

VLR 12/4/2
NRHP 4/27/4

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Parker, Colonel Josiah, Family Cemetery
other names/site number #046-5049

2. Location

street & number Approx. 50 yds. from intersection of Old Macklesfield Rd. - Macklesfield Ct. not for publication
city or town X vicinity Smithfield
state Virginia code VA county Isle of Wight code 093 Zip 23397

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature] 2/10/04
Signature of certifying official Date
Virginia Department of Historic Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:
 entered in the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
 determined eligible for the National Register _____ Signature of Keeper
 See continuation sheet.
 determined not eligible for the National Register Date of Action _____
 removed from the National Register
 other (explain): _____

U. S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service

name of property
location

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)
N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Funerary Sub: Family Cemetery

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Landscape Sub: Forestry

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Other: Family Cemetery

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation N/A
roof N/A
walls N/A

other N/A

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

name of property
location

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Military

Politics / Government

Period of Significance 1775 - 1810

Significant Dates 1810

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Parker, Colonel Josiah

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder N/A

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.

previously listed in the National Register

previously determined eligible by the National Register

designated a National Historic Landmark

recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____

recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Name of repository: Isle of Wight County Historical Society

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1/4 of an acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

1 18 363270 4093100 2 _____

3 _____ 4 _____

____ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: See continuation sheet

Organization: _____ date _____

street & number: _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Robert L. Magette, Trustee for P. P. Land Trust

street & number Post Office Box 423 telephone 757 / 357-4106

city or town Smithfield state VA zip code 23431

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

Section 7 Page 1 Colonel Josiah Parker Family Cemetery, Isle of Wight, Virginia

Section 7 Narrative Description

The Parker Family Cemetery contains the only known surviving and tangible reminder of Colonel Josiah Parker. Of extraordinary distinction, he was the hero of the Battle of Brandywine, the first United States Congressman to decry the practice of slavery, and, as Chairman of Naval Affairs, instrumental in establishing the United States Navy. Located in a wooded and heavily overgrown area in Isle of Wight County, Virginia, the cemetery was rediscovered in 2001 and remains remarkably well preserved.

The cemetery is sited on the undeveloped 26 acre Lot #6 located off of Old Macklesfield Road, in the subdivision "Macklesfield on the James," in the northern reaches of Isle of Wight County, Virginia. The Macklesfield area is comprised of an estimated 500 acres south of the village of Rescue on the James River, and east of the nearby Town of Smithfield. With the historic spelling "Macclesfield," this area was probably named for the family's ancestral estates in England, as the Parker family land grant went back to 1638, following on the heels of the establishment of Isle of Wight County in 1634.

The front quarter of the Lot #6 is a grassy field, with the back three-quarters wooded and overgrown. The rear slopes down to a marsh that provides a view of Ballard's Creek, which ties directly into the James River. As this lot is currently undeveloped, there are no buildings. Even after all other lots are fully developed, the rural character of this area will be maintained due to the subdivision's large lot size.

The Parker Family Cemetery is located in the center of Lot #6. The gravesite section is on high soil and well drained with a ravine on either side in the densely wooded area. While the precise boundaries of the Cemetery are not known, the 1/4 acre of nominated property is consistent with thirty persons that the family believes could be buried thereat.

U. S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service

name of property
location

Section 7 Page 2 Colonel Josiah Parker Family Cemetery, Isle of Wight, Virginia

Section 7 Narrative Description (continued)

The following physical objects are evident and exist within the 1/4 acre of nominated property:

1. Memorial Marker - "Erected to the grave of Capt. T. Frederick P. P. Cowper. Also in memory of Col. Josiah Parker, Leopold C.P.P. Cowper, Mary Ann Keith Parker, Ann P.P. Cowper."

Capt. T. Frederick P. P. Cowper

Thomas Frederick Pierce Parker Cowper (1810-1879) was one of Colonel Parker's four grandsons. Thomas Frederick was an Isle of Wight County Justice most of the 1840s until 1857. He was Major of Isle of Wight's 29th Regiment during the 1840s. His occupation was Ship's Captain.

Leopold C. P. P. Cowper

Leopold Copeland Parker Cowper (1811-1875) was also one of Colonel Parker's four grandsons. Leopold practiced law in Portsmouth by 1843. He was elected to the House of Delegates from Norfolk County and served four sessions through August 1849. In 1863, he was elected Lieutenant Governor of the Restored Government of Virginia and presided over the State Senate through 1867. After the death of his brother Josiah Cowper Parker in Missouri in 1853, Leopold was largely responsible for educating and housing his brother's family upon their return to Virginia.

Mary Ann Keith Parker

Mary Ann Keith Parker (1810-1858) was married to one of Colonel Parker's four grandsons, also named Josiah. They lived in Virginia, Kentucky, and Missouri. She returned with her family to Virginia upon her husband's death in 1853, and was taken in by Josiah's brother, Leopold. Her great grandmother was Mary Isham Randolph who was also the grandmother of Chief Justice John Marshall.

Ann P. P. Cowper

Ann Pierce Parker Cowper (1778-1849) was Colonel Parker's only child. He educated his daughter "...as if she had been a son, in the languages and in all manly arts." Historian R.S. Thomas recorded that "Her intelligence possessed a state if not a national reputation. She was proud of her family, and thoroughly conversant with all of its history." Ann's marriage in 1802 to William Cowper, naval hero, ended in divorce, which was a rarity in those days.

Section 7 Page 3 Colonel Josiah Parker Family Cemetery, Isle of Wight, Virginia

Section 7 Narrative Description (continued)

2. 1789 Grave Marker of Nicholas Parker - "After sixty seven years hurry through many busy and changing scenes of life including fifteen years of great affliction here rest from labour and pain the remains of Nicholas Parker Reader suspend thy opinion of me untill the day of judgement T___ __th Chapter of ___ written by himself O.B. 1789"

Nicholas Parker

Nicholas Parker (1722-1789) was the father of Colonel Parker. He was Justice of the County from 1766 to 1783, and Sheriff from 1768 to 1770. He was a vestryman in the Newport parish beginning in 1758. He was listed as a cabinetmaker by trade. He owned various lots in Smithfield, and in 1778 Nicholas was listed as one of twenty land owners in Isle of Wight who owned 500 acres or more.

3. A brick-covered, rectangular gravesite surface measuring approximately four by seven feet, to distinctly include several rows of an arched brick formation over the width and length of the grave.

Such plot is located in close proximity (approximately three feet) from the marker noted above in #1, which is in memory of Colonel Parker, his daughter, and two of his grandsons. Additionally, the brick covered grave lays about ten feet south from the grave marker of Nicholas Parker, father of Colonel Parker, as noted in #2.

Although irrefutable proof is not available, local tradition has suggested that the unique arched brick surface may be the final resting-place of Colonel Josiah Parker (1751-1810) at his family cemetery. Such a distinctive arched brick formation may indicate that a person of prominence was buried there during the Colonial period.

Davis Hazard, archaeologist with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, noted in a 2002 site inspection that the presence of a brick vault, the hand-made brick used in its construction, and the use of a sand mortar are consistent with what would be expected for an 1810 interment date. The use of brick burial vault might also be befitting someone of Colonel Josiah Parker's importance and social status.

Section 7 Page 4 Colonel Josiah Parker Family Cemetery, Isle of Wight, Virginia

Section 7 Narrative Description (continued)

4. A flat brick gravesite, located eight and 1/2 feet south from the noted arched grave in #3, approximately three by three feet.
5. A flat brick gravesite, located two feet south from the noted memorial marker in #1, approximately three by six feet.
6. Head stones for the infant children of Copeland Parker were evident during the University of Virginia 1937 Survey and Inventory of Churches, Cemeteries, Etc. in Isle of Wight County. The survey states that the graves of Nicholas Parker, Ann S. Parker, and Copeland S. Parker were in "very good condition." The stones below have not yet been rediscovered.

Grave Marker - "Ann S. Parker Only daughter of Copeland and Elizabeth Parker Rests Here She died - 16th July 1800 1 year 8 months 24 days."

Grave Marker - "Here rests from pain the body of Copeland S. Parker Son of E. Parker who departed this life on the 9th Sept. 1803 Age 1 year - 9 mos. 27 days."

The following outlines the historical evidence and documentation to substantiate the burial of Colonel Josiah Parker at his family gravesite in Macclesfield, Virginia:

A. Historical family and church records.

An abbreviated biography entitled Col. Josiah Parker written circa 1900 by Josiah Parker Cowper (1849 - 1906), the great grandson of Colonial Josiah Parker, states that Parker's "grave is still to be seen beside that of his daughter" and that Parker's daughter, Ann Pierce Parker Cowper, "was buried beside her father at Macclesfield in March 1849." Two records of burial from Christ Episcopal Church in Smithfield, Virginia confirm that Ann Pierce Parker Cowper was buried at Macclesfield.

Josiah Parker Cowper was born in Smithfield in 1849, and spent more than twenty of his first years there, living with his parents. His father, Captain Thomas Frederick P.P. Cowper (1810-1879) was the son of Anne Pierce Parker Cowper (Colonel Parker's only child), and thus, the grandson of Colonel Parker (See continuation pages 2 for more information).

Section 7 Page 5 Colonel Josiah Parker Family Cemetery, Isle of Wight, Virginia

Section 7 Narrative Description (continued)

According to a sworn affidavit of Colonel Frank A. Dwyer, grandson of the above referenced Josiah Parker Cowper, Thomas Frederick P.P. Cowper and his wife enjoyed a close relationship with his mother, Anne Pierce Parker Cowper, who resided at Macclesfield until her death. This is evidenced by church records of Christ Episcopal Church in Smithfield that show Anne Pierce Parker Cowper attended church with her daughter-in-law. They would have not only been present at her burial at Macclesfield in 1849, but also would have later tended the gravesite and visited there regularly with their son, Josiah Parker Cowper. Thus, Colonel Dwyer states that Josiah Parker Cowper "was in a position of having the precise location of her grave, and that of Josiah Parker, identified for him in the 1850s by those who had specific knowledge of the grave location of both Josiah and his daughter."

Additionally, it is Josiah Parker Cowper's father's grave marker which simultaneously recognizes the memory of Ann Pierce Parker Cowper and Colonel Josiah Parker (see continuation page 2), therefore, giving further evidence to Josiah Parker Cowper's knowledge that Colonel Parker's "grave is still to be seen beside that of his daughter" and that Parker's daughter, Ann Pierce Parker Cowper, "was buried beside her father at Macclesfield in March 1849."

Furthermore, a listing of "Graves at Macclesfield" compiled by Lucilla Stoney Cowper Dwyer (granddaughter of Thomas Frederick P.P. Cowper), and her sisters states that Colonel Parker was buried at Macclesfield. Colonel Dwyer, in his above noted affidavit, says this was a listing of graves "which my mother and her sisters were aware of during repeated visits to Macclesfield between 1890 and 1910."

B. Biographical Directory of the United States Congress.

The Biographical Directory of the United States Congress documents that Parker "died in Macclesfield, Va., March 11, 1810; interment in the private burial ground on his estate, "Macclesfield," in Isle of Wight County, Va."

Section 7 Page 6 Colonel Josiah Parker Family Cemetery, Isle of Wight, Virginia

Section 7 Narrative Description (continued)

- C. Historical documents show Parker was present at his home in Macclesfield at the time of his death.

Colonel Parker's will, dated March 8, 1810, places him at Macclesfield prior to his death circa March 10, 1810.

Obituary notices in newspapers dating to 1810 show that Parker died at his home seat of Macclesfield, to include The Norfolk Gazette and Publick Ledger (March 19, 1810), Virginia Argus (March 23, 1810), and Visitor (March 24, 1810).

Parker's will shows his love of the family's estate by writing "...It is also my will and desire that all or any part of my houses and lots situated in the towns of Norfolk, Portsmouth, and Gosport, to be sold...to be used in the improvement of my Estate in Isle of Wight."

It is reasonable to conclude that with such fond attachments to his ancestral home, and his subsequent death thereat, Parker indeed would be buried at his family's cemetery in Macclesfield.

- D. Research confirms the old Parker homesite was located near where the family cemetery was rediscovered.

The Parker Family Cemetery, found on Lot #6 of the "Macklesfield on the James" subdivision, is sited approximately 300 feet from where historical records place the location of the Parker family house, most likely on the recently cleared Lot #5 where a new house has been built.

The Parker family land grant went back to 1638, with the site named "Macclesfield," probably after the family's ancestral estates in England. A 1678 survey of Thomas Parker's 479 acres of land denotes the specific location of the home on the accompanying sketched map. Study of the 1678 survey, and comparison with modern topographic maps, places the Thomas Parker house on what is now Lot #5 at the end of Old Macklesfield Road.

Section 7 Page 7 Colonel Josiah Parker Family Cemetery, Isle of Wight, Virginia

Section 7 Narrative Description (continued)

Colonel Parker "inherited" 398 acres of the Macclesfield estate from his father, Nicolas Parker, through a "Deed of Gift" for a mere five shillings, on July, 20, 1787. The estate was left to Parker's grandson, and later acquired by Colonel Parker's daughter, Ann Pierce Parker Cowper, for debt owed to her by her son. At her death in 1849, the total worth of her estate, following satisfaction of the creditors, was \$18.78.

Captain A. H. Campbell's 1864 Civil War map shows no house at Macclesfield, which deeds indicate would have been owned by George W. Parker or Robert H. Whitfield during the Civil War period. Possibly, the house was destroyed during the Civil War in reprisal for Whitfield's secessionist activity.

The 1937 Work Progress Administration of Virginia Historical Inventory states that "the old house has been destroyed" and that Macclesfield was owned by Captain and Mrs. Simmons. Lot #5 is the same site as where the 1937 Simmon's home was located, which burned approximately twenty years ago. The Simmon's site was believed to be the same as the Parker house site by several elderly Macclesfield area residents.

While no traces remain today, residents report that recent construction of an house at Lot #5 destroyed here an English bond brick foundation in association with "wine bottles and many old artifacts." The modern house at this location is apparently built directly over a much earlier structure, with both clearly occupying the highest elevation and choicest portion of this lot. Despite a comprehensive archaeological surface examination of Lot #5 in 2002 by archaeologists with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, no evidence was found of any colonial deposits still surviving here.

Section 7 Page 8 Colonel Josiah Parker Family Cemetery, Isle of Wight, Virginia

Section 7 Narrative Description (continued)

E. Written and Oral Tradition of Local Historians.

In her 1977 book Smithfield A Pictorial History, historian Segar Cofer Dashiell states that Parker "retired to Macclesfield" and "is known to have been buried there, along with other members of his family." Similarly, in her 1993 book, Historical Notes On Isle of Wight County, Helen Haverty King says that Parker "died at his home March 19, 1810, and was buried there."

Mr. Richard Lee Austin, Curator of Historic St. Luke's Church (est. 1632), states that "it has been a long standing oral tradition that Col. Parker was buried at his home place, Macclesfield, a few miles from the church...the Parker family is an old and established family in this area...Josiah Parker was once a vestryman at Newport Parish Church (now Historic St. Luke's Church)."

Ms. Dinah M. Everett, Curator, Isle of Wight County Museum, says "for decades local historians have placed the site of his burial in the Parker family cemetery which has recently been rediscovered."

Mr. Harry G. Dashiell, son of historian Segar Cofer Dashiell, states that "after WWII, while hunting at Macclesfield I saw the graveyard and on asking who was buried there was told Josiah Parker." Also, "I can remember...hearing my mother and her parents talking about Macclesfield as the home of Col. Josiah Parker and that the family graveyard where Col. Parker was buried was on the farm."

F. Tradition shows Colonel Parker's grave to have been left unmarked.

Prior to the 2001 rediscovery of the Parker family cemetery, historian Helen Haverty King wrote in her 1993 book that while Parker was buried at his home in Macklesfield, "unfortunately, there is no marker on his grave, and the site is now lost."

Family records of a listing of "Graves at Macclesfield" of which Lucilla Stoney Cowper Dwyer, (granddaughter of Thomas Frederick P.P. Cowper, in turn, he was one of four grandsons of Colonel Parker), and her sisters were aware of during repeated visits to Macclesfield between 1890 - 1910, notes that Colonel Josiah Parker was "buried in this cemetery without visible stone."

Section 7 and 8 Page 9 Colonel Josiah Parker Family Cemetery, Isle of Wight, Virginia

Section 7 Narrative Description (continued)

To assist volunteers with the physical search for the burial location of Colonel Parker, a descendent from a separate line of Colonel Parker's descendants conveyed his family's oral tradition that a head stone was not at Colonel Parker's grave following the War of 1812. This information was relayed by family researcher, Daniel Parker Duvall, (great great grandson of Josiah Cowper Parker, in turn, he was one of four grandsons of Colonel Parker). Mr. Duvall believes that the gravesite was specifically void of a marker as to protect it from possible future British desecration, as may have been the case in the War of 1812.

Section 8 Narrative Statement of Significance

Summary Paragraph

The Colonel Josiah Parker Family Cemetery in Isle of Wight County, Virginia is being nominated under Criterion B because the property is associated with the life of a person significant in our nation's past. Josiah Parker is one of Virginia's most influential figures during the Colonial era and initial years in our county's history. Of extraordinary distinction, he was the hero of the Battle of Brandywine, the first United States Congressman to decry the practice of slavery, and, as Chairman of Naval Affairs, instrumental in establishing the United States Navy. The Colonel Josiah Parker Family Cemetery is eligible for nomination under Criteria Considerations C and D because it is the only surviving property in Isle of Wight County directly related to Colonel Parker's productive life.

Historical Background

Josiah Parker was born on May 11, 1751 and raised at his family homestead in "Maccelsfield" on the James River in Isle of Wight County, Virginia. There and at Smithfield he lived with his wife, Mary Pierce Bridger Parker, and their only child, Ann Pierce, and stepdaughters Judith and Catharine Bridger.

Section 8 Page 10 Colonel Josiah Parker Family Cemetery, Isle of Wight , Virginia

Section 8 Narrative Statement of Significance (Continued)

An early and staunch opponent against coercive British policy, in January 1775, at the age of 23, Parker was elected as a founding member of Isle of Wight's first "County Committee" whose mission was to enforce the boycott against importation of certain British goods and secure guns and gunpowder to establish a militia.

Parker was duly chosen in 1775 to represent Isle of Wight at three of the Virginia Conventions: the Second, Third and Fourth. These Conventions selected delegates to the Second Continental Congress, provided for arming the militia in each County, established a Committee of Safety, created a Virginia Navy, as well as established County Commissions to prosecute Tories.

Parker commanded troops in December 1775 at Great Bridge and Suffolk. Subsequently, he enlisted in the Continental Army on February 13, 1776, heeding the Continental Congress' call for Virginia to furnish six battalions for use, to become known as the "Virginia Continental Line." Parker was commissioned a Major in the Fifth Virginia Regiment of Foot; he was subsequently promoted to Lieutenant Colonel on August 13, 1776.

During the months following the Declaration of Independence, the Americans suffered a series of heavy losses and disastrous retreats in the north, the most critical being from New York, such that the fate of the new republic was in doubt. In the Fall of 1776, Parker's Fifth Regiment, as well as other troops from south and north of the James River (the Fourth and Sixth Regiments of Virginia) marched north to bolster General Washington's demoralized and outnumbered forces.

Desperate for a victory, at predawn on December 26, 1776, from his retreat in Pennsylvania, Washington crossed the Delaware through sleet, ice and snow to successfully surprise and capture 1,000 Hessian troops at Trenton, New Jersey, under the command of Colonel Johann Rall. A still unbelievable victory, made possible with manpower from southeast Virginia, this early turning point in the war revived Colonial hopes and encouraged the critical enlistment of many of Washington's new and old troops.

Section 8 Page 11 Colonel Josiah Parker Family Cemetery, Isle of Wight, Virginia

Section 8 Narrative Statement of Significance (continued)

Lieutenant Colonel Parker's Fifth Virginia Regiment was the first to cross the Delaware River with Washington that fateful morning. They took the lead in the march from McKonsky's Ferry to Trenton, and were the first to engage and fire on the Hessians that cold December 26 morning. Parker commanded 300 men.

Greatly distinguished on this occasion at Trenton, Parker had the honor to receive the sword of surrender of the wounded Hessian Colonel Rall. Consistent with this recognition, Parker is the only figure to hold a sword in John Trumbull's painting "Capture of the Hessians at Trenton," now displayed in the Yale Art Gallery. W.H.T. Squire's July 28, 1938 article places Parker next to Washington in Emanuel Leutze's famous 1851 painting "Washington Crossing the Delaware."

Shortly thereafter, Parker again distinguished himself at the Battle of Princeton, initiating Washington's praise that "Parker you have gained more honour today." With Washington's army trapped, the Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Virginia Regiments held the bridge on the Assunpink, thus delaying Lord Cornwallis' advance. That evening, Parker and his compatriots deceived the British concerning the American numbers by maintaining many fires, as well as manning pick and shovel detail, to hide the sounds of Washington's army as they stole away in the night toward Princeton.

The following day, January 3, 1777, having caught up with Washington, they participated in the defeat of elements of the 55th British Regiment near Princeton College, Parker being the Officer of the Day. The British were now driven from most of New Jersey. Most importantly, the Revolution had a chance as the rebel government and army gained widespread support. Parker was promoted to Colonel on April 1, 1777.

Parker was called "a hero" by the Virginia Gazette and complemented by Washington for his conduct at the Battle of Brandywine in Pennsylvania on September 11, 1777. As told by Ensign Robert Beale, with the outnumbered American forces in retreat, Parker's command was the last organized unit to come up and stop the onslaught of British-saving Washington's army. Although a defeat, the Americans were beaten but not broken, knowing they stood up well to the professional British soldiers.

Section 8 Page 12 Colonel Josiah Parker Family Cemetery, Isle of Wight, Virginia

Section 8 Narrative Statement of Significance (continued)

On the heels of Brandywine, Parker's Fifth Regiment also participated in Washington's surprise attack at the Battle of Germantown in Pennsylvania on October 4, 1777. Parker was in imminent danger at Germantown, having the blade of his sword shot away, leaving nothing but the hilt in his hand. Although again a defeat, the battle boosted morale as it was considered a result of mishaps and not poor tactics.

As often was the case in the Revolutionary War, care of family and private business called Parker home in early 1778. Still, he commanded part of the Fifth Regiment in Virginia in March 1778 and the militia at South Quay in May 1778. Applying to Washington for a furlough and being denied, in irritation he resigned his commission on July 12, 1778—an impulsive action which he ever afterwards regretted.

In May of 1779, after refusing command of local troops, he nevertheless became a volunteer with Colonel Lawson during the invasion of Tidewater and the burning of Suffolk. In October and November of 1780, he commanded a regiment under General Muhlenburg during General Leslie's brief invasion of Tidewater.

At the requests of Baron Steuben and General Thomas Nelson, Parker became commander of all Virginia militia, south of the James River from January through August of 1781 during Arnold's, Phillips', Leslie's, and Cornwallis' invasions. During this extremely critical period, he was able to maintain men in the field, when most counties were no longer responding to Jefferson's call for militia. Parker's pressing of Portsmouth, requested by General Lafayette, caused Cornwallis to reinforce Portsmouth with 1,000 men. The lack of these forces caused Cornwallis not to pursue Lafayette at Cook's Ford, to hesitate to attack Lafayette at Albemarle Old Courthouse, as well as vacillate in attacking Fredericksburg.

Lafayette's request letter mentioned above, dated May 17, 1781, stated,

Section 8 Page 13 Colonel Josiah Parker Family Cemetery, Isle of Wight, Virginia

Section 8 Narrative Statement of Significance (continued)

"The knowledge I have of your influence your zeal and your talents induce me to address you at this critical period. Every citizen and particularly such as have distinguished themselves in the military line ought at this moment to unite their efforts against the powerful enemy.

I therefore earnestly recommend that you will immediately take the field...Portsmouth, if the garrison was very remiss in their duty, may be an object so far as least as would make a diversion."

What Lafayette did not know at the time was that the energetic Parker was already in the field pressing Portsmouth.

Parker defeated Banastre Tarleton at Scott's Old Field, July 24, 1781, in Nansemond County. Parker maintained through spies surveillance of Lord Cornwallis through July and early August, Parker writing Colonel Davies,

"...I have not slept without my coat, Hat & Boots since Lord Cornwallis crossed James River untill his Departure from Portsmouth."

As General Robert Lawson indicated, the main supply of Lafayette's and Washington's armies in August and early September 1781 was supplied by Parker's south side troops. Colonel Christian Febiger indicated Parker had nominal command of troops at the Battle of Yorktown. For his services in the War he was awarded 6,666 acres of land. He was a member of the Society of the Cincinnati, the oldest military society in America. Indeed, Colonel Parker's military career was exemplary, Hessian Captain Johann Ewald pronouncing of Parker's men the epitaph *"...they abandon wife, child, house, and home, and let us lay waste to everything. They fight without shoes and clothing with all passion, suffer hunger, and gladly endure all the hardships of war."*

Parker continued his role as a distinguished statesman. Three times he was chosen to serve as a member of the Virginia House of Delegates—1779, 1782, and 1783. On December 20, 1783, Parker was elected Naval Officer of the Elizabeth River District at Portsmouth, the Navy being a long time passion. The position would continue to add to Parker's experience in naval affairs.

Section 8 Page 14 Colonel Josiah Parker Family Cemetery, Isle of Wight, Virginia

Section 8 Narrative Statement of Significance (continued)

Parker's unwavering passion for freedom resulted in his unsuccessful candidacy for delegate to the Constitutional Convention in 1788. Lacking a strong Bill of Rights to specifically guard fundamental freedoms, Parker, along with Patrick Henry, opposed ratification of the U.S. Constitution until such flaw could be remedied.

Without solicitation for the office, Parker was duly elected to serve as his district's representative to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1789 and served through the 6th Congress until 1801, these being formative years under our Nation's new Constitution. During his tenure, Parker is distinguished as one of less than 100 men to participate in the vote to decide the successful passage of the Bill of Rights.

Additionally, during his time in Congress, he served as Chairman of the Committee on Naval Affairs under the Washington administration, and was instrumental in starting the U.S. Navy with the building of the Constitution, Constellation, and the Frigate United States. Parker was a strong advocate of locating the permanent U.S. Capital on the Potomac River, and was in the unique position to serve at three successive sites of the Capital—New York, Philadelphia, and on the Potomac. He was a supporter of a volunteer militia of citizens as opposed to standing army.

Parker often spoke in the interest of his country, sometimes at political risk. During his tenure in the House, Colonel Parker was the first Congressman to verbally oppose the practice of slavery. On May 13, 1789, he moved that if Congress could not prohibit the importation of slaves, then the tariff bill under discussion should be amended to levy an import tax upon every slave brought into the Country. Parker expressed hope that,

"Congress would do all in its power to restore to human nature its inherent privileges; to wipe off, if possible, the stigma under which America labored; to do away with the inconsistency in our principles justly charged upon us; and to show by our actions the pure beneficence of the doctrine held out to the world in our Declaration of Independence."

Parker was subsequently appointed to a House Committee to consider the proposed amendment. Although supported by other Virginians, James Madison and Theoderick Bland, the proposed amendment was defeated.

Section 8 Page 15 Colonel Josiah Parker Family Cemetery, Isle of Wight, Virginia

Section 8 Narrative Statement of Significance (continued)

While Parker at one time held 35 slaves, it appears most were inherited from his father or obtained from the reacquisition from his brother of 102 acres of Macclesfield. The number of slaves appears to have gradually declined over the years to eight, possibly one family, at his death. Nothing is known for certain about the disposition of any of these slaves, whether they were freed, were moved away, or died.

Parker was instrumental in the freeing of slave Saul Matthews. Matthews, possibly from Isle of Wight County, was a spy for Colonel Parker in the summer of 1781. The General Assembly freeing Matthews in 1792 said "in consideration of many very essential services rendered to this Commonwealth during the late war, he is granted his full liberty and freedom...as if he had been born free." It was Parker, consistent with his congressional speech and the honor due the brave, that first voiced Matthews' acclaim, Parker saying that Matthews "deserved the applause of his countrymen."

While his prominence expanded as he took on state and national roles throughout years of his life, Parker did not neglect his local community. He was a vestryman during the War, caring even then for the poor, the widow, and the orphan. He served as a Justice of the Peace, a position of great prestige to represent the legislative, executive and judicial branch of the County government, during the years 1783-1797, 1799-1801, and 1806-1809. Additionally, he was a member of the Smithfield Masonic Lodge that was founded in 1787. He engaged in agricultural, timber, shipping, and land pursuits until his death at age 58, circa March 10, 1810. His bones were laid to rest at his family's burial site near the family estate in Macclesfield.

Criteria Considerations C and D Background

The Colonel Josiah Parker Family Cemetery is eligible for nomination under Criteria Considerations C and D because it is the sole surviving property in Isle of Wight County directly related to Colonel Parker's productive life. The only structure known to be associated with the productive life of Colonel Parker was his home Macklesfield. Historical documentation places it in a lot directly adjacent to the Parker Family Cemetery. By 1864, the house disappears from historical records with two houses having since been built at this location. An archaeological examination of this area in 2002 could find no evidence of surviving colonial deposits here.

Section 8 and 9 Page 16 Colonel Josiah Parker Family Cemetery, Isle of Wight, Virginia

Section 8 Narrative Statement of Significance (continued)

The setting of the cemetery retains a high degree of integrity given the large lot size both for the cemetery and adjacent properties, thereby providing an appropriate environs for honoring Colonel Josiah Parker's life and his contributions to Virginia and our nation.

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Section 10 and 11 Page 21 Colonel Josiah Parker Family Cemetery, Isle of Wight, Virginia

Section 10 Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property, being on Lot #6 of Macklesfield on the James, is square in shape and is situated between two ravines. Starting at the northeast corner the boundary runs south one hundred feet passing the vicinity of two cedar trees, the boundary then runs west one hundred feet passing a third cedar tree, the boundary then runs north one hundred feet, and finally the boundary runs east one hundred feet back to the beginning corner.

Boundary Justification

The nominated acreage is restricted to that area encompassed by the physical remains still visible in the Parker Family Cemetery and the area immediately surrounding them forming a square 100 feet on each side.

Section 11 Form Prepared By

September 16, 2002

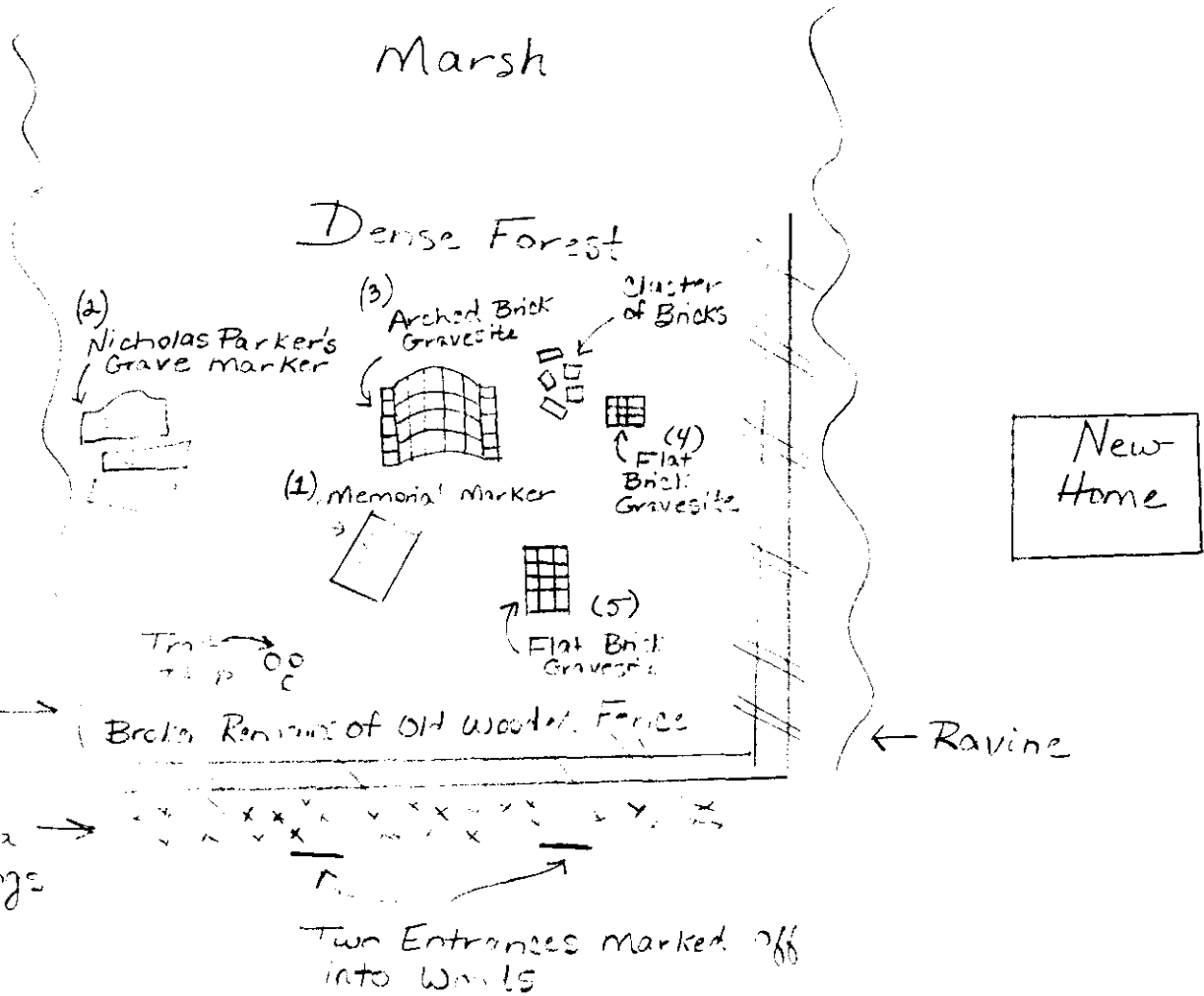
Debbie J. Sivertson, Administrative Analyst
County of Isle of Wight, County Administrator's Office
17130 Monument Circle, Isle of Wight County, Virginia 23397
(757) 357-3191

Thomas Finderson, Isle of Wight County Historical Society
24661 Sugar Hill Road, Carrollton, Virginia 23314
(757) 238-2280

E. Randolph Turner, III, Director, Portsmouth Regional Office
Virginia Department of Historic Resources
612 Court Street, Portsmouth, Virginia 23704
(757) 396-6709

James River

Ballard's Creek



Open Field

Macklesfield Court

Old Macklesfield Road

Numbers refer to same as those given in text for physical objects.

Not to Scale

DJS

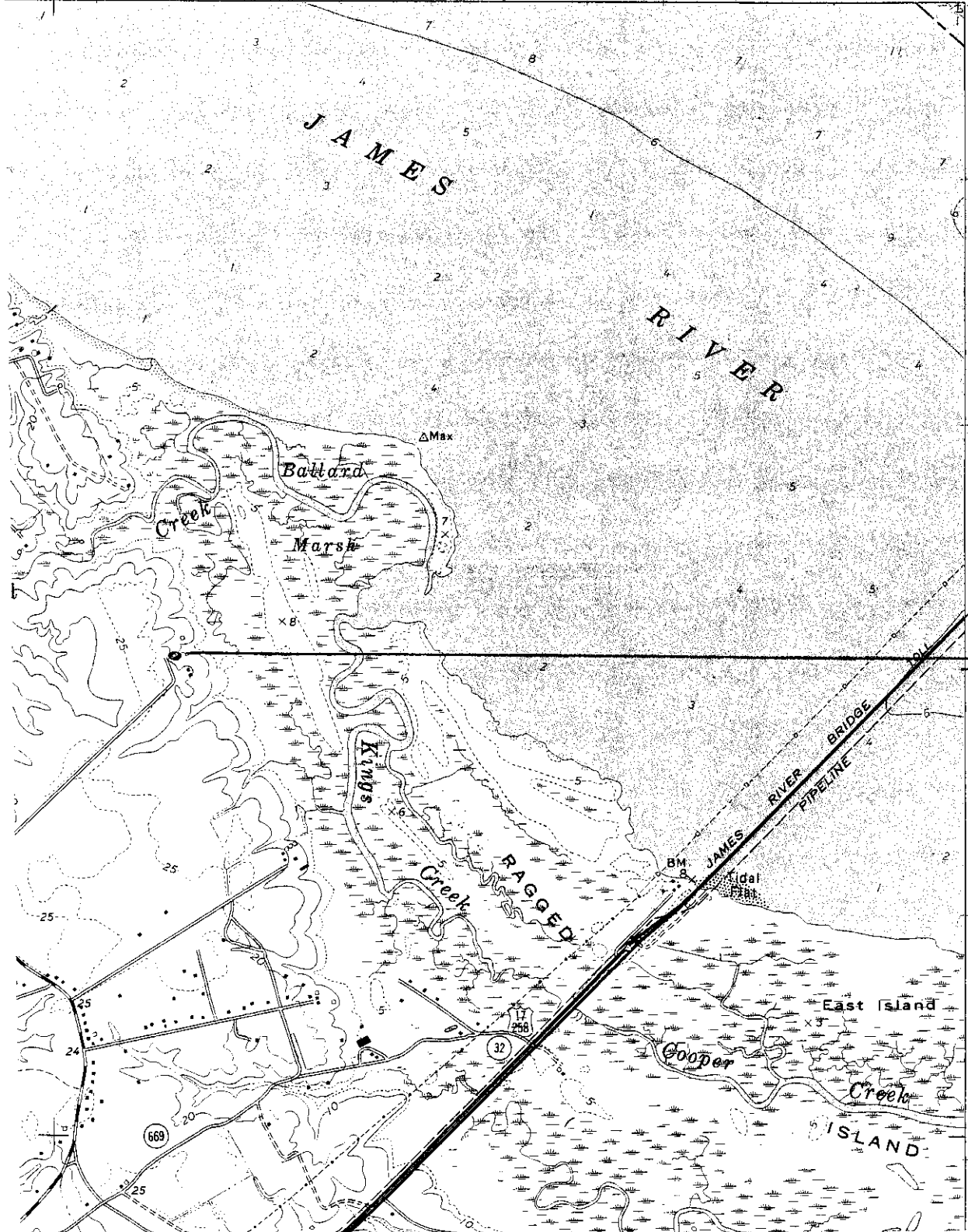
1/15/10



BENNS CHURCH QUADRANGLE
VIRGINIA
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

5758 III SW
(NEWPORT NEWS
NORTH)

32'30" 363 364 365 2 580 000 FEET 366 76°30' 37°00'



39 MI. TO U.S. 60
YORKTOWN 19 MI.

COLONEL
JOSIAH PARKER
FAMILY
CEMETERY

240 000
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