

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED NOV 6 1978
DATE ENTERED JUL 24 1979

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME *Grace Episcopal Church Complex*
HISTORIC
Grace Episcopal Church and Chapel of Ease and Mulberry Grove School
AND/OR COMMON
Grace Episcopal Church complex

LOCATION
STREET & NUMBER ~~East side of Hooper Neck Road, .3 mile north~~
~~of the Post Office~~
CITY, TOWN Taylor's Island VICINITY OF First
STATE Maryland CODE 24 COUNTY Dorchester CODE 019

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY
NAME Grace Foundation of Taylor's Island, Inc. Attention: Mr. George M. Radcliffe, Jr.
STREET & NUMBER P. O. Box 836
CITY, TOWN Cambridge VICINITY OF Maryland STATE 21613

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Dorchester County Courthouse
STREET & NUMBER High Street
CITY, TOWN Cambridge STATE Maryland 21613

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS
TITLE
DATE
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS
CITY, TOWN STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		(School)

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

On this site on Taylor's Island are three frame structures: a schoolhouse, chapel of ease, and Grace Episcopal Church.

The chapel of ease is a frame structure, measuring approximately 20' x 30', on brick piers. It probably dates from the first quarter of the 19th century. On the west gable is a single herringbone batten door. Two windows, with 6/6 sash, on each of the lateral sides light the interior of the former chapel. On the east gable is a recently constructed chimney. The building is used as a meeting room.

Its interior is composed of a single room with balcony or choir loft above the entrance. The latter is accessible from a stair in the southwest corner and is supported on two posts with chamfered edges. Its floors are of wide pine, and the walls are plastered, with portions of posts and plaster exposed. The plaster ceiling follows the contour of the rafters and tie beams.

To the southwest of the chapel is a small building which was moved here from Mulberry Grove, on the other side of the Island. This building, as the plaque reads, was "The first school house in Dorchester County and was built and used on Taylor's Island. Given to the Grace Foundation 1955." It is now used as a display area and lavatory.

To the north of the chapel of ease is a more recent church, probably dating from the 3rd quarter of the 19th century. It is a frame structure built on brick piers in Victorian Gothic style, with very steeply pitched gable roof. The doorway has a Welsh arch, and both leaves of the door are composed of a single panel of vertical boards surrounded by stiles and rails. Flanking the door are two very narrow vertical windows. A pair of larger, similar windows is located above the canopy. Each of the four panes is surrounded by narrow strips of colored glass. At the apex of the gable is a hexagonal window with central Star of David in leaded glass. At the apex of the roof is a small open belfry supported on a pyramidal structure covered with wood shingles. The wind braces of the open belfry form Welsh arches, a repetition of the window motif. There is also a tall, narrow spire with decorative wood shingle roof, at the pinnacle of which is a wooden cross.

German siding covers the exterior walls of the structure at the base of which is a diagonal watershed board. Along the sides are five windows similar to those above the entrance. Between the third and fourth bays is a brick chimney with weatherings in two positions.

At the rear of the structure is a small section with single door on the south side. The back or gable of this is composed of two very small windows, similar to those flanking the entrance, and three larger windows, the center one being taller.

The building has a wide overhang and is completely boxed. Only at the corners are there brackets. At the juncture of the box cornice and the shingle is an unusual round molding.

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Grace Episcopal Church complex
Dorchester County

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(DESCRIPTION, continued)

The interior consists of an entrance hall across the west end, a nave, and a chancel flanked by two small rooms at the east end. In the hall a small square opening is the only way to get to the steeple from inside the church. In the nave there is a center aisle with long banks of pews on either side. The chancel is a round-arched area recessed from the nave. The three windows over the altar and the side windows all have small pointed arches. The stained glass is opaque in the center with colored glass around the edges. Several kerosene fixtures remain along the side walls.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES **Church = circa 1873**
Chapel = circa 1820 BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Grace Foundation has one of the more attractive complexes of frame buildings in Dorchester County. The chapel of ease dates from 1820 and the church from circa 1873. The latter seems to be the prototype of all the smaller chapels in the county which have Welsh arch windows (e.g., Oak Grove).

Dorchester Parish was laid out in 1693. Circa 1900 it consisted of Grace Church, Taylor's and Old Trinity Church, Church Creek. The Parish had financial problems throughout the 19th century, which are reflected in the vestry minutes,

In August 1818 a vestry was elected by the parishioners of Dorchester Parish. A month later the vestry agreed to repair the "Dorchester Church @ F. Creek." The bills for this work were recorded in September 1819. An undated entry in the minutes, with 1820 and 1819 entries before it and an 1821 entry after, gives a description of the chapel of ease:

In accordance with the resolution of the Last Convention Vestry of Dorchester Parrish in Dorchester county report that they have at Present there--parish a substantial Brick Church which has Lately been put into Comfortable repare & about two thirds of the pues have been rented out they have also a Small unfinished Chapell on Taylors island Made of Wood in Which a Congration assembles they have no funds [?] or Glebe Lands the Revd G. Weller gives to there Churches as much time as he can speare from the Duties of G Choptank Parish of which he is rector & for which services he receives the rents of the pews CH ? & also the advantage of a small subscription from the Congragation on TIsland . . . 1

This entry goes on to explain that the parish had been in a disorganized state for years, without regular services or a legal vestry and unrepresented at the Conventions. It is stated that all their money was needed to support the ministry and repair the churches.

An entry in the vestry minutes of May 9, 1868 reveals that the parish was once again disorganized. A public notice was posted and the members of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Dorchester Parish were invited to elect a vestry as there was none at that time. Eight members were elected and on May 20, 1872, ". . . the Rev. Mr. Nott was elected Rector of Dorchester Parish, to take charge October 1, 1872 at a salary of \$500. Composed as follows: from Church Creek from \$75 to a \$100. from Taylors Island \$200 to \$225. from the mission fund \$200."2

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Records of Dorchester Parish in Dorchester County, Maryland.
 (Diocese of Easton) at the Hall of Records, Annapolis.
 Parish Register & Vestry minutes 1877-1937 (19961).
 Vestry minutes 1819-1860 (19962).
 Vestry minutes 1868-1892 (19963).

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET # 5

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 2 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,8	3 8,5 8,1,0	4,2 5,8 6,7,0
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C			

B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Beginning at a point on the east side of Hooper Neck Road .95 mile from the bridge to the mainland, following the road north 435 feet, then northeast 200 feet to a point, the southeast 435 feet to a point, then west 200 feet to the point of beginning, containing 2 acres.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

1 km

NAME / TITLE	Pamela James, National Register Coordinator Michael Bourne, Architectural Consultant, Elizabeth Jenness
ORGANIZATION	Maryland Historical Trust
STREET & NUMBER	Shaw House, 21 State Circle
CITY OR TOWN	Annapolis
DATE	May 1975
TELEPHONE	(301) 269-2438
STATE	Maryland
STATE	21401

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL ___ STATE ___ LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE *[Signature]* DATE 10-30-78

TITLE STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER	
<i>[Signature]</i> DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHITECTURE AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION	DATE <u>7-24-79</u>
ATTEST <i>[Signature]</i> KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER Regional Coordinator	DATE <u>7-23-79</u>

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(SIGNIFICANCE, continued)

On May 18, 1873 an "informal meeting of the Vestry of Dorchester Parish [was] held at Grace Church, Taylor's Island." This is the first reference to Grace Church, by that name. At this meeting it was resolved unanimously to "petition the Convention of the Diocese of Easton for permission to organize the Congregation of Grace Church on Taylor's Island."³

The Vestry of Grace Church met on Sunday, October 19, 1873, with the Rt. Rev. Bishop Tay present, and adopted the following resolution:

Whereas we are notified to our painful regret of the determination of our beloved Rector to discontinue his Pastorate with us; therefore, be it, Resolved-1st That we adopt this means of Expressing our sincere friendship & heartfelt gratitude to him for his uniform & untiring zeal in the Cause of our Church, and for the unbounded Success with which his efforts to promote the Cause of Religion with us have been crowned⁴

Following the sequence of references from 1868 to 1873, it appears that Grace Church was constructed during this period. In 1868 there was a movement to organize the parish, and in 1872 Taylor's Island was assessed more towards the minister's upkeep than the congregation at Church Creek. All of this seems to lead up to some major interest in the Church on Taylor's Island.

In 1873 Grace Church was first mentioned, with a request to formally organize the congregation. Then later in October 1873 when the minister, presumably Mr. Nott, who was appointed in May 1872, decided to leave the vestry congratulated him for the "unbounded success with which his efforts . . . have been crowned." It seems logical then to believe that the church was built during Mr. Nott's term, between May 1872 and October 1873.

According to a "sketch of Dorchester Parish" in the front of a Parish Register dated 1877-1-37, Grace Church was consecrated in May 1873 by the Rt. Rev. H.C. Leay, Bishop of Easton. Whether or not this was the same visit described above is not certain, but it does establish that the church was standing in 1873.⁵

The school now at this location was moved here from Mulberry Grove on the Chesapeake Bay side of Taylor's Island. This small frame building, originally containing only one room, is said to have been the first school built in the county.⁶

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #3.

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CONTINUATION SHEET Maryland ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 3

(SIGNIFICANCE, continued)

¹Vestry minutes 1819 - 1860 (19962).

²Vestry minutes 1868-1892 (19963).

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Parish Register 1877-1937 (19961).

⁶Plaque on the school building.

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Grace Episcopal Church complex
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CONTINUATION SHEET Maryland ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 4

ADDENDUM TO SIGNIFICANCE

Grace Episcopal Church is a carpenter Gothic structure typical of the small parish churches built in the United States in the second half of the 19th century. This particular example has a very steeply sloped roof and a bellcote with a tall steeple-like roof, giving it a grander appearance than other similar buildings (e.g., St. Paul's Church, Hillsboro, Caroline County, and St. Paul's Chapel, Crownsville, Anne Arundel County, Maryland).

The chapel of ease is significant as one of the few structures of its size and origin to survive. Its continued use as part of the church complex is also rare.

Dorchester Parish was one of the parishes of the Episcopal Church erected in Maryland in 1692-1693. These were the first parishes set up in the province. Dorchester Parish, of which Grace Church is a part, continues to be a separate parish.

The school building here is thought to be the first such constructed in Dorchester County. In any case, it is certainly one of the earliest, perhaps the earliest, surviving in the county to the present day.

HISTORY

The school located on the property has been moved twice. Originally located in a field by the road leading to James Island, it was moved to Mulberry Grove farm, and then to its present site. Believed to have been built circa 1785, it was purchased in 1855 by Traver Spicer of Mulberry Grove. In 1855 it was known as the "old schoolhouse". Spicer moved the building to his farm and used it as a smokehouse. When the Spicer family sold the farm in the 1950s, they wanted to preserve the school. In 1959 they donated it to the Grace Foundation for their use so the school would be accessible to the public. The exterior of the building remains basically intact, used for modern facilities.

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HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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CONTINUATION SHEET Maryland ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 5

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES, continued

Telephone interview with Mrs. J. Stapleforte Neild, Ridgeton Farm, Taylor's Island, Maryland. Mrs. Neild is a descendant of Traver Spicer and her family has many of his papers. (Re: schoolhouse)

Skirven, Percy G. The First Parishes of the Province of Maryland. Baltimore: The Norman, Remington Co., 1923.