

## **Historic Christ Church & Museum**

Constructed by Robert “King” Carter and completed in 1735, Christ Church in Lancaster County is the finest and best-preserved parish church from colonial Virginia. Carter built Christ Church to replace a wooden church his father John had constructed on the site in 1670. The church retains most of its original elements, including its molded-brick doorways, the finest of their type in the country. Its soaring walls feature extraordinary Flemish bond brickwork with glazed headers accented by Aquia stone trim around the doors and windows. The exterior also includes a full, classical entablature. On the interior, Christ Church has the only collection of high-back pews and one of only two triple-deck pulpits to survive from the period. The stone pavers, walnut altarpiece and marble font are also original. The elaborately carved tombs of Robert Carter and his two wives stand in the churchyard. The National Historic Landmark site includes an interactive museum where visitors can explore the social and political world of colonial Virginia, the role of the Church of England, and the lives of the Carters and other members of the parish.

## **Corotoman**

Corotoman plantation was owned by the Carter family from 1653 until 1862. The property was obtained through land patents by John Carter, a prominent tobacco planter, merchant, and political figure, but it is better known as the home of his son, Robert “King” Carter. Robert held virtually every important political position in Virginia, including Speaker of the House of Burgesses, member of the Governor’s Council, treasurer, and acting governor. Robert’s prodigious influence continued through his numerous offspring, who include three signers of the Declaration of Independence, two presidents, eight Virginia governors, General Robert E. Lee, a Supreme Court justice, and more than 20,000 other descendants.

The large Georgian mansion was completed in 1725 but destroyed by fire just four years later. The mansion’s 90 by 40 feet foundation remains outlined on the property. The museum at Historic Christ Church displays artifacts unearthed at Corotoman during excavations in the late 1970s.

## **Ditchley**

The Ditchley tract was patented in 1651 by Colonel Richard Lee, progenitor of the Lee family of Virginia. The present mansion, begun ca. 1762 by Kendall Lee, a great-grandson of Richard Lee, is classic colonial Georgian architecture. The house has the handsome brickwork, hipped roof, and geometric proportions characteristic of Virginia’s finest plantations houses. The interior preserves much original woodwork including a noteworthy Georgian stair. In 1792, the Lee family sold Ditchley to James Ball, kinsman of Mary Ball Washington, mother of George Washington. The property remained in the Ball family throughout the 19th century. In 1932 Ditchley was purchased by Mr. and Mrs. Alfred I. du Pont of Wilmington, Delaware. Mrs. du Pont, the former Jessie Dew Ball (1884-1970), was related to the Balls of Ditchley.

Ditchley’s current owners bought the property in 2015. They have renovated the manor house and the care takers house; the latter now is a special events venue to showcase sustainable agriculture operations on the property. The couple raise heritage Tamworth pigs, Belted Galloway cattle, and heritage turkeys and geese and tend the orchards’ 2,000 trees, most of which are 1600s- and 1700s-heritage varieties. This excursion includes a cider tasting of offerings from Ditchley Cider Works.

## **Verville**

This visually engaging brick plantation house is one of a handful of colonial buildings remaining in Lancaster County. While its form is typical of the 18th century Chesapeake area, early records indicate that Verville was always considered a superlative example of local domestic architecture. The house is the only standing structure on a plantation that once had many outbuildings and agricultural buildings. The property was settled by the Thomas Carter family who constructed the center portions of the house around 1725. It was acquired by Col. James Gordon, a Scots Irish immigrant, commencing in 1742. The present building was improved by Col. Gordon and his son, Col. James Gordon II, who inherited the property in 1768. Both Gordons were influential merchants, planters, and public officials. During the early 19th century, Verville was the home of Ellyson Currie, a justice of the Virginia General Court, who added the wings and probably the finely detailed Federal interior woodwork. The mantels are derived from designs in Owen Biddle’s *Young Carpenter’s Assistant* (1805). The house has since been expanded with several architecturally compatible additions.