

PHOTO 115

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:
COUNTY:
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE

APR 24 1974

1. NAME

COMMON:
St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

AND/OR HISTORIC:
Same

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
Louisiana Highway 418

CITY OR TOWN:
Williamsport (2 miles north of Innis)

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:
8th Gillis Long

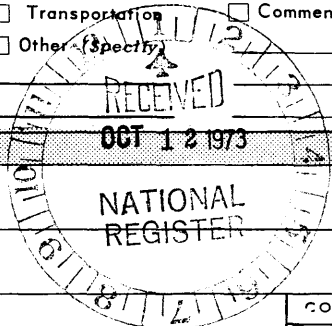
STATE: Louisiana CODE: 22 COUNTY: Pointe Coupee Parish CODE: 077

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religious		
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific		



4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

STREET AND NUMBER:
P. O. Box 888

CITY OR TOWN:
Innis

STATE: Louisiana CODE: 22

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
Pointe Coupee Parish Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:
New Roads

STATE: Louisiana CODE: 22

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
"Historical Landmarks in the Capital Region" - Land Use 2a

DATE OF SURVEY: July, 1973 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Capital Region Planning Commission

STREET AND NUMBER:
101 St. Ferdinand St. Suite 205, Box 3355

CITY OR TOWN:
Baton Rouge

STATE: Louisiana CODE: 22

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: COUNTY: ENTRY NUMBER: DATE: FOR NPS USE ONLY

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7 DESCRIPTION

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

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

St. Stephen's Church is a masonry building in the style of the Gothic Revival, built from drawings prepared by Mr. J. A. Wills, architect of New York City. Construction was begun in 1850 and completed in 1858. Much of the fabric of the building was hand made by slave labor, including the bricks, entrance door and pews. The brick was moulded and fixed on the site, some being shaped to the various mouldings which ornament the exterior of the building.

The plan is a very simple three cell church consisting of a vestibule in the tower, nave, and sanctuary. Orientation is such that the entrance faces toward the Mississippi River, thus placing the altar against the west wall. A small sacristy is included in the corner between the nave and the north wall of the sanctuary. The nave is a simple rectangle, without aisles and piers. The sanctuary, also rectangular in plan, is separated from the nave by a pointed arch.

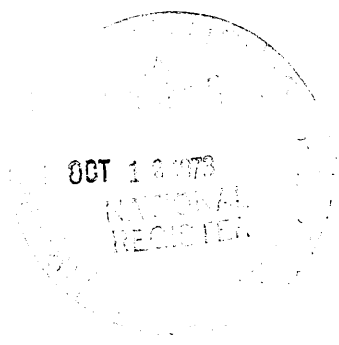
The exterior of the building is noted for the single three-story tower centered on the east wall and forming the entrance to the church. The tower has nicely detailed brick mouldings at each story, and in the sides vertical slot-like apertures piercing the walls resembling the archer's aperture in medieval strongholds. The tower terminates in a battlemented parapet with pyramidal pinnacles at the four corners. There are brick buttresses at the corners and along the wall of the nave interspersed with lancet windows. The roof is slate.

The interior has a wood floor, plaster walls and a fiber-board ceiling which both in its form and material represents a relatively recent modification. At the rear of the nave, there is a loft which is rather shallow, but is bounded by a handsome though quite simple balustrade. The original altar has been replaced and the altar rail moved out creating a deeper sanctuary.

Eleven beautiful windows of gothic design are along the sides of the church and a beautiful cathedral window is above the altar designed with many religious symbols and the words "God is Love". The stained glass windows were made in England and were shipped via New York and New Orleans and then up the Mississippi River to Williamsport. A wagon hauled them the rest of the way over rough ground to the Church.

The building is still in a sound condition although some settlement cracks have taken place. Plans are underway to restore the building.

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)

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 checked="" 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

St. Stephen's was founded in 1848 by a group of Anglicans who settled in the area between the Mississippi and Atchafalaya Rivers and south of Simmesport to the Morganza floodway. These people were of English background and carried with them their ties with the Church of England, which was established as the Episcopal Church in America. In 1849 the church was admitted into the Convention of the Diocese of Louisiana.

The first Non-Roman Church in the Louisiana Purchase was Christ Episcopal Church, established in New Orleans in 1830. The growth of the Episcopal Church was rather slow until the Rt. Rev. Leonidas Polk, later to become a General in the Confederate Army, became the first Bishop of Louisiana on October 16, 1841. Bishop Polk traveled the entire Diocese preaching, baptising, confirming and establishing churches along the major rivers and streams. In 1848 the Rev. Frederick Dean of Morganza began regular services at Williamsport (about two miles north of Innis on the Old River Road).

Work soon began on the construction of the oldest brick edifice in Pointe Coupee Parish. Mr. J. A. Wills of New York was hired in 1849 to design a building approximately 70 feet long using local material. The ground was broken in 1850, and Mr. John Hamilton supervised slaves owned by Mr. Charles Stewart to mold and burn the bricks on the site. Due to the high water building progress was impeded during late 1850 and early 1851. By 1855, a building committee was appointed and the building was rushed to completion. In 1856, all the brick had been made and by 1858 the building was completed. On May 1, 1859, Bishop Leonidas Polk consecrated St. Stephen's and also the connecting cemetery.

St. Stephen's is the oldest Episcopal Church Building in the Diocese of Louisiana which has not undergone some change in design. No architectural changes have taken place since it was built. However, the building is the third oldest in existence and the thirteenth oldest parish established in the Diocese.

All the church was built by slave labor, many of whom were baptised by various rectors. The organ and choir loft was used for slaves attending the services on Sundays.

The first Boy's Choir in the Diocese was established at St. Stephen's in 1848. In 1873, during a period without a rector and also a flu epidemic, Bishop Polk appointed Mrs. Sara Archer as the first woman Lay Reader in the Diocese, an unprecedented action due to the shortage of a man to conduct the services. Through her devotion and faithfulness the Church was kept open until a rector could be found.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church One Hundred Years in St. Stephen's Parish
1848-1949, Innis, Louisiana, Sept. 11, 1949.

Parish register and other records, St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Innis, La.

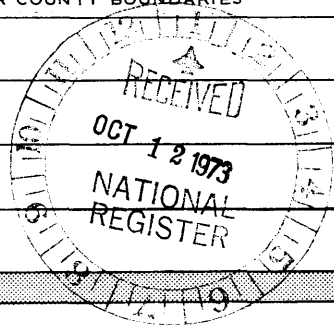
10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

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	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	30° 54' 05"	91° 40' 44"		0	0	
NE	30° 53' 46"	91° 39' 38"				
SE	30° 53' 39"	91° 39' 39"				
SW	30° 53' 58"	91° 40' 37"				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **100 acres**

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NW 15/626/200
NW 15/626/3418660
NW 15/626/3418500
NW 15/626/3418220
SW 15/626/3418900

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Rev. Lyle F. Parratt, Rector

ORGANIZATION: **St. Stephen's Episcopal Church** DATE: **June 1973**

STREET AND NUMBER:
P. O. Box 888

CITY OR TOWN: **Innis** STATE: **Louisiana** CODE: **22**

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

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: Jay R. Brown
State Historic Preservation Officer
Director, Department of Art,
Title: Historical and Cultural
Preservation
Date: October 9, 1973

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

A. R. Moles
Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 4/24/74

ATTEST: Charles H. ...
Keeper of The National Register

Date: 4.19.74

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According to the laws and jurisprudence of Louisiana, alluvial deposits formed by a stream belong to the owner of the adjacent property. This batture belongs to the individual owner even if a road or levee -- both considered servitudes in this cast - has been constructed on the stream's edge. Raccouri Oil River was once a section of the Mississippi River, and thus St. Stephen's Church has for many years claimed the property to what was the middle of the stream, and in this case, the Parish line.

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8. Statement of Significance (page 1)

During the years of 1926, 1936 and 1940, St. Stephen's was host to the Clergy Conferences and the Bishop's Crusade.

Among the well known persons who attended St. Stephen's were General John Archer Lejeune, first Commandant of the U. S. Marine Corps during World War I and Superintendent of V. M. I. from 1929-1937; Dr. M. A. Tichenor, originator of Tichenor Antiseptic; and Mr. Iveson B. Noland, father of Bishop Noland of the Diocese.

The church was well attended during the War Between the States and pious souls protected the building from violence and decay. The Communion service still in use was given by the Taylor family, relatives of General Taylor.

