



Following the establishment of the Church of England in Maryland, in effect making the church an arm of the government, and the moving of the capital of the colony from St. Mary's City to Annapolis, provision was made to construct the first St. Anne's Church. The colonial Assembly voted appropriations for its construction in 1695. The building was to be 65 feet long, 30 feet wide with a porch and a turret in which to hang a bell. Progress was slow and the building was not completed until after 1700, perhaps not until 1704. When completed, it served as the Chapel Royal for Maryland until 1715, when the province was returned to Lord Baltimore. No known pictures of it were made during its existence. There were official pews set aside for use of the Governor and legislators. King William III (1689-1701) sent over a handsome set of Communion Silver made in 1696 and engraved with his royal arms for use in his Chapel Royal in Annapolis. This silver is still in use every Sunday today. Later, Queen Anne (1701-1714) gave a bell, which called parishioners to worship. Over the succeeding years, galleries and transepts were added, additional pews (paid for by subscription and useable only by the owner) were installed, and an organ and organ loft were constructed. Despite the additions, the church was always too small to accommodate the growing population of the parish. Citizens, except Catholics, were nominally required to attend services. The apparently haphazard additions made the church look more like a barn than a church, so that the building was not only too small, but also ugly. In 1775, the congregation petitioned the colonial Assembly for funds for a new church. In the spring of 1775, the first St. Anne's Church was razed. Materials were purchased and brought to the site. Worship services were held in a theatre recently built on glebe (i.e. church owned) land. Then the American Revolution started. A new church building was not completed for 18 years!