

VLR-3/21/72 NRHP-11/3/72

Form 10-300  
(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: MIDDLESEX	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON: CHRIST CHURCH

AND OR HISTORIC: CHRIST CHURCH

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: N E side of Rt. 638, .1 mi, N of intersection with Rt. 33.

CITY OR TOWN: Saluda vicinity (Thomas N. Downing, First District Congressman)

STATE Virginia	CODE 51	COUNTY: Middlesex	CODE 119
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3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District Site <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
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 checked="" 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 The Right Reverend R. F. Gibson

OWNER'S NAME: Church Schools in Diocese of Virginia

STREET AND NUMBER: 110 West Franklin Street

CITY OR TOWN: Richmond STATE: Virginia CODE: 51

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC: Middlesex County Court House

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Saluda STATE: Virginia CODE: 51

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

DATE OF SURVEY: 1934  Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Library of Congress

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Washington STATE: D.C. CODE: 11

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DESCRIPTION	(Check One)					
CONDITION	<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

Located in the village of Christ Church about two and a half miles east of Saluda, and the same distance southeast of Urbanna, the second parish church of Christ Church Parish in Middlesex County is a rectangular building with a gable roof and exterior dimensions of sixty feet by thirty three and a half feet. The fine Flemish bond on the southern and western walls is characterized by its glazed headers and although the remaining walls are laid in Flemish bond, their surface is only occasionally marked by the glazed masonry. Several courses just below the cornice have been rebuilt. In the original order for the construction the bricks were to be two and one half bricks thick above the watertable and one and one half in the gables. The ovolo watertable which encircles the building was ordered to be three bricks thick and appears to have been repointed especially on the south wall. The vestry orders also indicate that the gable roof was originally intended to be clipped. Today rubbed brick and queen closers mark the corners of the building. The queen closers which flank many of the present window openings show that the windows have been altered and that they had previously hung at a slightly higher level.

A gabled roof vestibule, which was added to the church in the 1843 restoration, shelters the entrance to the western end. The vestibule has arched four-panel double doors, the superior panels of which form a bisected fanlight. Brick pilasters flank the door and above the entrance a molded cornice encloses the brick pediment which is pierced by a blind oculus. Upon the glazed header base of this western wall sits the repaired gable end which is distinguished by an oculus and raking cornice.

On the south side of the church glazed headers are used in a substantial portion of the wall. Today four semi-circular arched windows light the south side of the building. The fourth was created in 1931 when the door to the chancel on the south side was made into a rather diminished window. The original doorway hung at a lower level than the other windows and resulted in this diminution of the scale. Although the bay is now four feet wide, the early doorway was ordered to be six feet four inches tall by three feet wide. Below the watertable the queen closers that mark the colonial opening help to support the contention that the door was four feet wide. When augmented by the typical trim, this width would probably be necessary to form a finished opening of six feet four inches by three feet. It seems that the jambs of the windows on this side have been replaced or repointed.

The northern wall has three windows similar to those on the south side. In 1931 a doorway was created in the northeast corner of the wall to give access to the newly constructed sacristy. Although it is possible that this doorway replaced a window, parish opinion generally recalls only three windows in existence before 1931. Of the other three churches built in the parish during this decade none had more than three windows to a side. The one bay sacristy on the north side has a hipped roof pierced by a chimney and a door on the north.

On the east end of the church where a great chancel window once occupied the space, the wall is cut by a smaller arched window which was installed in 1843. Although the exact shape and height of the earlier bay is uncertain, a width of ten feet can be determined by the evidence of queen closers which flank the present bay. The exact shape of the window can not be ascertained because the great window head extended beyond the surviving

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See continuation sheet.

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early brickwork. A rather vague set of specifications described the ordered window "to be from the arch within six feet of the sill, ten foot wide." This is taken by James Scott Rawlings, the authority on Virginia's colonial churches, to mean that the window was ten feet wide and the height of the window was to extend from the bottom of the arch down to within six feet of the wooden floor. Rawlings speculates that the window might have been similar to the semi-circular window at St. Peters in New Kent County or to another of comparable dimensions at the Lower Chapel at Christ Church.

On the interior the low box pews line the central aisle which is paved with flagstones bought in 1931 from the Upper Church of 1773 located at Churchview. Today the ceiling curves in a low graceful ellipse above the interior which was completely destroyed during the "Disestablishment." It is not possible to say how the pews and the pulpit were arranged because although the vestry records exist, they supply only issued requests and make no distinction between those ordered and those carried out. During one of the restorations when plaster was being removed, a large square hole in the north wall twelve feet from the east wall was discovered and may have been the socket of the large beam of the rood screen. This rood screen was undoubtedly wooden with balusters or tracery above the lower panels. The Christ Church Vestry Book of 1666 cites the precedent of a rood screen in the first Christ Church: "Item. That ye Mother Church be called by the name of Christ Church .....building the Mother Church, in every respect to be done and finished according to the Middle Plantacon Church (in Williamsburg), to be finished in six months, glass and iron worke convenient time to be given for its transportation out of England."

In 1942 the Garden Club of Virginia enlarged the area of the colonial churchyard and encircled the region with a high brick wall. An outstanding assortment of colonial tombs are laid out to the south and the east of the church. To the south are found three table tombs whose panelled sides end in corners splayed with bulbous scrolls. Other decorative motifs such as ellipses, fans, fluting, and acanthus leaves ornament the magnificent collection of tomb sculpture. An attempt to restore some of the tombs has at least reunited the fragments which had been scattered about the churchyard.

4. 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)

1712-1714

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 type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry    | losophy   | _____                                    |
| <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

Begun in 1712 and finished in 1714, Christ Church in Middlesex County is the second parish church to be constructed on this site and is an invaluable vestige of one of Virginia's most significant colonial parishes. Preserved in its country setting, amid elaborately sculptured colonial tombs, Christ Church evokes the tradition of such illustrious Virginians as Sir Henry Chicheley, a seventeenth century deputy governor and Ralph Wormeley of Rosegill. The original mother church was built in 1666 when Christ Church parish was established from a union of Lancaster and Peanckatanck parishes. In spite of this union, Christ Church Parish continued to bear evidence of the earlier divisions in that it was composed of three precincts which included the Upper Parish (Lancaster) served by three chapels, the Lower Parish (Peanckatanck) served by two chapels, and the Middle Parish which had the mother church.

The records relating to the construction of Christ Church are supported by several inscriptions on the church itself. Three bricks, now incorporated into the tympanum of the western vestibule, bear the inscribed date 1714 which marked the completion of the walls of the second church. In addition, the letters "IH" upon one of these bricks refers to John Hipkin who is credited with the carpentry, "plumbing" and glazing. Two other bricks are marked with "EC" and a form of "HI" respectively, and the name "W. Johnson" appears on a fourth. Christ Church's mason, Alexander Graves, left no initial in his work.

Like many Anglican churches across Virginia, Christ Church was abandoned during the Disestablishment following the Revolution. Although the parish was represented at the Diocesan Council of 1821, little evidence of church activity from 1813 to 1840 remains. In his book Old Churches, Ministers, and Families of Virginia, written in 1857, Bishop William Meade eloquently described the situation at Christ Church: "And what has become of the old Mother-Church - the Great Church, as she is styled in her journal - standing in view of the wide Rappahannock, midway between Rosegill and Brandon? More perhaps than fifty years ago it was deserted. Its roof decayed and fell in. Everything within it returned to its native dust. But nature abhors a vacuum. A sycamore-tree sprung up within its walls." By 1840 when the parish's revival was initiated, the cupola (ordered in 1718), the stone aisles (1731) and the churchyard wall (1733) were gone.

The church's first restoration, which commenced in 1843, included the conversion of the chancel into a vestry, the reduction of the large chancel window and the addition of the vestibule on the west. At some later date the chancel was again established. Further renovations took place around 1931 when the sacristy was built on the east end of the north

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side, also a window was created from the doorway on the south and a new floor was installed in the chancel. The flagstones along the center aisle of the church were also purchased in 1931 from the Upper Church of 1773 located at Churchview.

The parish is fortunate in owning the only colonial vestry book which predates Bacon's Rebellion of 1676. Beginning with the record of Lancaster (Upper) Parish in 1663, the book bears the record of the united Christ Church Parish from 1666 to 1767. The church silver, damaged by fire and remoulded in 1855 by S. Kirk and Son of Baltimore, remains a vestige of the original set given to the church in 1687 by the first Ralph Wormeley of Rosegill.

The fine colonial and early republic tombs within the churchyard attest to the importance of the church's colonial congregation. The grave of Sir Henry Chicheley, Knight and Deputy Governor from 1678 to 1680 is located beneath the Communion Table. Here beneath the church lies Lady Madame Catherine Wormeley who died in 1685 and was the wife of the first Ralph Wormeley and later of Chicheley. On the southside of the churchyard lies the tomb of John Grymes of Brandon in Middlesex County and on the east side of the church are found a majority of the Wormeley family tombs. Among the later generations of the Wormeley family buried at Christ Church are Ralph Wormeley of Rosegill who died in 1806 and his wife Eleanor Tayloe Wormeley who died nine years later.

In 1921 the Episcopal Diocese established the Christchurch School, a boys preparatory school, on land adjacent to the churchyard. Christchurch now serves not only as a parish church but as a chapel for the school.

R.S.

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Colonial Churches in the Original Colony of Virginia, Southern Churchman Company, Richmond, 1908.  
 Meade, Bishop William, Old Churches, Ministers, and Families of Virginia, vol. 1, 369, Genealogical Publishing Company, 1966.  
 Rawlings, James Scott, Virginia's Colonial Churches: An Architectural Guide, Garrett & Massie, Richmond, 1963.  
 Rose, Harold Wickliffe, The Colonial Houses of Worship in America, Hastings House, Publishers, Inc., 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			LONGITUDE		
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	0			37°	36'	34"
NE	0			76°	32'	48"
SE	0					
SW	0					

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: Less than 10 acres.

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:  
VIRGINIA HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION STAFF

ORGANIZATION: VIRGINIA HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION DATE: MARCH 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 James W. Moody, Jr.  
 Title Va. Historic Landmarks Commission  
 Date MAR 21 1972

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 \_\_\_\_\_

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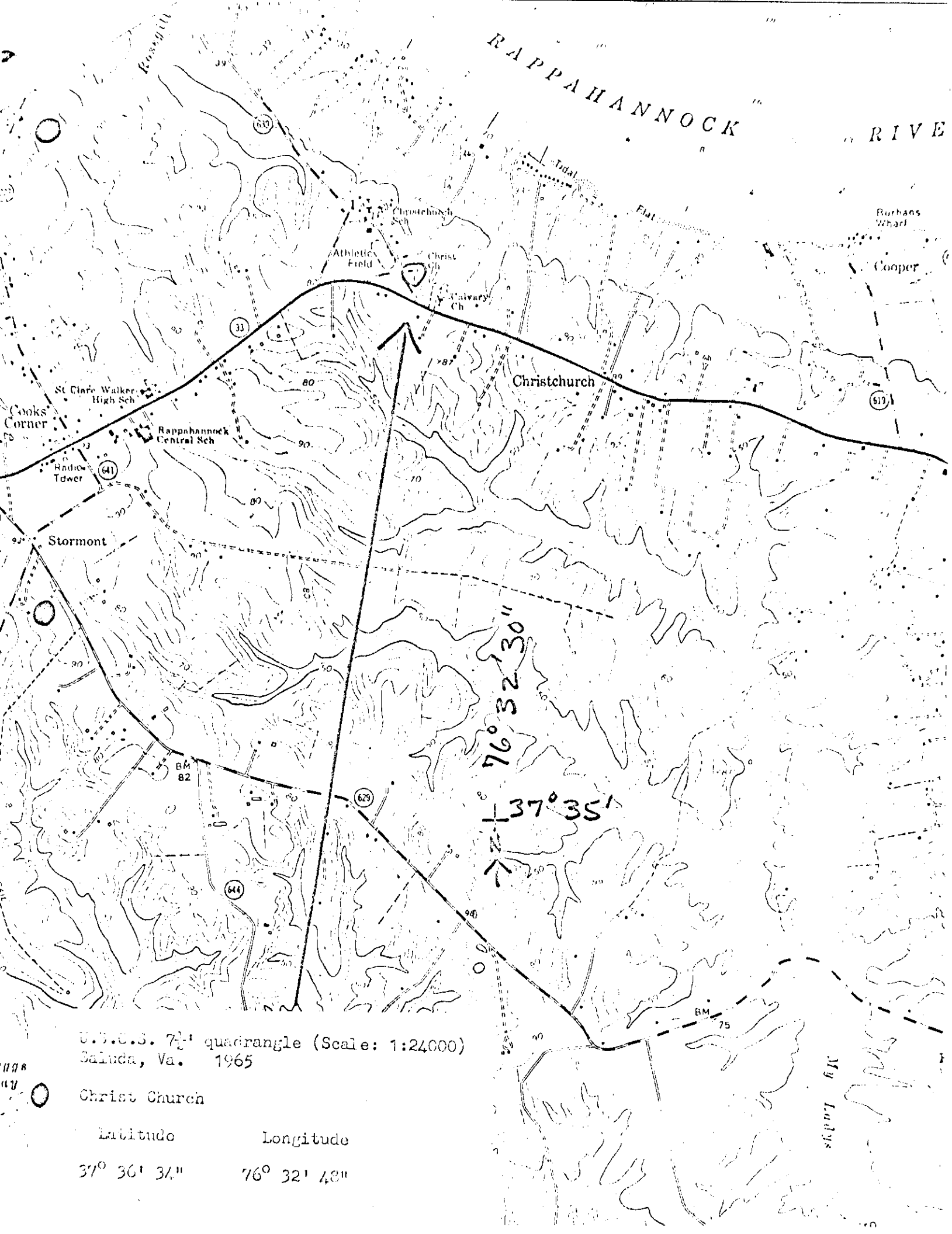
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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY INVENTORY  
1959 Federal  
Library of Congress  
Washington, D. C. Code: 11



RAPPAHANNOCK RIVER

Christchurch Sch  
Athletic Field  
Christ Ch  
Calvary Ch

Christchurch

St. Clare Walker High Sch  
Rappahannock Central Sch  
Cooks Corner  
Radio Tower

Stormont

76° 32' 30"

37° 35'

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

Christ Church

Latitude	Longitude
37° 36' 34"	76° 32' 48"

Mr. Ludg's