

Georgetown Walking Tour

Date: Sunday, January 13, 1974

Time: 10:00 A.M.

Where: The Old Stone House, 3051 M St., N.W., Georgetown

Cost: \$1.50 per person

Reservations: Call the Pioneer America Society, 626 S. Washington St., Falls Church, Va. 22046, Telephone: (703) 532-6680 — and mail your payment before January 13.

The tour will be limited to 30 people, on a first come basis.

YES, the health food store and restaurant, where the tour will end, can only accommodate 20 for lunch — again, first come basis.

The first part of the tour will be a visit to the Old Stone House. Built in 1765 by Christopher Laymon, a cabinet maker, it is the oldest intact house in the District of Columbia. Three stories high, the front room has always been used as a craft shop. Long the home of Mr. Laymon, it was lived in continuously until 1940. Vacant during the 1940s, it was acquired by the National Park Service in 1950, restored and opened to the public in 1960. It is now open 7 days a week from 9:30 to



The Old Stone House in 1973. (Photo by Edward W. Koch)

5:00 p.m. The attendants dress in early costumes.

Rae Koch will oversee our visit to the Old Stone House. Jim Putnam will conduct the tour of old Georgetown, in-

cluding a stop at the cabinet shop of Mr. Dave Burger.

There is plenty of parking at the Old Stone House on Sunday.

Ewell's Chapel — Vanishing History

By Tommye S. Burton
Gainesville, Va.

Ewell's Chapel (also known as Grace Chapel) is located in Prince William County on the west side of Route 625 just north of where Routes 15 and 625 cross, and about a mile north of Hickory Grove. It is on the Middleburg quadrangle.

The earliest record for the Chapel property is in the County Deed Book, Liber 19, Folio 415-416, dated August 10, 1847, and signed by Jesse Ewell and his wife, Ellen M.

The property was deed to five trustees to build a Chapel, to be named "Rescol," for the use of the Methodist Episcopal Church South, — "and when not in use by the ministers of said church — shall be free for the use of any other Christian sect or church."

The Chapel was acquired in 1884 by the Episcopal denomination from Sudley Methodist Church. It then became known as Grace Chapel.

The structure is original. It was re-weatherboarded in the early 1900s. The interior walls and ceiling are paneled with hand-planed boards.

The historical significance of Ewell's Chapel is its role in the Civil War, and the stark simplicity of a structure erected by a family descended of Virginia gentry, but of moderate means, during a time when travel to a church, even a short distance away, was a trying ordeal.

The little building of frame construction is situated at the foot of the Bull Run Mountains, whose ruggedness made them practically inaccessible during that era.

The Chapel is in a grove of oak trees on what was then a part of the Old Carolina Road. The history of this trail began in 1662 with Susquehannock Indians. It became commonly known as "Rogue's Road." During the Civil War, the Chapel became a semi-ruin.

Of all the irregulars engaged in guerrilla warfare, the most famous is probably John Singleton Mosby. The entire area was a part of "Mosby's Confederacy." Mosby was the heroic, romantic Virginian who had amazing talent for befuddling the Federal High command, and disrupting supply and communication lines.

On his jaunts through Northern Virginia, Mosby often crossed the Bull Run ridge or retreated to safety there. He frequented the Ewell tract, passing Edge Hill and Dunblane (the Ewell family homes), and Ewell's Chapel. (Dunblane and Edge Hill are still standing, but in bad repair, pending settlement of estate.)

Gen. George G. Meade learned of Mosby's movements and planned an ambush at the Chapel. He sent 40 mounted men and 100 infantry, who posted themselves there. Mosby, with 30 men, appeared about sunrise and charged the cavalry, who ran toward the infantry and led Mosby's band into the trap. But the infantry fired ineffectively from the ground and the Rebels immediately

TOMMY BUSTON PAPERS
MMS BOX 501 FROM

Fairfax City, Virginia

By Mary Sullivan Cliver



Ewell's Chapel in 1973 before a clean-up party got to work on the grounds.

Fairfax City has survived Indian Wars, the Revolution, the Depression, fire, flood, and wind, and now the very thing that brought it into being may serve to turn it into the same unidentifiable asphalt blur that much of the rest of Northern Virginia has become.

Fairfax was part of a large grant to Thomas, the sixth Lord Fairfax. It was undeveloped until the middle of the eighteenth century, despite the existence of good farmland, because of the constant danger of Indians raids and the isolation of the interior areas. King Carter, of Tidewater Virginia fame, acquired a large tract within the Fairfax grant; William Fitzhugh, William Moore, Cadwallader Jones, and Lewis Saunders also held land in the area of what is now Fairfax City. The prospects of copper in the area caused a pre-existing Indian trail from Occoquan to Chantilly to be developed. The copper was never mined, but the location of the road was a deciding factor in the subsequent location of the western portion of the Little River Turnpike, the Fairfax County Courthouse and, in recent years, some of the most rapid growth and development in the nation.

Settlement took place slowly at first, beginning about 1690. After the Indian trail became Ox Road, permanent homes were constructed and small settlements grew. Truro Parish was founded by the Church of England in the mid-eighteenth century and first met in a tobacco barn thought to be located on the Middle Ridge, now the site of a housing development. It was decided to erect a church building of bricks after the fashion of The Falls Church. The vestrymen included Mr. Edward Payne, Col. George Washington, Col. G. William Fairfax, Mr. Alexander Henderson, William Linton, and Thomas Ford. The glebe lands were to be from the Manger tract, now the Brecon Ridge subdivision.

public for support in rescuing a sbred of Virginia's heritage.

Donations for the restoration of the Chapel may be sent to Grace Chapel Restoration Fund, Mrs. John Marsh, Treasurer, 6305 Catharpin Road, Gainesville, Va. 22065. Donations are tax deductible.

scattered and dispersed, escaping again to the mountains.

The evidence of the ambush is documented in the *Official Records*, Vol. XXVII, Part III, p. 255, in a letter to Gen. O. O. Howard from Gen. Meade, who said, "thus the prettiest chance in the world to dispose of Mr. Mosby was lost."

A Union soldier, a sergeant in the 17th Pennsylvania, with a spyglass, had climbed a tree just over the gate leading to Edge Hill. He was shot from the tree and killed by Mosby. The splintered trunk of the cedar tree remains today, a victim of the elements.

The Union soldiers proceeded to Ewells, where they took Dr. Jesse Ewell prisoner. The dead soldier was left and buried by neighbors. It is logical to assume he was buried at the Chapel, but his grave has not been identified.

A family named Owens, evicted from their home, lived in the Chapel during the War. There a son, Charles, was born.

A small boy, Calvin Coolidge Teale, is buried in the churchyard. He was the son of a tenant farmer.

The Ewells are buried in the family cemetery at Edge Hill.

Gen. Richard Stoddert Ewell, cousin

to Dr. Jesse Ewell, was brought to Dunblane after his leg had been amputated following the Battle of Gainesville. While there, his bodyguard of cavalry was quartered in the grove at the Chapel.

Afer the Civil War the Chapel was restored and used until it again fell into decline with the advent of the automobile.

Historic Ewell Chapel, over 120 years old, faces demolition if a means of preserving it does not appear soon.

If it goes to the highest bidder, another chapter of the county's vanishing history goes with it, into oblivion. At a time when the county is experiencing many problems attributed to its extremely rapid growth, its historic landmarks are disappearing.

The Chapel belongs to St. Paul's Episcopal Church. The congregation is in the predicament of being liable for the bazardous condition of the Chapel, but of having no funds with which to restore it.

A Grace Chapel Restoration Fund has been established and a committee formed of church members and non-church members. An appeal is being made to the