

VLR-6/2/70 NRHP-9/15/70

Form 10-57
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Virginia	
COUNTY: York	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:
Grace Church

AND/OR HISTORIC:
York - Hampton Parish Church

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
SE side of Rt. 1003, NE side of intersection with Main St.

CITY OR TOWN:
Yorktown

STATE: Virginia CODE: 45 COUNTY: York CODE: 199

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	PUBLIC ACQUISITION:	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)				
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Vestry of Grace Church

CITY OR TOWN: Yorktown STATE: Virginia CODE: 45

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
York County Court House

CITY OR TOWN: Yorktown STATE: Virginia CODE: 45

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Historic American Buildings Survey Inventory

DATE OF SURVEY: 1959 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Library of Congress

CITY OR TOWN: Washington STATE: D. C. CODE: 08

STATE: Virginia

COUNTY: York

FOR NPS USE ONLY

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Grace Church is one of the few, if not the only, surviving colonial structures built of marl. Marl is soft when first cut, but exposure to the air hardens it almost to stone. Unfortunately the marl walls of Grace Church cannot be seen, except in patches, because of a stucco covering added in the nineteenth century.

The outside dimensions of the original portions of the church are 55'-9" by 28'-8". The church received a 29' long north wing early in its history, but it was destroyed in the fire of 1814 and never rebuilt. The rest of the church was also gutted in 1814, with the walls being the only colonial portions of the church to survive. Nearly all parts of the present church date from the restoration of 1848, when the building received its Greek Revival profile. The belfry, western doorway, and circular window were added in an 1926 renovation.

The church is surrounded at its base by the original water table, above which is a second exterior offset. The location of a south door can be seen where portions of the stucco have been removed. A modern parish house has been added to the south end of the building.

Grace Church is picturesquely situated overlooking the York River. The churchyard, with its many fine colonial tombs, is one of the most beautiful in Virginia.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|--|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 19th Century | |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The present Grace Church, originally called York-Hampton Parish Church, is thought to be the third parish church of York Parish, created about 1638. The first two churches, erected about 1642 and 1667, respectively, were located two miles below Yorktown at the old York settlement. In 1706 York Parish merged with Hampton Parish (formerly called Chiskiack Parish) to form York-Hampton Parish. Built about 1697, Grace Church was the only church to serve York-Hampton Parish. Evidence for its date of erection is Governor Francis Nicholson's pledge recorded in the county order book, November 26, 1696, of twenty pounds sterling toward the building of a brick church, provided the church be built within two years. Instead the church was built of marl slabs from the cliffs above the York River.

During the Revolution when the church was used as a magazine by Lord Cornwallis, it lost its windows and pews. In 1814 it was accidentally burned. The church remained in ruins until 1848 when it was rebuilt, this time without the original north wing, and stuccoed. It was at this time that the name was changed from York-Hampton Parish Church to Grace Church. During the War between the States, Federal troops erected a signal tower on the roof. The interior, which was used as a hospital, suffered extensive damage, and the colonial churchyard wall was demolished. The church was returned to use about 1870.

The bell, still in use, is inscribed "County of York, Virginia, 1725." The bell probably hung originally in the court house, but it is known to have rung from the church's belfry during colonial times. It is uncertain when the bell broke, but its fragments were carried off during the War between the States. The pieces were found in Philadelphia in 1882, the bell was recast and returned to Grace Church in 1889.

Grace Church also has the second oldest set of communion silver in Virginia. The chalice and flagon of 1649-50 are inscribed to Hampton Parish in York County. The flagon is thought to be the earliest English silver flagon in an American church.

Prominent parishioners of the York-Hampton Parish Church included the Nelson family, three of whom lie buried in the churchyard - Thomas Nelson (1677-1745), William Nelson (1711-72), and General Thomas Nelson (1738-89), a signer of the Declaration of Independence.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Mason, George Carrington, Colonial Churches of Tidewater Virginia. Richmond: 1945.
 Rawlings, James Scott, Virginia's Colonial Churches. Richmond: 1963.
 Rose, Harold Wickliffe, The Colonial Houses of Worship in America. New York: 1963.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE Degrees Minutes Seconds	LONGITUDE Degrees Minutes Seconds		LATITUDE Degrees Minutes Seconds	LONGITUDE Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		37 ° 14 ' 09 "	76 ° 30 ' 28 "	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **1 acre**

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Staff, Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission, James W. Moody, Jr., Director

ORGANIZATION: **Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission** DATE: **March 26, 1970**

STREET AND NUMBER:
Room 1116, Ninth Street State Office Building

CITY OR TOWN: **Richmond** STATE: **Virginia** CODE: **45**

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name _____

Dr. Edward P. Alexander, Chairman

Title **Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission**

Date _____

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

ATTEST:

 Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

