

Despoilers of the The Middle Church



1895 Orange Virginia

Between 1750 and 1758 Andrew Shepherd made a gift of an altar piece to a church in Orange County located about three miles southeast of the Orange County Court House on the old road leading to Fredericksburg situated on the land of Mrs. James Taylor, Sr.

During the conflict with Great Britain, this church was destroyed and the very bricks carried off and the altar pieces donated by Andrew Shepherd torn from the altar and attached as ornamental appendages to some articles of household furniture. The ancient communion plate, a large silver cup and paten with the name of the parish engraved upon it, was rescued and went to the possession of St. Thomas Church at Orange.

The despoilers then went to the churchyard and carried away tombstones for other purposes while breaking others in the ground. Vandalizing

churchyards was not uncommon during this period because Virginians had "been made" to attend church and pay tithing.

Source: Old Churches and Families of Virginia by Meade, Vol. II.