

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

For NPS use only

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic St. Mary's Episcopal Churches

and/or common St. Mary's Complex -- Churches (Old & New) and Graveyard

2. Location

North Side Broad Street Between
street & number Talbot and Wood Streets ___ not for publication

city, town Burlington ___ vicinity of

state New Jersey code 34 county Burlington code 005

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
___ district	___ public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	___ agriculture	___ museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	___ unoccupied	___ commercial	___ park
___ structure	___ both	___ work in progress	___ educational	___ private residence
___ site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	___ entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
___ object	___ in process	___ yes: restricted	___ government	___ scientific
	___ being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	___ industrial	___ transportation
		___ no	___ military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other Old Office Parish House

4. Owner of Property

Reverend James Green
name The Rector, Wardens, and Vestry of New St. Mary's Church

street & number Parish Office - 45 West Broad Street

city, town Burlington ___ vicinity of state New Jersey

5. Location of Legal Description

Burlington County -- Deed #-None.
courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Property acquired prior to 1724.

street & number County Court House

city, town Mt. Holly state New Jersey 08060

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Historic American Buildings
title Survey Inventory has this property been determined eligible? ___ yes ___ no

date 1967 federal ___ state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records Library of Congress

city, town Washington state DC

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The complex of Old and New Saint Mary's Churches with the graveyard in between is an important site in the history of the Gothic-Revival style in America.

Old St. Mary's Church

Old Saint Mary's Church is the oldest church building now standing in Burlington County. The corner stone was laid on March 25, 1703, by the Reverend John Talbot; the first sermon was preached in it on August 22, of that year, by the Reverend George Keith. These two were the first missionaries of the Church of England sent to America by "The Society for the Propagating of The Gospel in Foreign parts."

The charter of the church, issued by Lord Cornbury in 1704, called it St. Annes; the original name was restored by a new charter in 1709.

The original building was forty by twenty-two feet and constructed of brick. It was extended twenty-three feet in 1769; again in 1810 under Robert Mills, architect, and Samuel Gillis, carpenter, the church was enlarged and improved; the apse at the eastern end was added; and a year later, 1811, a new pulpit was erected. The building was made cruciform in 1834 when the north and south wings were added. The nave of the new building measured eighty-three feet by thirty feet.

The exterior of the church today is very much the same as it was in 1834 except that the bricks have been stuccoed.

One of the most treasured possessions of the church is the silver communion service presented by Queen Anne when the church was erected.

In the graveyard are the graves of William Bradford, Attorney General of the United States under President George Washington; and Elias Boudinot, President of the Continental Congress in 1783 when the treaty of peace with Great Britain was signed. The church is largely ceremonial today and is open to visitors on appointment.

New St. Mary's Church

The cornerstone was laid on November 17, 1846, and the structure was consecrated on August 10, 1854. Designed by Richard Upjohn in the Gothic style it was built of red sandstone which probably came from the "Wilbertha" Quarry near Trenton, New Jersey. Phoebe Stanton describes the church as follows:

St. Mary's is a cruciform church, and, unlike the earlier Chapel of the Holy Innocents in Burlington by John Notman, it is correctly oriented. The tower and spire at the crossing impart elegance to the exterior. There are three entrances -- an unpretentious west door, a south door covered by a porch, and a door which opens into the south transept....

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
	National			
___ prehistoric	___ archeology-prehistoric	___ community planning	___ landscape architecture	___ religion
___ 1400–1499	___ archeology-historic	___ conservation	___ law	___ science
___ 1500–1599	___ agriculture	___ economics	___ literature	___ sculpture
___ 1600–1699	X architecture	___ education	___ military	___ social/ humanitarian
X 1700–1799	___ art	___ engineering	___ music	___ theater
X 1800–1899	___ commerce	___ exploration/settlement	___ philosophy	___ transportation
___ 1900–	___ communications	___ industry	___ politics/government	___ other (specify)
	___ invention			

Specific dates 1703, 1846–1854 **Builder/Architect** Richard Upjohn

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The history of the Gothic-Revival style in America is well illustrated by a few surviving outstanding examples of domestic and religious architecture. This enclave of two churches and the small graveyard is pivotal to that historic movement. New St. Mary's in Burlington was the first attempt in America to follow a specific English medieval church model for which measured drawings existed and were utilized. The design and construction of new St. Mary's was also a milestone in Richard Upjohn's career, firmly establishing him as the foremost practitioner of the Gothic style in this nation. The Old St. Mary's Church and graveyard is adjacent to the newer church and show how the Parish church grew to accommodate a swelling of the congregation in Burlington.

One of the first architectural critics to recognize that Gothic as it was designed in America was naive was Henry Russell Cleveland who wrote, in an article in the North American Review (1836), that the Gothic had greater variety and flexibility than the Greek temple. He observed that "all traces of the church, as it exists in Europe, are lost in the plain and Puritanical meeting-houses of our ancestors" and of "Yankee meeting-houses with Gothic ornaments on them." Coherent, ecclesiastical Gothic arrived with Richard Upjohn's Trinity Church in New York (1839) which was the richest and best-known Episcopal parish in the country. His reputation was thus firmly established even though Trinity was not much imitated as it was too large and expensive for any but the richest parishes to copy.

Generally there was a reversion to earlier Gothic forms which was initiated by the English Cambridge Camden Society founded for the advancement of medieval art and architecture. It was deeply concerned with the quality of building and promoted the simple early English parish church as a model as well as the building arts of the Middle Ages to both improve taste and to remind worshippers of religious fervor. It was also firmly Anglican.

Adherents to this movement were called "Ecclesiologists" and published The Ecclesiologist beginning in 1841 which not only advised on architecture but commented on ritual and symbolism.

The society received its biggest boost in this country when the Rt. Rev. George Washington Doane, Bishop of New Jersey, was elected a patron member in 1841. Bishop Doane's profound interest in architecture led him to promote the first church buildings in America in which an attempt was made to conform to Ecclesiological standards. The first of these was the Chapel of the Holy Innocents (1845-46), a simple stone building designed by John Notman...for a

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Eight hundred people can be seated in the nave, the transepts and the three galleries. The chancel is fully expressed externally, and... is the same height and width as the nave. The transepts are slightly wider than the nave.

The rectangular masses of which St. Mary's is composed are bound into one by the tower and the grave and graceful spire,... the latter a modification of a broach. Upjohn used a continuous transition from the rectangle to the polygon upon it, suppressing the pyramidal masses usual at the corners of a broach and using inward-curving surfaces instead. He seems to have found this solution pleasing, for its appears again at Christ Church, Raleigh, North Carolina. The comfortable feeling of authenticity and the charm of the exterior of St. Mary's derive from the stone of which the church is built and the even, unostentatious rhythm of the buttresses and lancets along the walls of nave and transepts. There are but two departures from symmetry; a newel staircase in a turret rises at the northwest corner of the tower, and a chapel stands to the north of the chancel. The style of the church, in the terminology of the ecclesiologists, was "modern First Pointed."

The interior of St. Mary's reveals its early date more than the exterior.... The nave is long in proportion to its width, has no aisles, and is wood-paneled to a height above the backs of the seats. The walls are painted plaster. The small windows, the paneling, and the line formed by the sills compose a series of horizontals which seem to narrow and lengthen the space. A hammerbeam roof of steep pitch looms overhead. At the crossing four chamfered piers intrude at right angles to the walls, reducing the width of the nave by at least a third. They effectively destroy any feeling that nave and transepts unite in a spatial preface to the chancel. Upjohn treated the heavy... elements at the crossing more freely and in a more personal way than other parts of the design. The piers rise to the base of the spire with a grandeur that owes everything to the preferences of the architect. The crossing is ceiled at the level of the nave roof, where light enters through eight small windows sunk into the masses of the piers.... The eccentric arrangement of the paired windows in deep embrasures is dramatic. The chancel is large and richly appointed. Its roof is decorated, and the ritual arrangements conform to ecclesiological recommendations, save that the pulpit, with its heavy testor, is out of character with the rest of the furniture, which is done in Upjohn's... emphatic, and effective manner.¹

The model for the New St. Mary's had been selected by the Anglican Bishop of New Jersey, the remarkable Right Reverend George Washington Doane who was most anxious to establish the Gothic Revival in America. The specific English example for St. Mary's was the early fourteenth century church of St. John the Baptist at Shottesbrooke, Berkshire. This little church was known for its

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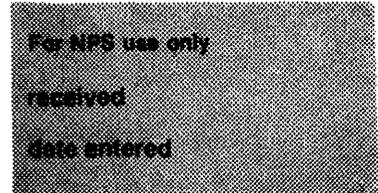
purity and cruciform plan, and measured drawings of it had been done by no less a figure than William Butterfield, the English architect. The Oxford Architectural Society published them in 1846.

Bishop Doane and his architect, Richard Upjohn, were both high churchmen and St. Mary's in Burlington was the embodiment of the English Gothic parish church. There were, however, certain changes in the planning of St. Mary's which deeply offended the Cambridge Camden Society. The nave was lengthened 137 feet, nearly twice the length of the chancel. The walls were laid in random ashlar in a warm colored freestone and are devoid of ornament and the graceful tower rises 150 feet from the ground creating a flowing, smooth profile. The interior, though small, creates all the drama of a medieval chapel, with its lively chancel decorations of Gothic applied ornament on the walls and wooden supports painted in brilliant colors and framing the jewel-like altar.

The church was damaged by fire in the Spring of 1976. The stone walls and tower are original, the roof having been burned. The interior has now been completely restored and refurbished.

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girls' school in Burlington, New Jersey. This was followed by St. Mary's Church, a handsome brown sandstone edifice in the Early English style, commissioned of Upjohn by the bishop.... Upjohn's skillful handling of St. Mary's materials and architectural elements brought the religious side of the Gothic Revival in America to maturity. The stone steeple became a hallmark of sophisticated church design.²

In their zeal to be archeologically correct, Upjohn and Bishop Doane, ironically drew severe criticism rather than praise from the English society. The two men had inadvertently sought advice and plans from the rival Oxford Architectural Society. Perhaps, because he was also an independent and individualistic designer, Upjohn was severely criticised by the Ecclesiological Society for his skill as a church architect -- but it is now acknowledged that in Burlington, he gave America a great new church in the Gothic style.

Quite apart from the Ecclesiologists' shortsighted antagonism is the fact that St. Mary's was conscientiously conceived and became an important milestone in the development of Ecclesiological architecture in the United States. It was symbolically correct, it had a south porch, it had a clearly articulated chancel inside and out. Its high-pitched roof was supported on the inside by open wooden trussing, and in the chancel the ceiling was richly decorated.... There was even an element of asymmetry in the positioning of the south porch counter to the prominent stair turrets on the northwest corner of the tower... and, to repeat, the church was based on an authentic English model. From the architectural point of view, however, the building is exciting more for its variations on the basic theme than for its careful copying; for Upjohn took substantial and highly productive liberties with St. John's, Shottesbroke. The English church was a squat, awkward building, with stubby transepts, a disproportionately heavy tower, and a nave that was shorter than the chancel. Moreover, the tower was squared off at the top, and the octagonal spire rose without transition from behind a crenelated parapet.³

In the end it was the Englishness that Bishop Doane wished to transplant to the "colonies" and he would settle for nothing less than an English church. Upjohn understood this. Along with St. James-the-Less in Philadelphia, St. Mary's initiated the mature parish church revival in America.

It [St. Mary's] is not unlike the severe geometry of such rational works as [Robert] Mill's Treasury Building in Washington, which was brand-new at the time St. Mary's was begun. There is, of course, no direct connection between the two, but in 1850 Neoclassical doctrine was still a powerful force in the formation of American taste, and it is possible that Upjohn was instinctively sensitive to this condition. Yet, like the severity of the Treasury Building, it is this same quality which makes the nave and transepts of St. Mary's more expressive of the primitive state of American society in 1846 than are the

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more English-bound conventions of the chancel, however lovely and appropriate they may be. By reducing the Gothic to its simplest possible terms, without sacrificing its intrinsic qualities of space, proportion, and scale, Upjohn made a statement about the Gothic at St. Mary's which was particularly expressive of the American scene and paved the way for a uniquely American understanding of the style.⁴

Footnotes

¹Stanton, Phoebe B. The Gothic Revival and American Church Architecture: An Episode in Taste, 1840-1856. Baltimore. The Johns Hopkins Press, 1968. pp. 76-77.

²Loth, Calder and Sadler, Julius. The Only Proper Style, Gothic Architecture in America. New York, New York Graphic Society, 1975. pp. 60-61.

³Pierson, William. American Buildings and Their Architects. New York. Anchor Books, 1978. Vol. 2, p. 180.

⁴Ibid., p. 184.

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Verbal Boundary

Beginning at the southeast corner of said lot at the intersection of Wood Street and West Broad Street, the lot measures 281.06 feet on the west side of Wood Street. West 156.00 feet to lot 11, north 114.00 feet, west again 144.22 feet, north again 200 feet to West Union Street. Along the south side of West Union Street 299 feet to Talbot Street. Along the east side of Talbot Street 465 feet, east 150 feet, south 100 feet to West Broad Street and along the north side of West Broad Street 438 feet to point of beginning.