

264

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in "Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms" (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name St. George's Episcopal Church
other names/site number n/a

2. Location

street & number 132 North Tenth Street
city, town Griffin () vicinity of
county Spalding code GA 255
state Georgia code GA zip code 30223

() not for publication

3. Classification

Ownership of Property:

- private
- public-local
- public-state
- public-federal

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FEB 28 1994
NATIONAL REGISTER

Category of Property

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property:

	<u>Contributing</u>	<u>Noncontributing</u>
buildings	3	0
sites	0	0
structures	0	0
objects	0	0
total	3	0

Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: n/a

Name of related multiple property listing: n/a

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets the National Register criteria. () See continuation sheet.

Elizabeth A. Lyon
Signature of certifying official

2/23/94
Date

Elizabeth A. Lyon
State Historic Preservation Officer,
Georgia Department of Natural Resources

In my opinion, the property () meets () does not meet the National Register criteria. () See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency or bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

Entered in the
National Register

entered in the National Register

Edson H. Ball 4/7/94

() determined eligible for the National Register

() determined not eligible for the National Register

() removed from the National Register

() other, explain:

() see continuation sheet

Bob _____
Signature, Keeper of the National Register Date

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions:

RELIGION/religious facility
RELIGION/church-related residence

Current Functions:

RELIGION/religious facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification:

Late 19th and Early 20th Century Revival: Gothic Revival

Materials:

foundation	stone masonry
walls	stone masonry/wood/stucco
roof	asphalt
other	terra-cotta

Description of present and historic physical appearance:

St. George's Episcopal Church is located west of downtown Griffin, Georgia in Spalding County on a wooded 1.551 acre lot at the corner of North Tenth and West Broad Streets (Photo #1). St. George's Episcopal Church is a complex of three connected historic religious buildings-- the 1871 sanctuary, the 1893 Old Rectory, and the 1921 Grantland Memorial Parish hall (Photo #2). The buildings form a U-shape with the opening facing North Tenth Street. In 1962 an education wing was added to the north side of the parish hall.

The sanctuary is a Gothic Revival style building of stone masonry construction in a cruciform plan (Photo #3). The building has a very steeply pitched, cross-gabled roof and pointed arched window and door openings--features typical of the Gothic Revival. There are also Latin crosses on the roof ridge above each gable. Although there is no known architect for the church, the design of the church shows influences of the Ecclesiological Movement, and inspiration for its style was can probably be linked to Richard Upjohn's plan book Rural Architecture (1852).

The 225-seat church building is a traditional cruciform plan which consists of a choir and nave running east-west crossed by a north-south arm. The two lateral arms, known as transepts, intersect the main sanctuary at the crossing and separate the nave from the chancel. The chancel consists of the altar and choir and is contained in the apse, the eastern extension of the sanctuary. The altar abuts the back wall of the chancel. The church is entered through the narthex, on the western end of the church, which leads into the nave (Photo #4). In 1937 the church entrance was remodeled slightly and

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

FEB 28 1994

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

NATIONAL
REGISTER

Section 7

stone work was added with an inscription from Proverbs 22:28 that reads: "Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set."

The interior features plaster walls with inset windows and board-and-batten doors, all of which have pointed arches. It has a high, wood-paneled ceiling with exposed roof trusses (Photo #5). The rafters and braces have chamfered, or beveled, corners.

The structural system of the roof, characteristic of the English Gothic, is of an intricate design that is both functional and aesthetic. Supporting the roof is a series of braces set within principal rafters. Each brace consists of two diagonal beams that intersect with a horizontal crosspiece, or collar. The principal rafters intersect lateral beams, also known as purlins, which are flush with the ceiling. A prominent feature of the ceiling is an articulated crossing. A large pendant descends from the center of the crossing.

There are large stained-glass windows in the chancel, north transept, and south transept. They are in the Intersecting style, which was popular in England in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. These windows have three main lights whose arches are continued into the main arch, resulting in intersecting tracery. The pulpit, a memorial to St. George's World War I veterans, features pointed arches, pilasters, and trefoils.

The chancel window, in the apse above the altar and choir, has four levels (Photo #5). The top level features the Trinity. The top light is the Hebrew symbol for Yahweh, or Jehovah, God the Father. The below-left light is the Lamb of God, which symbolizes God the Son. The below-right light is the Descending Dove, which represents the Holy Spirit. The next level has three circles that are, left to right, the Crown of the King, the Shield of Faith, and the Greek Budded Cross. Below these are three circles that picture the Holy Communion: the Paten, IHS (first three Greek Letters in the name Jesus), and the Chalice. Located behind the reredos and not visible from inside are the bottom three circles. These depict an open Bible, a Baptismal Font, and an Anchor, symbolizing entry into the Church. The Anchor is an early Christian sign which was a disguised cross.

The north transept window is topped with a Christmas Rose, a symbol of the birth of Jesus (Photo #6). Below left are the Cross and Crown, symbols of Christ's resurrection and victory over death. The Easter Lily, below right, symbolizes the hope of everlasting life. The south transept window is also topped with Christmas Rose. Below left are the Shield of Faith and the Sword of the Spirit. Completing the whole

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7

armor of God, which is discussed in the sixth chapter of the book of Ephesians, is the Helmet of Salvation, located below right.

Lancet windows are inset on both sides of the nave and on the rear wall above the entrance to the nave (Photo #7). These have colored borders. The windows in the nave have no tracery, in the tradition of the Early English style. These windows feature a painted leaf pattern. The original stained-glass windows were made by Booth and Reister of Buffalo, New York.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps indicate the church was heated by stove and lighted by oil before 1909. The December 1909 Sanborn Map shows the church and rectory to be heated by furnace and lighted by electricity. The church now has modern central heating and air conditioning.

The two other historic buildings in the church complex are the Old Rectory and the Grantland Memorial Parish House (Photo #2). The rectory is now used as the parish office and library. The rectory is a one-and-one-half-story Shingle style structure of stone masonry and wood-frame construction covered with a large hipped roof and a large gabled wing on the west side. The wood-framed upper section of the building's walls are covered with patterned wooden shingles. On the roof are several hipped dormers with multi-light, fixed-sash windows. The Old Rectory has an interior chimney with a corbelled cap and terra-cotta pipes. The siding is half-shingle and half-stone with the shingle portion flaring out over the stone portion. The shingles are mostly rectangular and overlap in a stepped pattern. The bottom shingles are rounded.

The gable features a decorative, jigsaw-cut truss at its apex, wide frieze boards, and modillions. A large multi-light fixed-sash window is flanked by smaller ones. The siding within the gable is half fishscale-pattern shingles and half stucco. The stucco portion has suggestions of half-timbering. The front door and the double-hung, 2/2 windows are original. The interior features some original plaster walls, multi-panel doors with fluted, bulls-eye door frames, fluted baseboards, and the original newel post (Photo #8).

The Grantland Memorial Parish House was designed by the noted Atlanta architectural firm of Hentz, Reid, and Adler. It is a one-story with basement, side-gabled, six-bay, stone-veneer building. It has segmentally arched double-hung, 16/16 and 12/12 windows, and stone chimneys with terra-cotta pipes. Interior features include original wood moldings, window surrounds, and recessed windows with interior shutters. The building's front porch was enclosed in 1962 to provide a passageway between the sanctuary and the rectory (Photo #9).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7

An education wing was added to the north side of the parish hall in 1962. It is a two-story, stuccoed with a half-timbered appearance building with hipped roof (Photo #3).

The church buildings are located on a lot thickly wooded with mature hardwood trees (Photo #10). The area fronting North Tenth Street has a carefully manicured lawn and shrubs (Photo #11). Behind the church is a parking lot with large trees and informal landscaping (Photo #3).

The area around the church was originally residential with some industrial development occurring around the turn of the century. The area began changing c. 1940, and it is now primarily commercial and industrial. Directly to the north are railroad tracks and a textile mill. A railroad right-of-way abuts the property to the east. To the south is commercial development associated with Taylor Street, a major east-west thoroughfare. West of the church are residential properties. Next to St. George's, on the south side, is St. George's Court, a high-rise retirement home.

The church is currently owned and occupied by the original owner, St. George's Parish of the Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): N/A

A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions):

Architecture
Religion

Period of Significance:

1871-1944

Significant Dates:

1871, 1893, 1921

Significant Person(s):

n/a

Cultural Affiliation:

n/a

Architect(s)/Builder(s):

Hentz, Reid, and Adler - Grantland Memorial Parish House (1921)

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8

Significance of property, justification of criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above:

Narrative statement of significance (areas of significance)

St. George's Episcopal Church is a historic religious complex consisting of a sanctuary, rectory, and parish hall that has served Griffin's Episcopal community since the 1870s.

In the area of architecture, the church complex is significant in particular for its 1871 stone masonry sanctuary built in the Gothic Revival style. Gothic Revival was the preferred style for Episcopal churches during the nineteenth century, inspired by the Ecclesiological Movement of the Anglican Church in England.

St. George's is a good example of a small Episcopal church designed to be reminiscent of the English parish church. St. George's structural and aesthetic roof with exposed trusses, its pointed window and door openings, and its window tracery are all characteristic of Gothic architecture. Although there is no known architect for the sanctuary, the design shows influences of the Ecclesiological Movement, and inspiration for its style can probably be linked to Richard Upjohn's plan book Rural Architecture (1852).

The Gothic Revival style was seen as the authentic Christian form of architecture that incorporated the high ideals and liturgy of the Episcopal religion. The use of this style for churches was also a backlash against the use of Classical forms because that was the architecture of pagans. The Ecclesiological Movement embraced Gothic architecture for its spiritual beauty as well as for its link to the rise of the Christian church. The altar of St. George's reflects this movement because it is attached to the rear wall of the chancel. Communion is prepared with the priest's back turned toward the congregation. This arrangement is a traditional one that the ecclesiologists reinstated.

The other two historic buildings represent current trends in architecture when they were constructed. Both of these buildings, as well as the non-historic education wing addition, were built to be compatible with the original Gothic Revival sanctuary. The 1893 rectory is significant as an example of the Shingle style, a style popular in the late nineteenth century but not often used in Georgia. The 1921 parish hall is significant as an early twentieth century stone-veneer building designed by the noted Atlanta architectural firm of Hentz, Reid, and Adler.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8

In the area of religion, the church complex is significant as the center of the religious life of Griffin's Episcopal community since the 1870s. The beginnings of the Episcopal church in Griffin date back to 1846 when the first missionary arrived to begin establishing an Episcopal congregation there. St. George's parish was formally organized in 1859 and was the first and only Episcopal parish in Griffin. The congregation's efforts to construct a church building finally came to fruition in 1871 with the construction of the existing sanctuary.

The Episcopal congregation was always very small in Griffin, as it was in other small Georgia towns where other denominations were clearly more dominant. In fact, there were less than 25 Episcopal congregations in Georgia in the 1850s when St. George's parish was formed. St. George's became a part of the Diocese of Atlanta when the Diocese was created in 1907.

St. George's is and has been the place where the Griffin Episcopalians gather and worship. Since its construction 120 years ago the church building has symbolized the stronghold of Episcopal religious belief in Griffin. The architecture of St. George's reflects the spiritual and aesthetic heritage of the Episcopal faith and the St. George's congregation.

National Register Criteria

The St. George's Episcopal Church complex is eligible for nomination under Criterion A for its significance as the center of Episcopal life in Griffin since its construction in 1871. It is also eligible under Criterion C for its architectural significance as an intact example of a stone masonry church built in the Gothic Revival style. The 1893 rectory is significant as an intact example of the Shingle style architecture. The 1921 parish hall is significant as an early twentieth century stone-veneer building designed by the Atlanta architectural firm of Hentz, Reid, and Adler.

Criteria Considerations (if applicable)

The St. George's Episcopal Church meets Criteria Consideration A as a religious property deriving primary significance from its architecture and its historical importance.

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8

Period of significance (justification)

1871 is the date of the sanctuary construction and 1944 marks the fifty-year mark for historical significance.

Contributing/Noncontributing Resources (explanation, if necessary)

The contributing buildings are the sanctuary, rectory, and parish hall. These buildings retain a high degree of integrity and were built within the period of significance.

Developmental history/historic context (if applicable)

(NOTE: The following history is taken directly from the "Historic Property Information Form" prepared by Elliot K. Wright on file at the Office of Historic Preservation, Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia.)

The Origins of Griffin and St. George's Episcopal Church

In 1839 General Lewis Lawrence Griffin (1794-1867) purchased 800 acres in the northern part of what was then Pike County. Surveyors for the Monroe Railroad and Banking Company, of which he was president, selected the site as a suitable point for a railroad junction. It is believed that General Griffin envisioned the founding of a city on that tract which would be the commercial and transportation hub of Georgia and the South.

General Griffin, who moved at an early age to Twiggs County, Georgia from South Carolina, built a sizable mercantile business in both Monroe and, later, Macon. As a young man, he distinguished himself as an Indian fighter with the Georgia Militia and was later appointed general of the state militia. He served in the state legislature in 1829 and 1830.

A keen businessman, General Griffin realized the potential of the railroad for encouraging trade and opening the frontier of Georgia and Alabama. He became very involved with the railroad movement in the state and staked his reputation and fortune in the creation of the Monroe Railroad Company. He had such confidence in the future of the railroad that the Monroe Railroad Company, chartered in December 1833 with the Georgia Railroad Company and the Central Railroad and Canal Company, had the first charter in the state granted specifically for a railroad. Charters for the other two railroads allowed for the construction of a railroad, canal, or turnpike. The Monroe Railroad

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8

was the first in Georgia to lay iron rails and to operate a steam locomotive.

In December 1836 the State of Georgia chartered a state railroad, the Western and Atlantic. The creation of this public railroad was the result of a statewide movement that had gained momentum at the Internal Improvement Convention, which occurred in November of that year in Macon. The convention was attended by representatives of the Georgia Railroad Company and the Monroe Railroad Company, including General Griffin. The convention recommended that the state build a central railroad from the Tennessee River, near present-day Chattanooga, to a point on the south bank of the Chattahoochee River in Georgia. Anticipating legislative approval of the railroad, General Griffin's railroad was rechartered as the Monroe Railroad and Banking Company on 10 December 1836. The new charter allowed for an extension of the railroad from Forsyth, the original terminus of the railroad, to the south bank of the Chattahoochee in order to connect with the state railroad line. It also included a provision for the State of Georgia to connect other railroads with the Monroe Railroad.

With the purchase of the large tract that would later become Griffin, it is believed that General Griffin intended to establish a state and regional railroad center. This was the intent of some real estate activity in Georgia during this period. Lots were announced for sale in the proposed town of West Point, Georgia, in the 3 October 1837 edition of the Milledgeville Southern Recorder. This was the planned junction of four railroads, including the Forsyth and West Point Railroad, and it was expected to grow into an important junction on the New Orleans to New York line. Another locale seen as a potential major junction was the terminus of the Western and Atlantic Railroad. Stephen Long, chief engineer of the railroad, noted in his report to the Governor of Georgia that Terminus held a "commanding position."

It is perhaps just such a commanding position General Griffin sought when he planned to extend the Monroe Railroad from Griffin to Terminus and West Point. Quimby Melton, Jr., writes in his book that General Griffin was negotiating at that time with the Georgia Railroad to run their line from Madison to Griffin. It is interesting to note, also, that a Mr. Branham introduced a bill into the Georgia Senate on 26 December 1838 to extend and continue the Western and Atlantic Railroad "to some point in Henry County." The bill may have been an attempt by parties interested in the Monroe Railroad to bring the terminus of the state railroad closer to the railhead of the Monroe Railroad. The future site of Griffin was selected in 1839 in Pike County, south of Henry County. If the state line had terminated in or near Griffin, that city would have probably developed into a railroad metropolis; a

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8

major junction for the railroad lines from Tennessee, Alabama, South Carolina, and Savannah.

Just as General Griffin thought on a large scale, so did he think on a small scale, about the important aspects of everyday life. Of the 800 acres General Griffin purchased for the city, 22 acres were given for churches and public use. The Episcopal Church was one of six churches endowed with a one-acre lot. Also granted land were the Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, Methodist Protestant, and Cumberland Presbyterian churches. Although the Methodist Protestant and Cumberland Presbyterian Churches never organized in Griffin, the former three churches took their lots soon after the founding of the city. General Griffin also gave land for a courthouse, Male and Female Academies, parade ground, athletic field, two ornamental squares or parks, and a cemetery. General Griffin purchased the land for the town at a rate of six dollars per acre. The first acre was auctioned in June 1840 for 1000.00. When General Griffin realized how lucrative the founding of the town could be for himself, he gave the land to the Monroe Railroad and Banking Company with the stipulation that his donations be honored. The company named the town "Griffin" in honor of the general.

By 1838 the Monroe Railroad had completed its original 25-mile line from Macon to Forsyth. By 1841 iron rails had been laid to Barnesville and wooden rails to Griffin. Financial problems caused by the depression of 1837-44 delayed the construction of the railroad from Forsyth to Griffin. In 1842 the first locomotive steamed into Griffin on iron rails, and by 1843 the line reached Jonesboro. The attempt to complete the line from Forsyth to Terminus, which was renamed Marthasville in 1843, during the depression resulted in the collapse of the Monroe Railroad and Bank Company in 1844. It was sold in 1845 under court order. This failure meant the end of a vision that saw Griffin as a major junction for trunk lines in the region. The railroad center of the South developed at Marthasville, instead, which was renamed Atlanta.

Griffin prospered and experienced rapid growth in its early years because of the railroad and the fertile, cotton-producing region around it. Griffin developed quickly as a shipping center for cotton. The town served as market for Meriwether, Henry, Pike, and portions of Troup, Fayette, Upson, Monroe, and Butts Counties. With the arrival of the railroad, Griffin took away a large portion of the market from McDonough, which had been founded earlier and was located 18 miles away. Some residents of McDonough disassembled their houses and moved them to Griffin. The Greenville Public Road served as an artery for the transportation of cotton to Griffin from as far away as Opelika, Alabama. By 1845 Griffin had seven cotton warehouses, and by 1849 the

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8

town was shipping 49,000 bales of cotton per annum. The 1850 census shows Griffin as having a population of 2,320.

Although Griffin never became the regional transportation center General Griffin had perhaps visualized, many of his plans did come to fruition. His plan for the town to be a county seat was realized in 1851 with the creation of Spalding County and the selection of Griffin as the seat of government. By this time his town had become an important railroad and market town. He carved a city from the wilderness, and the success of Griffin made possible the eventual establishment of another part of his plan, a local Episcopal Church.

Missionary Work at Griffin

St. George's has a calling that dates back to early missionary meetings in 1846. Although endowed with land by General Griffin, the Episcopal Church did not actually lay a physical foundation for a church in Griffin until after the War Between the States, during the bitter and tumultuous years of Reconstruction. A spiritual foundation, however, was laid early in the history of Griffin.

The Anglican Church, or Church of England, came to Georgia with General James E. Oglethorpe in 1733. The church was in a precarious position during the American Revolution, and its clergy was often under assault, ideologically and sometimes physically. The Anglican Church survived the revolution, however, to become the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States of America in 1789. In its early years the Episcopal Church was very weak, especially in rural areas where most inhabitants were evangelical Christians. Because the church was often viewed as aristocratic and English, growth was a continuous struggle. The church in Georgia had an especially difficult time and was unable to participate in the 1789 convention that resulted in the creation of the new ecclesiastical organization. Years of work and dedication, however, resulted in the creation of the Diocese of Georgia in 1823.

By 1841 there were six churches in the state, Augusta, Clarkesville, Columbus, Macon, St. Simon's, and Savannah, and 323 communicants. At the Eighteenth Annual Convention of the Diocese of Georgia, held that year in Clarkesville, Stephen Elliott, Jr. (1806-1866) was elected the first Bishop of Georgia. He was subsequently consecrated at Christ Church in Savannah on 28 February 1841. Much progress was made under the strong leadership of Bishop Elliott. Within ten years the diocese had grown to twenty-one churches with 870 communicants.

Georgia was mainly a frontier diocese with success occurring mostly on the coast and in the larger inland cities. Griffin was a new town,

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8

chartered in 1843, and it would take years before the town would grow enough to support a sizable congregation. The Episcopal Church, however, had a presence before the construction of a church building.

The beginnings of the Episcopal Church in Griffin date back to 1846 when the area was visited by the Reverend Richard Johnson. Rev. Mr. Johnson resided near Macon in Montpelier Springs, the site of the Episcopal Institute of the Episcopal Church of Georgia. He served as a missionary to Griffin and Talbotton, becoming the rector at Talbotton when the church was built in 1848. That year he wrote to the Episcopal Church Journal that he had discontinued his visits to Griffin and was concentrating on ministering to Talbotton. Griffin was visited by another Episcopalian missionary, the Reverend Wesley P. Gehaghan, in 1851 according to the Episcopal Church Journal. The Reverend Henry Kollock Rees, by advice of Bishop Elliott, came to Griffin as a missionary in 1857. He gathered the few Episcopalians in the area together to "afford them the opportunity of receiving the instruction of our Holy Church." Rev. Mr. Rees had a long and successful record as a missionary and would be appointed Diocesan Missionary on 6 June 1889.

St. George's Parish is Organized

The name St. George comes from the Christian legend of St. George, a saint of the Church of England, who triumphed over the Dragon. This symbolized the victory of Christianity over the infidels during the Middle Ages.

The first record of any action taken towards the formation of a parish may be found in a document, dated 20 May 1858, that gives notice of the subscribers' agreement to form St. George's Church. Appointed to serve until Easter of 1859 were the church's first wardens, William Waddy and Henry A. Glassford; and the first vestrymen, G. L. Warren, A. B. Clark, A. Taliaferro, and John M. Lunquest. A year later the church was formally organized, on Wednesday, 19 May 1859. On that date Bishop Elliott organized St. George's Parish of Griffin. He noted in the Episcopal Church Journal, "This is one of the points at which missionary service ought to be performed regularly and at which a church should be built." During his visit he officiated at the Methodist Church, administering communion, confirming one person, and baptizing four infants.

On 21 August 1859, the Reverend James Harden George began this missionary duties in Griffin. Appointed by Bishop Elliott, he resigned his position as rector at St. Paul's in Albany, where he had served since 1851. Rev. Mr. George ministered to the eight communicants in the Griffin area from the home of Mr. Lunquest.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8

Shortly after his arrival a small schoolhouse was rented and used for church services. During his first year the congregation varied from twenty to fifty for the two Sunday Services over which he presided. His day school numbered forty to forty-five pupils.

According to Henry Thomas Malone in his history of the Episcopal Church in Georgia, "The second great challenge to the Episcopal Church in Georgia came with the events of the 1860s." The church had survived the American Revolution, and the Diocese of Georgia had been growing steadily for 38 years. By the time of the War Between the States the Diocese of Georgia had grown to twenty-five churches. Georgia Episcopalians accepted the challenge and were instrumental in the organization of the Confederate Church. During the war two parishes entered the diocese, one of which was St. George's.

The War Between the States delayed the construction of the church building and probably interfered with the growth of the congregation. A letter by the visiting Mrs. Kell reported only three communicants at church services one Sunday in 1861: herself, Mrs. C. W. Thomas, and Mr. Audley Maxwell. Rev. Mr. George reported fifteen communicants in 1862. The parish, despite its small size, was able to overcome the trials of wartime Georgia. St. George's was reorganized on 3 May 1864 and admitted to the Diocese of Georgia by the Second Annual Council of the (Confederate) Episcopal Church of Georgia, assembled in Columbus, on 5 May 1864.

According to a letter written by Rev. Mr. George's daughter, parishioners at that time included the Waddys, Clarks, Maxwells, and Dr. Palmer. Added to the rolls later were the Sulleys, Captain John Low, and the Nelms Family. Captain Low was a sea captain, staunch Roman Catholic, and friend of Rev. Mr. George. He would later have a vital role in the construction of the church building. Services were held then at the old Booth Club and later a little brick building behind the Presbyterian Church.

The Reverend Charles W. Thomas accepted the rectorship of the church in November 1864. Circumstances resulted in irregular services, and in February 1866 he resigned to minister in Atlanta as rector of St. Philip's. Before leaving, he donated a melodeon to the church. William Hunt served as lay-reader until the Reverend Charles A. Grant became missionary of the small group on 23 May 1866. He conducted regular Sunday services, according to the Griffin Church Directory of the Southern Herald, 16 August 1866.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8

Reconstruction and the Construction of St. George's Church

Reconstruction was a difficult time for Griffin, as for the rest of the South. Colonel Ira W. Foster, Union commander in the district, appointed S. W. Mangham to conduct a census of the county to determine the condition of the people. It was discovered that of the Spalding County population of 7672, 37 percent of the residents were destitute. According to Dr. Buford Brandis in The Griffin Story: A Study in the Dynamics of Economic Growth (1949), Griffin did not recover its prewar level prosperity until the mid-1880s. It is a testimony to the faith of the members that the physical foundation of St. George's was laid during such a difficult time in history.

One of the earliest recorded efforts to construct a building for the church occurred 16 April 1864, when Rev. Mr. George convened a meeting to "confer in regard to what means might be within for the erection of a church building." He created a committee of parishioners for the task, but little was done until after the war. Efforts were made during the church year of 1867-1868 to erect a church. A frame church was built on a lot donated by James Freeman. This structure was nearly completed when a storm demolished it during the spring of April 1868.

The Reverend Caleb Dowe took charge of the congregation on 1 August 1868. There were approximately twenty-five communicants at St. George's. He was appointed by the Right Reverend John Watrus Beckwith, Bishop of Georgia. The beloved Bishop Elliott had died in 1866. Rev. Mr. Dowe was an effective motivator and inspired his parishioners to build a church.

The congregation worked hard and made many sacrifices. Earnest workers at this time included Mrs. Levin Mitchell, Mrs. Kell, Mrs. Waddy, Mrs. Rockwell, Mrs. David Bailey, Mrs. Hearne, Mrs. James Freeman, Mrs. George Lawton, and the Gholstons. The 28 April 1871 edition of the Griffin Middle Georgian reports an upcoming "Strawberry Festival" at the town skating rink to raise funds for the completion of St. George's. The "Buisy Bees" sewing society of girls bought the chancel furniture and alms plates. In the words of Mrs. John McIntosh Kell, "The building of the church was a great effort and only hearts filled with love could have built it. The cruel civil war had left most of the Southern people so impoverished but all did their best, from the 'widow's mite' to the offerings of little children."

There were financial contributions as well. James Freeman donated \$1000.00 and residents of Savannah and New York City, at the behest of Bishop Beckwith, donated \$1000.00. Captain Low loaned \$1600.00 toward the effort.

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8

During this time St. George's took into its membership one its most famous parishioners, Confederate naval hero Captain John McIntosh Kell (1823-1900). Captain Kell quickly became a leader at St. George's. Shortly after he joined the church elections were held with the following results: Mr. Levin Mitchell, senior warden; Captain Kell, junior warden; and vestrymen John Hunt, Nathan Munro, Charles Johnson, and Thomas Nall. Colonel David J. Bailey, Major Horne, and Colonel Charles Spalding were prominent men in the state who also joined about this time.

Under the direction of the Rev. Mr. Dowe, the Building Committee was named. On the committee were Major Uriah Horne, Captain Kell, and Dr. George Beecher. St. George's was not erected on the lot granted by General Griffin. Clear title to the land donated by General Griffin was not established until 1867. As previously mentioned, the Monroe Railroad and Banking Company failed in 1844. St. George's was directly affected by the failure because the lot granted to the church was involved in litigation to pay the debts of the railroad. The suit sought possession of the lot because the church had not taken possession or accepted the donation.

Known as the Stell case, litigation was finally terminated and the lot was conveyed by the church to Joseph H. Johnson for \$400.00. On 6 June 1867 Laura E. Patterson sold Lots No. 1 and 2 of Square 31, located at the corner of Tenth and West Broad Streets, to St. George's Episcopal Church for \$600.00.

With the successful conclusion of these matters, the construction of the church could commence. The gray stone for the church was quarried from Dr. Beecher's place. The cornerstone was laid 14 November 1869 with the Bishop Beckwith officiating. A Bible, Prayer Book, and the names of the Bishop of Georgia, Governor of Georgia, President of the United States, the rector, wardens, vestrymen, members of the church, building committee, and city officials were deposited in the cornerstone. Also included were copies of the Middle Georgian and Griffin Semi-Weekly Star.

**The First Services at St. George's Church and its Subsequent
Consecration**

There was much excitement in Griffin accompanying the completion of St. George's in 1871. Many activities occurred at the church before and after the first services were held. According to the Middle Georgia, dated 25 April 1871, election results at St. George's were as follows: Captain Kell, senior warden; vestrymen James C. Freeman, junior warden; and Col. G. M. Lawton, N. C. Munro, A. B. Kell, John H. Mangham, T. S. Wood, C. B. Smith, John Lowe, and Levin Mitchell. The

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8

first services were announced in the Middle Georgia dated Friday, 5 May 1871. The paper stated that services would be held "at the Episcopal church building next Sabbath, instead of the chapel as heretofore." The Rev. Mr. Dowe presided over the first services at the new church on 7 May 1871. Bishop Beckwith visited the congregation on Tuesday, 16 May 1871. The pews were rented the following Monday.

Rev. Mr. Dowe resigned the rectorship of St. George's in January 1874. The death of his wife laid heavy on his heart, and he decided to return to Louisiana, where he became rector of St. Joseph's. Another reason for his leaving was the accidental burning of the Central College for Young Ladies in the fall of 1873. He had been very involved with the school, formerly known as Marshall College, located near the northwest corner of Thirteenth and Broad Streets. He served as president for a short time during the year 1872-73.

The Reverend Robert H. Barnwell became rector of St. George's in July 1874. The congregation was diligently striving to pay the loan on the church so that it could be consecrated. The church building and furnishings cost \$6000.00. At the time of Rev. Mr. Barnwell's arrival, all that remained of the church's debt was \$1400.00 of Captain Low's loan. Captain Low was a long-time supporter of St. George's, and he finally became a communicant at the age of 90. He was baptized Easter 1873 and was confirmed the following Sunday by Bishop Beckwith. At the request of Rev. Mr. Barnwell and Captain Kell, Mrs. Kell wrote to Captain Low, in her words, "the most pleading, begging letter" she ever wrote in her life, asking him to forgive the debt. According to Mrs. Kell, Captain Low asked Rev. Mr. Barnwell after reading the letter, "Captain Kell's wife wrote this letter? Captain Kell is a fine man, he is a good man, we both love the ocean, we love the sea and talk about it when we meet, tell her I'll think about it." Captain Low did think about it, and he forgave the debt in October 1874.

The church was consecrated 12 November 1874, in a service officiated by Bishop Beckwith. It was an important event and was attended by clergy from across the state. One of St. George's early missionaries, Rev. Mr. Rees, attended. The Reverend R. W. B. Elliott, son of Bishop Elliott and newly-appointed Missionary Bishop of Western Texas, preached the consecration sermon. Among the visiting ministry were Alexander I. Drysdale, Emmanuel Church, Athens; Reverdy Estill, St. Philip's, Atlanta; James M. Stoney, St. Stephen's, Milledgeville; and S. E. Barnwell, St. Mark's, Dalton.

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8

The New South Comes to Griffin

The decade of 1881-1890 was an important one in the history of Griffin because during this time the first cotton mills were constructed in Griffin. The textile industry allowed Griffin to recoup its prewar prosperity, and it became the backbone of the city's economy. One of St. George's parishioners, Captain Seaton Grantland, became the motivating force behind the movement to industrialize.

Shortly after the war, local newspapers began advocating the establishment of industry in Griffin. Captain Grantland brought the New South to Griffin with his founding of the Griffin Manufacturing Company, the first of many textile mills, which was chartered in August 1883. Mr. Grantland was also instrumental in the organization in 1888 of the Kincaid Manufacturing Company, the forerunner of the immense Dundee Mills.

The impact of this industrialization was felt in the immediate vicinity of St. George's. Sanborn maps from around the turn of the century show several manufactories near St. George's. The Central Mill, a large facility that later became Georgia Cotton Mills #3, was located to the north, across the railroad. Towaliga Falls Milling Company, a flour and grist mill, was located across West Broad Street from the Old Rectory. Behind the church, on the railroad, was the Griffin Hosiery Mill.

St. George's in the Twentieth Century

With the ravages of war behind it and a blossoming textile industry at its base, Griffin was able to meet the challenges of the twentieth century. St. George's continued to grow with Griffin. The Reverend Cleland Linloch Nelson (1852-1917) was elected Bishop of Georgia in 1892. Under his aggressive leadership the Episcopal Church gained so many communicants that it was necessary to create the Diocese of Atlanta in 1907. St. George's was one of fifteen parishes in the new diocese.

An important work by St. George's was the creation of Boy Scout Troop #1, the first troop in Georgia, in 1911. The group was organized by the Reverend Clayton Earl Wheat, rector of St. George's, who served as the first scoutmaster. Rev. Mr. Wheat left St. George's in 1913 to become chaplain of the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York.

The church also helped create the St. Stephen's Episcopal Parish, the African-American Episcopal Church in Griffin started by Reverend E. L.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 8

Braithwaite on 16 December 1916. A church was built in 1917 on North Third Street. By 1921 St. Stephen's had 39 members.

The year 1921 was an auspicious one because the 14th Annual Convention of the Diocese of Atlanta was held in Griffin. The newly-completed Grantland Memorial Parish House appeared on the 1 January 1921 cover of The Diocesan Record, a publication of the Diocese of Atlanta. Constructed of Stone Mountain granite, it was dedicated the first Sunday of Advent by Bishop Henry Judah Mikell. The parish house was a gift of Leila Grantland Barnes and Suzanne Grantland Tilney in memory of their father, Captain Grantland. New church furniture was purchased at this time.

In 1923 church officers included Hendley V. Kell, senior warden; David J. Bailey, Jr., junior warden; and the following vestrymen: O. W. Sibley, Walter Graebe, Hiram Powell, Paul Walker, Ed Davis, and Frank Mays. Mr. Kell was the son of Captain Kell, and Mr. Bailey, a prominent insurance and real estate man who served as mayor of Griffin, was the son of Colonel Bailey. A parishioner to whom The Diocesan Record often refers is C. Robert Walker, who served as superintendent of the church school from 1910 to 1955.

Reverend Henry A. Willey was rector of St. George's from 1919 to 1924, and his wife was organist. In 1924 they left for Lihue, Kaulai, Hawaii, where he served as a missionary. Rev. Mr. Willey was succeeded by the Reverend George E. Zachery in 1925. St. George's was one of seventeen parishes in the Diocese of Atlanta and ranked thirteenth in size with 150 communicants. The new parish house became an important center for fellowship. A new athletic club was formed and many basketball games were held in the basement gymnasium of the parish house.

In 1926 Mrs. Hester Estelle Kell Davis and the Parish Guild of ladies began serving "elegant dinners" on Tuesdays and Thursdays for the Rotary and Exchange Clubs of Griffin. "Miss Hessie," as she was fondly known by friends and family, started the dinners because members of local civic organizations complained to her that the Griffin hotels were not providing satisfactory luncheons. Proceeds went toward purchasing banquet furnishings and a gas range for the parish house. The program was expanded to include other groups such as the Pilots Club and Lions Club. Not only were the luncheons an important work and service to the Griffin community, they also helped the congregation through the Depression. The dinners became a tradition of St. George's that continued until after the Second World War.

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8

Rev. Mr. Zachery served at St. George's a short time before answering the call of All Saints and St. Michael's Church in Baltimore in December 1926. He was replaced by L. W. Blackwelder who served as rector from 1927 to 1947. As times changed, so did St. George's manner of delivering the Gospel. By 1936, St. George's message was reaching the Griffin community by radio.

9. Major Bibliographic References

Wright, Elliott. "St. George's Episcopal Church." Historic Property Information Form, September 1991. On File at the Office of Historic Preservation, Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

Previous documentation on file (NPS): (X) N/A

- () preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- () previously listed in the National Register
- () previously determined eligible by the National Register
- () designated a National Historic Landmark
- () recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- () recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary location of additional data:

- (X) State historic preservation office
- () Other State Agency
- () Federal agency
- () Local government
- () University
- () Other, Specify Repository:

Georgia Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):

Sp 248 (1985 Survey)

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.551 acres

UTM References

A) Zone 16 Easting 754500 Northing 3682110

Verbal Boundary Description

The proposed boundary encompasses the intact historic property and follows the current legal boundaries. It is bounded on the north by West Broad Street, on the east by the railroad right-of-way, on the west by North Tenth Street, and on the south by West Slaton Alley. See enclosed map.

Boundary Justification

The boundary encompasses the current legal boundaries associated with the church complex which are also the historic boundaries.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Leslie N. Sharp, National Register Program Specialist
organization Office of Historic Preservation, Georgia Department of Natural Resources
street & number 205 Butler Street, S.E., Suite 1462
city or town Atlanta **state** Georgia **zip code** 30334
telephone (404) 656-2840 **date** February 18, 1994

(OHP form version 12-08-93)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Photographs

Name of Property: St. George's Episcopal Church
City or Vicinity: Griffin
County: Spalding
State: Georgia
Photographer: James R. Lockhart
Negative Filed: Georgia Department of Natural Resources
Date Photographed: September 1992

Description of Photograph(s):


- 1 of 11: North facade of St. George's Episcopal Church; photographer facing south.
- 2 of 11: South Facade of Old Rectory and west facade of Parish House; photographer facing northeast.
- 3 of 11: Southeast corner of church and rear facade of Parish House and education wing; photographer facing northwest.
- 4 of 11: Main entrance or narthex on west side of church; photographer facing east.
- 5 of 11: Chancel including altar, choir, and exposed trusses; photographer facing east.
- 6 of 11: North transept; photographer facing northeast.
- 7 of 11: Nave and east wall; photographer facing west.
- 8 of 11: Main hall of Old Rectory; photographer facing north.
- 9 of 11: Enclosed porch of Parish House; photographer facing south.
- 10 of 11: Southwest corner of church and narthex; photographer facing northeast.
- 11 of 11: North facade of church and front grounds; photographer facing southwest.

WEST BROAD STREET

316.70'

213.40'

St. George's Episcopal Church
Griffin/Spalding County, Georgia
Site Plan

Photographs/Direction of View: 

Scale: 1" = 40'

North: 

AREA: 1.551 ACRES

Education Wing

Parish Hall

Rectory

Sanctuary

N 89° 45' 00" W

S 89° 45' 00" E

WEST SLATON ALLEY

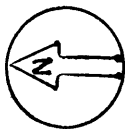
N 89° 45' 00" W

C.M.

C.M.

213.40'

213.40'



TENTH STREET

1

11

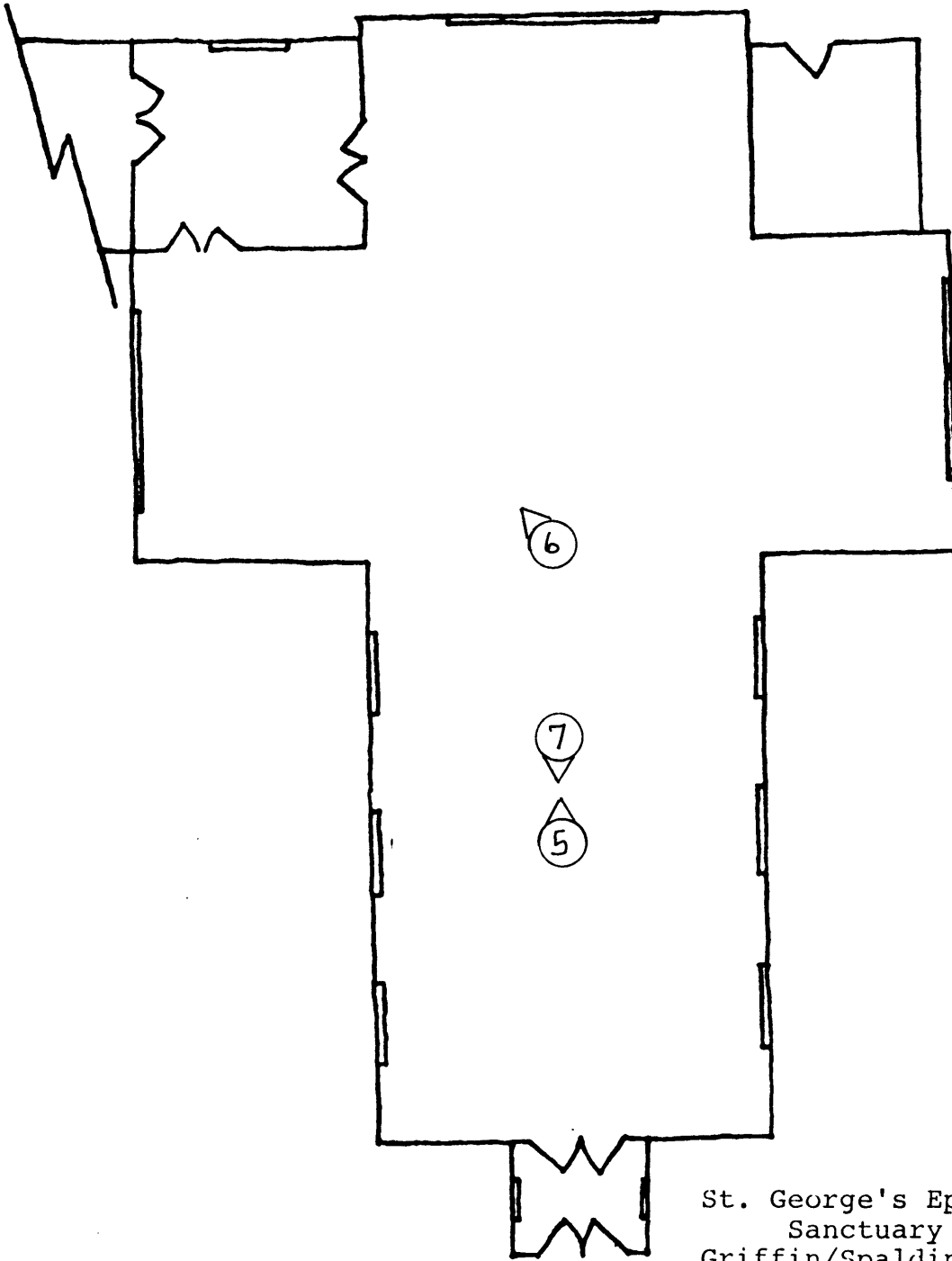
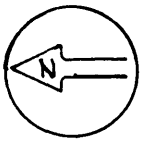
a

10

3

50'

30'

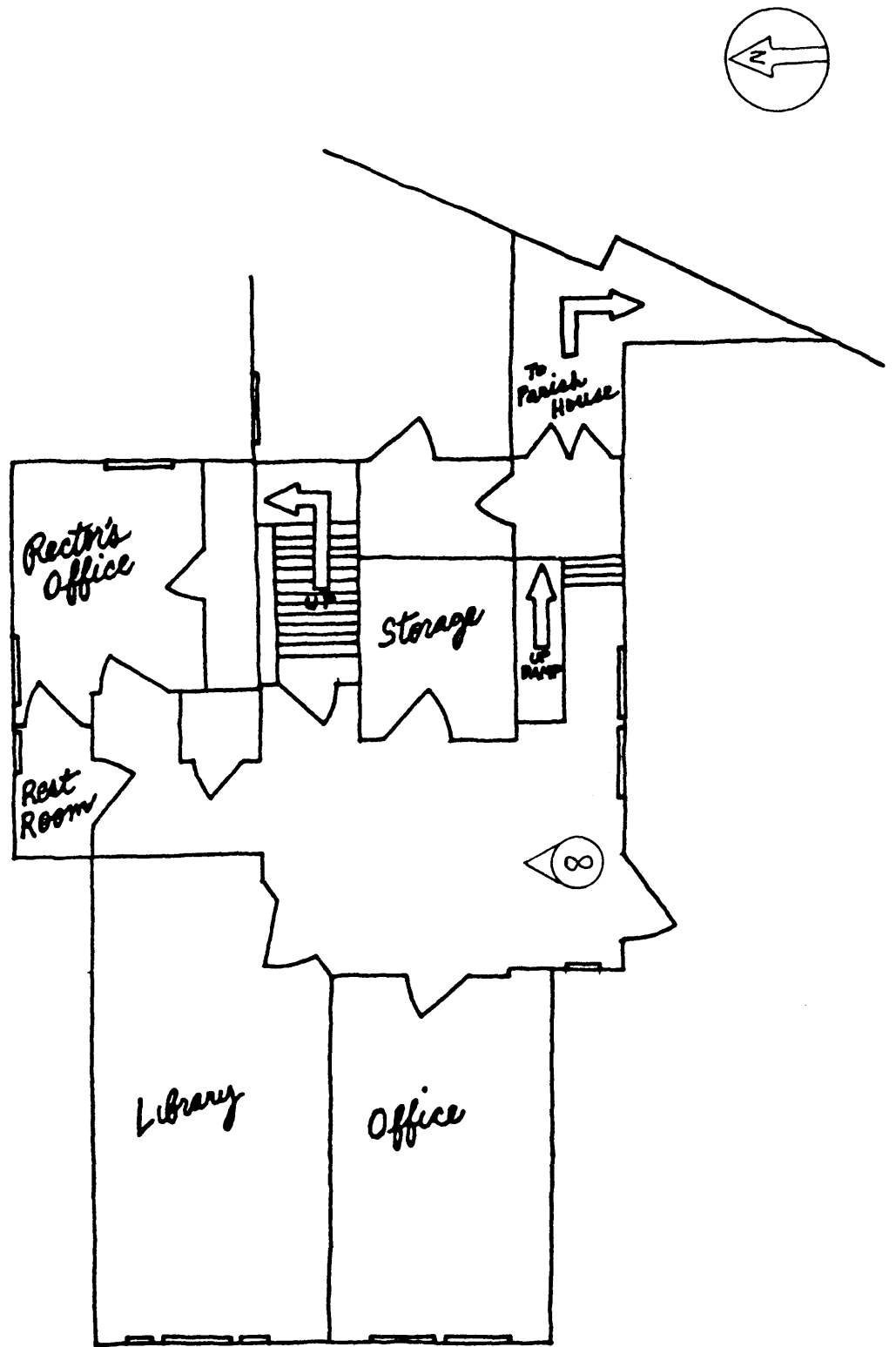


St. George's Episcopal Church
Sanctuary
Griffin/Spalding County, Georgia
Sketch Map

Photographs/Direction of View:

Scale: None

North:

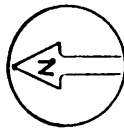
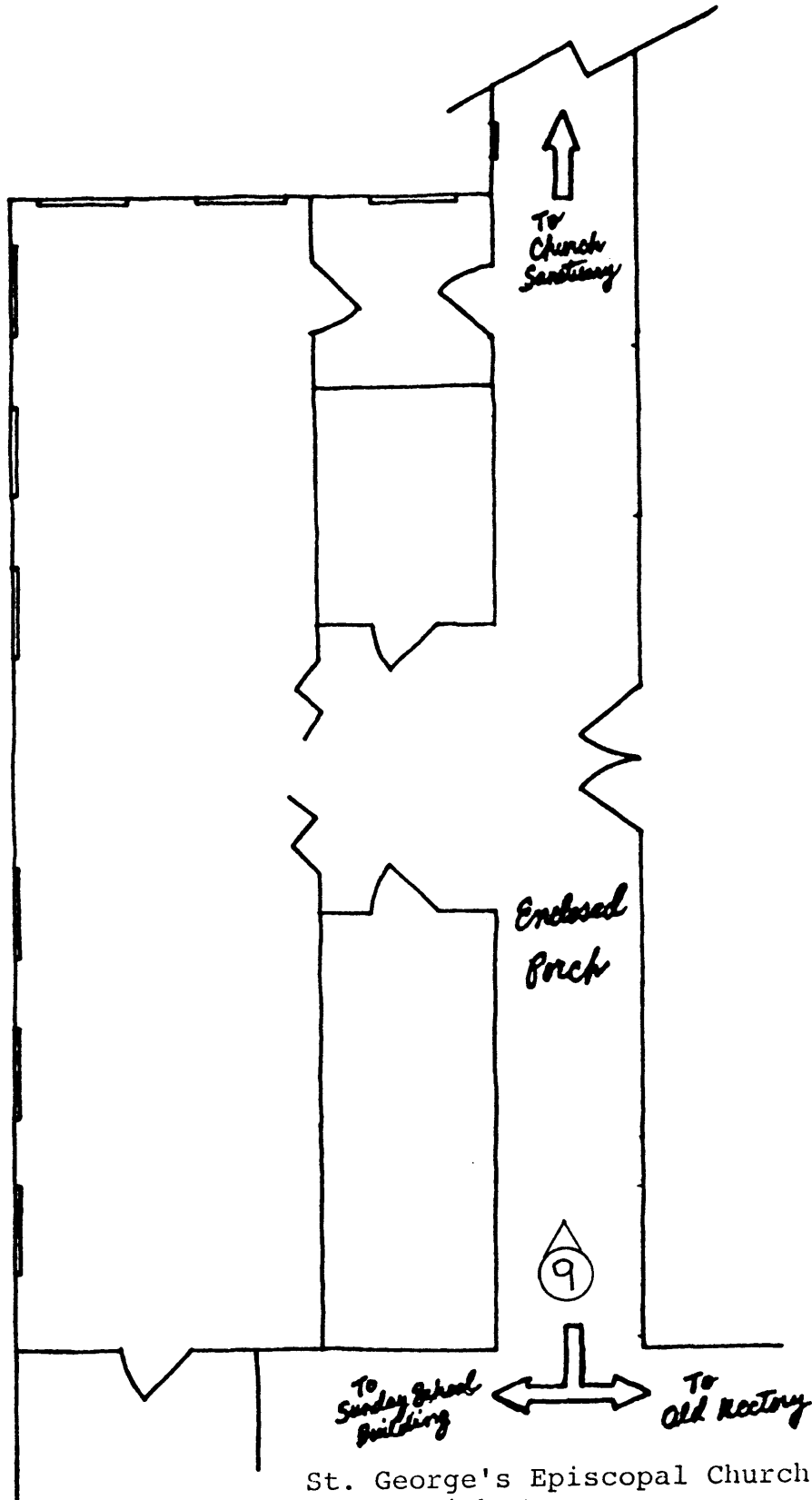


St. George's Episcopal Church
 Rectory
 Griffin/Spalding County, Georgia
 Sketch Map


Photographs/Direction of View:

Scale: None

North:



St. George's Episcopal Church
 Parish House
 Griffin/Spalding County, Georgia
 Sketch Map

Photographs/Direction of View: 

Scale: None

North: 