

**Episcopal Church Women's Trip to
Yeocomico Cople Parish Episcopal Church**

Monday, May 22nd

8:30 AM, Church Parking Lot

Our final activity/event for the year will be our trip to Yeocomico Cople Parish (Episcopal) Church in Kinsale, the oldest church in Westmoreland County. This historic trip will be on Monday, May 22. It should be interesting, worthwhile, and fun! See below for the history of the church.

If you plan to go, please contact Debbie Garland (jrroverman@verizon.net) or Elaine Wyant (elaine_wyant7@comcast.net) in advance so we won't leave without you and you can be included in the lunch count. We will meet in the Christ Church parking lot at 8:30 to car pool.



Cople Episcopal Parish - Yeocomico Church

Yeocomico Church is located on Rt. 606 between Kinsale and Tucker Hill. Yeocomico Church is the oldest church in Westmoreland County. Originally built in 1655 of oak timbers sheathed with clapboards, the church was rebuilt in 1706 with bricks fired in a nearby kiln.

The church, built in 1706, or almost precisely a hundred years after the first settlement at Jamestown, takes its name from Yeocomico River, flowing into the Potomac and dividing Westmoreland from Northumberland. It stands near the Potomac shaded by trees and protected by a brick wall, the restoration of an old one, which even in 1857, according to Bishop Meade's testimony, was "mouldering away." The church also has been considerably restored, but it remains notable among Virginia Colonial churches for the curious roof lines created by a gentler slope and then a steeper slope in the gable, and for

the porch on the T-side of the cross which has the same broken roof lines. The placing of the windows is likewise unusual, and though the general pattern of the brickwork is the regulation Flemish bond and glazed header combination, there is a quaint variation of that pattern in the gable of the porch and, over the door of the porch, an unusual combination of three arches, the top one based on the two lower— suggesting the top of a mullioned window.

Altogether the suggestion of the Gothic is very strong—even if there is also a hint of Strawberry Hill or Queen Anne Gothic. Briefly, while simplicity and dignity are the notes of the typical Virginia Colonial church, quaintness is the keynote of this one. The building seems to have been in a tumble-down condition when the War of 1812 came along, but Meade describes feelingly the acts of desecration committed on it, not by the British this time, but by a detachment of our own men who were watching the British forces in the river. In the good Bishop's words, the baptismal font was "used as a vessel in which to prepare the excitements of ungodly mirth" until it was rescued by a "venerable man of the Presbyterian connection."

Mary Ball, who afterwards married Augustine Washington and became the mother of George, used to attend this church in her girlhood, riding over (on her young dapple gray horse, perhaps) from the home of her guardian, Captain George Eskridge, at Sandy Point nearby. Not far away is the region of Nomini Creek upon which stood Nomini Hall, the seat of Councillor Robert Carter, grandson of the first Robert, called King, where the young Princetonian, Philip Vickers Fithian, was tutor, and delighted among other things in the Councillor's performance upon the harmonica. Nearer Nomini Hall, however—and vanished now like the Hall itself—was Nomini Church which Fithian could see as an agreeable prospect from his bedroom window.

In the neighborhood—on Pope's Creek—was Wakefield where Washington was born, and along Nomini Creek, Bushfield where Washington visited his brother, John Augustine. On Nomini Cliffs above the Potomac still stands Thomas Lee's great house Stratford, now being made into a memorial of Robert E. Lee, who was born there, in right of Light Horse Harry's earlier marriage.



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