

Rev. William Mease 1574 – 1650 - My 10<sup>th</sup> Great-Grandfather, by David Arthur

born: 01 Jan 1574 in London, Middlesex, England

married: 12 Jun 1603 in London, London, , England

died: Oct 1650 in Henrico, Virginia, United States

Parents:

William Mayes (Mays), Isobel Tressam

Wife:

Elizabeth Partridge - Birth 22 October 1576 -- Swimbridge, Devon, England

Death ? -- Virginia, United States

Sons, John born 1615 and Henry born 1624, were born in Virginia.

(Rev. William (Mays) Mease – John Mays – William Mays – William Mays – Lucy Mays Ellis – Jane Ellis Wade - Richard Wade – Robert Wade – Horaito Wade – William Henry Wade - Anselona Wade Arthur – Edgar Arthur – David Arthur)

Some accounts say William Mease arrived at Jamestown in the first Gates expedition in August-September 1609. Leading scholars say he was the minister in Virginia during the Starving Time winter of 1609-10.

Other accounts say William Mease came to the Virginia Colony at Jamestown with Lord De la Warr in June of 1610. Their arrival was after the horrible “starving time” of the Winter and Spring of 1609-10.

Lord De la Warr arrived just in time to prevent the abandonment of Jamestown in June, 1610, when Sir Thomas Gates and Sir George Somers found the Colony at the last gasp, and took them aboard their ships to carry them back to England—a bitter trial after all that had been endured. And evidently it was God’s will that Virginia should be tried, but it was not His will that she should be abandoned. When the ships were actually going down the river, word came to them that Lord De la Warr was lying at Old Point Comfort with abundant reinforcements and supplies. Virginia was not abandoned, but rescued in the nick of time. With the coming of Lord De la Warr and a well-selected company of emigrants, a new and more hopeful era opened for the Colony.

The first church at Kecoughtan (later Hampton). Built on the Parish Glebe Farm about 1616, as the first church of the oldest continuous settlement of English origin in America, William Mease was the first known minister of the parish, from 1613 until about 1620

The Indian Massacre of 1622 took place in the English Colony of Virginia on Friday, 22 March 1622. Captain John Smith, though he had not been in Virginia since 1609 and was not a firsthand eyewitness, related in his History of Virginia that braves of the Powhatan Confederacy "came unarmed into our houses with deer, turkeys, fish, fruits, and other provisions to sell us". The Powhatan grabbed any tools

or weapons available and killed all English settlers they found, including men, women and children of all ages. Chief Opechancanough led a coordinated series of surprise attacks by the Powhatan Confederacy that killed 347 people, a quarter of the English population of Jamestown.

In 1623, the year following the indian "massacre", several prominent colonists, including Rev Mease returned to London to testify that the affairs of the colony were being conducted correctly. Rev Mease later returned to the colony.

Following are several accounts of the arrival of English colonist to Virginia and the settlement of Jamestown and the surrounding area. These accounts mention Rev. William Mease and his contributions.



First Church at Kecoughtan in Virginia Historical Markers

Quick Description: Erected 1950 by Virginia Conservation Commission. (Marker Number WY 90.)

Location: Virginia, United States

Date Posted: 2/22/2013 2:14:23 PM

Waymark Code: WMGEFG

Long Description:

Near here on the church creek stood the first church at Kecoughtan (later Hampton). Built on the Parish Glebe Farm about 1616, as the first church of the oldest continuous settlement of English origin in America, William Mease was the first known minister of the parish, from 1613 until about 1620.

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Marker Number: WY 90

Marker Title: First Church at Kecoughtan

Marker Location: Hampton, Virginia

County or Independent City: Hampton County

At "Kequoughton, 37 miles below Jamestown, on the same side of the river", at what is now Hampton, Va., pastor William Mease founded St. John's Church, the oldest continuing protestant congregation in the United States.

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<https://www.geni.com/people/Rev-William-Mease/6000000028126455370>

William Mease was born in England in 1574. He had two sons, John Mease (Maies), described in the old records as "the son of William Mease", and Henry Mease who was of the House of Burgesses, of Stafford County, in 1666 (see Overwharton Parish Register, Preface, also Va. Land Grants), and also had large land holdings. John Maies, son of Williams Mease married the daughter of Henry Newcomb.

In 1612, John Rolfe established the culture of tobacco in the colony, and two years later married Pocahontas and took her to England. In 1616, in England, John Rolfe wrote a letter to the King, James I, in which he described the condition of the colony and its outlying settlements. This letter is published as an appendix to Bishop Meade's "Old Churches and Families of Virginia". Vol 2. pa.430, where it may be found, and he says among other things: "At Kecoughton, being not far from the mouth of the river, 37 miles below Jamestown on the same side are twenty whereof eleven are farmers: all these mayntayne themselves as the former Captain George Webb, Commnader. Mr William Mays, Minister there. The farmers, 81, besides women and children, in everie place some, which in all amounteth to three hundred and fifty one persons a small number to advance so great a work". This settlement of twenty men, with some of the women and children, at Kecoughton, of which William Mease was Minister, was located at what is now known as Hampton. It will be noted that Rolfe's spelling of William Mease's name shows very clearly that it was pronounced then, just as it is now. He himself spelled it Mease, but even then wrote it "Mayes" or "Mase" among other forms.

Reverend William Mease (spelled "Mays" by John Rolfe in 1616) who arrived at Jamestown in the first Gates expedition in August-September 1609. Leading scholars say he was the minister in Virginia during the Starving Time winter of 1609-10, was the founding minister of St. John's Church and Parish at Kecoughtan (now City of Hampton), serving 1610/11-1621, and was minister and teacher at Henricus Citie (Henrico) and the College for Indian children 1621-22. He returned to London late in 1622.

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[http://genealogytrails.com/vir/jamescity/church\\_jamestown.html](http://genealogytrails.com/vir/jamescity/church_jamestown.html)

## Church of Jamestown

Source: Colonial Churches in the Original Colony of Virginia, Publ. 1908. Transcribed by Helen Coughlin

When it shall please God to send you on the coast of Virginia, you shall do your best endeavors to find out a safe port in the entrance of some navigable river, making choice of such an one as runneth farthest into the land, and if you happen to discover divers portable rivers, and among them any one that hath two main branches, if the difference be not great, make a choice of that which bendeth most towards thee northwest, for that way you shall soonest find the other sea.”

What an insight into the situation of those who first came to Virginia we have in this first item of the “Instructions by Way of Advice,” given by the Virginia council, in London, to the outgoing colonists! Virginia was little more than a name for a vast unknown region, extending from South Carolina to Canada.

Truly these voyagers “Went out, not knowing whither they went.” Where they will land, what they will find, what coasts, what bays and rivers; how broad the land will be, how far away, when they land, it will still be to the long-sought “other sea.” all is unknown.

This was in December, 1606.

The two companies which had undertaken to colonize Virginia were enthusiastic in their work. Already the Northern Company had sent out one ship in the previous August (1606), and of course she had not been heard from. In fact, she never reached Virginia at all, but fell in with a Spanish fleet in the West Indies and was taken, and most of her officers and men were even then in Spanish prisons. Also, in the following June two other ships were sent out by the Northern Company. They reached “Virginia,” away up on the Kennebec river, in Maine, where, after much suffering and many deaths, the colony was frozen out, those who survived returning to England.

The three ships which came to Jamestown came out between these two disastrous ventures, being sent out by the First, or London Company. On December 19, 1606 (O. S.), they set sail with between one hundred and forty and one hundred and fifty colonists; and with the exception of short stops in the Canaries and in the West Indies, they were in the ships until April 26, 1607 (O. S.). For six weeks they were held by unprosperous winds in sight of England; and then it was that we first hear of the character and influence of their pastor, the Reverend Robert Hunt.

As we have seen in the last paper, the far-sighted Christian statesmen and patriots who planned and sustained this first permanent English colony in America were most careful to make full provision for the religious status and spiritual needs of the colony. There could be no question as to the religion.

The recent Romish Gunpowder Plot to blow up the King and the Protestant House of Parliament was yet fresh in all memories. England was enthusiastically Protestant, and Protestantism was practically undivided, and united in the Church of England.

For their pastor Smith records that the Archbishop (Bancroft) of Canterbury appointed the Rev. Richard Hakluyt, the historian of English voyages of discovery, to be minister to the Colony, and that by the authority of Hakluyt the Rev. Robert Hunt was sent out.

“Master Edward Maria Wingfield” speaks as if the choice of Hunt to be their minister had rested with him. “For my first work (which was to make a right choice of a spiritual pastor) I appeal to the remembrance of my Lord of Canterbury, his Grace, who gave me very gracious audience in my request. And the World knoweth Whom I took with me [i. e., Hunt]; truly, in my opinion, a man not any waie to be touched with the rebellious humors of a Popish spirit nor blemished with the least suspicion of a factious schismatic, whereof I had a speciall care.”

Whoever chose him, all agree in praising him. Smith calls him “an honest, religious, courageous divine; during whose life our factions were oft qualified, and our wants and greatest extremities so comforted that they seemed easie in comparisson of what we endured after his memorable death.”

Again it is recorded of him that during the six weeks the ships were kept in sight of England, “All which time Master Hunt, our preacher, was so weake and sick, that few expected his recovery. Yet, although he were but twentie myles from his habitation (the time we were in the Downs), [from which we infer that his home must have been in Kent], and notwithstanding the stormy weather, nor the scandalous imputations (of some few, little better than Atheists, of the greatest ranke among us) suggested against him, all this could never force from him so much as a seeming desire to leave the business, but preferred the service of God in so good a voyage, before any affection to contest with his godlesse foes, whose disastrous designes (could they have prevailed) had even then overthrowne the business, so many discontents did then arise, had he not, with the water of patience and his godly exhortations (but chiefly through his true devoted examples) quenched those flames of envie and dissention.”

We cannot follow the long and trying voyage (they were eighteen weeks and two days on the way). But after they had left the West Indies “in search of Virginia,” they were caught in a “vehement tempest,” and driven helplessly on beyond their reckoning, so that some even “desired to bear up the helme and return to England than make further search.” \* \* \* “But God, the guide of all good actions, forcing them by an extreme storme to Hull [drive helplessly] all night, did drive them by His providence to their desired port beyond all expectation, for never any of them had seen that coast.”

On Sunday morning early, the 26th of April, corresponding to the 6th of May, as the calendar is now corrected, they entered Chesapeake Bay, and landed on the southern shore.

Our first sight of Virginia, through the eyes of these storm-tossed and cabin-bound colonists, is like a dream of fairyland. It was our most charming season—the early days of May. They wandered on the shore of what is now Princess Anne county, and found, as young Percy, of Northumberland, records, “faire meddowes and goodly tall trees, with such fresh waters running through the woods as I was almost ravished at the sight thereof.”

It was the Third Sunday after Easter, and if on the ships or on the shore that day the service was read, as it is probable that it was, the appropriateness of the Epistle for the day, beginning with 1 Peter 2: 11, and warning them "as strangers and pilgrims," to practice self-discipline, to submit to authority, and live in love, must have impressed those who heard it.

To this same point they returned three days later, on Wednesday, April 29th, the day after they had found the channel at Old Point, and knew that they could enter the river. Then, after the revered fashion of old Christian explorers and discoverers, they set up a cross at the spot of their first landing, and called that place Cape Henry.

After two weeks of exploration and examination, of which an interesting account is given by George Percy, they finally determined upon an island adjacent to the north bank of the river and forty miles from its mouth. This was selected as their "seating place," and for three very good reasons: It was sufficiently removed from the sea, and so less liable to attack from outside enemies; it was an island, (and large enough for their purposes, being two and three-quarter miles long), and so afforded better protection from the natives; and there was a channel of six fathoms of water near enough to the shore for their ships to be moored to the trees, thus affording additional protection and an easy landing.

To this place they came on May 13th, and the next day, Thursday, 14th, all hands were brought ashore and set to clearing ground for their settlement and making ready timber for their stockade fort. This stockade was triangular, "having bulwarks at each corner like a half-moon, and four or five pieces of artillery mounted in them." The side next the river was 420 feet long and the two other sides each 300 feet long. A road ran all around on the inside next the stockade, and next to the road and facing inwards were the cabins occupied by the colonists. In the open space in the middle of the triangle stood the guard-house, the store-house, and when it was built, which was within a few weeks, the church. The settlement was at the upper or western end of the island.

"Now to quote Captain Smith, "because I have spoke so much of the body, give me leave to say somewhat of the soule; and the rather because I have been demanded by so many how we began to preach the Gospel in Virginia, and by what authority; what churches we had, our order of service, and maintenance of our ministers; therefore, I think it not amisse to satisfie their demands, it being the mother of all our Plantations, intreating pride to spare laughter to understand her simple beginnings and proceedings.

"When we first went to Virginia I well remember we did hang an awning (which is a old saile) to three or four trees, to shadow us from the sunne; our walles were rales of wood; our seats unhewed trees till we cut planks; our Pulpit a bar of wood nailed to two neighboring trees. In foule weather we shifted into an old rotten tent; for we had a few better, and this came by way of adventure for new.

"This was our church till we built a homely thing like a barne, set upon cratchets, covered with rafts, sedge and earth; so was the walls. The best of our houses [were] of like curiosity; but the most part far much worse workmanship, that neither could well defend [from] wind nor raine. Yet we had daily Common Prayer, morning and evening; every Sunday two sermons; and every three months the Holy Communion, till our minister died; but our prayers daily with an Homily on Sundaies we continued two or three years after till our preachers came,"-that is, the next preacher to come after the death of Mr. Hunt."

Here is a true picture of the beginning of Church life in America. The pioneers, working in summer heat, building a fort, clearing ground, planting corn, getting out clapboard and specimens of timber to send back to England, with sassafras roots and other crude products of the land.

Sunday comes, and they leave their tools, but still taking their arms, they gather under the "old saile" to shadow them from the sun while they hear the familiar words of Common Prayer, and the cheering exhortations of their man of God.

There, doubtless, the first celebration of the Holy Communion was held on Sunday, the 21st of June, 1607, corresponding to July 1st in our calendar. It was the Third Sunday after Trinity; and the next day the ships were going back to England. Note again the appropriateness of the Epistle-1 Peter 5: 5, etc.: "All of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility, for God resisteth the proud and giveth grace unto the humble. Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God that He may exalt you in due time. Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you."

This probably continued for some weeks, and then was built the first church building of the Church of England in America-the "homely thing like a barne, set upon cratchets, covered with rafts, sedge and earth."

Soon the sickly season of August and September was upon these unacclimated men, and they died like sheep. Twenty-one deaths are recorded between August 5th and September 6th alone. Provisions were also running short. There were but two gallons of wine left, and this the President reserved for the Communion Table. Mr. George Percy describes this wretchedness: "There were never Englishmen left in a foreigne cuntry in such miseries as we were in this new discovered Virginia. Wee watched every three nights, lying on the bare cold ground, what weather so ever came, and warded all the next day; which brought our men to be most feeble wretches. Our food was but a small can of barlie sod in water to five men a day. Our drink cold water taken out of the river; which was at a flood verie salt, and at a low tide, full of slime and filth; which was the destruction of many of our men. Thus we lived for the space of five months in this miserable distress, not having five able men to man our bulwarkes upon any occasion. If it had not pleased God to put a terrour in the Savages' hearts we had all perished by those wild and cruell Pagans." Such was the first church and congregation at Jamestown.

This poor little building of logs, covered with turf and sedges, lasted only about six months. Early in January, 1608, just after Newport's return from England, bringing supplies of men and provisions, the town caught fire and the reed thatching of the huts and church made a fire "so fierce as it burned their pallizadoes (although 10 or 12 yarde distant) with their armes, bedding, apparel and much private provision. Good Master Hunt, our preacher, lost all his library, and all that he had but the clothes on his backe, yet [did] none ever see him repine at his losse." Newport came to their help, and while the men were repairing the storehouse and other buildings, Newport's mariners rebuilt the church, probably on the site of the old one; and this is the second church built, and like the first, it was a hurriedly-constructed and poor affair.

Just about a year from the time it was built this church witnessed the first marriage in Virginia, which took place about Christmas, 1608, or January, 1609, when John Laydon, a laborer, who had come over in

1607, married Anne Burras, the maidservant of Mistress Forrest. They had arrived about October, 1608. This lady and her maid are the first women whose names are mentioned in the lists of emigrants.

This little church must also have seen the last offices performed for that faithful man of God, "Good Maister Hunt." The time of his death is not recorded, but it can hardly have been later than the winter of 1608-9. Doubtless his remains rest in the bosom of Old Virginia at Jamestown, among the hundreds and hundreds whose lives were laid down in her foundation.

These two churches are the only ones which captain John Smith knew in Virginia, for he returned to England in October, 1609. Hunt had then been already some months dead.

It witnessed the horrible "starving time" of the winter and spring of 1609-10, and saw the abandonment of Jamestown in June, 1610, when Sir Thomas Gates and Sir George Somers found the Colony at the last gasp, and took them aboard their ships to carry them back to England—a bitter trial after all that had been endured. And evidently it was God's will that Virginia should be tried, but it was not His will that she should be abandoned. When the ships were actually going down the river, word came to them that Lord De la Warr was lying at Old Point Comfort with abundant reinforcements and supplies. Virginia was not abandoned, but rescued in the nick of time. With the coming of Lord De la Warr and a well-selected company of emigrants, a new and more hopeful era opened for the Colony. As for the church, although only two and a half years old, it was already in very bad condition. But De la Warr, a deeply pious man, took much pains in repairing it. Strachey gives a bright picture of the church and its worshippers: "The Captaine General hath given order for the repairing of [the church] and at this instant many hands are about it. It is in length three score foote, in breadth twenty-foure, and shall have a chancell in it of cedar, with faire broad windows, to shut and open as the weather shall occasion, of the same wood, a pulpit of the same, with a font hewen hollow like a canoa, with two bells at the West end. It is so cast as to be very light within, and the Lord Governour and Captaine General doth cause it to be kept passing sweete, and trimmed up with divers flowers, with a sexton belonging to it; and in it every Sunday we have Sermons twice a day, and Thursday a sermon, having true (two?) preachers which take their weekly turns; and every morning at the ringing of a bell about ten of the clocke each man addresseth himself to prayers, and so at foure of the clocke before supper. Every Sunday when the Lord Governour and Captaine General goeth to church he is accompanied with all the Counsailers, Captaines and other Officers, and all the Gentlemen, with a guard of Halberdiers, in his Lordship's Livery, faire red cloakes, to the number of fifty, both on each side, and behind him: and being in the church his Lordship hath his seat in the Quier, in a green velvet chair, with a cloath, with a velvet cushion spread on a table before him on which he kneeleth, and on each side sit the Counsel, Captaines and officers, each in their place, and when he returneth home again he is waited on to his house in the same manner."

Here is great punctilio and formality; but withal De la Warr, Somers and Gates were men of profound piety. Religion was not a matter of ceremonies and services with them, but was the foundation of their lives. They were of the sort that "next to God loved a good fight," but they loved both truly, and God was ever first.

As for the two ministers who took their turns at Jamestown in those days, one was the Reverend Richard Buck, who had come with Sir Thomas Gates. He was an Oxford man and "an able and painful preacher." He served the church at Jamestown at least eleven years, and maybe longer, and died in Virginia. He seems to have been of a Puritanical turn of mind, for he called his children, successively, Mara, Gershom, Benoni, and Peleg. The other minister must have come with Lord De la Warr, and his

name is not given, but he is thought to have been the Rev. William Mease, who came at this time, and was in Virginia a number of years, being in Elizabeth City parish in 1615. This church, which Newport built and Lord De la Warr renovated, was of course built of wood; and in it, in April, 1614, Pocahontas was married to John Rolfe, probably by Mr. Buck. It is, more probable that Pocahontas was baptized at Henrico by the Rev. Mr. Whitaker, as she seems to have lived there with Sir Thomas Dale at the time of her conversion.

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[https://archive.org/stream/churchofenglandi01penn/churchofenglandi01penn\\_djvu.txt](https://archive.org/stream/churchofenglandi01penn/churchofenglandi01penn_djvu.txt)

When the "Susan Constant," the "Goodspeed," and the "Discovery" dropped down the Thames from London, December 20th, 1606. a Church of England clergyman was on board one of the vessels, bound for the New World and ready to minister to the spiritual needs of the Virginia colonists. The Reverend Robert Hunt seems to have been appointed at the recommendation of the Reverend Richard Hakluyt, who had declined the post ; though the Archbishop of Canterbury gave his approval to Hunt, as "a man not anywaie to be touched w\*^^ the rebellious humors of a popish spirit, nor blemished w\*^^ y\*" least suspicion of a factius scismatick."^ It appears that he had lived in Kent, and that, prior to his mission, he was vicar of Reculver, to which he had been appointed January 18th, 1594, and from which he resigned in 1602.

#### STORY AND PAGEANT

The little expedition was delayed for six weeks, by unfavourable winds; and during the time Mr. Hunt "was so weake and sicke, that few expected his recoverie. Yet although he were but ten or twelve miles from his habitation (the time we were in the Downes), and notwithstanding the stormie weather, nor the scandalous imputations (of some few, little better than Atheists, of the greatest ranke amongst us) suggested against him, all this could never force from him so much as a seeming desire to leave the business, but preferred the service of God, in so good a voyage, before any affection to contest with his godlesse foes, whose disastrous designes (could they have prevailed) had even then overthrowne the businesse, so many discontents did then arise, had he not, with the water of patience, and his godly exhortations (but chiefly by his true devoted example) quenced those flames of envie and dissention." Thus, according to one in a position to observe the strain and difficulties of the venture, Mr. Hunt proved a constructive and ennobling factor.

On the 26th of April, 1607, the settlers arrived at a cape, which they named Cape Henry in honour of the Prince of Wales, the eldest son of King James the First. A cross was planted there. Then the expedition sailed into Chesapeake Bay and up the James River. On the 13th of May, the site for Jamestown was chosen; and the ships were made fast to the trees. The next day, the travellers unloaded. Both gentlemen and labourers felled trees to make a clearing for the fort.

Here we quote from Captain John Smith: —

"Now because I have spoken so much of the body, give me leave to say somewhat of the soule; and the rather because I have been demanded by so many how we began to preach the Gospel in Virginia, and by what authority; what churches we had, and our order of service, and maintainance of our ministers,

therefore I think it not amiss to satisfie their demands, it being the mother of all our Plantations, intreating pride to spare laughter to understand her simple beginnings and proceedings.

"When first we went to Virginia I well remember we did hang an awning (which is an old saile) to three or four trees, to shadow us from the sunne; our walles were railes of wood ; our seats unhewed trees till we cut planks; our Pulpit a bar of wood nailed to two neighboring trees. In foule weather we shifted into an old rotten tent; for we had few better, and this came by adventure for new.

"This was our church till we built a homely thing like a barne, set upon cratchets, covered with rafts sedge and earth; so was the walls. The best of our houses of like curiosity, but the most part far much worse workmanship, that neither could well defend wind nor raine. Yet we had daily Common Prayer, morning and evening; every Sunday two sermons; and every three months the holy Communion, till our minister died; but our Prayers daily with an Homily on Sundaies, we continued two or three yeares after, till our (more?) preachers came."

Much has been written of the hardships which the first Virginia colonists endured. Ague and fever, diseases caused by the swamps and the bad drinking water; the constant menace of the Indians; the scarcity of food; the inevitable dissensions which arose within a disappointed group of settlers; the difficulties of adaptation and adjustment to new living conditions — it is all a sad story. The President of the colony, Edward-Maria Wingfield, vouches for the wholesome influence of the clergyman in those anxious times. "Two or three Sunday mornings, the Indians gave us alarms at our Towne; by that times they were answered, the place about us well discovered, and our divine service ended, the daie was far spent. The preacher did ask me if it were my pleasure to have a sermon; hee said he was prepared for it. I made answer, that our men were wearie and hungry, and that he did see the tyme of the day far past (for at other tymes he never made such question, but the service finished, he began his sermon), and that if it pleased him, we would spare him till some other time. I never failed to take such notes, by writing, out of his Doctrine as my capacity would comprehend, unless some rainy day hindered my endeavors." Captain John Smith found in the Reverend Mr. Hunt "an honest, religious, and courageous divine;" and said: "Many were the mischefs that daily sprung from their ignorant (yet ambitious) spirits, but the good Doctrine and exhortation of our Preacher Mr. Hunt reconciled them." Though a period of such dire distress followed that "the living were scarce able to bury the dead,"<sup>^^</sup> and the stock of liquors was reduced to two gallons each of "sack" and aqua vitae, the sack was reserved for the communion table. <sup>^^</sup> While, unlike the colonists who later settled in New England, the Virginia settlers had no political and religious problems to spur them on to expatriation, they emphasised piety and reverence in their daily activity.

On the 22nd of June, 1607, Captain Newport left for England, in the "Susan Constant," leaving behind him 104 persons, "verie bare and scantie of victualls, furthermore in warres and in danger of the Savages." For his good passage homeward and his safe return, the colonists "made many prayers to our Almighty God." The day before he departed, the holy communion was celebrated. This service, at which Captain Newport invited many "to supper as a farewell," is regarded as the first communion held in the colony.'

Then followed the long summer months, so vividly described by one of the sufferers. "Our men were destroyed with cruell Diseases as Swellings, Fluxes, Burning Fevers, and by warres, and some departed suddenly, but for the most part they died of mere famine. There were never Englishmen left in a forreigne Countrey in such miserie as wee were in this new discovered Virginia. Wee watched every

three nights lying on the bare cold ground what weather soever came warded all the next day, which brought our men to bee most feeble wretches, our food was but a small Can of Barlie sod in water to five men a day, our drinke cold water taken out of the River, which was at a floud verie salt, at a low tide full of slime and filth, which was the destruction of many of our men. Thus we lived for the space of five monthes in this miserable distresse, not having five able men to man our Bulwarkes upon any occasion. If it had not pleased God to have put a terrour in the Savages hearts, we had all perished by those vile and cruell Pagans, being in that weake estate as we were our men night and day groaning in every corner of the Fort most pittifuU to heare, if there were any conscience in men, it would make their harts bleed to heare the pittiful murmurings & outcries of our sick men without reliefe every night and day for the space of sixe weekes, some departing out of the World, many times three or foure in a night, in the morning their bodies trailed out of their Cabines like Dogges to be buried: in this sort did I see the mortalitie of divers of our people.

"It pleased God, after a while, to send those p.eople which were our mortal enemies to releev us with victuals, as Bread, Corne, Fish, and Flesh in great plentie, which was the setting up of our feeble men, otherwise wee had all perished. AUso we were frequented by divers Kings in the Countrie, bringing us store of provision to our great comfort."

Captain Bartholomew Gosnold died the 22nd of August — "a worthy and religious gentleman." He was "honorably buried, having all the ordnance in the port shot off, with many volleys of small shots." ^^ By September, at least fifty of the colonists had died, and the provisions were nearly exhausted. Wingfield was displaced as President by Ratcliffe, September 10th.

In December, Captain John Smith made a journey up the Chesapeake, in order to get provisions from the Indians. Unfortunately, he incurred the hostility of the natives, and two of his companions were killed. Smith himself was made captive. Released after a few weeks, he returned to Jamestown, to find that more of the colonists had died.

In January, 1608, Captain Newport returned. Three days after his arrival, the little settlement of Jamestown was burned — the storehouse and the barn-like church being consumed in the flames. Smith tells us that in this fire "Good Master Hunt, our Preacher, lost all his library and all that he had but the cloathes on his back; yet none never heard him repine at his losse." Upon any alarm, Smith said, Mr. Hunt "would be as readie for defence as any; and till he could not speake he never ceased to his utmost to animate us constantly to persist; whose soule questionlesse is with God."

Captain Newport's arrival gave the colony a further lease on life. Impoverished and homeless as the settlers were, worn by disease and privation, disappointed of their hopes of speedy fortunes, and well-nigh defenceless against the attacks of the savages, they were about ready to abandon the ill-starred project. But Newport gave orders for rebuilding the town; and his sailors rebuilt the church. There was nothing at their disposal but green timber from the adjacent swamps and woods; this was used. Newport also tried to effect better relations between the whites and the Indians. He paid a visit to Powhatan, a well-known chief who lived on the north side of the York River.

On the 10th of April, Newport left Jamestown for England. In the meantime. Captain Nelson, who had started out for Virginia with Newport and had been separated by storm, arrived in the "Phoenix," with provisions as well as seventy settlers. This brought temporary relief; but the hardships of the colonists were still severe. During the year, a band of eighteen savages fell into the hands of the settlers; and for

some time they were carried to the religious services, both morning and evening, in the hopes that they might be favourably influenced. We do not know the results.

"When Newport returned in October, he brought more colonists, including the first women who joined the Jamestown settlers. A certain Mrs. Forrest came over, bringing her maid, Anne Burras. The latter was married to a labourer, John Laydon, one of the original settlers, either in December, 1608, or in the following month. It was the first marriage celebrated among the white settlers of Virginia. We do not know whether the Reverend Mr. Hunt performed the marriage or not. He died about this time.

In the hopes of bettering conditions, the friends of the Virginia enterprise applied for a new charter. The same was granted, May 23rd, 1609, to "The Treasurer and Company of Adventurers and Planters of the City of London for the first Colony in Virginia." Anglican clergymen were prominent in the incorporation. The list included the Bishops of London, of Lincoln, of Worcester, of Bath and Wells; Dean Sutcliffe of Exeter; the Reverend Richard Hakluyt, and others — all associated in the scheme." The 29th article of this second charter asserts the missionary character of the undertaking: —

"And lastly, because the principal effect which we can desire, or expect in this action, is the conversion and seduction of the people in those parts unto the true worship of God and Christian religion . . . .

The celebrated Hakluyt was anxious to keep before the colonists the serious nature of their enterprise, and wrote a letter of advice, which contained the following language: — †

"Lastly and chiefly, the way to prosper and achieve good success is to make yourselves all of one mind for the good of your country and your own, and to serve and fear God, the giver of all goodness, for every plantation which our Heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted out."

The newly chartered Company published a statement of their intentions in the planting of the Virginia colony; and enumerated as the "principal and Main Endes:" first, "To preach and baptize into the Christian Religion and by the propagation of the Gospel to recover out of the armes of the Divell, a number of poore and miserable soules, wrapt up unto death, in almost invincible ignorance, to endeavor the fulfilling, and the accomplishment of the number of the elect, which shall be gathered from all corners of the earth; and to add our myte to the Treasury of Heaven, that as we pray for the coming of the Kingdom of Glory, so to expresse in our actions the same desire, if God have pleased to use so weak instruments, to the ripening and consummation thereof." This document closed with the appeal: — "Let every man look inward, and disperse that cloud of avarice, which darkeneth his spiritual sight and he will finde there, that when he shall appeare before the Tribunall of Heaven, it shall be questioned him what he hath done? Hath he fed and clothed the hungry and naked? It shall be required, what hath he done for the advancement of that Gospell which hath saved him; and for the releefe of his makers Image, whom he was bound to save?"^^

On the 1st of June, 1609, the first expedition under the new charter sailed from Plymouth. There were nine vessels. Newport commanded the fleet ; and Sir Thomas Gates was Lieutenant- Governor. Among the instructions issued to Gates, we find the following articles: —

"You shall take principall Order and Care for the true and reverent worship of God that his worde be duely preached and his holy sacraments administred according to y"" constitucons of the Church of

England in all fundamentall pointes, and his ministers had in due observance and respects agreeable to the dignity of their callinge. And that all Atheisme Prophanes Popery or Schisme be exemplarily punished to the honor of god and to the peace and safety of his Church, over w<sup>th</sup> in this tendernes and infancy, you must be especially solicitous & watchefull.

"You shall, with all Ppensesness and diligence, endeavour the conversion of the natives to the knowledge and worship of the true (god) and their redeemer Christ Jesus, as the most pious and noble end of this plantacon, w<sup>th</sup> the better to effect you must Pcure from them some convenient number of their children to be brought vp in yo<sup>r</sup> language, and manners, and if yo<sup>r</sup> finde it convenient we thinke it reasonable you first remoue from them their Iniocasockes or Priestes by a surprise of them all and detayninge them prisoners, for they are so wrapped up in the fogge and miserie of their iniquity, and so tirrified with their continuall tirrany Chayned vnder the bond of Deathe vnto the Divell that while they Hue amoung them to poyson and infecte them their mindes, you shall neuer make any greate progres into this glorious worke, nor haue any Civill peace or concurre with them."

One of the ships, the "Sea Venture," which embarked with Sir Thomas Gates, Sir George Somers, and Captain Newport, was cast on the Bermudas by a violent storm. The passengers and sailors were stranded on the island for several months. The chaplain of the vessel was the Reverend Richard Buck, an Oxford man, commended as "an able and painful preacher." During the stay on the island, the shipwrecked travellers had regular religious services. Strachey, the Secretary of Virginia, says: — "We had every Sunday two sermons preached by our minister, besides every morning and evening, at the ringing of a bell, we repaired all to public prayer, at what time the names of our whole company were called, and such as were wanting were duly punished." While there, Mr. Buck had several marriages, baptisms, and funerals. Six of the company were buried according to the Church of England rites. Before leaving the island, in the rude cedar ships which they built during their sojourn, the travellers, at the direction of Sir Thomas Gates, erected a memorial in the figure of a cross, made of some timber from the old wreck, and bearing on each side an inscription in Latin and English: "In memory of our great deliverance both from a mightie storme and leake: wee have set up this to the honour of God." Sailing for Virginia, they arrived May 23rd, 1610." Some of the ships had already landed; but the usual scourge of epidemic disorders, famine, and distress, coupled with disorganisation and friction had exacted its toll. When Gates reached Virginia, he found only about sixty colonists. Probably three hundred had died during the preceding nine months. It was truly a grim spectacle that confronted the new Governor. But as soon as he landed, the Governor, accompanied by the newcomers, proceeded to the ruined church. Gates caused the bell to be rung. The dispirited, starved people went to the church, to join in the "zealous and sorrowful" prayer of the Reverend Mr. Buck. At the close of this service, the commission of Gates was formally proclaimed. So discouraging was the outlook that Gates determined to abandon the settlement. On June 7th, the survivors embarked, floating down with the tide, "none dropping a tear, because none had enjoyed one day of ha,ppiness." But on the next day, they sighted a squadron commanded by Lord Delaware, who had decided to take charge of the colony in person. So they returned.

Thomas West, Lord Delaware, had been appointed Governor General the year before; but he had delayed his journey to America until he realised that conditions demanded his presence. His instructions were similar to those received by Gates. He was ordered "to take principall order and care for the true worship and service of god as by havinge the gossPELL preched frequent prayers and the sacram<sup>ts</sup> administred as becometh xtians." His ministers were to be held in respect, "agreeable to their dignitie

and callinge;" and atheism, prophaneness, popery, and schism were to be punished. Efforts were to be made to convert the Indians; and strategy was recommended to circumvent the influence of the savage priests.

When Lord Delaware first landed, he caused his company in arms to stand in order and make a guard; then he fell upon his knees, and in the presence of the people made a long and silent prayer. Afterwards, he marched up into the town and passed on into the little church, where he listened to a sermon by the Reverend Mr. Buck. With the resuscitation that followed, as a result of Lord Delaware's leadership, the church was given prompt attention. The Governor ordered the church repaired, and many people joined in the work. Secretary Strachey described it, as "in length three-score foot, in breadth twenty-foure, and shall have a Chancel in it of Cedar and a Communion Table of the Blake (black) Walnut, and all the pewes of Cedar, with fa ire Broad Windows, to shut and open, as the weather shall occasion, of the same wood, a Pulpet of the same, with a font hewen hollow, like a Conoa, with two Bels at the West end. It is so cast, as to be very light within." The Governor and his staff sought, even in the midst of the struggles through which they were passing, to keep alive the dignity which befitted their station. As Strachey tells us, "the Lord Governour and Captaine Generall doth cause (the church) to be kept passing sweete, and trimmed up with divers flowers, with a Sexton belonging to it; and in it every Sunday wee have sermons twice a day, and every Thursday a sermon, having true (two?) preachers, which take their weekly turnes; and every morning at the ringing of a bell, about ten of the clocke, each man addresseth himself to prayers, and so at foure of the clocke before supper. Every Sunday, when the Lord Governour and Captaine Generall goeth to Church, hee is accompanied with all the Counsaillers, Captaines, other Officers and all the gentlemen, with a guard of Holberdiers, in his Lordship's livery, faire red cloakes, to the number of fifty both on each side, and behinde him; and being in the Church his Lordship hath his seate in the Quire, in a green velvet chair, with a cloath, with a velvet cushion spread on a table before him, on which he kneeleth, and on each side sit the Counsell, Captaines, and officers each in their place, and when he returneth home againe, he is waited on to his house in the same manner."

There was evidently another minister in Jamestown, beside Mr. Hunt — probably the chaplain of the fleet or the Reverend William Mease.

On May 24th, 1610, the "Lawes Divine, Morall, and Martial for the Colony in Virginia Britannia" were first established. They were exemplified and approved by Lord Delaware, June 12th, and enlarged by Sir Thomas Dale, June 22nd, the following year. While extremely rigid and severe, according to present day standards, they were not foreign to the spirit of the times, which had been moulded so largel upon the Levitical law of the Old Testament. By these laws, all captains and officers, whether in town or towns, forts or fortresses, were enjoined "to have a care that the Almightye God bee duly and daily served, and that they call vpon their people to heare sermons, as that also they diligently frequent Morning and evening praier themselues by their owne exemplar and daily life, and duty herein, encouraging others thereunto." No man should speak impiously or maliciously against "the holy and blessed Trinitie, or any of the three persons ... or against the knowne Articles of the Christian faith, vpon paine of death." Blaspheming God's holy name was made a capital crime. Unlawful oaths, taking God's name in vain, would be severely punished for the first offence; for the second, a bodkin would be thrust through the offender's tongue; for the third, the culprit might be brought before a martial court and receive sentence of death. The ministers must be treated with proper reverence. "Everie man and woman duly twice a day vpon the first towling of the Bell shall vpon the working dales repaire vnto the Church to

hear diuine Service vpon pain of losing his or her dayes allowance for the first omission, for the second to be whipt, and for the third to be condemned to the Gallies for six Moneths." Sabbath violation was severely punished. The duties of the ministers were prescribed.

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<http://www.stjohnshampton.org/mission-statement>

## History

### Settlement Begins 1610

English settlers established a community and church on the tip of the peninsula in 1610, three years after the colonization of Jamestown. A small group of civilians and soldiers moved to the fertile shores of Hampton Roads to escape the famine and disease which had decimated the residents of Jamestown. Here, with the friendly Kecoughtan Indians, they found a more congenial environment. But the killing of a settler ended the peacefulness, and the English took full possession of the area.

In 1619, "Kecoughtan" was named "Elizabeth City" in honor of the daughter of King James I, but the beautiful Indian name continued in popular use for another century. The settlement was then renamed "Southampton" to honor the Earl who was a major stockholder in the Virginia Company. In time the name was shortened to "Hampton." The church also evolved through the centuries. The following information will assist you in understanding and appreciating the great heritage, history, and Christian faith that is St. John's. (Parish Site Locations)

### First Parish Site 1610 – 1623

Excavations in the Church Creek area of Hampton indicate that the earliest English settlements were near present-day LaSalle and Chesapeake Avenues. Tradition has it that services of the parish were held there, and a historical marker to that effect can be seen on LaSalle Avenue. The first minister of the new parish was the Reverend William Mease who was appointed by the Bishop of London to lead the church at Kecoughtan. After serving from 1610-1620, he returned to England, and then later returned to the colonies.

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[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St.\\_John's\\_Episcopal\\_Church\\_\(Hampton,\\_Virginia\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St._John's_Episcopal_Church_(Hampton,_Virginia))

English settlers from Jamestown established a community and church on the tip of the Virginia Peninsula on July 9, 1610, one month after Lord De La Warr arrived at Jamestown with supplies that effectively ended the Starving Time in that settlement. This new settlement was named after the Algonquian-speaking Kecoughtan who lived in the area.

### First parish site 1610-1623

Excavations in the Church Creek area of Hampton indicate that the earliest English settlements were near present-day LaSalle and Chesapeake Avenues. The first minister of the new parish was the Reverend William Mease who was appointed by the Bishop of London to lead the church at Kecoughtan. A historical marker on LaSalle Ave marks the approximate location of the first site.

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Second Parish church, 1623



Erected in 1623, the year following the indian "massacre". That year several prominent colonists, including Rev Mease returned to London to testify that the affairs of the colony were being conducted correctly. Rev Mease later returned to the colony at an unknown date.

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The following account of the life and death of Rev. William Mease has second marriage and death in England in 1636. It attributes the later Virginia records of William Mease to one of his sons.

Sherrod's Legacy: Reflections of Sherrod Mayes and his Descendants

By Ron Mayes, Ed.D

<https://books.google.com/books?id=5J37AgAAQBAJ&pg=PA32&lpg=PA32&dq=William+Mease+burial+1636&source=bl&ots=GC236DZHjO&sig=i3oLANerJZcWw9Hh-w2ggD6rxPs&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwih-vXbvufRAhVDxCYKHQq5DCsQ6AEIJzAD#v=onepage&q=William%20Mease%20burial%201636&f=false>