

VLR-8/15/72 NRHP-12/5/72

Form 10-300  
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

|                         |      |
|-------------------------|------|
| STATE:<br>VIRGINIA      |      |
| COUNTY:<br>CHARLES CITY |      |
| FOR NPS USE ONLY        |      |
| ENTRY NUMBER            | DATE |

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

1. NAME

COMMON:  
WESTOVER CHURCH

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
WESTOVER CHURCH

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:  
.3 mi. S of Rt. 5, 5 mi. W of Charles City

CITY OR TOWN:  
Charles City vicinity (William Lloyd Scott, Eighth District Congressman)

|                   |            |                         |             |
|-------------------|------------|-------------------------|-------------|
| STATE<br>Virginia | CODE<br>51 | COUNTY:<br>Charles City | CODE<br>039 |
|-------------------|------------|-------------------------|-------------|

3. CLASSIFICATION

| CATEGORY<br>(Check One)   | OWNERSHIP  | STATUS  |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> District<br><input type="checkbox"/> Site<br><input type="checkbox"/> Object<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building<br><input type="checkbox"/> Structure<br> | <input type="checkbox"/> Public<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private<br><input type="checkbox"/> Both<br>Public Acquisition:<br><input type="checkbox"/> In Process<br><input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied<br><input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied<br><input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress<br>Yes:<br><input type="checkbox"/> Restricted<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

|  |                                     |   |  |                                   |
|--|-------------------------------------|---|--|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural  | <input type="checkbox"/> Government | <input type="checkbox"/> Park                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation  | <input type="checkbox"/> Comments |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial    | <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial | <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence    | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Educational   | <input type="checkbox"/> Military   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religious |  |                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment | <input type="checkbox"/> Museum     | <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific           |  |                                   |

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY The Reverend J. T. Alves

OWNER'S NAME:  
Vestry of Westover Church

STREET AND NUMBER:  
R.F.D. 2

CITY OR TOWN:  
Charles City

STATE:  
Virginia

CODE:  
23030

51

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:  
Charles City County Court House

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:  
Charles City

STATE:  
Virginia

CODE:  
51

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
Historic American Buildings Survey Inventory

DATE OF SURVEY: 1958

Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
Library of Congress

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:  
Washington

STATE:  
D.C.

CODE:  
11

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: VIRGINIA  
 COUNTY: CHARLES CITY  
 ENTRY NUMBER:  
 DATE:  
 FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

Westover Church lies a little south of Route 5, about 4 miles east of the junction of Route 5 and Route 156, in a grove of trees above Herring Creek, a branch of the nearby James, and is approached by a lane through fields. The rectangular brick church measures 60' 6" X 28' on the interior and is laid in Flemish bond with glazed headers above the bevelled water table. The use of glazing is less regular in the front gable than in the body of the building. English bond is employed below the water table, and queen closers mark the jambs and the corners. Yellowish rubbed brick suggests quoins at the four corners of the building, and the same type brick marks the jambs of the four windows on the north side and the three windows farthest from the chancel on the south. The jambs of the south window nearest the chancel, originally the south doorway, were replaced when the doorway was altered into a window. The rounded arches laid in a double course of rowlocks above the north and south windows replace what were probably originally segmental arches. The gallery window in the west end with a rounded arch of rubbed brick in fulls and double halves is a modern replacement, as is the west doorway with its segmental arched pediment, semi-circular arched opening, tympanum with glazed headers and shallow pilasters of rubbed brick. The east end has been greatly altered, and the present door, windows and surrounding areas are post-colonial. The side walls are generally in good condition. The present clipped gable wooden shingle roof with the kick and the modillioned cornice are a recent restoration by Orin M. Bullock, Jr., of Baltimore, although the roof trusses are original. This roof replaces a roof with deep eaves and Italianate brackets dating from 1867.

The present interior of the church bears little resemblance to the colonial interior. The west gallery and the vestry in the east were added in 1867. At the same time, the floor was raised from its original level, so that there are now several steps under the gallery. Furthermore, in 1970, Mr. Bullock replaced the late-nineteenth century tongue and groove ceiling with a segmentally arched plaster ceiling.

Westover Church owns several fine pieces of silver including a paten, chalice and cover made in London in 1694-95 and donated by Sarah Braine, and a chalice and paten made in London in 1731-32, which was possibly made by George Jones.

G.H.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

3. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian       16th Century       18th Century       20th Century  
 15th Century       17th Century       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/Phi- | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry    | osophy  | <u>Local history</u>                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention   | <input type="checkbox"/> Science                  | _____   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape   | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture                | _____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | Architecture                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Human-            | _____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature  | itarian   | _____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Military    | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater                  | _____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            | <input type="checkbox"/> Music       | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation           | _____   |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Westover Church is important not only for its numerous historical associations, but because it is an excellent example of the rectilinear form of colonial Virginia church architecture. The picturesquely sited building has long been a familiar landmark along Virginia's historic Route 5.

The Parish of Westover is one of the oldest in the country, being recognized in colonial records as early as 1625. No church building is known to have existed at this time, however. The parish originally included land on both sides of the James River, but the boundaries were altered several times. The land across the river was lost in the early 1720's, and the boundaries became coterminous with those of Charles City County in 1725. The name of the parish, as well as that of the famous nearby Westover Plantation, came from the West family which was granted the West Hundred.

The first church of Westover Parish stood a few hundred yards from the original Westover plantation house, up river from the present church. This first church's still remaining churchyard contains, among others, a tombstone with the date 1637 (now obliterated), said to be the oldest existing stone in Virginia. The present building was constructed in 1731. The church was abandoned for nearly 30 years after 1805 as a result of the Disestablishment, during which time it often served as a barn. It is also said to have been used as a stable by Federal Troops during the War Between the States.

The church has undergone several renovations beginning in 1867 when most of the interior and possibly the roof were replaced. The latest restoration was undertaken by Orin M. Bullock, Jr., of Baltimore and involved the replacement of the roof, cornice and segmentally arched ceiling. The west moulded brick doorway and gallery window had been restored in 1956.

Presidents William Henry Harrison and Benjamin Harrison of Berkeley, and John Tyler of Sherwood Forest, as well as the families of such well-known nearby plantations as Westover, Shirley and Belle Air have worshipped in Westover Church.

G.H.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Mason, George Carrington, Colonial Churches of Tidewater Virginia.  
 Richmond: Whittet & Shepperson, 1945, pp. 59-65.  
 Rawlings, James Scott, Virginia's Colonial Churches, An Architectural Guide.  
 Richmond: Garrett & Massie, 1963, pp. 116-120.  
 Rose, Harold Wickliffe, The Colonial Houses of Worship in America.  
 New York: Hastings House, Publishers, 1963, pp. 477-479.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

| LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES<br>DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY |          |         |         | O<br>R  | LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES<br>DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY<br>OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES |         |  |  |
|--|----------|---------|---------|---------|---|---------|--|--|
| CORNER   | LATITUDE |         |         |         | LONGITUDE   |         |  |  |
|  | Degrees  | Minutes | Seconds | Degrees | Minutes   | Seconds |  |  |
| NW   | 37 °     | 20'     | 08"     | 77 °    | 09'   | 39"     |  |  |
| NE   | 37 °     | 20'     | 08"     | 77 °    | 09'   | 26"     |  |  |
| SE   | 37 °     | 19'     | 42"     | 77 °    | 09'   | 26"     |  |  |
| SW   | 37 °     | 19'     | 42"     | 77 °    | 09'   | 39"     |  |  |

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 40 acres

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

| STATE: | CODE | COUNTY | CODE |
|--------|------|--------|------|
|        |      |        |      |
|        |      |        |      |
|        |      |        |      |
|        |      |        |      |

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:  
Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Staff

ORGANIZATION: Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission DATE: June, 1972

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

CITY OR TOWN: Richmond STATE: Virginia CODE: 51

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

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 \_\_\_\_\_

J. R. Fishburne, Director

Title Va. Historic Landmarks Commission

Date \_\_\_\_\_

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

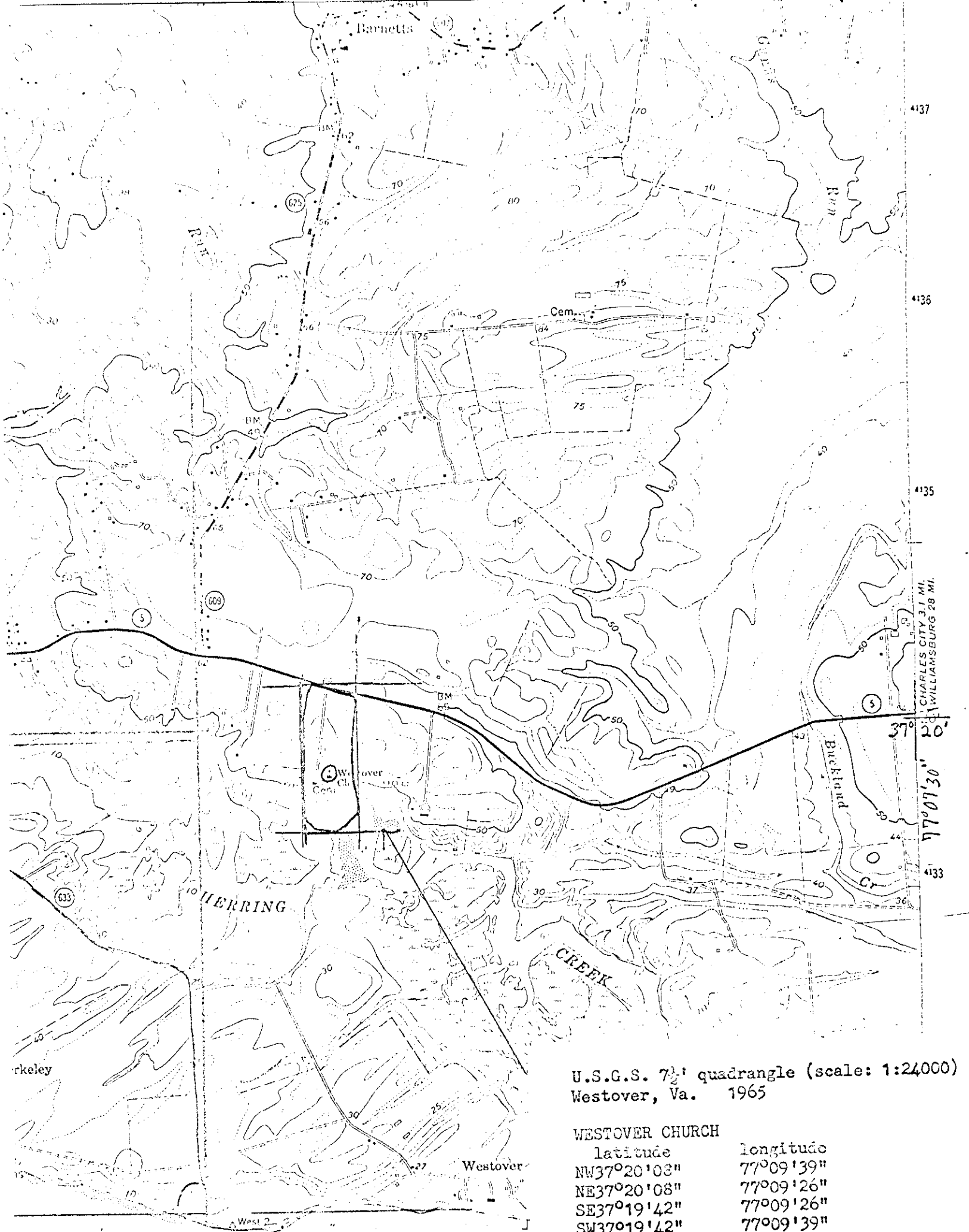
Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Keeper of The National Register

Date \_\_\_\_\_

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



U.S.G.S. 7 1/2' quadrangle (scale: 1:24000)  
 Westover, Va. 1965

| WESTOVER CHURCH |           |
|-----------------|-----------|
| latitude        | longitude |
| NW37°20'03"     | 77°09'39" |
| NE37°20'08"     | 77°09'26" |
| SE37°19'42"     | 77°09'26" |
| SW37°19'42"     | 77°09'39" |