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This coin minted in 1691, the year of the creation of the County, shows the profiles of King William III and Queen Mary of *England* for whom the County is named.

### *Shepherd's Church*

**T**HE RED brick building of Shepherd's Church, which stands back from the south side of Route 360 in King and Queen County some two miles east of the St. Stephen's crossroad, was built on the eve of the Civil War; but the church had its beginnings in the period immediately following the Revolutionary War and establishment of the Methodist Episcopal Church of America. This organization, which came into being at the Baltimore Conference of 1784 with Wesley's former Colonial Superintendent as its first bishop, gave a natural impetus to the spread of Methodism in the new nation. By 1790 or earlier, circuit riders were holding meetings in the Shepherd's Church area of King and Queen, although there was no meeting house until 1802.

In earlier years the residence of one William Shepherd had been used for meetings; and it was his son William who provided the 1802 church building, known as Shepherd's Chapel because it was converted from a schoolhouse he had built. Twenty-seven years later this second William Shepherd became father-in-law to the diarist John Walker of Chatham Hill. It is to Walker's record of the church's activities during his almost fifty years of membership, and his interest in preserving its earlier history (some facts of which he learned "from old Sisters Crowe and Prince, the first Methodists in this part of the country") that the present account is indebted. In an entry for 1857 the diarist recalls how on his return from Nashville, Tennessee, where he had joined the Methodist Church the year before, he was registered by the pastor as a member of "Shepherd's Chapel Class in Dec. 1819 at brother Shepherd's house." This must have been the meeting house rather than Shepherd's residence, since Walker adds that he had been a member "there" ever since. At any rate, the name by which the converted schoolhouse was known, bequeathed to the two succeeding church buildings, appropriately memorializes this pioneer King and Queen Methodist family.

William Shepherd's wooden schoolhouse-chapel, twice enlarged during its thirty-six years of service, was torn down in 1838 and replaced by a two-story 33-by-39-foot brick church on or near the same site. The total cost of the new structure is not recorded, but for making the bricks at eight dollars a thousand Lewis Jeffries was paid \$468.36. He also erected the building, which he began in early August and finished in late October. Shepherd and his son-in-law (who was already forty-four years old at the time of his marriage nine years earlier) appear to have shared the responsibilities of church leadership, for they bore the whole expense except for some two hundred dollars subscribed by the membership. Perhaps they were following the "class" plan originated by Wesley for paying the debt on a chapel in Bristol, England, an account of which Walker copied into his diary from the *Christian Advocate*:

The society was divided into classes . . . placed

in charge of the more affluent and prosperous brethren, who were required to collect from each a penny a week or if some were unable to give so much, to pay the difference.

The dedication sermon for this second Shepherd's Church was preached on Christmas Day 1838 by the Rev. Henry B. Cowles, and the last sermon from its pulpit by the Rev. Thomas Durham on the first Sunday in June 1859.

Later that month the twenty-year-old building was razed for the use of its bricks in the church which stands today. Although Walker dubbed Jeffries' structure "a mean piece of work," he was in favor of repairing rather than scrapping it, and did not make an advance subscription to the new project. Nevertheless, he adds, "I did not say that I would not help to pay something for the completion"; and when brickmaking began in April his hands were hauling planks to build the kiln and molding bricks under the direction of an expert hired from King William. Walker himself followed and recorded the plans and progress of the building in detail. It was to measure 39 by 56, and to stand on a new site to the north of what was then the main road and across it from the two earlier buildings. Brickwork and woodwork were in charge of William Hurt and Thomas McClelland respectively; flooring was bought in Norfolk; foundations were dug in June while the old church was being razed; and brick-laying began on July 3.

Unfortunately the bricks gave out, and work was delayed several weeks while a new kiln was being made and burnt. The walls were finally finished on September 21, "a very substantial illigant building"; but the delay resulted in a November freeze before the plasterer (Bayley of Loyds in Essex) could finish, and the stop of all work from mid-December until spring. It was the third week in May 1860 when Mr. March, a fine painter from Richmond, put the finishing touches and the building was ready for use. Shepherd's had been without a meeting house for almost a year; but this large church with its imported flooring and building specialists was a much more ambitious undertaking than the square brick structure of 1838 built by Lewis Jeffries of nearby Stevensville.

During the interval, meetings were held at members' homes: Walker records the dates when his "humble dwelling house" was thus honored. In April before painting had been finished in the new building, its acoustics were tested and pronounced "delightfully charming and melodious" and superior to those of the old church; visiting New England relatives of the Rev. John Shackford inspected the church and pitched hymns in various parts of it; and three days later a group of church members sang together there on Sunday. Finally on Saturday May 19 Walker's hands were busy cleaning up the churchyard in preparation for Mr. Shackford's initial sermon next day. No mention of the music on that occasion is made; but evidently there was interest in having a choir worthy of the fine acoustics, for the following summer a singing school was organized at the church under a singing master named Jordan.

By special invitation the Rev. Henry B. Cowles, who had dedicated the first brick church, came from Petersburg on May 27 to preach the new Shepherd's dedication sermon. This sermon initiated a three-day meeting in which he and two fellow preachers from Petersburg (Laurens and Kerr) presided over the largest attendance ever seen at Shepherd's. Four Sundays later Walker, who had been married from the wooden church and seen his children baptized there, writes, "I saw . . . what I never expected to see in my life, the baptism of a grandchild in Shepherd's new building." In 1860 he and his wife were the only ones still living of those who had been members at the time of their marriage; and

Shepherd's growth in these years, reflected in the increased size and elegance of the successive buildings, is further revealed in two extracts from the diary. When appointed steward in 1826 Walker prayed, "Lord, bless thy little few in Shepherd's Class." In 1859 when the third church was begun he wrote:

Oh that the later house be more glorious than all the former houses were. The others brought scores into their walls and many died in triumph members thereof.

The increasing number of Methodists in King and Queen and adjacent counties between 1790 and 1860 is indicated by the gradual narrowing of the territory covered by the single circuit. Originally in the Gloucester Circuit, Shepherd's was transferred in 1829 or 1830 to one with headquarters in Caroline, and in 1835 to Essex. In 1832, after joining the Caroline Circuit, it served for the first time as locale for a quarterly meeting of its circuit. The Caroline Circuit held another quarterly meeting there in 1834, and the Essex Circuit met there in the first year of Shepherd's membership. Among those present for the latter meeting were "Brother Brock, P. E. McDonald, A. P. Miller, College Agents". Shepherd's no doubt had a share in the funds raised for the Virginia Methodist colleges of Randolph-Macon and Emory and Henry, founded in 1830 and 1838 respectively; and later, in 1858, Walker notes his own contribution of \$200 to the current Randolph-Macon endowment-fund drive. By this date King and Queen had its own circuit, as did neighboring King William; for in 1860 Charles Boggs, head of the King William Circuit, was substituting for the King and Queen head B. H. Johnson, incapacitated by ill health.

Of the many preachers who rode these various circuits the earliest mentioned is "the renowned Stephen Roswell," whom Walker met and talked with at the Baltimore Conference of 1840 and who had served for Gloucester some fifty years before. When Walker himself became a member of Shepherd's in 1819 he was registered by Samuel Garrard, "the then pastor." Father John Henry came with Rufus Leadbetter for the Gloucester Circuit in 1827 and with Samuel T. Moorman for the Caroline in 1831. Among other preachers of the Gloucester era were Brothers Harold and Long (first names not given), who were at Shepherd's in 1826; Thacker Muir, also there in 1826 and in January of that year married to Walker's aunt, his third and next-to-last wife; and Hezekiah McClelland, who in 1829 united John Walker and Margaret Shepherd in marriage.

The list of preachers named between 1830 and 1836 is longer, possibly because Shepherd's enjoyed more frequent pastoral visits in the Caroline and Essex Circuits. Besides the men already mentioned, Josiah Leigh, Lewis Skidmore, Thomas Campbell, Frank Scott, J. B. Gregory, George W. Nolly, Joseph Lear, William H. Starr, David Fisher, Richard Mitchell and a Brother Corbin preached at Shepherd's in those years. Starr was in charge of the Caroline Circuit in 1832, and organized the Shepherd's Sunday School, with Shepherd, Walker and William Dix as managers. That July he held a two-day meeting of his Circuit at Cattail Church, the former Church of England building of St. David's Parish in King William, after the Revolution used by all denominations; and in this neutral setting "Sempleites and Campbellite Baptists" united with Methodists in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper administered by him. Reporting this unprecedented event and the disapproval expressed by the Campbellites' pastor Walker exclaims, "May the Lord speedily bring all denominations of Christians to unite together." His ecumenism was less evident when converts to Methodism wished to be immersed, especially after his own vicarious participation in this sacrament administered to some of the 1834 Shepherd's converts by David Fisher clad in a suit borrowed from him. Walker writes:

I loaned Brother Fisher a suit of clothes to immerse in and had to wring water out of them which I found a troublesome business, without the further trouble of bringing them home wet and had to wash them all again. I do most earnestly believe our blessed Lord and Master

never instituted such a mode of getting into church.

William H. Starr returned to the area in 1861-62 to replace the ailing Mr. Johnson in the King and Queen Circuit.

From the mid-twenties to 1836 the diary affords information on the results of Shepherd's evangelistic efforts. Two- and four-day revivals occurred frequently at the church and accompanied the circuit's quarterly meetings; and week-long summer camp meetings were held for the circuit. Results varied all the way from "no converts" to the "25 or 30" made at Shepherd's in June 1834 at a meeting such as it had never seen before. The 1835 quarterly meeting, however, showed that "religion in Essex Circuit is . . . in a low state"; and at the August camp meeting on "brother Arthur Rennolds' land, Essex Circuit," there were only eight conversions, "6 of them in my tent." After 1836 there is a gap in the record (the diaries from then until 1857 being still undeciphered) and information about the 1838 church is confined to the diarists's reminiscences at the time it was torn down.

We know, however, that Shepherd's "later house" got off to a good start in August 1860 when chosen as a place for the circuit's first quarterly meeting since the church's completion. The six-day session made twenty converts, reclaimed three backsliders, and added fifteen members to Shepherd's roll. Walker's rejoicing over the converts on this as on earlier occasions was dampened (literally and figuratively) by the manner in which some of them chose to enter the church. After Brother Boggs had baptized several in Mr. James R. Fleet's millpond by immersion and only one or two by pouring, the diarist exclaims,

Oh that the converts of the Methodist church would get rid of the belief of immersion being the right way . . . and embrace the most scriptural modes of pouring or sprinkling.

The preachers who brought in this fruitful harvest were Thomas A. Ware, Charles Boggs, and Brothers Shackford, Durham, Griffith, McDonald and Hoyle, the latter from the King William Circuit. Ware, a promising young man from the Tennessee Conference, was acting for the appointed presiding elder, the Rev. Mr. Wilson, who like the circuit director Johnson was in ill health.

Like all churches, Shepherd's now and again had its backsliders and disciplinary problems. In the reminiscences, inserted in his 1857 entries, Walker records the fact that he himself sometime in 1829 or 1830 was brought to trial before a church committee composed of Hezekiah McClelland, William Shepherd and Thomas Hemmingway, on a charge of lying brought by Thacker Muir. His accuser did not appear at the trial, however, "knowing they were false charges. I was acquitted and have stood fair in the church ever since." The Rev. Thacker Muir's record is less fair: at the quarterly meeting of the circuit held at Cole's Chapel in June 1829 his colleagues expelled him from the Methodist Church.

Whether Muir's expulsion was before or after he brought the charge against Walker is not clear; but it is clear that he was both quarrelsome and mercenary. In April 1826 Shepherd's was trying to settle a property dispute between him and Walker's uncle, William Temple, and Walker hopes that "friendship may be the end." Three months later on the death of Muir's wife, after only six months of marriage, Walker as his aunt's administrator declares that Muir's refusal to honor her known intention of leaving something to Joseph Temple's legatees in return for financial favors received from them "has somewhat lost my confidence in him, particularly as a Christian." In August 1830, about the time of his charge against Walker, Muir was threatening to sue his dead wife's administrator for immediate payment of his portion of her estate. In 1857 Walker refers to him as "the arch enemy of all righteousness." He must also have been the arch black sheep of the Gloucester Circuit and of Shepherd's experience. Two members, expelled from Shepherd's in 1859 for selling spirits no better "than spirits made from Rats bane" are an anticlimax in this story of church discipline.

Although Walker continued his diary until the end

of December 1866 (two months before his death), after 1860 it contains little to add to Shepherd's history. He was now an old man; he attended church when his health allowed, but often stayed at home on Sunday reading Wesley's sermons. War clouds were gathering, and in December 1860 he wrote to the editor of the *Christian Advocate* protesting the paper's abolitionist sympathies, and no doubt expressing the views of the Shepherd's congregation. After war began his entries are chiefly concerned with it and family affairs. There is a fitting close to his long record of Shepherd's story, however, in the description of a violent storm in May 1862 (apparently a tornado) which blew down houses, chimneys and large trees all around the neighborhood of the church. A few trees were lost in the churchyard, but "thanks be to God not one fell on the house, so plain it is that God protects his places where his poor worms worship his great and good name."

Shepherd's "later house" survived this storm and the storms of war. It was the meeting place for the war work of the ladies of the neighborhood, as we learn from the diary of Benny Fleet, boon companion of John Walker's youngest son, Melville. In September 1862 two churches, Shepherd's and St. Stephen's, together sent two wagons and a tumbril of food supplies to an army hospital. Of the Rev. Mr. Starr after his return to King and Queen in 1861 Benny writes,

. . . he is the dryest Preacher you ever saw except when he is preaching about the war, & then he is the most enthusiastic old fellow you ever heard of.

After thirty years Mr. Starr's Sunday School was still operating, for Benny attended it in July 1863. He also reports a great revival at Shepherd's that July which brought in "about 30 converts."

Today, a hundred and sixty-four years after the original meeting house opened its doors, the congregation developed from "the little few of Shepherd's Class" numbers some one hundred and twenty members.

WILLIE T. WEATHERS

## Smyrna Church

*The address delivered by Mr. David Nelson Sutton on the occasion of the one hundredth anniversary of Smyrna Church is condensed in the article below. Controversy over different theological beliefs led to the "separation" of the "Campbellites" and the Baptists. Mr. Sutton indicates the steps which led to the formation of the churches of the Disciples of Christ in Virginia, at which time Dr. Duval, pastor pro tem of Bruington Baptist Church, advocated and preached the views held by Alexander Campbell, founder of the denomination.*

. . . Bruington Church withdrew from Dr. John Duval, P. B. Pendleton, John Draper, John W. Watkins, Temple Walker and others.

That they might continue to worship according to the dictates of their own conscience these persons were organized into a church and met for worship at a stage, as it was then called, in front of Charles Nunn's gate under some large spreading oak and hickory trees. In the autumn of that year, 1831, weekly meetings were held at "The Cottage" owned by P. B. Pendleton, Sr., later the home of R. A. Williams, and now owned by Douglas Griggs.

The first church building was completed and dedicated in 1832. When the question of place of location of the church building arose some of the more influential and wealthy members living near the river wished it to be erected near them. They, however, had conveyances and could come to church while at the time many in the vicinity in which the church was erected would have to walk to church. It was decided to carry the church to the people. The exercises today confirm the wisdom of that choice.

None of the records of the church during its first thirty years have been preserved. The information here given was gathered from the *Millennial Harbinger*, published during that period, and from the brief history of Smyrna written by the late Dr. B. H. Walker.

The church was organized with Philip B. Pendleton and Temple Walker as elders, John Draper, J. W. Walker and perhaps others as deacons. Dr. Duval, the minister, held his membership at Jerusalem [Church]. T. M. Henley, who had been dismissed from Upper Essex Church for his doctrine, was living in Essex. He moved to Hillsborough in King and Queen in 1834 and became an elder. He was the father of R. Y. Henley, who married a daughter of Alexander Campbell.

In 1833 the church had over thirty members. The first name suggested for this church was the Union Church. In a letter written by Dr. Duval in that year he stated "what will probably be called the Union Church has been organized in this neighborhood," and has "taken up the reformation . . . The congregation is going on well, meeting and breaking bread, etc., nearly every Lord's day. It has somewhat over thirty members, nearly all from Bruington."

Alexander Campbell records that "appointments were made for Rappahannock and Smyrna on the 20th and 21st, each distant about twenty miles, where the brethren have erected for themselves substantial and neat brick meeting houses."

In the summary of news in the *Millennial Harbinger* of July, 1834, we find the following:

On the 30th of last month began a protracted meeting at our house of worship (Smyrna) which continued four days. There were present eight proclaimers of the word, among them were your father [Alexander Campbell?], brother Thomas, brother Short, &c. Brother Thomas delivered three able discourses to large and attentive audiences. Although it rained very much on Saturday and Sunday, there were present many of our brethren, some few of the sects, many of whom went away complaining heavily of brother Thomas. But two of the Methodists (one of whom is a very intelligent gentleman), together with fourteen other persons have been immersed into the water; . . . fifteen of whom have joined the congregation—eight ladies and seven gentlemen. One of them is a colored person, of much intelligence. So we see that the truth plainly spoken may offend the sects, but at the same time awakens sinners.

On October 29, 1837, the elders Thomas M. Henley and Temple Walker were directed to communicate with Mr. Campbell and call his attention to the fact that he had without scriptural authority referred to a person as a Christian who had not been immersed . . .

The land on which the church stands — originally three acres and 97 poles, was donated by Philip B. Pendleton. The deed conveying the property is dated July 16, 1835. . . . The land is described by metes and bounds and is said to be the parcel in which the meeting house called Smyrna is now located. One acre of land adjacent to this was later donated by Thornton Pemberton.

Alexander Campbell preached at Smyrna March 20, 1845, and reported that "We met on a very cold day with a good congregation and spent a very interesting night with our brother Duval." The next day he went to Rappahannock, returning, however, to spend the night at Pleasant Grove, the home of the widow of "our much lamented Philip B. Pendleton." The next day he visited elder Thomas M. Henley, and in the evening addressed at Hillsborough a very attentive audience.

The earliest preserved record of the church is of the church meeting held September 11, 1852. Included in the minutes are the following:

Resolved, that the clerk furnish the elders immediately after each meeting a list of the names of delinquent or such as are irregular in their attendance at the house of worship on Lord's Day, that they may be seen after and their condition reported to the church. . . . Resolved, that the salary of our sexton, Muscoe Verlander, be raised to twenty dollars. . . .

The minutes of the meeting of October 2, 1852, show that a collection for the general evangelist was directed to be taken and delegates were appointed to the

general cooperation meeting to be held in Richmond in October.

The next church meeting of which there is a record is that of January 15, 1859. The financial report showed subscriptions for 1858 in amount of \$488.50 of which \$100 remained unpaid. The church that year paid the General Evangelist \$125.00, donated \$35.00 to the Bible Union, spent \$12.50 for tracts and books for gratuitous distribution, \$12.50 for Sunday school books, gave \$35.00 to the missionary society and paid \$30.00 for occasional preaching.

The minutes of this meeting recite that the following preamble and resolution was adopted . . .

Whereas our church meetings have frequently been failures and generally poorly attended, **RESOLVED**, That we, Temple Walker, R. V. Henley, Thos H. Simcoe, S. S. Henley, Jas. Pyne, Jno. Smither, Wm. M. Verlander, Volney Walker, Wm. D. Turner, Jos. T. Henley, Benj. Boughton and B. H. Walker, do pledge ourselves to each other that we will attend every church meeting and make every reasonable sacrifice to do so.

The first building was destroyed by storm . . . Dr. B. H. Walker gives the following account:

The first house was of brick, indifferently built and inconveniently arranged with the pulpit on the side and galleries on three sides. A protracted meeting was being held in the house and just the evening before the storm and destruction of the house, the meeting closed. The storm occurred about twelve o'clock the next day and if the meeting had been in progress no doubt many would have been injured and some killed, as the gable end fell in, and the bricks filled the galleries and reached the pulpit. It was regarded as providential. The next day after the disaster almost every member of the church without any notice being given met on the grounds and promptly decided to rebuild and make the new house larger and more suitable to the times and necessities of the congregation, and before leaving almost the entire amount was subscribed. This occurred in June, 1854. The erection of the house was commenced at once, and by winter it was covered in and the congregation again met in a new building. When the congregation assembled in the new building only a portion of the floor was laid, and rude seats were provided around the stove. My father presided . . . The house was formally set apart to the service of God the first Sunday in June, 1855, and was conducted by Brethren J. W. Goss and Silas Shelbourne. It was a glorious meeting and resulted in the addition of about thirty persons to the church . . .

In 1859, \$50.00 was donated by the church towards the erection of a meeting house for the Disciples of Christ in Fredericksburg, Va. . . . R. Y. Henley was selected by a committee to visit each member of the church at least twice a year and oftener during sickness or if necessity required it, to admonish and encourage delinquent members. The church agreed to pay him \$100.00 for his services. There is no record of payment.

On January 21, 1860, the last record before the War Between the States, a committee was appointed to mark off  $\frac{1}{4}$  of an acre for a burying ground. E. N. Challener was then minister. The final payment was made to the estate of J. J. Smith who had served as minister. . . .

From 1860 to 1870 the record is silent.

At the church meeting of January 8, 1870 . . . the following extract from the minutes tells of a burning issue of this day:

Whereas the report has reached us that some of our members have commenced the sale of ardent spirits, therefore Resolved, that we consider such a practice injurious to our stand-

ing as a church and that the tendency is demoralizing and that as a church we can not countenance and allow it unless sold as a medicine. Carried.

In 1871 there were 148 members on the books of the church. Total collections from all sources, \$419.33. After the deduction of disbursements there remained in hand a balance of \$60.47—a most unusual report.

Unfortunate dissensions arose in the church during 1877 and continued until the time the church burned November 16, 1878. This catastrophe reunited the congregation. When the congregation assembled at the ruins following the burning of the church their mourning was turned to gladness when that noble patriarch Capt. A. F. Bagby . . . announced that he some time previously purchased fire insurance on the church building in the amount of \$2,000.00.

Prompt action was taken to rebuild the church. The building committee for the present church consisted of E. S. Acree, Ro. Y. Henley, Sr., Dr. B. H. Walker, A. C. Walker, Joseph Pynes and Capt. A. F. Bagby. The present building was completed in 1880.

When the church building was burned both Bruington Baptist Church and Providence Methodist Church offered to this congregation the use of their respective churches for worship. As many of the members of this congregation at that time had to walk to church, the offer of Providence, which is situated nearer to Smyrna, was accepted and the congregation worshipped there while this church was rebuilt. . . . The spirit of cooperation between these three churches for more than half a century has been magnificent and is worthy of special mention.

At the church meeting of January 4, 1896, the following resolution . . . was adopted:

Resolved, that it is the sentiment of this church that the practice of dancing meets with the decided disapprobation and condemnation of the church and earnestly protest against the practice among our church members and request our elder and pastor to urge upon the congregation the impropriety of such practice; moved that this be read by bro. Hundley at his next appointment at Smyrna.

The elders of Smyrna during the first hundred years have included P. B. Pendleton, Temple Walker, Dr. S. S. Henley, James C. Roy, Thomas Cauthorn, Hill Jones, R. Y. Henley, Peter Ainslie, the father of the present Peter Ainslie, Thos. H. Simcoe, Dr. B. H. Walker, R. L. Coleman, Capt. A. F. Bagby, W. H. Walker, Smith Acree, A. C. Walker, J. R. Coleman, Willie Eubank and W. T. Henley.

The ministers of this church during the first hundred years include Dr. John Duval, T. M. Henley, Robt. Y. Henley, R. H. Wynne, J. J. Smith, E. N. Challener, Wm. G. Applegate, F. D. Powers, who was at one time Garfield's pastor, and who stated that he had preached to five presidents and stood before kings but never felt as proud of his message as when he preached at Smyrna; E. B. Chandler, H. B. Smith, W. J. Cocke, Wm. Minter, Dr. J. T. T. Hundley, Sam G. Sutton, F. W. Troy, George Vaiden, George Watson, J. O. Helsabeck, John Grasty, Alvin Duhree and Nelson Fox. (The minister at the one hundredth anniversary was Dr. J. B. Hundley.)

The Sunday School at Smyrna was organized by Churchill Anderson. The *Christian Intelligencer* of August, 1845, notes that "Brother Henley writes us that a flourishing Sunday School composed of some sixty scholars is in operation at Smyrna." . . . There is no person here today who does not recall vividly the cakes and candy which the good sisters unflinchingly passed out to the children of this Sunday School, and time and again the minutes of the rally day meeting of the church recite "the children were given a bag of candy and nuts as a Christmas gift from the Sunday School."

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Today, 1966, the congregation of Smyrna numbers about two hundred and thirty members.