

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: North Carolina	
COUNTY: Vance	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:  
St. John's Episcopal Church

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:  
SR 1329

CITY OR TOWN:  
Williamsboro

STATE: North Carolina      CODE: 37      COUNTY: Vance      CODE: 187

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Comments _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:  
Diocese of North Carolina

STREET AND NUMBER:  
201 St. Alban's Drive

CITY OR TOWN: Raleigh      STATE: North Carolina      CODE: 37

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:  
Vance County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Henderson      STATE: North Carolina      CODE: 37

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: 1959       Federal     State     County     Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
Library of Congress

STREET AND NUMBER:  
East Capitol and Independence Avenue, S.E.

CITY OR TOWN: Washington      STATE: D.C.      CODE: 11

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

St. John's Church is a simple rectangular structure with molded weatherboards on a foundation of brick laid in Flemish bond. The west gable end features the main doorway which contains the original double door surmounted by a small pediment. The doors have four tiers of bead and bevel panels, arranged in pairs of alternating long and short panels, with a single panel across the top. This arrangement is rare in the United States, but is found in Bermuda. An interesting feature of the doors is the inside sheathing, which is laid in herringbone fashion, matched at the lock rail. Above the entrance is a row of four windows with molded sills and nine-over-nine sash.

The north and south elevations are seven bays long and feature a box cornice decorated with classic modillions. The first and second bays on both sides contain small windows which, with those on the west gable, light the gallery. The remaining five bays contain large nave windows with sixteen-over-sixteen sash, many of which are original. The east wall has an identical window on either side of the altar.

The interior arrangement of the church is quite simple with the chancel on a slightly raised platform at the east end, box pews in the nave, and a paneled gallery over the west entrance.

The gallery is supported by a heavy turned post on either side of the center aisle. It is reached by two enclosed stairs with paneled railings which rise from the north and south walls.

The nave contains box pews with paneled sides, with a horizontal panel above a vertical one and a molded cap. Within them are plank seats on three sides. All the pews have paneled doors with modern hinges in imitation of early hardware. On the left at the crossing is a raised octagonal pulpit reached by a narrow stair with paneled sides which dates from a recent restoration. A sounding board with an ogee dome is suspended from the ceiling. The soffit of the sounding board is decorated with triangular flat panels.

The chancel is enclosed by a communion rail with fine turned balusters. The chancel wall is decorated with four large tablets inscribed with the Nicene and Apostles creeds and the Ten Commandments. Apparently these are also modern additions.

The church walls are of rough plaster above a raised paneled wainscot. The ceiling, which is also plaster, is most unusual. It is flat on either side with a curved center section in imitation of a barrel vault.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian       16th Century       18th Century       20th Century  
 15th Century       17th Century       19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1773

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |   |   |  |
|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education              | <input type="checkbox"/> Political                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> Science                        | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture                      | _____                                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian            | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater                        | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> Military               | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation                 | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |   | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            |   |   | _____                                    |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Vestry of St. Peter's Church in Granville County met on August 1, 1771, to discuss

a Church to be Built and Completed Finished at or near St. Peters Church in Nutbush at the Following Dimentions. (to wit) 60 feet long by 34 feet wide, 18 feet pitch with such Elegant & Convenient Windows and Doors as they may judge necessary--

In October of the same year the vestry let a contract with John Lynch, a master carpenter, for the construction of the new church. After almost two years of sporadic effort the building was completed. John Lynch signed his name to the foundation, along with the date, "August 28, 1773." Shortly after the erection of the building then called Nutbush Church, a small community sprang up around it. By 1781 it had acquired the name of Williamsborough (later called Williamsboro) and included a score of dwellings.

The outbreak of the revolutionary war curtailed religious activities at Nutbush, but the church building continued to be utilized. In July 1781 Governor Thomas Burke made the structure his temporary headquarters. A letter the governor wrote to General Nathanael Greene on July 18, 1781, noted Burke's address as "Nutbush Church in a little Town called Williamsborough, Granville County."

From 1800 to 1820 Williamsboro had no minister and the church building was used for secular meetings and entertainments. In 1821 the Reverend William Mercer Green, who had just been ordained a deacon, took charge of Nutbush Church. Two years prior the congregation had been officially recognized as a parish by the Diocese of North Carolina. Through the tireless efforts of the Reverend Mr. Green the parish was revived both physically and spiritually. In his report to the convention of 1823, Green stated: "The Church at Williamsboro, which four years ago was a perfect ruin, has been thoroughly repaired. . . ."

Since the church had been used occasionally for temporal purposes, the congregation felt that it should be reconsecrated. Accordingly, on October 16, 1825, Bishop Ravenscroft consecrated the church building as St. John's. St. John's Church quickly grew in importance and in 1828 Bishop Ravenscroft moved his Episcopal residence to Williamsboro and served as rector for a year. In 1870 the Reverend William Shepherd Pettigrew took charge of St. John's and continued until his death in 1900.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

FORM 100-10  
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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Following Pettigrew's death the church moved into a period of severe decline. No regular services were held for some twenty years and the church building fell into such a state of disrepair that it was unsafe. In 1947 a movement was begun to restore the structure to its original appearance, and in 1950 a formal campaign was inaugurated to solicit gifts. On September 30, 1956, the completely restored building was re-consecrated by the Rt. Reverend Edwin A. Penick, Bishop of the Diocese of North Carolina.

St. John's Church remains as the only colonial Anglican church building in the Diocese of North Carolina, one of three dioceses in the state. Thomas T. Waterman, in an article for the North Carolina Churchmen, described it as

. . . a remarkable survival of a colonial church of its period. While simple in form, the woodwork, both exterior and interior, is extensive and well preserved. It constitutes the best exemplar of colonial church woodwork in North Carolina, as the other churches of the period have lost their interiors through alteration or time.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Anonymous, "St. Peters Vestry." Unbound manuscript, Francis Lister Hawks Papers, The Church Historical Society, Austin Texas.

Granville County Records, Granville County Courthouse, Office of the Register of Deeds, Oxford, North Carolina. (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills, Census Reports).

Granville County Records, State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina. (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills, Census Reports).

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES				
CORNER	LATITUDE		LONGITUDE		LATITUDE		LONGITUDE		
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	°	'	"	°	'	"	36°	25'	46"
NE	°	'	"	°	'	"	78°	26'	05"
SE	°	'	"	°	'	"			
SW	°	'	"	°	'	"			

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: One acre.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:  
John B. Wells, III, Survey Supervisor; Greer Suttlemyre, Survey Assistant

ORGANIZATION: State Department of Archives and History  
DATE: December 16, 1970

STREET AND NUMBER:  
109 East Jones Street

CITY OR TOWN: Raleigh  
STATE: North Carolina  
CODE: 37

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name: H. G. Jones  
Title: Director, North Carolina State Department of Archives and History  
Date: December 16, 1970

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date \_\_\_\_\_

(July 1969)

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9.

Journal of the Annual Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of North Carolina, 1822-1825. Raleigh, North Carolina: Edwards and Broughton Printers (imprint varies).

Saunders, William L. (ed.), The Colonial Records of North Carolina. Raleigh, North Carolina, 10 volumes, 1886-1890, XV, passim.