Keitz, George Cunningham, Magnus Tate, John Neville, William Baldwin, Morgan Morgan II, and Hugh Stephenson. These twelve men were given the responsibility over two existing churches — one in Shepherdstown built 1769, and one in Bunker Hill built soon after the creation of Frederick County in 1738.

Rapid growth in the region during the second half of the 18th century brought a great deal of real estate development and eventual settlement to the Potomac and Shenandoah River Valleys. Shepherdstown (then called Mecklenburg) was established in 1762 when growth was occurring in the area. What is today known as Charles Town, is where the Washington family was developing a substantial agricultural empire. In order to accommodate a growing population, as well as to appease the ruling gentry tired of the long journeys to the two distant churches, the decision was made by the vestry to build a new mother church. Dates of construction for the new church are somewhat in doubt, but most sources estimate construction over a three-year period beginning in 1771 with completion in 1774. This places the new church in the precarious situation as being an elegant and costly symbol of English domination in the years leading up to the American Revolution.

Historically, the new church was named "Norborne," "Berkeley" or "Trinity" with the name St. George being a later 19th romanticization which seems to have gained local acceptance and usage. Historical sources use the earlier names interchangeably and the earliest maps simply refer to it as the "English" church. This church was the central place of worship for Norborne Parish and was built substantially larger than the two other churches in the region. The combination of a "T" shaped floor plan with two stories of windows to illuminate a gallery section, gave the new church at least twice the seating capacity of other local places of worship.

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The architect for the new church is not known, although several individuals are potential candidates based on circumstantial evidence. Barnhart (1979) presents a very strong case for John Ariss (Ayres, Orris) as architect based primarily upon local residence and association with known vestry members. He was a justice of the peace for Berkeley County in 1773 and was known to have had association with at least five of the Norborne vestrymen. Ariss was part of a committee appointed by the House of Burgesses to inspect chapels in Frederick, Norborne and Beckford Parish including the entire region around the current site of St. George's. Ariss is credited with designing numerous mansions in Northern Virginia as well as several churches in Frederick and Truro parishes (Waterman 1945). Ariss is known as an English-born builder as well as an architect and had the capability to serve as undertaker (contractor) for projects as large as this chapel. It is possible that Ariss's designs are modifications of structures published in the 1740 edition of Batty Lagley's City and County Workmans Treasury of Design (Upton 1997:130). Unfortunately, all original records of the church construction and congregation composition have been lost. Details of daily church life can occasionally be gleaned from other local documents, but the architect of St. George's Chapel has yet to be ascertained.

The cost of the new church is not known, but in comparison to other churches of smaller size where documentary evidence exists, the cost is believed to have exceeded £600 which would be twice the cost of an average church for that time. This was a considerable amount of money for the late 18th century and local residents would have been expected to tithe in proportion to their ability to pay for such a church. Wealthy families are also believed to have contributed land, interior furnishings, and other items with members of the vestry most often mentioned. Land upon which the church was built was donated by Robert Worthington who also owned the surrounding Quarry Banks (to become Piedmont) plantation. James Nourse, a later owner of Piedmont is believed (by family traditions) to have donated the pulpit and railing. Conspicuously absent are claims from other prominent families for specific contributions to the cause. It is quite possible that tithes were enough to cover the church construction and furnishing without the need for large-scale contributions of an individual nature. Some money was also sent from the dissolution of some old Frederick parish holdings which may have been used for the new church.

The size of the church grounds are listed as one acre, three rods (one rod = 16.5 ft.) And six poles (Barnhart 1979:29). This lot was donated by Robert Worthington of Piedmont and was within eyesight of his primary residence. The land was apparently never formally deeded to the Parish and was in actuality still a part of Piedmont until sale to the neighboring Davenport family in 1858 (Barnhart 1979:29). Within the grounds of the chapel was a cemetery, although the size and number of graves have never been ascertained. Research documentation maintains that a cemetery containing an unknown number of internments exists within church grounds. Archaeological investigations, however, were able to locate only one potential grave shaft. According to the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) (1981:288) the following are buried there:

“Alcinda, daughter of Thomas and Anne Carter, second wife of Thomas Griggs, Sr., born June 26, 1753, died about 1781.”

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“Also probably, Elizabeth (Skelock) Griggs, wife of Lee Griggs and mother of Thomas Griggs, Sr., died after 1813, aged 95 years.”

“Capt. John Smith of Middlesex Co. Va., a cousin of Samuel Washington died March 19, 1777, while on a visit to “Harewood” and is probably buried here.”

“George Hite, son of Jacob Hite, and grandson of Joist Hite, born October 28, 1761, died Dec. 16, 1816. Buried either here or in old Presbyterian grave-graveyard in Charles Town.”

“Robert Worthington, his son Robert and his grandson Ephriam are all buried here.”

“A wife of Horatio Gates is also said to have been buried here. They lived at Travelers Rest.”

This listing is based on a 1930's project by the DAR to inventory and research small cemeteries in Jefferson County.

A cemetery with several leaning gravestones is also shown in an 1859 drawing by Porte Crayon. In this drawing which has been reproduced by the Jefferson County Historical Society, the cemetery is shown on the east side of the church ruins. No trace of a wall or gate is shown, and the church's rear (North) wall has collapsed or been removed.

St. George's Chapel was constructed on the eve of the American Revolution and had only a brief period of active use. Many of the vestry (and probably parishioners) of the church are known to have participated in the revolution, and it is speculated that the congregation was split between those loyal to the king and those seeking a break from England. As a symbol of the established religion of England, the church was placed in a very precarious position of balancing service to the local area and yet taxing those individuals of other faiths on behalf of the Church of England. With the region containing a very broad mix of people from Germany, Ireland, Scotland, as well as England, a sizable portion of the population were not associated with the Anglican Church and were supporting places of worship in other locations. To be taxed for a religion one did not believe in, nor participate in, was an additional financial burden as well as a symbol of English oppression.

Within the close of the American Revolution the Anglican Church was abolished and a new voluntary Protestant Episcopal Church was created in its place. Taxation for state-sponsored religion was prohibited under the American Constitution and the money supply for the old parish hierarchy dried up. Without tax dollars it was the responsibility of local congregations to financially support the upkeep of buildings and farms, as well as to pay the salaries of the ministers.

While no church documents exist, it is reasonable to assume that church attendance as well as financial support plummeted after the War. This, in combination with an aging group of original supporters, resulted in the

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financial and physical erosion of the church. The will of vestryman, Robert Rutherford (written prior to 1793) gives forty dollars for "repairing the stone church near Charles Town" as well as other money for county churches. Apparently the church was in need of "repair" within 20 years of its construction (Williams 1939:10).

The final years of St. George's Chapel are scantily documented with only vague references to ministers who preached in rotating order at the various churches who maintained a congregation. The last reference to services held at St. George's was about 1811, although some occasional use may have continued afterwards. In 1817 a new Zion Episcopal Church was built in Charles Town as a reflection of the shift in population and of the deteriorated condition of St. George's Chapel by that time. A subsequent fire in this new church in 1843 destroyed all furnishings possibly salvaged from the old chapel as well as all original church records. This presumably accounts for the lack of documentary material on St. George's and has contributed to the many myths about it which exist today.

The abandonment of the chapel in the first quarter of the 19th century meant that an already aging structure (40-50 years old) was left to deteriorate in a relatively isolated location. It was used for some period of time as a barn for the Briscoe family at Piedmont and by the 1859 sketch by Porte Crayon the church had lost its roof and one wall.

In 1859 the church and graveyard were purchased from Henry R. and W.D. Briscoe by Braxton Davenport, then owner of the adjacent Altona farm. The ruins of the chapel are briefly described in at least one Civil War period diary and there is some evidence that the ruins and surrounding fields were visited on numerous occasions during the war. Several local relic collectors have reported finding Civil War artifacts on Chapel property and one published source (Magazine of the Jefferson County Historical Society Vol. 11, December 1945) mentions that Altona farm was one of the major campsites of the War. Generals Sheridan and Brooke are cited as having headquarters of the Federal Army with "thousands of tents" at Altona.

Photographs and paintings of the chapel ruins are in existence and date as early as the 1890's. In several early photographs the walls are shown to still be intact, except for the north side (See Barnhart 1979: 52-53). Architectural details such as mortised beams believed to support the second story gallery are clearly visible, as are remaining wooden lintels over the tops of the rectangular first-floor windows. In photographs, Victorian era ladies and gentlemen are shown visiting the ruins as a recreational outing. By the early 20th century there was enough tourism in the area to warrant the production of postcards and travel brochures highlighting local landmarks — among them the chapel. According to Gibson (1922), it was a tourism-related venture that brought about the renaming of the church.

Popular interest in the Chapel increased during the 1920's and 1930's and it became the center of a great deal of myth and speculation. Descriptions of the building furnishing became more and more embellished with detail as did the list of important people who supposedly worshiped there. The interest in George Washington was part of the Colonial Revival period at that time. All in all, by the mid-1930's St. George's Chapel had become a legend

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and a symbol of local pride and heritage. The impact of the Civil War was economically disastrous to the region as was the later Great Depression. The local population needed a symbol of a once wealthy and prosperous time, and found it in the grandeur of the once great Chapel. The rise and fall of the chapel became in many ways an anchor for those of the 1930's who sought stability in a return of the past.

The importance of St. George's Chapel was further reaffirmed by the recordation of the structure in 1936 by the Historic American Building Survey. The chapel was the third site in West Virginia chosen for study, and is catalogued with the HABS number W. VA-3. Line drawings were prepared of the exterior of all four sides of the structure and a series of photographs from interior and exterior angles were taken.

The chapel was approximately 30% intact at the time of the 1936 study. The west and east walls were completely gone with the south and west walls still retaining some first story window openings. Corners were still standing as columns and reached a height of nearly 25 feet in several locations.

A photograph of the Chapel from 1975 (Magazine of the Jefferson County Historical Society Vol. 41, Dec. 1975, pg 14) shows that the process of deterioration continued in the 40 years since the HABS survey. By the mid 1970's all window openings had become obscure and the height of all exterior walls generally reduced to the level of the first floor windowsills. Corner columns were present at six of the eight corners, but only about half the height seen in the 1936 photographs.

The Chapel property was deeded to the Bee Line Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) in 1974. The Davenport family who owned the property presented the site to the DAR in hopes of having it preserved and possibly turned into a better interpreted historic site. This donation, along with a generous contribution towards the ruins stabilization, began a county effort to highlight this property for the Bicentennial. The grounds were cleared of vegetation and ornamental shrubbery was planted with the assistance of the Shenandoah-Potomac Garden Council.

The stabilization of the chapel ruins was conducted by a crew from Harpers Ferry National Historical Park. Stonemasons were loaned for the project as a Bicentennial donation. The goal of stabilization was to prevent further loss of the chapel walls by removing unstable portions and by capping the top course with mortared stone. Some repointing of the foundation was also apparently done at this time on portions of the wall above the watertable.

The walls of the chapel were lowered to a uniform height of about four feet except for the northwest corner which was stabilized at a height of 18 feet. Only this single corner was deemed stable enough to leave intact and its presence gives the feeling of height necessary to interpret the true size of the structure. No records are available on the process of stabilization although the Davenport family and others were present to observe much of the work. Based on their comments it appears that a large amount of interior stone rubble was moved about as both

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the inside and outside walls were excavated below ground surface. Stone was moved outside the chapel ringing it with piles up to five feet in height. Interior excavation also moved stone towards the middle accumulating heights again of 4-5 feet. Some previous effort to stabilize the walls using iron beams for bracing was also removed at that time, and it is unclear by whom or when the earlier work was conducted.

St. George's Chapel is known to have had doorways in both the south and west sides, but the western door sill or opening was either not present or was intentionally closed for the stabilization effort. This provided only one (south) point of access into the structure. The doorway opening was also apparently rebuilt since the current width of 5'10" is somewhat larger than that of the 1936 drawings showing 5'-4". The watertable and interior sill are intact and were apparently never touched during stabilization since they are three feet below the top of the present stabilized wall.

During the Bicentennial celebration a number of small improvements were made to the surrounding churchyard. A small gravel parking area and road was created south and north of the chapel to provide for access by stabilization vehicles and later to accommodate visitors. Lawn was established, brush was cleared, and flowers planted.

Unfortunately, the spirit of the Bicentennial wore off by the late 1970's and interest in the chapel soon faded. As Charles Town grew in population, new housing subdivisions were added adjacent to State Route 51. This expansion of the town resulted in increased recreational use of the chapel grounds and problems with late-night gatherings and littering. The DAR soon had difficulty in maintaining the grounds and in providing basic security. By the later 1980's the site was beginning to become overgrown and by 1989 the DAR surrendered the property to Henry and Fay Davenport — the current owners. They have been maintaining the grounds and acting as stewards over the chapel. As recently as the late 1990's a wedding was held on the chapel grounds for a member of the Lehrer family who currently own Piedmont.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE

The archaeological significance of St. George's Chapel lies with the ability of the site to yield information related to the poorly known colonial history of present day Jefferson County. Based on the results of archaeological research, the site as a whole was found to have integrity of design and association despite the numerous changes since abandonment in the early 19th century.

Subsurface features such as interior wall supports, exterior outbuilding/wall foundations, and the presence of at least one (and probably many more) gravesite demonstrate that a great deal of site integrity still exists. Artifactual information, despite low frequencies compared to residential sites of the same period, is still adequate to determine distributional differences within the structure. Unequal distribution of building materials such as

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nails can assist in locating and interpreting such interior church features as staircases, galleries, and other architectural features.

The combination of subsurface features and artifacts within the chapel has the ability of yielding information on church design and construction not available in any type of historical source material. The fact that no primary documents exist regarding the chapel during its period of use (Circa 1771-1817) enhances the value of the archaeological resource. A reconstruction of the chapel based upon archaeological evidence would be feasible based upon a combination of features, artifacts, photographs, and comparisons to other churches with similar elements.

The contribution of St. George's Chapel to the understanding of Anglican Parish Churches has the potential to be very significant. St. George's is only one of seven churches built in Colonial Virginia (now West Virginia) between 1607 and 1789 which is of stone (Upton 1997:13). Even though it is in a current state of ruin, it is still well documented in various stages of decay and still retains a portion of walls which express the imposing greatness of it in both an architectural and engineering sense. A freestanding stone structure without interior wall supports was a true engineering feat in the pre-Revolutionary War years.

The shape of St. George's and the suggested layout and design is one which is also very unique in the realm of Anglican church architecture. Upton (1997:47-97) presents a model for the evolution of church floor plan design based on his analysis of 166 known parish churches. He hypothesizes that the shaped floor plan is possibly a derivation of cruciform floor plans or that possibly is it related to a Scottish Kirk design. "T" shaped churches or Kirks were built in Scotland since the Middle Ages and were widely built by Scots Presbyterians in the eighteenth century. Given that a significant portion of Virginia's population were of Scots origin, as well as approximately twenty-five percent of the Anglican clergy, the idea of the "T" shaped plan may have diffused to the new world via this immigrant group. "T" plans are relatively rare and are known only as a "T" shape which results from a latter addition to an existing (more common) rectangular shape. Likewise, the two story facade of St. George's is also one of a handful of such designs found across Colonial Virginia. No churches with both a "T" shaped floor plan and a two-story facade are known anywhere in this region. Add to this the uniqueness of stone construction and you have a church design which is totally unique within a social environment where sameness of design and materials are commonplace.

The question then arises as to why the vestry of St. George's chapel would have wished to have set themselves apart from all other Virginians who were their peers. Upton makes a very strong case for the symbolic nature of churches in relationship to the establishment and maintenance of power relationships within a local parish setting. If this premise is indeed true, then there must have been an imposing need to create such a unique and therefore awe-inspiring experience for the parishioners who were required to attend.

Built on the eve of the American Revolution, the Anglican church as an arm of the English government would have tried to subtly show the might of the established order by producing such a structure. Given that the vestry

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Statement of Significance (cont.)

was not one of the more radical groups eager to take up arms against the Crown, St. George's may have been an expression of a Tory philosophy which used architecture to quell the rumbling of dissent heard in the region in the 1770's. While not lost on the local gentry, a costly and imposing church would have most impacted the slave and planter populations who would become the foot soldiers in any coming conflict. The gentry were used to the large buildings with elaborate furnishings, but the majority of the population were living in crude accommodations without the finery of carved woodwork, silver candlesticks, ornate cloths and cushions, books, and other symbols of power and wealth held by the church.

The ability of archaeology to yield information related to church design and construction is also a contribution to understanding the social fabric of a local community. The organization and use of interior space speaks not just to architectural but also to the feelings created between the vestry designers and the parishioners exposed to the carefully planned environment. The vestries were the large landowners with thousands of acres of land and hundreds of slaves at their disposal. Planters, small landholders, indentured servants, German subsistence farmers and others low on the agricultural ladder were the ones required by law to attend services and to be subjected to the psychological environment planned by the vestry and manifest in church design and furnishings. To the gentry, the chapel would have been a place for social gathering where they would not only interact with their peers, but also where they would reinforce their positions of importance by their manner of dress and their spatial positions within the pews. The purchase of pews by elite families and the seating of individuals by strict rules of social class meant that each attendance of a church service would not only bring one closer to God but also would re-affirm the power relationships within a community. Any contribution which archaeology can bring to an understanding of interior space design can by means of comparison to other parish churches allow for a greater understanding of Norborne Parish through ethnographic analogy.

Archaeological testing at this site suggests that subsurface archaeological features such as stone support walls will be found underneath the floor level of the chapel. Walls and other features will allow for the location of major interior design features (such as the pulpit, chancel, altar, aisles, and family pews) relevant to the understanding of the use of sacred and secular spaces within the church.

Recent attempts to locate the gravesites of Washington family members (Starrs 1999) at the nearby estate of Harewood have highlighted the potential for sophisticated forms of forensic analysis. Excavation by a team from George Washington University in the summer of 1999 located several graves within a walled cemetery on the Harewood property. The goal of the project was to locate the gravesite of Samuel Washington, brother of George. There are approximately 20 members of the Washington family whose grave sites are unknown and it was hoped that these individuals would be found along with the remains of Samuel. Unfortunately only two graves were located and results of forensic analysis have not yet been completed. Current Washington family members have donated DNA samples that will be compared to DNA extracted from skeletal material to ascertain genetic relationships. The recent failure to find the Washington graves means that other unmarked cemeteries may be present at Harewood or that the family was buried at some other location. Given that Samuel Washington was a warden and vestryman of St. George's, it would be reasonable to assume that he could be

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Statement of Significance (cont.)

buried there. Washington family members who are currently unaccounted for in regards to burial places include Samuel Washington (1734-1781); son, Thornton Washington (1760-1787) and fourth wife, Anne Washington (1737-1777) as well as nine other Washington affinal and consanguineal. All twelve individuals died at the Harewood estate a mile from the chapel and all died during the period of time when the chapel was in active use. Just as families purchased pews inside the church to illustrate their social standing, so too did they purchase family burial plots within the churchyard.

Anglican churches of the 17th and 18th centuries were required by law to have a fenced churchyard. Burials could occur within the yard if it was of sufficient size, or could be outside the yard in a designated location. The churchyard was a multiple use space used for social gatherings, the posting of notices, and the dismounting of newly arrived guests from carriages. It was as much a showplace as was the interior of the church, where social roles were expressed and the social hierarchy reinforced. The creation and use of churchyard space was therefore symbolic of the secular world as much as it was the religious one.

In addition to a church cemetery, the churchyard would often contain a small separate vestry building if space within the church was not created for such. The vestry would meet at regular times to conduct the business of the parish and to discuss current economic and political events. The vestry house was built to be large enough to seat the twelve members of the vestry plus any guests. Vestry buildings varied in size and materials of construction but were small, dignified spaces used for only formal meetings. Freestanding vestry buildings were common features within eighteenth century churchyards, but relatively few survive today. Many vestry buildings were not well built and their relatively small size (usually 12 feet by 16 feet) made them more susceptible to deterioration by the elements. By the early nineteenth century, these office spaces were incorporated somewhere into the main body of the church, where they functioned as a small multi-purpose room (Upton 1997). Less formal gatherings such as church festivities were held within the walled or fenced churchyard.

The archaeological significance of St. George's Chapel is enhanced by the presence of intact subsurface features in the yard area surrounding the Chapel. The stone wall/foundation found in excavations could be either the remains of a vestry building or a remnant of defined space such as a churchyard or high status family burial plot. Excavations have determined that soil stratigraphy is intact and this would allow for the reconstruction of activity areas, fences, and walkways through future excavations outside the church. The use of space has significance to defining and maintaining social roles among members of the congregation and it would be very valuable to compare how exterior spaces at St. George's were similar or different from those at other northern Virginia churches. The changes through time of interior space within churches have been found to yield information on ideology and power (Upton 1997) so it is quite possible that the exact distribution of exterior space could have similar value.

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SUMMARY

In conclusion, St. George's Chapel is an archaeological site which possesses integrity of stratigraphy, features, artifact distributions, and associations. It has also demonstrated its ability to yield information relevant to the understanding of the development of Anglican church properties in eighteenth century colonial and early American Virginia (now West Virginia). This site contains a cemetery component composed of individuals prominent in the area, some of whom are linked to the Washington family and whose skeletal DNA could yield information relevant to understanding the social dynamics of rural community life.

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Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning at a stake at western edge of Briscoe's land; thence N. 60° 50' West 200 feet to a stake; thence N. 26° 55' east 162 feet to a stake; thence S. 62° East 189 feet to a stake at the western edge of Briscoe's lane; thence S. 22° 20' West 169 feet to the place of beginning, containing 3 roods and 7 perches, to which survey and plot special reference is hereby made.

Boundary Justification

The above verbal boundary description conforms to historical deed references in use since 1859. It is believed that this boundary reflects the historical extent of the chapel property as well as conforming to the most recently recorded deed made on August 8, 1989, between the Trustees for the Bee Line Chapter, National Society, Daughters of the American Revolution and current owners, Mr. And Mrs. Henry Davenport III.

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Section Photo Page 1

Name of Property: St. George's Chapel
Address: Off West Virginia State Route 51
Town: Charles Town Vicinity
County: Jefferson County, West Virginia

Photographer: Charles Hulse

Date: March 2, 2001

Negatives: WV SHPO, Charleston, WV

- Photo 1 Front Facade, South Elevation
 Camera facing North
- Photo 2 Northwest Corner, North Interior Elevation
 Camera facing Northwest
- Photo 3 Stabilized Wall Detail, East Wall Segment
 Camera facing North
- Photo 4 Northwest Corner, North Exterior Elevation
 Camera facing East
- Photo 5 Interior of Ruins
 Camera facing Northwest