1. NAME OF PROPERTY

Historic Name: ST. PETER'S CHURCH

Other Name/Site Number: Old St. Peter's Church

2. LOCATION

Street & Number: Third & Pine Street Not for publication: N/A

City/Town: Philadelphia Vicinity: N/A

State: PA County: Philadelphia Code: 101 Zip Code: 19106

3. CLASSIFICATION

Ownership of Property		Category of Property	
Private:	X	Building(s):	X
Public-Local:	___	District:	___
Public-State:	___	Site:	___
Public-Federal:	___	Structure:	___
		Object:	___

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	_____	buildings
1	_____	sites
2	_____	structures
3	_____	objects
8	0	Total

Number of Contributing Resources Previously Listed in the National Register: 8

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 ____ request for determination of eligibility 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 ____ does not meet the National Register Criteria.

Signature of Certifying Official Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

In my opinion, the property ____ meets ____ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of Commenting or Other Official Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

5. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is:

___ Entered in the National Register
___ Determined eligible for the National Register
___ Determined not eligible for the National Register
___ Removed from the National Register
___ Other (explain):

Signature of Keeper Date of Action

6. FUNCTION OR USE

Historic:	RELIGION FUNERARY	Sub:	Religious Facility Cemetery
Current:	RELIGION FUNERARY	Sub:	Religious Facility Cemetery

7. DESCRIPTION

ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION: Georgian

MATERIALS:
Foundation: Stone
Walls: Brick
Roof: Metal
Other: Brick (walkways & wall), Iron (fence)

Describe Present and Historic Physical Appearance.

St. Peter's Protestant Episcopal Church stands at the southwest corner of Third and Pine Streets in the Society Hill neighborhood of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Construction for the church began in 1758 and was completed in 1761; however, the outfitting of various interior features continued through 1764. All construction was supervised by the Philadelphia master builder Robert Smith, who is largely credited for St. Peter's design and interior appointments. The building was originally intended to serve as a "chapel of ease" for the parish of Christ Church, the first Anglican church in then Quaker Philadelphia. However, subsequent changes in Christ Church parish politics allowed the "chapel" to become co-equal with the mother church. St. Peter's is oriented on an east-west axis near the northeast corner of a large grave yard that it stands within. The yard is surrounded by a brick wall entered through by several wrought-iron gateways that open directly onto the city streets. Outwardly, St. Peter's Church is barn-like in shape with a gable roof and a tall brick bell tower and wooden spire attached at the west wall; a large Palladian window marks the east wall. Numerous graves and crypts surround the building on three sides. The grave or church yard is thickly planted with a wide variety of mature specimen trees, bushes and plants. A brick walkway borders each side of the building and leads down the middle of the church yard ending at the Fourth Street gate. During a brief part of its 237-year history, the church property encompassed almost an entire city block–from Third to Fourth Streets and from Pine to Lombard Streets. The property is now reduced by that land belonging to St. Peter's School along Lombard toward Fourth Street.

The church, which measures 60 by 90 feet, has been constructed on a stone foundation supporting 22-inch thick brick walls that rise to a height of 36 feet at the roof plate. Above the plate, the east and west gable-end walls are 14 inches thick. The walls of the building are laid in Flemish bond on the exterior and common bond on the interior. The base of the building is accented on all sides by a brick watertable. Each corner of the building as well as two corners of the bell tower are embellished by rusticated brick quoins. Two levels of sliding-sash, multi-light windows mark the first floor and gallery of the interior. All windows are accented by limestone keystones and flanking imposts with limestone sills and consoles. The east wall contains a large Venetian or Palladian window framed by heavy wood molding capped by a prominent keystone. A round bulls-eye window is centered within the tympanum of the east gable.

The exterior fabric of the church has experienced little or no physical change other than from routine maintenance.[1] The only known modification was the addition of four brick flues, probably about 1839-40, that were built into the north and south walls between the three middle windows. The flues are hardly noticeable and appear as narrow pilasters within the walls. Originally, the flues served coal stoves that stood within the church during cold months. Their chimney stacks were removed at the roofline in 1956.

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[1] Much of the building's repair history was never fully recorded, probably because that domain belonged to the property committee whose various chairmen chose not to record their work in the parish records. The probable reason that most repairs and renovations went unrecorded in the 18th and 19th centuries is that work was often underwritten by the members of the building committee or other parishioners who wished to remain anonymous. One example of this phenomenon is vestryman D. Henry Flickwir (1798-1881), a master builder and member of the Carpenters' Company whose construction crew erected the bell tower in 1842. Following the 1848 renovations, a cash book entry for April 13, 1849, noted that Flickwir, then a member of the Repairs Committee, was reimbursed $408 for reasons unknown. Most probably, he served as the general contractor, but that can only be surmised.

The church roof is framed by eight principal rafters resting upon king-post trusses with raised collar beams braced by pairs of hammerbeams.[2] The outer roof is clad with raised-seam galvanized metal sheeting. The roofing has been metal since 1848 when the wood-shingle roof was covered. Much of that shingle roof survives below, functioning as a subroof for the metal roof.

Before 1842, when the bell tower was added at the west end, St. Peter's sported a small wood-frame bell cupola at the west end of the roof. The cupola and its two bells were removed in 1842 when the present tower and spire were constructed. Much of the brick structure that supported the cupola and bells remains within the church since the builder also intended the structure to serve as the stair tower and structural anchor for the pulpit.[3]

The present bell tower measures 24 feet 6 inches square and stands 110 feet tall with a battlemented top capped with marble coping stones. The load-bearing brick walls are laid in Flemish bond on the exterior and measure 2 feet, 2 inches thick with brick buttresses built into the four corners to add extra strength. Brick entrance vestibules with two-leaf wood doors are attached to the north and south walls. The tower and its wood spire were added to the church in 1842 following the design specifications of the architect William Strickland.

The eight-sided spire is framed by white-pine posts covered with cedar shingles and molded cedar planks at the angles. The posts are bolted, strutted and braced into massive wood beams anchored to the tower's upper level. The spire stands 90 feet tall, 75 feet of which extend above the tower. The spire is topped by a copper ball and cross, both gold gilded, which together stand 6 feet, 6 inches tall.

The tower contains a set of bronze bells that were donated to the parish in January 1842, prompting the tower's construction. The eight bells (or chimes) were cast at Thomas Mearns

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[2] The truss system is based upon an early 18th-century English framing method often used when a vaulted inner ceiling like St. Peter's projected above the wall plate. [David T. Yeomans, "British and American Solutions to a Roofing Problem," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, v. L, n. 3, (September 1991), p. 266-272.] The raised collar or tie beam type was often used for parish churches with arched ceilings by 17th-century English architects like Christopher Wren. An illustration in Francis Price's *The British Carpenter* (1733), a builders' manual well known in Philadelphia by the mid-18th century, contains one truss example that could have served as the model for St. Peter's. More interesting is the illustration in plate VII of *The Carpenters' Company 1786 Rule Book* for a "60' Roof Truss with `Arched Ceiling.' [Charles E. Peterson, editor, *The Carpenters' Company of the City and County of Philadelphia 1786 Rule Book*, (Princeton: The Pyne Press, 1971).] The truss is practically identical to St. Peter's, whose roof is 60 ft. wide. Robert Smith (1722-1777), the builder of the church, was one of the Carpenters Company's greatest master builders, suggesting that the Company turned for their model in 1786 to the work of a past master. Structural engineers who have studied St. Peter's and other 18th-century churches in the city have found that the trusses are identical to those Smith created for Old St. Paul's Church (1760-61), another former Anglican parish church at Third and Walnut Streets.

[3] On April 14, 1760, during the latter phase of St. Peter's construction, the vestry of Christ Church donated "two old bells to St. Peter's" [Christ Church Vestry minutes]. The design of the cupola was rather generic, resembling many similar structures on public buildings from the English Renaissance period. Its design source may well have been the plate in William Adam's *Vitruvius Scoticus* for the Orphan Hospital (1734-36) in Edinburgh.

Foundry in London, the same foundry that cast the Liberty Bell. The largest bell stands 4 ft. high and measures 4 ft. in diameter, comparable in size to the Liberty Bell; the smallest measures 2 ft. in diameter.[4]

St. Peter's has four principal entranceways, one at each corner of the building. In the 18th century, the main entrance was most probably located at the southeast corner, not at the northwest as it is today.[5] Each doorway contains a pair of "great" wooden doors. Only the doors of the southwest corner are original, the other three sets were removed in the 1830s and replaced by smaller two-leaf panelled doors. In 1960, the 1830s doors were replaced by replicas based upon the original southwest doors. As a concession to the city's fire code, the new doors were all made to open outward.

In one respect, the interior plan of the church resembles that of many 18th-century Anglican parish churches in England and America: an open rectangular room oriented on an east-west axis; four sections of boxed pews separated by a wide central aisle and two lesser side aisles that extend the length of the building. Two galleries with more box pews extend lengthwise between the east and west walls while a west-end gallery separated by the pulpit tower contains only two rows of single-bench pews. In another more important respect, however, the floor plan resembles no other Anglican church of its period because of the unusual placement of its wine-glass pulpit and reading desk. The pulpit and desk, which are characteristically combined into a double-decker unit, stand at the opposite end of the church from the altar, rather than at the east or perhaps even the north end of the church. The pulpit is attached to a square tower that projects out of the church's west wall. The tower originally functioned as the foundational base for the bell cupola that was removed in 1842.

The principal features of the interior include: the combined pulpit and reading desk; a chancel area at the east wall beneath the large Palladian window (now blocked by the organ case); the wooden altar or Holy Table standing upon a raised wooden platform one step above the main floor; the east wall beneath the altar window decorated as a panelled reredos; the chancel area containing the altar table set within the balustered railing of the communion

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[4] Tuned to the diatonic scale, the bells were originally set up for English-style "change" ringing, which required one person per bell. Each bell and its wood stock hung from an iron axle turned by an attached rope wheel. The bell was allowed to swing, sometimes in full circle, with the iron clapper sounding within. The original eight bell-rope holes arranged in the traditional change-ringing circle remain within the floors of the tower above the bell-ringers' third-level room. As early as 1848, the bells were fixed in place and "changes" have been rung since then via a rope pulley system controlled by one ringer.

[5] In the mid-18th century, the western "edge of town" began around Seventh Street because the colonial city had developed along the Delaware River. Third Street was then a primary corridor for public commerce since it ran directly north to the city's main mercantile and governmental buildings around Chestnut and Market Streets. Not coincidentally, the front end of St. Peter's was situated at the corner of Third and Pine Streets where the large Palladian window was publicly visible. Of the two eastern entranceways, the south door was likely the preferred entrance. In the northern hemisphere, the south side of a building has traditionally been preferred for affording greater exposure to sunlight and heat. Many of the most distinguished 18th-century parishioners were buried at the southeast corner of the yard, also suggesting that the east end lots were the most publicly prominent. Last of all, the north side of the church faced the Philadelphia Almshouse in the late 1750s. Known as "Almshouse Square," the city poorhouse occupied the entire block across Pine Street from Third to Fourth Streets and from Pine to Spruce Streets from 1735 to 1767.

rail and framed by the pillars of the organ gallery above the chancel; a broad coved ceiling underscored by a ceiling cornice; and large multi-light, clear-pane windows set into the walls at the upper and lower levels.

The ornate wine-glass pulpit with its sounding board and reading desk at the west end of the church were completed by the church's master builder, Robert Smith, in April 1764, two-and-a-half years after the church opened for services. The pulpit resembles several models illustrated in Batty Langley's *Treasury of Designs* (1750), a builders' pattern book that Smith is known to have purchased in 1751.[6]

St. Peter's chancel, like many American colonial chancels, is raised one step upon a wood-frame platform. The reredos (or decorated wood panelling) behind the communion table contains a bas-relief sculpture of garlanded grapes and a wheat sheaf. The altar or communion table is a Chippendale, although its exact origins are unknown. The chancel area is enclosed by turned wood balusters and a walnut communion rail. On the underside of the organ gallery built above the chancel in 1789 is a carved bas-relief sunburst or Glory representing the Holy Spirit.

The ground floor of the church is divided by four rows of panelled wood pews that are raised one step off the floor on a platform of oak joists and yellow pine boards. The larger pews, which are found on the central aisle and along the north and south walls, are three-sided while the pews adjoining the central pews are often single-sided. Like most of the interior furnishings, the design of the pews was probably left by the parish building committee to the builder Robert Smith.[7] The exact number of box pews in the church has continually evolved from as early as 1776 when a quantity of three-sided box pews on the side aisles were split in half to create the single benchers.[8] This practice has continued

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[6] Sandra L. Tatman and Roger W. Moss Jr. *Biographical Dictionary of Philadelphia Architects, 1700-1930*. Boston: G.K. Hall, 1985, p. 742. According to the pre-1789 floor plan, the original front of the reading desk may have been semi-circular, presumably to accommodate a clerk's station for leading the service. When the desk was shortened is uncertain, but a probably date is 1792 when a row of pews were added at the west end, thereby narrowing the cross aisle and constricting the passage between the new pews and the desk. The architect, Thomas U. Walter, may have altered the pulpit slightly in 1848, although it is much more likely that he simply reinforced it structurally. Walter may also have shortened the desk a second time, but the records are not clear. Whoever the actual agent, the pulpit has survived relatively unaltered while the reading desk has been shortened somewhat.

[7] The original building contract of 1758 lacks any specifications regarding the interior accommodations. Smith was likely familiar with the standard interior furnishings of Anglican churches, especially for a relatively restrained "chapel of ease" like St. Peter's.

[8] The second modification after 1776 occurred in 1789 when the organ was moved out of the north gallery and six box pews were created in its absence. Between 1792 and 1892, changes were restricted largely to splitting a few larger pews in half and reorienting the direction of the pews built against the west wall. All single benchers, then as now, were arranged to face the pulpit not the altar. In the 18th century, the principal Anglican worship service was Morning Prayer during which most action was directed toward the pulpit and reading desk. In 1892, the organ console and choir were removed from the organ loft above the altar and relocated on the ground floor. The console displaced two single bench pews, being placed about where it stands today in the northeast

throughout the church's history, primarily to accommodate the changing size of the congregation and to improve income from pew rentals.[9] Unlike the ground floor, the gallery pews were never modified and are large three-sided boxes with the exception of the single benchers against the west wall flanking the pulpit.

The first pipe organ and its wooden case were completed in 1767. In 1789, the organ was moved from its original position in the north gallery to a new loft built over the chancel. The large Palladian east window was blocked almost entirely by the new location of the pipe case. Designed in the English Rococo style, the case was probably created by David Tannenberg (or Tannenberger), a Moravian organ builder from Lititz, PA.[10] When the organ stood in the center of the north gallery, it apparently disturbed the adjacent pew holders, prompting the vestry to move the instrument and create more rentable gallery pews in the process. The large wood pilasters that help support the organ gallery were added in 1797, presumably because the original structure lacked sufficient strength.

In 1806, the parish commissioned the Philadelphia sculptor William Rush to carve two wooden urns that stand upon the outer piers of the pipe case.[11] In 1831, St. Paul's Church, a neighboring Episcopal parish on Third Street, gave St. Peter's three carved figures by Rush; these included two female figures that stand upon the pilasters flanking the organ case and a

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corner of the room. Five pews on the center aisle nearest the altar were eliminated for the choristers, who were aligned facing each other in the medieval chapel tradition. In 1944, several of the pews at the west end, installed in 1792 and 1842, were removed to restore the original width of the cross aisle. The pews against the west wall remained until 1960 when the end walls at the ground-floor were enclosed to create stair halls and several small service spaces.

9 Pew rentals were an Anglican practice going back to the development of box pews. The size and location of a parishioner's pew, as assigned by the church wardens, were often based on social rank and position. Rentals were an essential form of parish income with the larger boxes commanding the higher rates. Like property, pews were passed down through a parishioner's family. At St. Peter's, gallery seats, not the main floor, were considered choice locations in the 18th century, presumably because the gallery was warmer in the winter. This fact is borne out by St. Peter's pew rental rates which were highest for gallery seats.

10 In designing the pipe case, Tannenberg (1728-1804) may well have consulted design books by Batty Langley or James Gibbs. [Beatrice Garvan, "St. Peter's Church," *Three Centuries of American Art*, Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1976.] Tannenberg built similar cases in 1769 for Trinity Lutheran Church and the First Reformed Lutheran Church, both in Lancaster; he also made pipe cases in the 1790s for Zion Lutheran Church at Fourth Street near Cherry and the Race Street Reformed Church. A surviving case built by Tannenberg in the late 1700s for Zion Moselem Church near Kutztown, Pennsylvania, also bears similarities to St. Peter's. [Roberts Papers–Historical Society of Pennsylvania; article by Dr. John H. Speller, *Schuylkill River News*, No. 49, (March 1992).]

11 Rush (1756-1833), the cousin of the noted Philadelphia physician, Dr. Benjamin Rush, began his career as a carver of ship figureheads but developed into one of the first great sculptors in early America.

cluster of cherubims resting atop the pipe case.[12]

In its 237 years, St. Peter's has had only six pipe organs. The record holder for longevity is the present instrument, an Ernest M. Skinner Co. (Opus 862) installed in 1931 and fully restored in 1991. The Skinner was the "Cadillac" church organ of its day. This model was built at the time to complement the church's nationally recognized boys' choir.[13]

The main aisle and east end of the church floor are paved with square marble sheets set on the diagonal; the side aisles and west end are paved with heavy slate flagstones set lengthwise. Like many of the church's features, the exact chronology of the floor surface is uncertain. The original surface may have been brick that was replaced sometime before 1842. The oak floor joists and yellow pine floor boards beneath the pews, however, are largely original.

The galleries were originally served by narrow winding staircases at the corner ends of the building. Each consisted of open newel stairs with winders, similar to a "bandbox" staircase. The west-end stairs were removed sometime before 1842, probably as early as 1789 when the pipe organ was moved to its own gallery over the chancel. Two alcoves were fashioned out of the space where the stairs had been. These were to contain wood (and later coal) stoves that were set up and taken down seasonally. The present sets of stairs, which are located at each corner of the church, were built in 1960 just before the church's bicentennial.

The walls and ceiling of the church have experienced little substantial renewal or modification other than minor patching caused by periodic water leaks. The round louvered ventilator in the middle of the ceiling was installed in 1846, probably as an attempt to solve the church's ongoing heating and ventilation problems.[14]

The parish converted to electricity in 1926. Most of the existing brass light fixtures, like those hanging from the gallery and those attached to the north and south walls, date from this conversion.

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[12] The Rush sculpture were originally carved in 1812 for St. Paul's new organ case. "Praise," the figure on the south pilaster, plays a harp; "Exhortation," on the north pilaster, leans on two books, presumably the Old and New Testaments, and gestures toward Heaven. The four winged cherub faces, set within a Glory, were probably meant to symbolize sacred music or the Holy Spirit. [Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, *William Rush: American Sculptor*, (Philadelphia: PAFA, 1982, p. 130-132.]

[13] In the 1930s, Ernest M. Skinner was the most prestigious organ maker in the United States. Of the roughly 800 Skinner instruments built between 1903 and 1931, comparatively few remain intact. Although fully rebuilt, St. Peter's organ is still essentially the same instrument designed by Skinner. From 1915 to 1960, the choirmaster and organist of the church was Dr. Harold W. Gilbert. Gilbert also served as headmaster of St. Peter's Choir School which stood next to the church on Locust Street in the building now housing the independent St. Peter's School. During his tenure, the men and boys choir of St. Peter's became nationally prominent.

[14] Wood and coal stoves always presented problems because of their fumes. The large ceiling vent originally featured a louver system controlled by ropes and pulleys to regulate air flow. Air from the church, which exhausted through the vent, may have been directed outside through stove pipes that ran transversely from the ventilator to brick chimneys at the outer walls.

All of the ground-floor windows, with the exception of the memorial altar window, date from 1974 when the parish decided to restore the double-hung, clear-pane sash for the 1976 Bicentennial. Prior to that year, in the period between 1848 and 1895, all of the ground floor and the two gallery-level sash in the west wall had been replaced with memorial stained glass.[15] The gallery windows are probably original, a supposition based on the absence of any record of replacement or substantial repair. The glass panes are opaque as a means to reduce sun glare.

The original color scheme probably involved whitewashed walls and light cream woodwork. At some point in the early 19th century, probably in 1837 just after the death of long-time rector, Bishop William White, the original 18th-century brightness gave way to Gothic Revival darkening.[16] Since 1876, however, with a major renovation overseen by the architect Frank Furness, the interior has retained the light walls and woodwork characteristic of its original appearance.

The building site was acquired from the William Penn family in 1757, one year before construction began. The vestry of Christ Church had been seeking to buy the site for three years from the Penn family, but had been ignored because the Penns had been speculating on a higher commercial bid that never materialized. The lot had probably been a swampy area that drained into the Delaware River. The surrounding church yard was acquired incrementally over a period of 24 years. The first two lots were purchased in 1758; the northwest quadrant of the yard, which had been subdivided by the Penns for 11 house lots, was acquired in 1782.

During one brief period from about 1965 to 1969, St. Peter's parish owned the entire city block from Third to Fourth Streets and from Pine to Lombard Streets. In 1969, St. Peter's School, which was founded by the parish in 1834, became independent and assumed control of its Lombard Street grounds next to the church yard.[17] In 1974, the church transferred

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[15] While a few of the memorial windows can be traced through the parish records, most cannot. Many windows were donated between 1875 and 1895, when the vestry forbid further memorials. The three-panel chancel or altar window dates from 1887, when it replaced the church's first stained-glass window given in 1848 as a memorial to the late Bishop William White. The two remaining stained-glass windows, in the west wall at the gallery level, are the Evans memorials installed in the 1890s by Mayer & Co., the same German company (with a New York studio) that made the chancel window.

[16] White was succeeded by a new generation of ministers influenced by the Anglo-Catholic movement and champions of the Gothic Revival style. A second interior scheme for St. Peter's, involving tan and mauve tones, may have occurred in 1846 while the Rev. William Odenheimer was rector. The third and perhaps final darkening occurred in 1848 as part of larger renovations and repainting of the entire building; this scheme probably involved a light mocha brown. Frank Furness, known as a High Victorian Gothic architect, ironically restored the original brightness of the woodwork as part of a major renovation for the Centennial Exposition of 1876. Furness did not follow a scrupulous 18th-century restoration, but allowed for decorative floral stenciled bordering around the walls and windows of the gallery. The stenciling was probably painted out in 1896.

[17] The core or oldest part of the school was designed in 1872 by the architect Samuel Sloan. This brownstone structure has been added to several times through the 20th century: first in 1903 with a parish house addition at 317 Lombard by architects Bunting & Shrigley; second in 1977 with an east-side

ownership of a cleared lot at Fourth and Lombard to the school for a play yard. Before the early 1960s, the yard had been the site of five brick rowhouses. The parish retains ownership of a parking lot at Third and Lombard Streets also used as a school playground.

The brick wall surrounding the church yard was constructed in 1784.[18] The 1911 Parish Yearbook asserts that the marble spheres which act as finials on the gate posts were imported from England along with the wall brick; that fact, however, is not documented. The exact age of the present church gates is uncertain. Most likely, they date from 1784 during the construction of the wall.[19] However, the gates were completely reconstructed in 1835, reusing as much of the original material as possible, and have since been periodically repaired. An iron-rod fence with Gothic-style gate posts bordering the west side of the Pine Street entrance walk was installed sometime before 1860, perhaps in 1848. Portions of the brick walkways around the church may date from 1784 when the church yard wall was completed. However, the central walk between the Fourth Street and Third Street gates was probably not laid with brick until 1900.

A small one-story brick structure built against the southwest corner of the church yard wall is likely a former bier shed for holding caskets. The building may date from 1765, but more likely was constructed in 1890. Burials in the church yard began as early as the 1760s, although the exact location of all those buried is not known.[20] In 1835, 25 family burial vaults were constructed in the northeast corner of the yard where a small number already existed. These burial vaults consist of flat stone slabs resting on marble bases about three feet high. Sometime in the late 1970s, a small section of the yard just west of the vaults was set aside for cremation urns. This area is made up of ivy beds in which the urns are to be placed; two crosswalks bisect the section for easy access.

The yard's most physically prominent marker, a large column with no capital, mounted on a classical base, is that of Commodore Stephen Decatur, the naval hero of the Battle of Tripoli in 1804. Less physically prominent but more architecturally entertaining, is the 19th-century memorial to Benjamin Chew Wilcocks, donor of the church tower bells, whose gravestone

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fire tower by Mitchell/Giurgola Architects; and third in 1983 with a substantial west-side addition by architects George Yu and Brooke Harrington, formerly of Mitchell/Giurgola.

[18] The first churchyard fence was replaced by a new wood post and board structure in the summer of 1776, just in time for the British Army to occupy Philadelphia in the winter of 1777-78 and tear down the new fence for fire wood. The 1784 contract for the new wall was signed with John Parker and William Gray.

[19] The master blacksmith, Samuel Wheeler, or his partner, the vestryman Robert Towers, likely crafted the gates since they also built the iron fence (or palisade) along Third Street in the same year. Wheeler later designed and built the balcony for Congress Hall in 1786, and the iron picket fence and gate on Second Street for Old Christ Church around 1795-97. Wheeler is also reputed to have made cannon for Washington's army at the Battle of Brandywine, and the iron chain that Washington stretched across the Hudson River above West Point to prevent the British from invading New York. [*The Evening Bulletin*, Feb. 6, 1922.]

[20] An inventory of gravestone locations and inscriptions was begun in the late 1860s and published in 1879, but many of the oldest stones had already become unreadable. Most pre-20th century marble and limestone markers are now completely illegible because of acid rain and other cumulative effects of urban pollution.

intentionally resembles the tower and spire. The only known gravestone designed by a prominent architect or designer is the grave of Benjamin Carr, a noted church composer and music publisher, who served as organist in the early 19th century. Carr's cylindrical stone with its grecian urn was designed by William Strickland. Other graves of nationally prominent figures include Nicholas Biddle, president of the Second Bank of the United States, George Mifflin Dallas, Vice President of the United States under James Polk, Congressman and Ambassador Joseph Ingersoll, Congressmen Charles Biddle and John Swanwick, Gen. John Rutledge, and the 18th-century portrait painter Charles Willson Peale.

John Haywood, born in England, came to Philadelphia in his youth with a wide knowledge of the sea and sailing. As a prominent trader abroad he knew a great deal about naval defense and was appointed Commodore and commanded the Pennsylvania naval force. Hazelwood defended the Delaware River at both Philadelphia and Burlington, New Jersey. He is buried in the church yard.

Also buried in the church yard is John Nixon, a prominent shipping merchant who held offices in the provincial government. He fought with Washington at the Battle of Princeton, helped administrate and contribute funds to the Revolution. In July 1776, he was chosen to read the Declaration of Independence to the crowd in the State House Square.

While few of the gravestones are considered outstanding works of art, collectively they represent, though dimmed by age and urban environmental abuse, an outstanding collection of representative funerary objects covering three centuries of American history.

Parish records indicate that the landscape of the church yard was never formally designed. Rather, the eclectic collection of plantings seems to represent the cumulative effect of various efforts over 200 years. The row of enormous Sycamores lining the north and west walls can be traced to 1838-1841. Sycamores have been planted in this yard at least as early as 1770, and over time probably replaced the Lombardy Poplar and Weeping Willow as the predominant tree within the yard. A row of old Osage Oranges marks the south edge of the yard near Third Street; parish legend offers that the trees grew from seeds brought back by Lewis and Clark in 1807.

Given the age and social prominence of this church, and the financial wherewithal historically of its congregation, the high level of architectural integrity throughout this building is remarkable. Unlike Old Christ Church (1727-44), the parent congregation of St. Peter's, the interior of the "chapel" church never underwent significant alteration that materially changed its 18th-century character.[21] With the minor exception of the ground-floor enclosures of the east and west walls in 1960, St. Peter's interior would be immediately recognized by a parishioner of 1789. That same parishioner would only be surprised by the bell tower of 1842 and the raised-seam metal roof; in all other respects the church's exterior fabric remains remarkably intact.

CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES

Buildings: Church
Biershed

Site: Churchyard (cemetery)

Structures: Wall (and gates)

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[21] The original box pews of Christ Church were removed and replaced by the present bench pews in 1834-36 during renovations overseen by the architect Thomas U. Walter.

Vault area

Objects: Decatur monument
Wilcox monument (replica of church tower and spire)
Carr monument (designed by William Strickland)

8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:
Nationally: X Statewide:___ Locally:___

Applicable National Register Criteria: A___ B X C X D___

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): A X B___ C___ D___ E___ F___ G___

NHL Criteria: 2, 4
NHL Exception: 1

NHL Theme(s): XVI. Architecture
B. Georgian

Areas of Significance: Architecture, Religion, Social History

Period(s) of Significance: 1758-1875

Significant Dates: 1758, 1761, 1789, 1842, 1848, 1875

Significant Person(s): The Right Reverend Doctor William White (1748-1836)

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: Robert Smith (1722-1777)
William Strickland (1788-1854)

State Significance of Property, and Justify Criteria, Criteria Considerations, and Areas and Periods of Significance Noted Above.

Constructed between 1758 and 1764, St. Peter's Protestant Episcopal Church is nationally significant for its unique Anglican church plan produced by one of colonial America's premier builders of the Georgian style. The architecture of St. Peter's represents an exceptionally well-preserved example of mid-18th-century Georgian-style architecture with a unique interior plan that is considered an innovative and extremely rare architectural response to 18th-century Anglican liturgy.[1] This plan located the altar at the east end of the church, the traditional Anglican location, yet placed the pulpit (and reading desk) in opposition at the west end on a direct axis along the central aisle. Only one other younger example of this plan type is known to exist in an American colonial church–Pompion Hill Chapel in Cooper River, South Carolina (a National Historic Landmark), built as a "chapel of ease" in 1763, five years after St. Peter's.[2] The plan of Pompion Hill also differs markedly from St. Peter's in its significantly smaller size and use of college chapel bench seating rather than high-sided box pews.

The probable explanation for St.Peter's rare plan may be found in the Anglican liturgy of the period. Two co-equal centers of worship were maintained for 18th-century worship: the pulpit and reading desk for the proclamation of the Word (the minister's sermon from the pulpit and the Bible lessons from the desk), and the altar or Holy Table for the celebration of Holy Communion. At the time of St. Peter's design in 1758, the pulpit and reading desk in the mother parish, Christ Church, were located in front of the chancel, largely blocking the view of the altar.[3] Although in theory the centers were co-equal, in practice the pulpit overpowered the altar by blocking its view. The builders of St. Peter's may have considered the new church an opportunity to correct that problem. By placing the pulpit and reading desk at the west end, a clearer separation of the two centers of worship would be achieved.

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1 In a study of American colonial churches, James F. White identified at least six distinct experimental plans for Anglican churches in the mid-18th century. Of these, St. Peter's is the oldest of two churches in the nation representing the sixth type: the opposed plan with the east-end altar on direct axis with the west-end pulpit and reading desk. [James F. White, *Protestant Worship and Church Architecture: Theological and Historical Considerations*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 101-105.]

2 Only one extant English example of this opposed plan may exist as well, but the church is also later than St. Peter's. Built in 1782, Teigh parish church, Rutland, more closely resembles Pompion Hill with its bench seating arranged like an English cathedral choir. [G.W.O. Addleshaw and Frederick Etchells, *The Architectural Setting of Anglican Worship: An Inquiry into the Arrangements for Public Worship in the Church of England from the Reformation to the Present Day*. London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1952, p. 194-195.] Pompion Hill was also a small country chapel built for a southern planter, while St. Peter's, although first called a "chapel," actually functioned as a large city parish church.

3 This position was quite orthodox in the liturgy of the 17th and 18th centuries when Morning Prayer occurred more frequently than Holy Communion. Only at Holy Communion was it considered necessary to see the altar. The practice did not signify irreverence, but preserved the medieval notion of compartmentalized spaces where the chancel (and choir), separated by rood screens, were considered special "rooms" for the celebration of Holy Communion. [Stephen P. Dorsey, *Early English Churches in America, 1607-1807*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1952., p. 27.]

Each center would then be allowed greater architectural focus with a grand Palladian window above the altar at the east end, and the elaborate panelling and sounding board around the pulpit and desk at the west end.

St. Peter's was initially conceived of as a "chapel of ease" to accommodate the overflow from the burgeoning congregation of Christ Church, the only Anglican parish in Philadelphia at the time.[4] In size and appointment, the "chapel" of St. Peter's was clearly subordinate to the more richly detailed Georgian architecture of Christ Church, built in 1727-44.[5] During St. Peter's dedicatory sermon on September 4, 1761, the Rev. Dr. William Smith, provost of the University of Pennsylvania, called the new building "not a superb and magnificent one, fitted to the ostentatious worship of the Lord, but a House decently neat and elegantly plain." The building committee from Christ Church, chaired by Dr. John Kearsley, who is credited for the design of Christ Church, was largely "low church" and supported a restrained design for theological if not hierarchical reasons. In its "neat and elegantly plain" expression, St. Peter's may well have served as the model for a regional group of later 18th-century Anglican churches in the Delaware Valley that shared a similar refinement.[6]

Planning for St. Peter's started as early as 1753, but issues involving internal parish politics, site acquisition, and fundraising delayed construction for five years.[7] The site at Third and Pine Streets, finally given somewhat begrudgingly by the sons of William Penn, was then at the southernmost end of the expanding city where many fine new homes for a growing mercantile class were being erected. By 1758, Philadelphia had developed a significant professional and middle-class population, many of whom belonged to the Anglican or Church of England. At the time, Christ Church was the only Anglican parish in the city. The Church of England was England's official state religion, a political fact that attracted

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4 Before the American Revolution, members of the Protestant Episcopal church in the English colonies belonged to the Anglican or Church of England. A "chapel of ease" functioned as a smaller auxiliary church, tied both theologically, financially and administratively to the mother parish. As a colonial variation on the English tradition, the two congregations were administered co-equally by a common rector and vestry (the Anglican lay board of directors), an arrangement that continued until 1832 when "The United Churches of Christ Church and St. Peter's" formally separated.

5 The new church's footprint was 60 x 90 ft., or 25 percent smaller than Christ Church at 61 x 118 ft. The basic spacial proportions of either church, however, pattern themselves after several of Sir Christopher Wren's "auditory" churches of 17th-century London.

6 One good example is St. James, Kingsessing. [Donald Richard Friary, *The Architecture of the Anglican Church in the Northern American Colonies: A Study of Religious, Social, and Cultural Expression*, Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation in American Civilization. University of Pennsylvania. 1971.]

7 When "some gentlemen from the South End of the City" went in March 1753 to see the rector of Christ Church about building a new church, they did not seek the Rev. Robert Jenney's consent, but rather informed the aging minister politely of their intentions and requested that he put the matter before the vestry. Jenney feared that the congregation, and his influence, would be fractured, but the "South End" group went ahead anyway. [C.P.B. Jefferys, "The Provincial and Revolutionary History of Saint Peter's Church, Philadelphia, 1753-1783." *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*. Vols. 47 (1923) and 48 (1924), p. 14-15.]

many prominent figures out of faith and political expediency. This included some conservative Philadelphia Quakers who identified with the English Whig party despite the provincial city's strong Quaker tradition of religious tolerance and dissent.

The builder and designer of St. Peter's was Robert Smith (1722-1777), perhaps the most important builder-architect in colonial America.[8] Thirty-six-years old when he began the project, Smith was just entering the prime of his career, having recently earned the status of master builder from the Carpenters' Company of Philadelphia.[9] The 18th-century builder-architect like Smith was primarily a master builder who worked closely with his client, working out a basic design and consulting architectural pattern books for details. Once the builder and client had settled upon the final design and specifications, the builder hired a crew and acted as general contractor.[10]

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[8] Born in Scotland, the son of a baker from rural Dalkeith Parish outside of Edinburgh, Smith came to America about 1748 after apprenticing with master builders in Scotland and England. Little information exists of his early life, and little evidence remains of his career other than his buildings. Smith may have apprenticed to William Adam in Edinburgh about 1740 when the noted builder and his equally distinguished sons were remodeling the estate of a local nobleman. [Charles E. Peterson, "Robert Smith, Philadelphia Builder-Architect: From Dalkeith to Princeton," *Scotland and America in the Age of Enlightenment*, edited by Richard B. Sher and Jeffrey R. Smitten. (Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh Press, 1990).] Smith was probably Philadelphia's biggest 18th century contractor. Besides houses and churches, Smith built Nassau Hall at Princeton University (a National Historic Landmark), the *chevaux-de-frise* as an American naval defense across the Delaware River in 1777 and the continental Army barracks at Billingsport, New Jersey. Among his affiliations, he belonged to the American Philosophical Society (1769), played a major role in affairs of the Carpenters' Company, and served as a member of the Commission of Correspondence for the First Continental Congress (1774).

[9] "The Carpenters' Company of the City and County of Philadelphia" descended from a medieval London carpenters' guild that had formed as a fraternal charitable society but evolved into a powerful trade guild. By the late 17th century, however, the guild had lost much of its power, but the founding of Philadelphia in the 1680s proved to be a bonanza for unemployed English carpenters, who eventually created a small but influential trade association in the colonial city. The Company exercised influence far beyond its exclusively small number by functioning as middleman between Philadelphia's rich and powerful and the rest of the building trades. It accomplished this by dominating key middle-rank regulatory posts in the city like building inspector for public works, and cost estimator for public and private projects. By the mid-18th century, the Company had developed a tight grip on building in colonial Philadelphia. Robert Smith became a principal figure in the policy setting of this association, which in turn affected the architectural look of the colonial city. [Roger W. Moss, Jr. "The Origins of the Carpenters' Company of Philadelphia." Charles E. Peterson, edit. *Building Early America*. Radnor: Chilton Book Co., 1976.]

[10] The extent of the role that the Christ Church building committee played in helping Smith develop the final design has remained some source of debate. The building contract, signed August 5, 1758, clearly specified the form, details and materials of St. Peter's. The contract also specified that Smith "from time to time hereafter...be under the direction and instruction of the said Committee touching and concerning the said [church building]." Smith, on the other hand,

Smith likely won the commission from Christ Church parish due to his recent completion of their new steeple (1752-54), and his prominence in Philadelphia as one of the mid-Atlantic colonies' leading builders. Smith's commissions ranged from Rhode Island to Virginia, although his known major projects in Philadelphia included the Second (1749) and Third (1766) Presbyterian churches; the steeple for Christ Church (1752-54); the east wing of Pennsylvania Hospital (1755) (a National Historic Landmark); St. Paul's Episcopal Church (1761), a city parish; Mount Pleasant (1761, attributed) (a National Historic Landmark), a country estate in the English Palladian tradition; a townhouse for Benjamin Franklin (1764); Carpenters' Hall (1768) (a National Historic Landmark); alterations to the dormitory and provost's house for the University of Pennsylvania (1761); and the Walnut Street Prison (1773-74). Many of these buildings ranked among Philadelphia's most important at the time. In 1768, Smith's selection to design and build the new hall for the Carpenters' Company indicated the regard that his fellow master builders held for his skill.[11]

Despite Philadelphia's distinction as a leading city of the English colonies by the 1750s, the city had failed to attract top English architects because of the perception that Philadelphia was still a provincial backwater. In their place, the city's leading institutions and citizens came to rely upon professional builders like Smith who fashioned "high style" buildings by consulting architectural pattern books.[12] These design books guided Smith and his colonial

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had fully matured as a master builder-architect by this period, and the likelihood that he would be simply following orders without significant creative input is remote. It is very much more likely that the specifications of the contract were drawn up mutually with substantial input from Smith. His first known church commission, the Second Presbyterian Church (1749) on Third Street above Arch (demolished), bore many outward similarities to St. Peter's, suggesting that he adapted his Presbyterian design solution for the Anglicans nine years later. This basic design would be reused by Smith a third time in 1766-69 for the Zion Lutheran Church on Fourth Street above Arch Street (demolished).

11 Besides his importance as the leading builder-architect of the English colonies, Smith represents a significant figure in the genealogy of American architecture. In the 18th century, the role of architect-as-professional did not exist in America. Instead, master builders like Smith functioned as designer, engineer and contractor. Smith prefigured the changes that would occur from the 1790s onward. With the arrival of European-trained professionals like Benjamin Latrobe (1764-1820) in 1796 and John Haviland (1792-1852) in 1810, the building industry slowly began to differentiate between the building tradesman and the design professional. Men like Latrobe and Haviland helped train the first generation of Americans, like William Strickland (1788-1854), Robert Mills (1781-1855), and Thomas U. Walter (1804-1887), who would eventually become recognized as the country's first professional architects.

12 Known examples of pattern books in Smith's personal library included Batty Langley's *The City and Country Builder's Treasury of Designs* purchased in 1751, Andrea Palladio's *The Four Books of Architecture* purchased in 1754, and *Vitruvius Britannicus* purchased in 1756. Smith also probably owned a copy of James Gibbs's *A Book of Architecture*. [Sandra L. Tatman and Roger W. Moss, Jr., *The Biographical Dictionary of Philadelphia Architects: 1700-1930*, (Boston, G.K. Hall & Co., 1985), p. 742.] Two books by Gibbs were widely available by mid century in major colonial cities like Philadelphia: *A Book of Architecture* (1728), and *Rules for Drawing the Several Parts of Architecture* (1732). The Book of Architecture was particularly popular, enjoying numerous reprints throughout England and the colonies. Dependence upon pattern books had one major drawback: once they reached America, their styles were often

counterparts in an age when architecture was based entirely on historical precedent. By mid century, however, Philadelphia's master builders had developed a hybrid variant of the English Georgian style that was partly indebted to the restrained early 17th-century English Renaissance classicism of Inigo Jones and partly to the richer late 17th-century Baroque classicism of Sir Christopher Wren. St. Peter's exemplifies this hybrid mode, which has been called the first genuine "Georgian" architecture in the English colonies.[13]

The actual English model for St. Peter's may well have been Marybone Chapel, a prestigious chapel of ease in Oxford Street, London well illustrated in James Gibbs's *Book of Architecture*.[14] Designed by Gibbs in 1721-24, Marybone bears a remarkable resemblance to St. Peter's in its equally elegant plainness: a rectangular form topped by a gable roof with simple block dentil molding, similar window fenestration, the Palladian window at the east wall, the oculus window in the pediments, the relatively simple barrel vault ceiling, and the large urns located at the four corners of the roof (originally intended for St. Peter's but omitted during construction). Gibbs favored the Baroque style of Christopher Wren and his well known London "auditory" churches. Wren's concept for an auditory church space called for an open unobstructed room of rectangular dimensions, no less then 60 x 90 ft., with ground-floor and gallery seating handling a capacity of no more than 2,000 people.[15]

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out-of-date by 10 to 20 years from leading stylistic developments in England and the Continent. This phenomenon is important to note in understanding the architectural time lag of St. Peter's Church and other colonial "high style" buildings when compared against comparable building of their time in England and Europe.

13 William H. Pierson, Jr., *American Buildings and Their Architects*, Vol. 1. "The Colonial and Neoclassical Styles," Garden City: Doubleday & Co., 1970, p. 117. By 1758, Philadelphia had just entered its "middle period" (ca. 1750-1780) of Georgian architecture, which began with Edmund Woolley's design for the State House bell tower (1750-53), and included other prominent colonial buildings like the east wing of Pennsylvania Hospital (1755), Mt. Pleasant in Fairmount Park (1761), Cliveden in Germantown (1763) (a National Historic Landmark), the Powel House (1765) in Society Hill, and Carpenters' Hall (1770) at 320 Chestnut St. [George Tatum, *Philadelphia Georgian: The City House of Samuel Powel and Some of Its Eighteenth Century Neighbors*. Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1976., p. 38.] Christ Church, by contrast, belonged to an earlier, more Baroque period in Philadelphia's history of colonial architecture.

14 The wide availability of the *Book of Architecture* in Philadelphia by the 1750s, and Smith's familiarity with the work, strongly suggests Marybone Chapel as the primary model for St. Peter's.

15 Wren made several important changes to traditional medieval church design. Like Inigo Jones (1573-1652), he responded to the participatory liturgy of the English Reformation requiring "auditory" interiors where all assembled could see and hear. He abandoned the medieval cruciform with its long narrow nave and deep chancel separated by rood screens. In its place, he substituted a single open space based on the interior proportions of a Roman basilica. This new interior was a remarkable break from Gothic arrangements of preceding centuries. In some of its features, a likely source of inspiration was St. Paul's, Covent Garden (1630-31), by Inigo Jones. Wren also borrowed Jones's Palladian window from the Queen's Chapel, London (1623-27), a prominent feature that became a characteristic fixture in well-to-do colonial churches like Christ Church and St. Peter's.

Christ Church and St. Peter's are based on this auditory form like their English predecessors, Marybone and Gibbs' far better known St. Martin's in the Field, London. Recent research by Joseph W. Hammond of Freehold, New Jersey, into the origins of Robert Smith's design for St. Peter's shows a clear similarity between the two churches, as well as between St. Peter's and Christ Church in Surry, St. James's, Westminster and St. Anne's, Westminster.

From 1761, when St. Peter's was dedicated, until 1842, the church remained virtually unchanged architecturally. Soon after Christmas 1841, however, a former vestryman announced that he was donating a set of bells to the parish.[16] The announcement, which apparently didn't come as a surprise, prompted the vestry, after some internal disagreements over the financial obligation, to launch a fundraising campaign for the construction of a bell tower. William Strickland (1788-1854), a nationally prominent Philadelphia architect, was retained to design the tower, which initially was envisioned without a wooden spire.[17]

Strickland designed the bell tower and spire in a semi-colonial revival mode, which at the same time evoked the feeling of a rural parish church from late medieval England.[18] The

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[16] When Benjamin Chew Wilcocks announced the gift of bells to his family on Christmas, among them was Joseph R. Ingersoll, a prominent attorney and later Ambassador to Great Britain, and his brother Charles J. Ingersoll, an equally prominent attorney and congressman, who was married to Wilcock's daughter. All were members of St. Peter's including Joseph, who served as rectors's warden, the chief lay officer of the parish. Wilcocks had served on the joint vestry of St. Peter's and Christ Church in the late 18th century during the tenure of Bishop William White. The set of eight bells or chimes were made by Thomas Mearns of Whitechapel, London, noted as foundry for the Liberty Bell.

[17] The son of a master carpenter who came to Philadelphia from New Jersey around 1790, William Strickland (1788-1854) was apprenticed at 15 to the English-trained architect Benjamin Latrobe. Trained in the old school of apprentice to master builder, Strickland came of age in a transitional period in American architecture when architectural design was moving away from the master builder tradition to the proto-modern professional designer. As a result, Strickland belonged to that early line of American architects, beginning with Latrobe and extending to Robert Mills and Thomas U. Walter, who regarded themselves as the pioneers of the American architectural profession. In 1818, William Strickland won the commission for the Second Bank of the United States (1818-24) (a National Historic Landmark). A stripped-down version of a Greek temple based on the Parthenon, the design won Strickland immediate recognition as one of the bright new architects in the nation. The Second Bank probably marked a turning point in American architecture, ushering out the red-brick Georgian classicism of Robert Smith's 18th-century Philadelphia and introducing the early 19th-century white-stone neo-classicism of the Greek Revival. Strickland worked competently in nine different revival styles, but he is now remembered largely for his Greek Revival designs between 1818 and 1845. Strickland's other outstanding buildings in Philadelphia include the U.S. Naval Asylum (1827-33) (a National Historic Landmark) and the Merchants Exchange (1832-33), both exceptional trend-setting examples of the Greek Revival. [Agnes Addison Gilchrist, *William Strickland: Architect and Engineer 1788-1854*. New York: De Capo Press, 1969].

[18] Strickland's probable model for St. Peter's tower has not been documented, but a likely candidate would be the tower and spire he added in 1820-22 to Immanuel Episcopal Church (1703) in New Castle, Delaware. The dimensions of the two structures are dissimilar, but the essential proportions, materials, and details

semi-gothic appearance of the tower and spire was an ironic addition to a classical Georgian form like St. Peter's. Although parish records do not provide insight, it is quite likely that the influence of the Anglo-Catholic movement, which found advocates among vestrymen like Horace Binney Jr. and the rector, the Rev. William Odenheimer, may have prompted church officials to choose a design that added a certain Gothic flavor without undoing the Georgian classicism of their church.

The overscale of the tower to the rest of the building is also something of a mystery. It is unlikely that Strickland misunderstood Georgian classical proportions given his identification with the classicism of the Greek Revival. Most likely, the vestry requested a tall tower to surpass that of Christ Church, and thereby freed Strickland to produce an interpretative design rather than a strict Georgian-looking tower in the tradition of Christopher Wren.[19] It certainly seems accurate to say, however, that Strickland was generally responding with respect to Smith's original building. The tower was constructed under Strickland's direct supervision using the same building methods–load-bearing brick walls and thick wood beams–that Robert Smith had originally used for the church building.

Strickland presumably won the commission because of personal connections within the parish and his general name recognition in Philadelphia. His introduction to St. Peter's building committee probably came from either Nicholas Biddle, a parishioner for whom Strickland had built the Second Bank of the United States in 1818-24, or James Biddle, also a parishioner and commodore of the U.S. Naval Asylum, for whom Strickland had built the Asylum in 1833 and was currently enlarging.[20] Strickland had already proven himself familiar with the basic vocabulary of Georgian architecture, as demonstrated by his faithful recreation of the mid-18th-century steeple for the Pennsylvania State House (Independence Hall) added in 1828.

The 18th-century interior has survived largely intact save for modest modifications, such as the re-insertion of west-end gallery stairs and some other minor modifications in 1960, the less intrusive introductions of artificial lighting (gas in 1848 followed by electricity in 1926), and central heating in 1875. Since 1875, the light-colored interior walls have retained their 18th-century brightness following a roughly 30-year period when the interior finishes were darkened in the Victorian Gothic mode.

Two prominent Philadelphia architects remodeled portions of the interior during the 19th century but reminders of their work have since been largely erased by subsequent restorations. In 1848, for example, Thomas U. Walter (1804-1887) may have first "gothicized" the interior although fragmentary mentions in the vestry minutes and accounting warden's cash books suggest that the interior had already been darkened earlier

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remain the same.

[19] The two parishes had become formally separated into two corporations by 1832. By the 1840s, the classical orders with their strict rules of proportion had been abandoned in American architecture to create a liberal environment where Strickland could have felt free to exaggerate his proportions. [Constance M. Greiff, *John Notman, Architect: 1810-1865*, (Philadelphia, The Athenaeum of Philadelphia, 1979), p. 43.]

[20] Either of these projects, along with the design of Christ Church Hospital (1819-29) and the extensive interior redesign of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in 1830, may have assured him of the commission through the social network of these parishes.

that decade.[21] Walter's work appears to have involved the removal of the original north and south gallery staircases flanking the chancel at the east end. He may have taken out Robert Smith's boxed winder staircases and inserted iron spiral stairs. The iron stairs, however, were probably replaced in 1896 by wooden staircases, which were themselves replaced in 1960.[22]

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[21] Thomas U. Walter's ascent to national prominence occurred just as quickly as William Strickland's. In 1833, he won a national competition for Girard College's new main building in Philadelphia. Walter produced a magnificent white-marble Greek temple under Nicholas Biddle's direction that has been called "the last word in American Greek Revivalism." The success of Founders Hall (1833-47) (a National Historic Landmark) led to hundreds of commissions that elevated Walter to the top tier of American architects, and, perhaps, first among the Philadelphians in the early to mid-19th century. When Walter died in 1887, he was recognized as one of American architecture's pioneering figures and dean of the profession. Among his most important works, he is recognized nationally for the dome and Senate and House wings of the U.S. Capitol Building (a National Historic Landmark) designed in 1848. [Robert B. Ennis, "Thomas Ustick Walter, Architect." Unpublished monograph for the National Endowment for the Arts-sponsored exhibition at The Athenaeum of Philadelphia, 1979. Collection of the Athenaeum of Philadelphia.]

[22] Most records indicate that Walter's assignment was just one of numerous renovations and repairs that the vestry had been contemplating for over a year. The list of renovations included the installation of gas, repainting and recarpeting, alteration of a few smaller box pews, raising the bellringers' floor in the tower, and covering the wood-shingle roof with tin sheeting. It may seem remarkable that the church was still using 18th-century candle chandeliers in 1848, but historically the congregation has been most conservative in making changes to the building. Once gas lighting was installed, they did not switch to electricity until 1926.

The other significant 19th-century architect to work on the church was Frank Furness (1838-1912).[23] In the spring of 1875, when Furness and his partner George W. Hewitt (1841-1916) accepted the commission to renovate St. Peter's, the two men were about to end a four-year partnership once their Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts was completed (1871-76). Furness was the more charismatic and artistically original of the two. While his most publicly recognizable extant work remains the Pennsylvania Academy (a National Historic Landmark), students of American architecture more frequently cite his late 1870s Philadelphia banks as the most remarkable creations.

The timing of St. Peter's renovation was likely inspired by the celebration of the American Centennial scheduled for the following year. Given the nation's then current reflections on its colonial past, it is not surprising that the vestry decided to restore something of the church's 18th-century appearance. It is still rather remarkable that a High Victorian architect like Furness removed the gloomy gothic paint and marblized walls that had darkened the interior since the 1840s, and restored the 18th-century brightness of the woodwork.[24] He did add, however, a touch of Victorian floral stenciling around the gallery windows, and replaced the clear-paned window glass with delicate floral-etched panes.[25]

The most substantial but largely unnoticeable modifications to the church's interior were done late in 1960 by an architect who considered himself a specialist in Philadelphia's 18th-century architecture. George B. Roberts, a former vestryman (1933-195?), accounting warden, and building committee chairman, was retired from the parish by 1960, but had advocated the modifications since 1949.[26] The work consisted of removing the first-floor

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[23] Furness came from a distinguished family of Philadelphia intellectuals. His father, the Rev. William Henry Furness, was pastor of the First Unitarian Church of Philadelphia, and close friend of Ralph Waldo Emerson. His brother, Horace Howard Furness, was a distinguished Shakespearean scholar at the University of Pennsylvania who was recognized internationally. In 1857, Furness apprenticed to John Fraser, who became his partner a decade later, and is best remembered for his Union League Building (1864-65) at Broad and Sansom Streets in Philadelphia. After rudimentary training from Fraser's office, Furness left for Richard Morris Hunt's atelier in New York. The Civil War interrupted Furness's professional education, although he returned to work and study under Hunt briefly after the war. [George E. Thomas, "Frank Furness: The Flowering of an American Architect," *Frank Furness: The Complete Works*, pp. 13-51.]

[24] Furness came, in large part, out of the English Ruskinian tradition that celebrated hand-made medieval forms and applied ornamentation. Given the design aesthetic of his era, it would have been understandable had he promoted a renovation in the High Victorian Gothic style. The 1870s marked the height of the High Victorian Gothic's popularity in Philadelphia's largely Episcopalian upper-class society. This was especially true for Episcopal Church architecture where the "High Church" liturgy considered English Gothic the only proper church architecture.

[25] September 10, 1875, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, p. 3; *The Evening Bulletin*, September 10, 1875 p. 2; St. Peter's Church Cash Book, December 14, 1875.

[26] George Brooke Roberts (1900-1975) was a very competent professional who practiced out of his Rittenhouse Square townhouse. A scion of one of the city's leading families, Roberts was grandson and namesake of George B. Roberts, fifth president of the Pennsylvania Railroad (1880-1897). Roberts trained under Paul Cret at Penn's School of Architecture (1928), afterward working for Cret

pews against the east and west walls and enclosing the space they had occupied under the galleries. Within the new spaces at the west end were created a vesting sacristy on the north side of the pulpit and a storage room on the south side for the altar guild. At the east end, a small storage space for sacraments was built under the gallery on the south side of the chancel, and a small closet for choir books was created on the north side. Enclosed gallery staircases that met modern fire code were added at the west end on the north and south sides, and the north and south gallery staircases at the east end were also enclosed and reconfigured to meet code. All of the entrance doors, save the southwest pair, were replaced with full-length reproductions that matched the surviving 18th-century originals at the southwest entrance. Most of the mechanical systems were replaced, including the wiring, plumbing and heating, and a fire detection system was installed.[27] The fact that these relatively modest changes are considered significant is testimony to the parish's stewardship in safeguarding the architectural integrity of the church through three centuries.

In 1975, in preparation for the American Bicentennial the following year, the vestry decided to remove the stained-glass memorial windows installed in the late 19th century. Between 1875 and 1895, when the vestry forbid further memorials, most of the original clear-glass windows on the ground floor had been replaced with stained glass memorials. Only two of the larger gallery windows in the west wall had been replaced with stained glass, leaving the upper level of the church characteristically bright, and the ground floor rather dark. The vestry believed that with the installation of reproduction clear-pane sliding sash, the 18th-century brightness of this English Enlightenment-based church would be restored. Presently, only the two stained glass windows in the west wall of the gallery remain in place, and the three smaller stained glass windows over the alter in the west wall.

St. Peter's association with figures of national significance ranges from its founding years on the eve of the American Revolution through the late 1830s when the city still rivaled New York as the national center for banking and finance. Perhaps the leading 18th-century figure associated with the parish was the Rt. Rev. Dr. William White (1748-1836), rector of the United Churches for 57 years from 1779 to 1832. From 1832 to 1836, White continued

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until 1936 when he started his own practice. [George Roberts, "Time Remembered: A Philadelphia Childhood," Roberts Papers - Historical Society of Pennsylvania; *The Evening Bulletin*, January 4, 1975] Roberts carefully researched the building history of St. Peter's, even preparing a six-page background paper in 1959-60 that became research-based rationale for the changes to come. Roberts was also responsible for design of the marble plaque (1942), which is inserted into the west pier of the Pine Street gate, as well as the wooden sign board (1950) just inside the gate, and the mahogany prayer kneeler and litany desk (1950) built by the designer Gustav Ketterer as a memorial to the Rev. Edward M. Jefferys. St. Peter's commission presumably led to other commissions for Roberts, such as rehabilitations of the Hill-Physick-Keith House, 321 South 4th Street (1965-70) (a National Historic Landmark) and "Grumblethorpe" on Germantown Avenue (1966-69) for the Society for the Preservation of Philadelphia Landmarks [Roberts Papers–Historical Society of Pennsylvania].

[27] The church had always lacked service space, like a vesting sacristy for the clergy and work space for the altar guild. The existing gallery stairs at the east end had long failed to meet city fire code. The proposed changes must have been a source of great debate within the parish in the years leading up to the project since the interior had survived virtually unchanged since 1789 when the pipe organ was relocated over the chancel from the north gallery. In the end, the vestry unanimously approved George Roberts's design plan in April 1960, and the work was completed by J.S. Cornell & Sons of Philadelphia.

to serve as St. Peter's first rector following its separation from Christ Church.

A native of Philadelphia, White graduated from the College of Philadelphia (later University of Pennsylvania) in 1765, and joined the United Churches in 1772 as an assistant to the Rev. Richard Peters.[28] He was married to the sister of Robert Morris, the financier of the American Revolution, and remained loyal to the American cause, serving as chaplain of the Continental Congress and later to the early Congresses of the republic. Despite White's social influence in the affairs of the Continental Congress and the early federal government, he is best recognized as a principal founder and the second Presiding Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States after 1786. White is also credited with being the principal author of the early Episcopal prayer book after the American split with the Church of England. During White's long tenure, the joint parish of Christ Church and St. Peter's was considered de facto cathedral church of the Episcopal Church in the United States. The national General Convention of the church met in St. Peter's five times between the 1821 and 1838.

Other prominent 18th-century figures who were parishioners of St. Peter's, were Dr. Philip Syng Physick, known as "the father of American surgery"; Charles Willson Peale (1741-1827), one of America's most famous 18th-century portrait painters, and founder of the first significant natural history museum in North America; and Dr. John Morgan, physician-in-chief of the Continental Army and a founder of the University of Pennsylvania Medical School. St. Peter's hosted George Washington and his wife with some regularity since the Washingtons were good friends of Samuel Powel, first mayor of Philadelphia after the Revolution. During the winter of 1781-82, the Washingtons rented a house next to Powel's, just down Third Street from the church, and often attended Sunday services in the Powel family pew (#41).

One of the leading figures in the history of African Americans was Absalom Jones. In his youth, he came to Philadelphia as the slave of one of the early members of the church, Benjamin Wynkoop. Jones was married in St. Peter's in January 1770 to Mary, slave of another member. Jones was surely influenced by the sermons of William White who ordained him deacon in 1795 in St. Peter's and to the priesthood in 1804, making him the first African American Episcopal priest. In 1784, Jones, with Richard Allen founded the Free African Society, a benevolent association for the nascent black community of Philadelphia. Its members defied the yellow fever epidemic of 1793, tending to the sick and dying and burying the dead. In 1794, Jones founded the African Church of St. Thomas, the first African Episcopal church in the nation.

In the early 19th century, the leading figure associated with the church was Nicholas Biddle (1786-1844), a parishioner, who served as president of the Second Bank of the United States and fought bitterly with President Andrew Jackson in the 1830s over the need for a strong federal banking system. Biddle, perhaps more than any other Philadelphia figure in the early 19th century, represented the last of a breed of aristocratic Philadelphians who had been prominent in national affairs from colonial times through the early federal era. Biddle's generation was the last tied directly to those years when the city served as capital of the United States (1789-1800).[29]

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[28] A student of the Rev. Dr. William Smith, the provost of Penn, he received the first doctorate in divinity from the University in 1782 while rector of Christ Church. White was a trustee of the University for 62 years, many years of which he served as the senior member and chairman.

[29] "It was a compact, cohesive group, the last full flowering of colonial origins. At the head of many organizations–civic, cultural and commercial–were men who in general shared the same attributes: descendants of well-established families, they composed the local aristocracy; of superior education, they were endowed with a deep sense of civic responsibility and were blessed with talents that

brought them to the fore; through their wide range of interests they were perhaps the last representatives of the Enlightenment, as reflected by the memory of Franklin." [Nicholas B. Wainwright, "The Age of Nicholas Biddle: 1825-1841," *Philadelphia: A 300-Year History*, New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1982, p. 258.]

Others from around that era included George M. Dallas (1792-1864), Vice President of the United States under James Polk, and the man whom Dallas, Texas was named for; Alexander James Dallas, Secretary of the Treasury under James Madison; Commodore Stephen Decatur, naval hero of the Battle of Tripoli; Horace Binney (1780-1875) the most prominent Philadelphia attorney of his day and perhaps in the country. Other prominent "Philadelphia lawyers" from the parish of a slightly later generation included Joseph R. Ingersoll and Charles J. Ingersoll, both congressmen and ambassadors to Great Britain.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

___ Preliminary Determination of Individual Listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
_X_ Previously Listed in the National Register (as a contributing resource in the Society Hill Historic District).
___ Previously Determined Eligible by the National Register.
___ Designated a National Historic Landmark.
_X_ Recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey (recorded 1932).
___ Recorded by Historic American Engineering Record: #

Primary Location of Additional Data:

_X_ State Historic Preservation Office
___ Other State Agency
_X_ Federal Agency
_X_ Local Government
___ University
_X_ Other: St. Peter's Church parish records, Christ Church parish records.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Acreage of Property: 1.67 acres

UTM References: Zone Northing Easting
A 18 4421245 487420

Verbal Boundary Description:

Beginning at a point at the southwest corner of Third and Pine Streets on the outside edge of the brick wall surrounding St. Peter's church yard and proceeding in a southerly direction for approximately 164 feet on a line following the outside edge of the wall; then turning 90 degrees in a westerly direction and proceeding approximately 198 feet in a line parallel to the church yard on the north side and a parking lot on the south side; then turning 90 degrees in a southerly direction for approximately 40 feet to a point near the outside north-side wall of St. Peter's School building; then turning 90 degrees in a westerly direction and proceeding approximately 198 feet in a line parallel to the church yard on the north side and the school yard on the south side to a point on the outside edge of the churchyard wall along Fourth Street; then turning 90 degrees in a northerly direction and proceeding approximately 204 feet on a line following the outside edge of the wall to a point at the outside corner of the wall at Pine and Fourth Streets; then turning 90 degrees in an easterly direction and proceeding approximately 396 feet on a line following the outside edge of the wall to the point of commencement at Third and Pine Streets, Philadelphia.

Boundary Justification:

The boundaries were chosen to encompass St. Peter's Church building, its burying yard, bier shed and surrounding churchyard wall. These boundaries include all of the contributing resources described within this nomination which have historically been associated with St. Peters Church, but exclude St. Peter's School building, its playground and parking lot along Lombard Street, which are not being nominated.

11. FORM PREPARED BY

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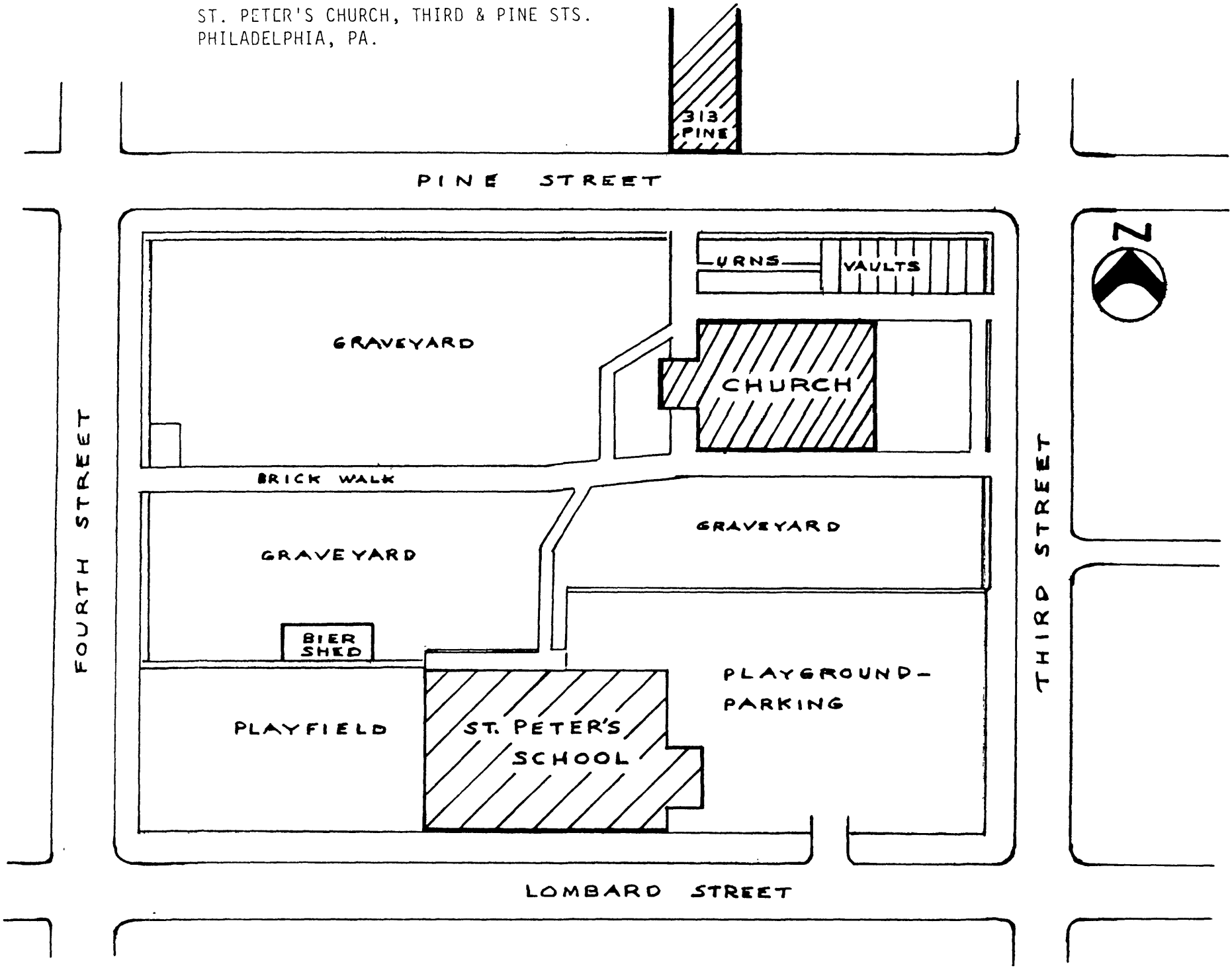
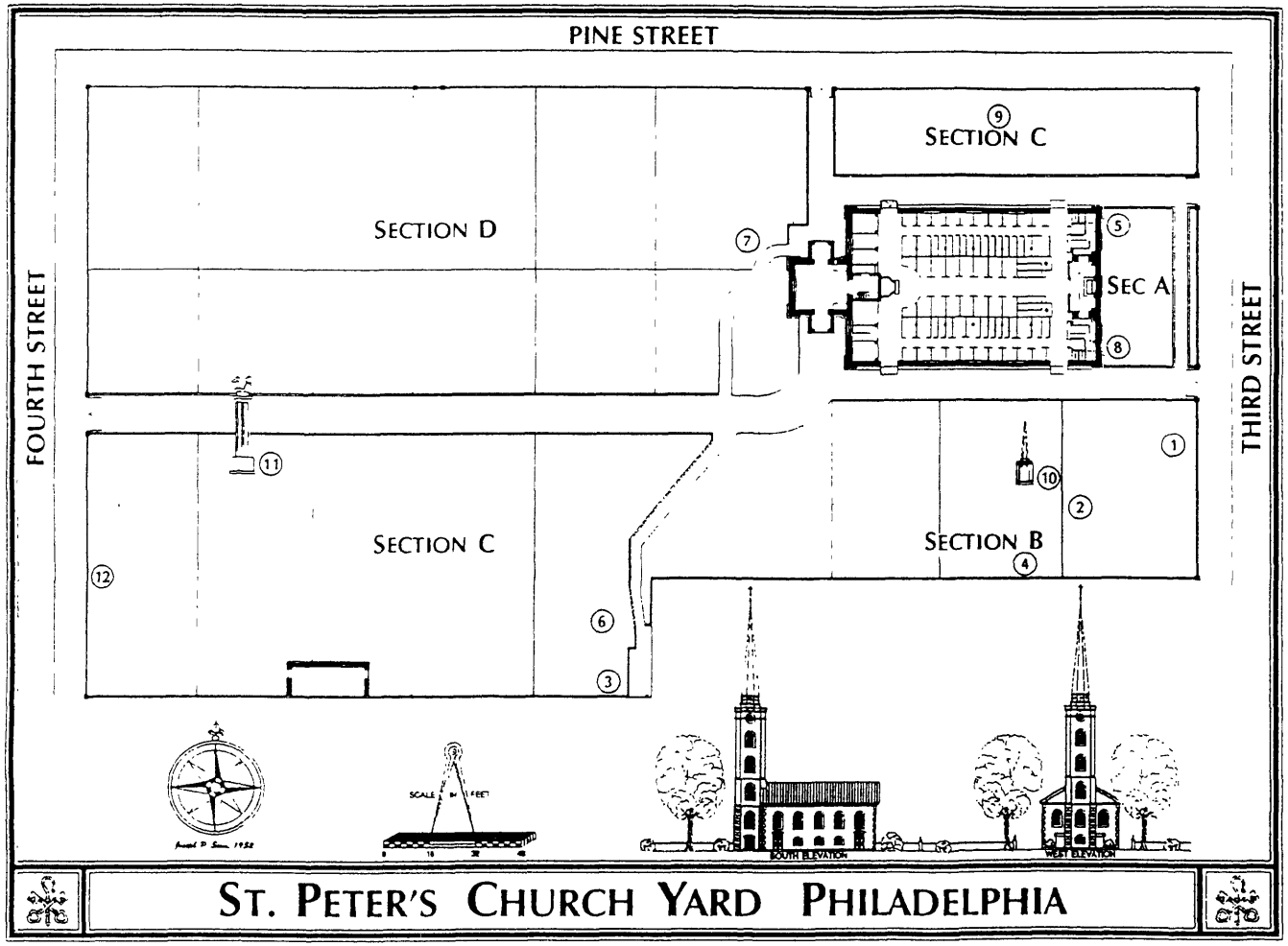
ST. PETER'S CHURCH, THIRD & PINE STS.
PHILADELPHIA, PA.





ST. PETER'S CHURCHYARD

When St. Peter's was built in 1761, the surrounding land was open country, a pond and a cow pasture. It was soon designated as a burying ground and today we can see the graves of many illustrious Americans. The lives of the people buried here, whether well-known or not, are part of Philadelpia's history.

REVOLUTIONARY WAR FIGURES

(1) John Nixon, a Lieutenant Colonel, the first person to read the Declaration of Independence publicly

(2) Benjamin Chew, Chief Justice of Pennsylvania, at whose country home, Cliveden, the battle of Germantown was centered

(3) Gustavus Conyngham, Captain of the privateer "Surprise"

Francis Gurney, a Lieutenant Colonel during the war who later became a State Senator

William Shippin, a Marine Captain who died at the Battle of Princeton

Dr. John Morgan, Physician-in-Chief of the Continental Army and founder of the University of Penn Medical School

MAYORS OF PHILADELPHIA

John Stanford, William Plumstead and Isaac Roach

NATIONAL POLITICAL FIGURES

(4) Nicholas Biddle, President of the Second Bank of the U.S.

(5) Alexander Dallas, Secretary of State, Secretary of the Treasury and Secretary of War

George Mifflin Dallas, Vice President of the U.S. Dallas, Texas was named for him.

Congressmen Joseph Reed Ingersoll, John Swanwick, Charles Biddle and General John Rutledge

ARTS FIGURES

(6) Charles Willson Peale, the famous portrait painter and his son Raphaele Peale, also a painter

Owen Morris, America's first professional comedian

(7) Benjamin Carr, conductor, composar and founder of the Musical Fund Society

Pierre Eugene duSimitiere, a Swiss-born paintar

FOUNDERS OF THE CHURCH

(8) William Bingham

John Cadwalader, John Nixon, Joseph Sims and Benjamin Wynkoop

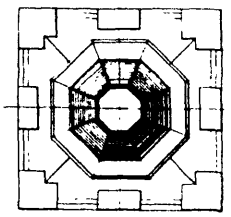
OTHERS

(9) Samuel Breck, builder of Sweetbriar Mansion

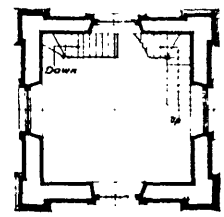
(10) Benjamin Chew Wilcocks, donor of the church bells

(11) Commodore Stephen Decatur, the Hero of the Battle of Tripoli in 1804

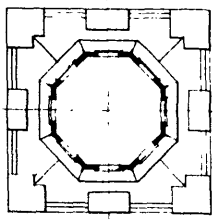
(12) The Chiefs of seven Indian tribes. They came to Philadelphia to meet with President Washington in 1793, were all stricken with yellow fever and died



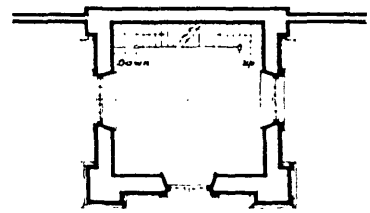
Plan D-D



Plan B-B

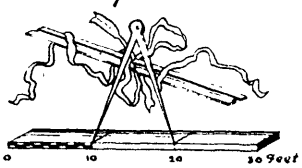


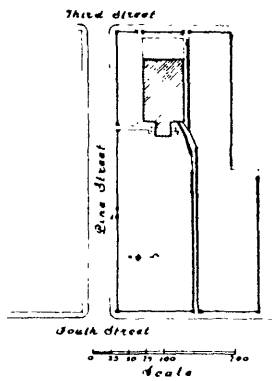
Plan C-C

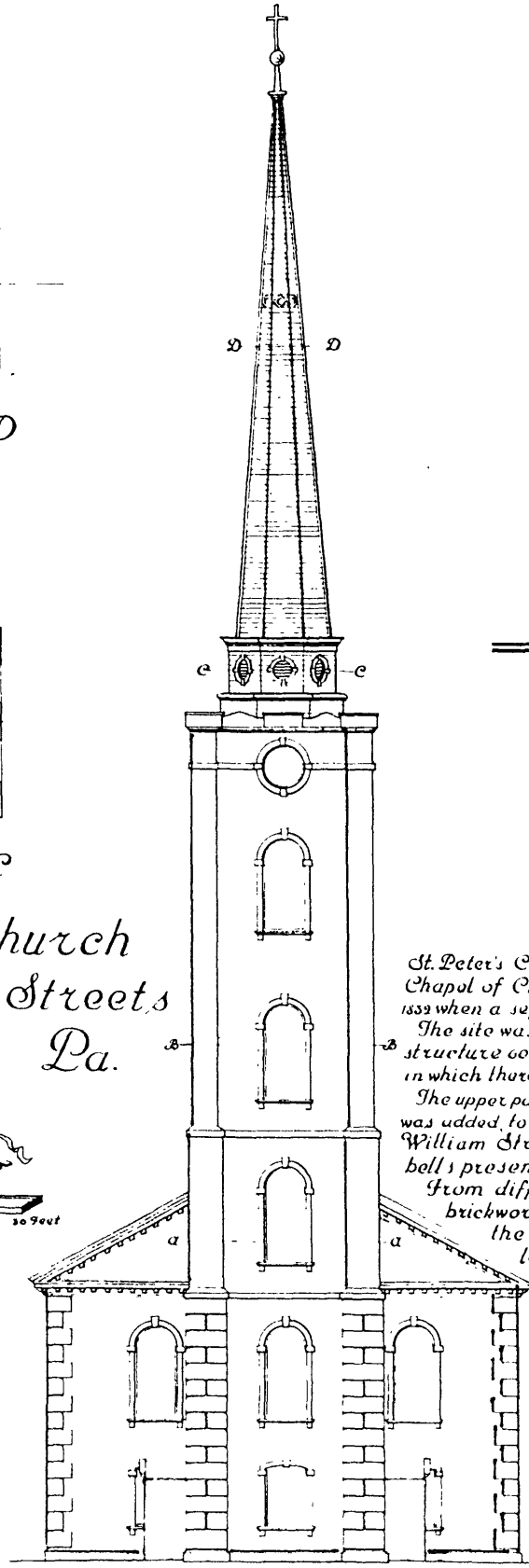


Plan A-A

St. Peter's Church
Third and Pine Streets
Philadelphia Pa.





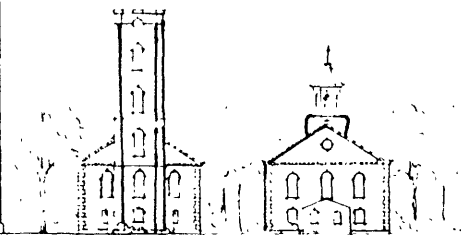


West Elevation

Description

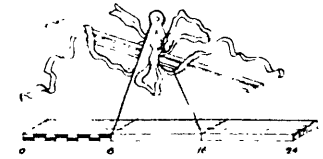
St. Peter's Church was built between 1758-1761 as a Chapel of Christ Church and maintained until 1832 when a separation from the parent body was effected. The site was granted and on it was built a brick structure 60-90' crowned at one end by a small cupola in which there hung two small bells.

The upper part of the tower with its octagonal spire was added to the original chapel in 1842 by the architect William Strickland in order to receive a chime of bells presented by some friend of the parish. From differences in color and character of the brickwork of the upper and lower portions of the tower it appears likely that the lower part of the tower is part of the original structure and that Strickland added the upper part and the spire.

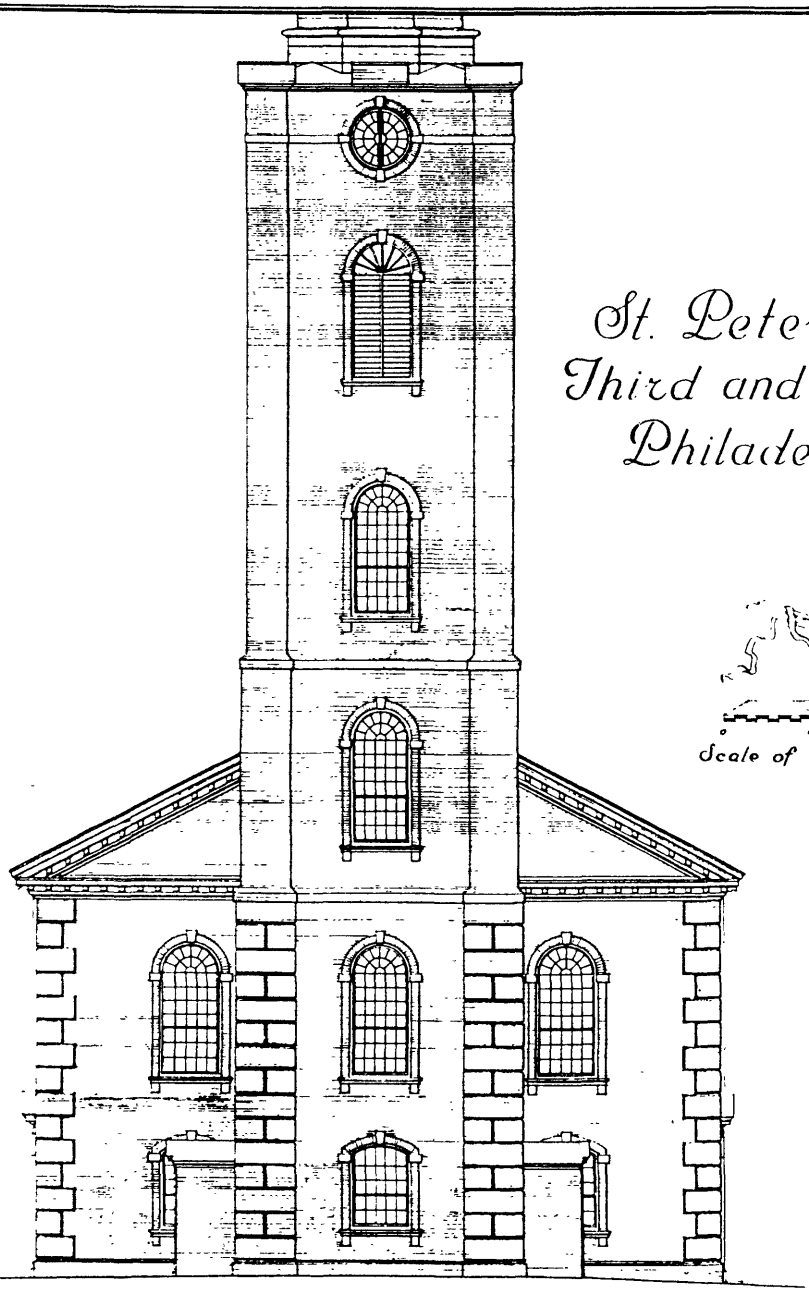


Measured & Drawn by C. L. Plumly 1932

St. Peter's Church
Third and Pine Streets
Philadelphia Pa.



Scale of Elevations in Feet.



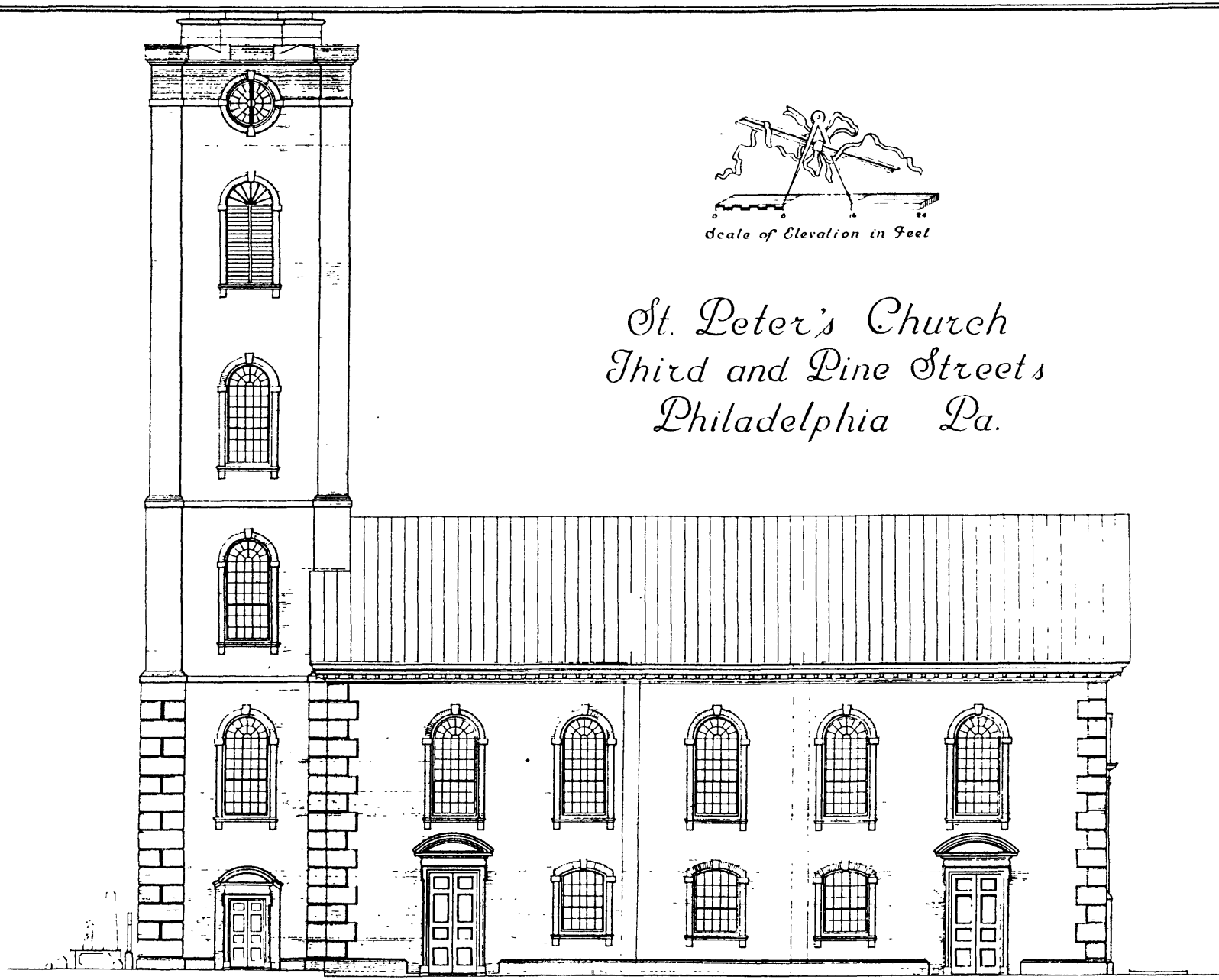
West Elevation

East Elevation

Measured & Drawn by B. Glicklar 1932

Scale of Elevation in Feet

St. Peter's Church
Third and Pine Streets
Philadelphia Pa.



South Elevation

North Elevation similar, except doors have triangular Pediments.

Measured and Drawn by B. Glicklor 1932.

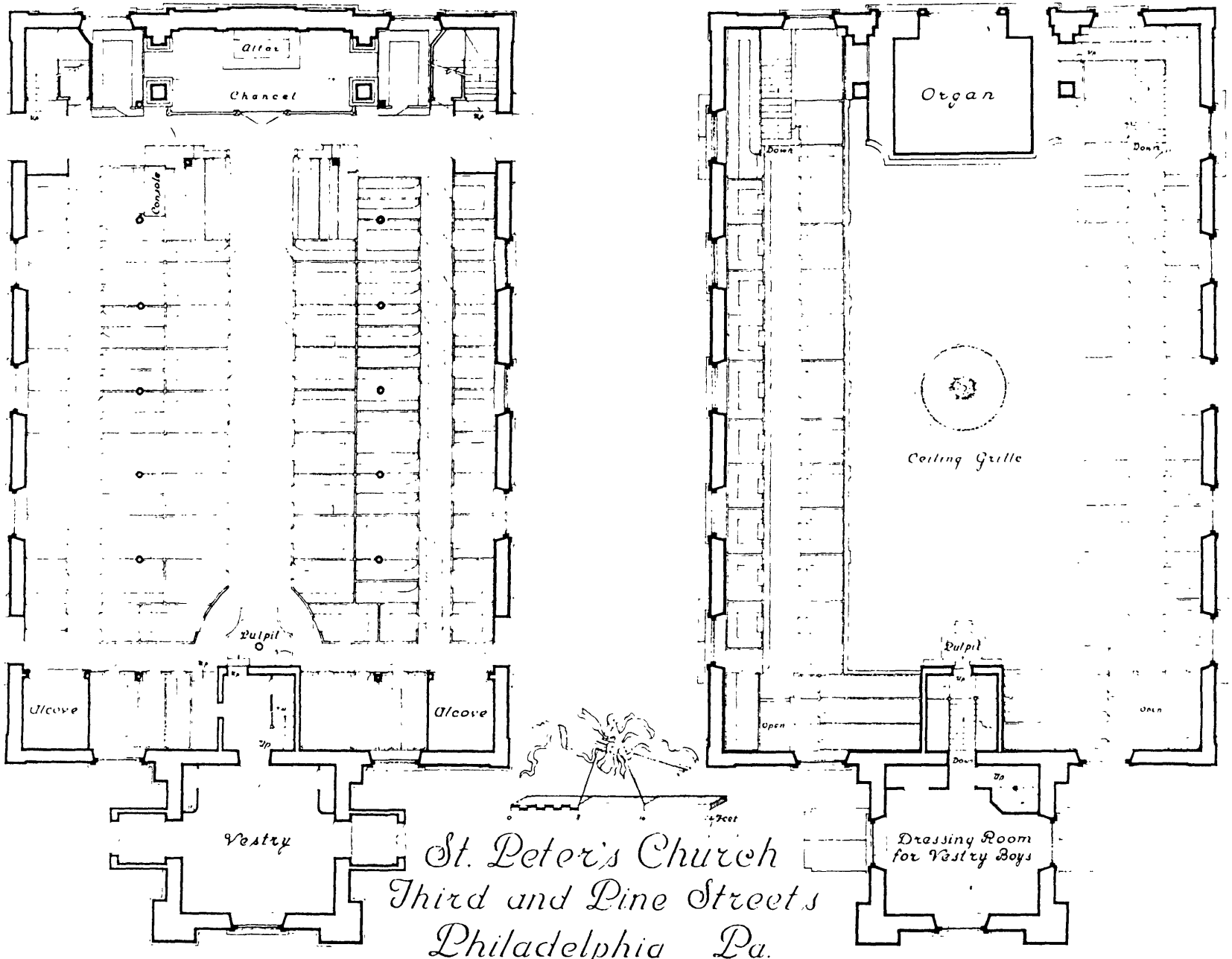
Section looking West

St. Peter's Church
Third and Pine Streets
Philadelphia Pa.

Section looking North

Measured & Drawn by T.K. Jackson 1932.

0 8 16 32
Scale of Sections in Feet



St. Peter's Church
Third and Pine Streets
Philadelphia Pa.

First Floor Plan

Gallery Plan

Measured & Drawn by H. Metzger