1. NAME OF PROPERTY

Historic Name: CHURCH OF THE ADVOCATE

Other Name/Site Number: George W. South Memorial Church of the Advocate

2. LOCATION

Street & Number: 18th and Diamond Streets Not for publication: N/A

City/Town: Philadelphia Vicinity: N/A

State: PA County: Philadelphia Code: 101 Zip Code: 19121

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	
4	1	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
4	1	Total

Number of Contributing Resources Previously Listed in the National Register: 4

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	Sub:	Religious Facility Church-related Residence
Current:	RELIGION SOCIAL	Sub:	Religious Facility Civic

7. DESCRIPTION

ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION: Late Victorian Gothic

MATERIALS:

Foundation:	Granite
Walls:	Granite (Port Deposit)
Roof:	Stainless Steel
Other:	Limestone, Sandstone (trim and decoration)

Describe Present and Historic Physical Appearance.

The Memorial Church of the Advocate, designed and built by Charles M. Burns, is a picturesquely composed complex of buildings at the northwest corner of Eighteenth and Diamond Streets, comprising a parish house, chapel, baptistery and the church proper. Designed to suggest a medieval compound, the buildings are grouped about a central cloister and are visually connected by their Gothic detail and ornament and the common materials of rock faced granite with sandstone and limestone dressings. Most strikingly, the buildings are oriented not with respect to the nominal east-west of the Philadelphia street grid, but according to true east. The centerpiece of the complex is the church, whose form is closely based on that of a thirteenth-century French Gothic basilica, with a three-aisle nave, quadripartite vaults, a semicircular apse and ambulatory, transepts, a narthex and a complete apparatus of flying buttresses. The most remarkable feature of the church is the scrupulous historic fidelity of its details.

The character of the building is massive and robust; its effect deriving not so much from a profusion of ornament as from the arrangement of a few large masses and forms. This sense of massiveness is in part the result of the granite construction.[1] On the north and south walls, the white limestone trim is restricted to the water table, buttress offsets, arch voissoirs, and the carved crockets of the window archivolts. Each side elevation is dominated by a simple transept, marked by tall lancet windows. Supporting the transept and the raised nave walls are heavy flying buttresses set between the bays of the church.

The chief feature of architectural interest on the exterior is the semi-circular apse, whose vigorously profiled corona of flying buttresses reaches the intersection of Eighteenth and Diamond Streets at a dramatic raking angle. Here the architectural sculpture is further enriched by figural crockets that terminate the archivolts of the clerestory and aisle windows. Crowning the apse, and placed directly above the altar, is a copper figure of Gabriel blowing his trumpet. (The metal fleche, or spire, of the crossing has since been lost.) The standing seam metal roof was originally copper but was replaced with terne-coated stainless steel similar to the original roof about ten years ago.

The western facade consists of a polygonal narthex which projects from the body of the church and which is surmounted by the great rose window. No tower compromises the clear expression of nave and aisles. The unfinished tower had been intended to be a free standing spire near the southeast corner of the lot. Together with the octagonal baptistery to the south, the entrance provides a picturesquely arranged group of polygonal forms. Some of the richest carving of the church is lavished on the entrance portals, particularly the figural crockets of archivolts. Here are some of the more striking grotesques of the building including one medieval figure with thick glasses, placed to the right of the portal. The red doors are handsome and are trimmed with wrought iron hinges and strapwork of florid design.

Far from being a timid or inadequate copy, the church superbly demonstrates the eclectic and synthetic approach to Ecclesiological design, in which stylistic sources from numerous periods

---

[1] In this respect Burns' church is unlike the limestone Gothic churches of northern France. This may have guided him toward using vigorous and simple prototypes for his design which corresponded well to the heavily mural nature of his granite building. In particular, the cathedral at Soissons, one of Burns' models, is very close in its austerity to the Church of the Advocate.

were used in accordance with modern functional requirements. For example, in order to mediate between the street and the angled nave of the church, the narthex projects as a three-sided polygon imitating the form of St. Ouen of Rouen, which permitted a better alignment with the street. Likewise, the towerless entrance invited a monumental treatment of the western facade, which suggested the use of a great rose window. Here, the finest prototypes were not from the thirteenth century of the nave but rather from the more exuberant fifteenth century with the florid tracery of the *rayonnant* style.

The interior of the church is virtually a single vessel of space, consisting of a central nave of four bays, which is screened from the lower flanking aisles by three pairs of slender piers. Four larger piers mark the transept crossing, which is as wide as the nave. This serves to emphasizes the breadth of the church rather than the length, a departure from French Gothic prototypes that is characteristic of Burns' subtle manipulation of his historic sources. Unlike medieval worship, with its emphasis on processional movement and on the liturgy, nineteenth-century Episcopal worship in America emphasized preaching and insisted on clear lines of sight and sound. Toward this end, Burns shortened his nave and broadened his transepts, creating a much more centralized preaching space than that of his medieval models.

At the eastern end is the semicircular apse, which consists of nine sides of a sixteen-sided polygon. A narrow ambulatory, half the width of the aisles, circumscribes the chancel. Screened from the nave by a low stone railing, the chancel is generously ornamented, including a carved Gothic reredos of limestone and wooden choir stalls. The carved lectern is especially noteworthy, presenting a complex allegory showing a cowled saint reading a book between two cowled saints wielding double-edged swords and surrounded by the lion, ox, eagle and angel of the four evangelists. In front of the chancel, at the base of the northeastern crossing pier, is the carved pulpit. It is approached by a flight of stone steps and ornamented with Gothic tracery and sculpted figures representing events or people in the history of the church, including Saint Augustine, the Venerable Bede and Bishop William White, the first bishop in the Diocese of Pennsylvania.[2] Directly beneath the chancel, and replicating its semi-circular form, is the crypt, which was intended by the donors to serve as the burying place for the bishops of Pennsylvania.

The nave elevation consists of a high arcade, a shallow triforium, and a high clerestory, all three elements drawn together by the continuous piers that divide the bays. They show a degree of sophistication and creativity rare in American Gothic architecture. While they stylistically draw on the French cathedrals of the High Gothic, the nave wall is an original creation, an unusual synthesis freely based on several French models. The distinctive rhythm of juxtaposing a trio of clerestory windows above four lancet windows in the triforium recalls the Thirteenth-century Collegiate Church at St. Quentin. Here too is the source for the central roof rib which is not French in style, surely added to counteract the rather short proportions of the nave.[3] On the other hand, the odd form of the pier, made of clustered shafts whose central rib rises without interruption from plinth to the capital at the springing of the vaults, suggests the Cathedral of

---

2 The pulpit was not installed until 1899, two years after the Church was dedicated. Designed and executed by Robert D. Kelly, who did the altar and reredos based on Burns' design, the pulpit departs from the French sources which shaped the interior.

3 Louis Grodecki, *Gothic Architecture*, Abrams, New York, 1977. pp. 133-138.

Troyes, or the Abbey Church of St. Denis, likewise works of the thirteenth century.[4] Finally, the nave vaults spring, not from high in the clerestory as is typical of the High Gothic, but at the top of the triforium, as they do in such transitional Early Gothic as Saint-Etienne of Caen (begun 1200).

Like the nave walls, the west elevation is also divided into three, although it is somewhat different in character. Above the three entrance arches is a triforium, consisting of paired openings grouped beneath pointed relieving arches, a common thirteenth century Gothic form. Above this is the great *rayonnant* window, taking up virtually the entire space of the western wall with its curvilinear tracery and flame-like arrangement of mullions.

The sculptural program of the interior is distinctive and of very high quality. This carving comprises all three of the principal kinds of Gothic sculpture, figural, floral and geometric. The figural program is exceptionally elaborate, consisting of carved busts of saints and apostles, as well as portraits of people connected with the church. Among the most significant of these are the carved capitals of the nave piers along the south side. The nave capital at the southwest pier of the crossing is devoted to a memorial to Mrs. More consisting of a portrait on a frame carried by two angels. The next pier bears the carved head of George W. South, the namesake of the church. Following a conventionalized angel, the fourth pier capital displays a bust of Richard Y. Cook, the inveterate head of building committee. While these donors and supporters of the church occupied pride of place in the nave capitals, the designers and builders are honored, unseen, in the ambulatory. There the carved figural capitals depict the architect, the contractor, the builder, the sculptor, the foreman and Rev. Silvester, the first rector.

Other carving is distributed throughout the church, generally connected to the function of the part of the building. Flanking the north entrance is a figural group, late Gothic in style, showing St. George and the dragon, alluding to the English origin of the South family. The allegory is even more explicit in the fine carving of the baptistery, which depicts images of birth and infancy. The chief work shows three heads of cherubs, peeking from behind the wings of angels, while a belt course enframes the room with a continuous frieze of cherubs with crossed wings. At the center of the room is a massive octagonal font which was designed by Field and Medary and executed by Robert D. Kelly a few years after the dedication of the church. In general, the carving displays an exceptionally high degree of realism and is drawn from Late Gothic precedent, rather than the somewhat dematerialized forms of Early Gothic sculpture. Once again Burns borrowed judiciously from the period and examples that offered the best application to the task at hand.

Cherub heads also mark the west wall, most astonishingly in a frieze of thirty-six carved heads below the triforium. Otherwise, much of the other detail consists of floral carving. In the nave piers, this is concentrated in the plinths, arcade capitals, and shaft capitals. This is thirteenth and fourteenth century in character, chiefly consisting of naturalistic leafy foliage rather than stylized forms. Between these leafy forms are also unexpected vignettes depicting grotesques and gargoyles. A frieze of foliage, Late Gothic in character, marks the base of the aisle windows. Despite the latitude given to the carvers, Burns remained closely involved in the approval of

4 *Ibid.* pp. 172-173.

carved motifs.[5] His scrupulous oversight maintained the quality and coherence of the composition.

Finally, the geometric carving of the tracery is High Gothic, with its proliferation of trefoils and cusped arches. The moldings are likewise executed with considerable undercutting and are crisply profiled, based generally on the French cathedrals of the early thirteenth century, including Amiens and Reims. The masterpiece of tracery, however, is the massive *rayonnant* window of the west elevation, where the sculptural program most vividly meets the stained glass work of Clayton & Bell.

The complete stained glass program provided by the English firm of Clayton & Bell is one of the more extraordinary features of the church. It is rare in American churches to have the stained glass provided by one designer, especially a European source. But the glazing was one of Richard Cook's highest priorities and he personally selected the firm to avoid having the glass "mar" the design that had been so carefully developed.

The great rose window that dominates the west wall represents the text "I am the Vine." Branches radiant from the figure of the Lord at the center to create a hierarchical ordering of figures from ecclesiastical history. A handsome Jesse window is located at the west end of the north aisle and memorial windows occupy the transcepts. In addition to the thirty-six figural windows, Clayton & Bell also provided thirty-one simpler windows which harmonized with the design. Cook planned to gradually replace these but never did; thus, the building retains the original program installed by Clayton & Bell in 1897.

The stained glass of the Church is typical of the firm's work of the period. Inspired by thirteenth and fourteenth century models, their work is distinguished from other work of the period that drew on more eclectic sources. Figures, executed in a strong palette of red, blue and white, are framed by canopy-work which echoes the architectural details of the church. The subtle application of silver stain creates a cool light that diffuses through the interior.[6]

Adjoining the chancel and tucked in to the reentrant angle at the northeast of the crossing is the two-story vestry. Each of its rooms are provided with a corner fireplace of carved stone. To the east of this is the sacristy which terminates to the east in a polygon. Significant features include the oak beams of the ceiling with their carved floral ornament.

The church itself is largely unchanged since its date of completion, retaining even the original furnishings and fittings which remain in use for religious services. The only significant change is the addition of a series of fourteen large scale mural paintings undertaken by two local artists,

---

5 Burns noted to Cook: "...I have lately seen in Mr. Whitman's hands a very pretty design for the proposed carving of the course beneath the windows of the aisles, while it is pretty in itself, were it carried out you would soon see it would appear almost as out of place as if it were the well-known Grecian Acanthus...." Letter, Charles M. Burns to Richard Y. Cook, 23 April 1897.

6 Background on the work of Clayton & Bell was provided by Jean M. Farnsworth who is working on an inventory of stained glass in the Philadelphia area. Peter Cormack, a scholar of English stained glass, identified George Daniels (1854-1940), the firm's principal figure draughtsman from the mid-1870s on, as the probable designer of the Advocate windows.

Richard Watson and Walter Edmunds, between 1973 and 1976. Mounted on individual panels below the windows along the aisles and in the transepts, these depict vignettes of the black experience in America, including slavery, emancipation, and scenes from the Civil Rights Movement. These are in the form of a traditional biblical cycle beginning with the Garden of Eden and ending with a vision of the Apocalypse. Executed in an intense, expressionistic style that looks back to both the Harlem Renaissance and the social realism of American art in the 1930s, the work is notable for creating a powerful visual expression of the church's contemporary religious and social mission.

The chapel consisted of a rectangular nave with a projecting chancel to the east. It has been demolished to its nave walls and to the base of the rose window. Like the rest of the complex, it is constructed of rock-faced granite from the Port Deposit quarries of Maryland, with trim of reddish Beaver County sandstone. The covered stone arcade, located on the south side of the chapel, has nine openings defined by a low wall on which stand small columns with intricate capitals that terminate in nicely proportioned Gothic arches. Most notable is the carving of the foliated capitals of the narthex arcade.

The parish house is a two-story building, now missing the gabled roof which originally provided an additional story. Also constructed of Port Deposit granite, the building is simply treated except for its southern facade. Here, the interior stair is clearly expressed in the diagonal sweep of four Gothic arches rising to a turreted corner tower--a striking example of the Gothic Revival doctrine of using the interior arrangement of space to dictate the external form. Likewise the east and west sides of the building clearly expressed its original function as a Sunday School building, the seven first-story Sunday School rooms marked by pairs of segmentally arched windows.

The parish house is the most heavily used of the buildings, housing services during the winter months when the church is not used, as well as all of the parish's other religious, community service, and office functions. It has been altered inside with contemporary partitions and finishes to serve these new uses but much of the original design can be seen.

Completing the complex are a rectory and curacy located along the northern boundary of the site. The rectory, facing east on 18th Street, is the more ornate of the two buildings with a brownstone and brick facade that continues the Gothic vocabulary of the complex through the use of pointed openings and Gothic details. The curacy, a more modest brick building which fronts on Gratz Street, is enlivened by courses of fired brick headers and rusticated brownstone trim. The siting, plan, and materials of the pair express their more secular functions and provide a transition from the stone cloister to the residential rows that extend to the north. (The curacy does not contribute to the significance of the property.)

The Church of the Advocate complex is a remarkable document of the Gothic Revival in America. Although it has lost the roof and interior of the chapel, the cloistered complex and the church itself survive with very little alteration. The church retains not only its full stained glass program by the important English firm of Clayton & Bell, but the original furnishings for the services. Its function as a community anchor and social service provider echo the work of its medieval antecedents which it resembles not only architecturally but in spirit.

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___ C X D___

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

NHL Criteria: 4
NHL Criteria Exeptions: 1

NHL Theme [1987]: XVI. Architecture
E. Gothic Revival
3. Late Gothic Revival

NHL Theme [1994]: III. Expressing Cultural Values
5. Architecture, Landscape Architecture, and Urban Design

Areas of Significance: Architecture
Art
Religion
Social History

Period(s) of Significance: 1887-1897

Significant Dates: 1887, 1891, 1894, 1897

Significant Person(s):

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: Charles Marquedent Burns, architect
Arthur Williams & Sons, contractor
Clayton & Bell, stained glass
J. Franklin Whitman & Co., carving.

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

The George W. South Memorial Church of the Advocate (1887-1897) is a landmark in the religious, social and architectural history of the United States. Built as a private bequest and intended to serve as the Episcopal Cathedral of Philadelphia, the church is a major monument in the American Gothic Revival. No other American church has so complete a repertoire of the canonical elements of Gothic Revival architecture: complete programs of architectural sculpture and stained glass, a full apparatus of flying buttresses, and an orientation of the church to true east. The socially-conscious goals of its founders, who specified that the church should be "free for all time", continued into the twentieth century as the church became a provider of extensive social services and a center of activism for the Civil Rights movement embracing the cause of both African-American and women's rights. It was the site of several nationally significant events of the movement, including the Third Annual National Conference on Black Power in 1968, the 1970 Black Panther conference to rewrite the constitution and the first ordination of women in the Episcopal Church in 1974. Not only did the church host these events, but a vast cycle of wall murals records the way stations of the Civil Rights movement. As in a medieval church, whose art served to illustrate and reinforce the liturgical message, these modern murals addressed the contemporary concerns of 1960s and 70s congregations. Together, the medieval revival presentation of the building and the modern murals document the critical social role played by America's inner city churches from the late nineteenth century to the present.

The Church of the Advocate owes it existence to the greatest single act of religious philanthropy in the history of Philadelphia. Built as a memorial to the merchant and civic leader George W. South, the church was the centerpiece of a sprawling complex including a chapel, parish house, baptistery and rectory. The church quickly became famous and already by 1889, when only a fragment had been built, it was honored in *King's Handbook of Episcopalian Churches*, a register of the most prominent Episcopal buildings in the country, as one of the country's "noblest of Church-extension projects."[7]

George W. South (1799-1884) was a prominent Philadelphia businessman who prospered as a commission agent and whose clients included such luminaries as President Andrew Jackson.[8] After his death in 1884, his widow, Rachel A. South, and daughter, Harriet Louisa More, determined to erect and endow a church in his memory. They confided this wish to their financial advisor, Richard Y. Cook, who was executor of South's will and manager of the substantial estate. Although South was a Presbyterian, the Episcopal church--more socially prominent in Philadelphia--was made the beneficiary of the bequest.[9] Eager to commemorate

---

7 George Wolfe Shinn, *King's Handbook of Notable Episcopal Churches in the United States*, Moses King, Boston, 1889. pp. 233-234.

8 George E. Thomas, "Charles M. Burns, AIA," *Drawing Toward Building: Philadelphia Architectural Graphics*, pp. 157-158. South also was prominent in Whig politics and had served as treasurer of Philadelphia County before the city was consolidated in 1854. His fortune, estimated at over $1 million at his death, was amassed as a financier who founded the Burlington Bank in New Jersey and backed the development of numerous rail and transport lines including the Camden & Amboy Railroad and the Delaware and Raritan Canal. "Death of a Former County Treasurer," *Public Ledger and Transcript*, 3 September 1884; "Local News Paragraphed," *Philadelphia Record*, 6 September 1884; "Mrs. H.L. South More," *Philadelphia Record*, 29 December 1906, p. 6.

9 Parish tradition, cited in the Church of the Advocate assessment report prepared for the Episcopal Diocese Stewardship

their late husband and father, but anxious to build where there was the greatest need for a church, the two women determined that the rapidly developing districts of North Philadelphia were most in need of missionary activity. Here was then unfolding the great post-Civil War boom of industrialization which made Philadelphia--particularly its northern factory neighborhoods--one of the centers of American industry. The group selected the site of an old mansion in the heart of this neighborhood, purchasing a lot measuring 173 by 222 feet at the northeast corner of Diamond and Eighteenth Streets. In November 1886, the property was conveyed to a Board of Trustees[10] and the Diamond Street Mission was formally established. The following winter they planned the building campaign with their architect, Charles Burns,[11] and Cook who had been appointed head of the building committee. On February 7, 1887 the Board signed a contract with Burns, and committed themselves to what would be a building program of nearly fifteen years.

Charles M. Burns, Jr. (1838-1922), architect, painter and teacher, was the chief designer of Episcopalian churches in Philadelphia from the close of the Civil War to the turn of the century.[12] Burns' work represented the flowering of the Gothic Revival in Philadelphia, a nationally important center of American architectural thought in the nineteenth century. The son of a Philadelphia merchant, Burns studied at the University of Pennsylvania from 1856 to 1859 and was the first architect to emerge from that school. His architectural training was at the hands of John Gries, a prominent Philadelphia architect, and F.C. Withers, the well-known Gothic revivalist and designer of the Jefferson Market Courthouse in New York. Burns served in the Union Navy during the Civil War, acting as paymaster to Admiral David Farragut and seeing action at the battle of Mobile Bay. After the war, he worked extensively for the Pennsylvania Railroad, but by 1868 he had begun the practice of ecclesiastical design that was the mainstay of his career for the next half century. Burns' practice extended throughout the country, designing such major structures as the Church of the Redeemer, Bryn Mawr (1877-1881); Christ Church Cathedral, Salina, Kansas (1882-1906); Calvary Church, Sioux Falls, South Dakota; and well

---

Planning Project (Milner, 1992), claims that the church originally was built as a Presbyterian facility. In this account, the church design was found to be incompatible with Presbyterian doctrine and was then offered to↳and accepted by↳the Episcopal diocese. Although South was Presbyterian, the correspondence and accounts of the trustees indicate that the church was conceived as Protestant Episcopal from the outset. The original trustees, including South's wife, were all communicants of the Episcopal church. It is likely that the church South built at Eddington, Bucks County, where he lived from 1839 to 1852, was the Episcopal Church Christ chapel erected there in 1845. Richard Cook, executor of the estate and head of the building committee, was a member of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the Incarnation, whose rector, Rev. Joseph Newlin, assisted in establishing the Church of the Advocate. "George W. South Memorial Church of the Advocate", Dedication pamphlet, Philadelphia, 1897. Also, Archives of the George W. South Memorial Church of the Advocate.

10 The Trustees consisted of Mrs. South, Mrs. More, Richard Cook, George W. South, nephew of Mr. South, and the Bishop of the Diocese. When Mrs. South died in 1888, Cook's son, Gustavus Wynne Cook, took her place. Archives of the George W. South Memorial Church of the Advocate, Philadelphia.

11 The congregation was established in late 1886 and until the completion of the chapel worshipped in a large house on the site. J. Wesley Twelves, *A History of the Diocese of Pennsylvania of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the U.S.A., 1784-1968*, Diocese of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, 1969, p. 207.

12 Biographical material on Burns includes Sandra Tatman and Roger Moss, "Charles Marquedant Burns," *Biographical Dictionary of Philadelphia Architects: 1700-1930*, G.K. Hall & Co., Boston, 1986; and George E. Thomas, "Charles M. Burns, AIA," *Drawing Toward Building: Philadelphia Architectural Graphics*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 1986). Many sources incorrectly cite his middle name as Marquedant. Burns spelled it Marquedent, which is used here.

over 50 other churches and chapels.[13] At the same time, Burns was an influential art educator. Beginning in 1879, he taught Theory and Practice in Freehand Drawing and Design at the Pennsylvania Museum and School of Industrial Art, and he simultaneously served as an instructor in drawing at Haverford College (1881-1885). His most famous pupil was the famous illustrator Joseph Pennell, who also published a small book about Burns.[14]

Burns' selection as architect of the Church of the Advocate reflects the extraordinary architectural sophistication of the head of its building committee, Richard Cook. A successful financier and close family friend, Cook had been appointed by George South to manage his estate for his wife and daughter.[15] When the women determined to build the memorial church, they turned to Cook to handle the finances. While Mrs. South and her daughter provided the funding, Cook set the ecclesiastical program and increasingly became the primary maker of architectural decisions. The parish's first rector, Rev. W.W. Silvester, was recruited by Cook with a letter that defined the doctrine and liturgy of the new parish. Silvester had been chosen for his doctrinal leanings[16] and Cook lured him away from a competing offer by a congregation in Wilmington, Delaware by promising "a parish of neither low nor Ritualistic Churchmanship... firmly grounded in opposition to Ritualistic teachings and practices... kept in the Broad road between the two extremes of Churchmanship...."[17] Cook's views on church ritual and dogma were matched by an equally developed understanding of Gothic Revival architecture as the means to express ecclesiastical values. His taste and ideas had been deepened by study trips to Europe which now formed the basis for his selection of an appropriate architect and style for the Advocate Church. It was Cook's aim to build not only a new parish church for the city, but a cathedral church where the bishops of the Diocese of Pennsylvania might be suitably interred[18]. Burns, who had recently

---

13 Tatman and Moss, pp. 119-121. Also John Charles Manton, *A Splendid Legacy*, St. Timothy's, Roxborough, 1859-1984, Privately published, Philadelphia, 1984, and obituaries including "Charles Marquedent Burns," *Evening Public Ledger*, 24 July 1922 and "Funeral of Charles M. Burns," *Public Ledger*, 25 July 1922.

14 Joseph Pennell, *Charles Marquedant Burns, Artist and Teacher*, Privately printed, Philadelphia, 1922).

15 Richard Y. Cook (1845-1917) had started out as manager of a hosiery business that became one of the largest importers of European hosiery and notions in the country. By the 1880s, Cook was associated with an array of financial ventures including the Pennsylvania Warehousing and Safe Deposit Company, the Market Street National Bank, the Tradesmen's National Bank and the Lehigh and New England Railroad Company. In 1890, he became President of the Guarantee Trust and Safe Deposit Company, one of the largest and most prominent financial institutions in the city. "Richard Y. Cook, Banker, is Dead," *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*, 8 December 1917, "Richard Y. Cook, Financier, Dead," *Public Ledger and Transcript*, 9 December 1917.

16 The Rev. William Wallace Silvester had studied at the Philadelphia Divinity School and the Cambridge Theological School, of which he was the first graduate in 1868. Prior to his recruitment by Cook, he had been the canon in charge of Davenport Cathedral in Iowa from 1878 to 1884 and worked with the Rev. Montgomery Schuyler to establish the cathedral church in St. Louis, Missouri. He served as rector of the Church of the Advocate until his death in 1901. "George W. South Memorial Church of the Advocate," Dedication pamphlet, Philadelphia, 1897 and Twelves, *A History of the Diocese of Pennsylvania*, pp. 207-208.

17 Letter, Richard Y. Cook to W.W. Silvester, February 9, 1887. Archives of the George W. South Memorial Church of the Advocate.

18 Cook's ambition to establish a cathedral church was never realized but his purpose was expressed in the elaborate mortuary vault that was constructed under the chancel to receive the bodies of the bishops of the Diocese of Pennsylvania. A fund was also provided, the income of which was devoted to the removal of remains and care of the vault. The South family, the Cooks and Rev. Silvester, the first rector of the parish, are buried in the crypt beneath the

designed Cook's country house and was completing substantial alterations to St. Stephen's Church in Wilkes Barre for the Diocese of Central Pennsylvania, was the logical choice for this ambitious undertaking.[19]

Burns was hired on February 7, 1887, and immediately set about making plans for the chapel and parish house. These buildings were placed along the northeastern and northwestern ends of the site, respectively, leaving the greater portion of the lot open for the church proper, which would be built after the congregation was established. The cornerstone for the chapel was laid on May 30, 1887; it was consecrated exactly one year later. Constructed of rock-faced granite from the Port Deposit quarries of Maryland, the chapel was trimmed with reddish sandstone from Beaver County with the characteristic hammer-dressed surface so popular in late nineteenth-century American architecture. In form, the chapel was a simple rectangular volume under a steep gabled roof with a simple projection to the east for the chancel; the interior was a single unpartitioned space capped by an open hammer-beam wood truss, carried on stone corbels. Apart from the rose window and arcaded narthex, the chapel was simple in treatment, demonstrating its subordination to the main church.[20] The chapel was demolished to the outer walls in the early 1980s.

The parish house was completed in 1887. This was a three-story building under a high-pitched gable roof with a turreted stair tower to the southeast. The first floor comprised seven Sunday School classrooms, divided by moveable partitions so that the rooms might be opened up for common lessons, with a total capacity of six hundred. The second story was occupied by a single large meeting hall, seating five hundred, while the upper story was designated as a gym.[21] A fire on February 22, 1895 caused considerable damage to the building and it was rebuilt the following year with improvements for the growing parish.

During this period, Burns also completed a house for the rector to the north of the chapel. This building was not integrated into the cloistered ensemble of church, chapel and parish house, but forms the end of a rowhouse block that runs north. Burns differentiated this domestic structure

---

crossing. "George W. South Memorial Church of the Advocate," Dedication pamphlet. *Meryweather*, "Church of the Advocate, Sermon in Stone."

19 A movement to create a cathedral system within the Episcopal Church had been developing in the United States since the 1870s. Although it was gaining widespread support, it remained a subject of controversy within the church. Shinn noted in his 1889 handbook: "it is not the purpose of this book to argue the question, but simply to give illustrations." The handbook lists fourteen cathedrals and pro cathedrals, the majority of which were in the west and mid-west. The most extensive movement was in New York where cathedrals had been erected in Buffalo, Albany and Long Island and the competition to design the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City was underway. The designs for the majority of these churches were based on English Gothic precedents, the dominant style of the Ecclesiological movement in America.

20 The stained glass, now lost, was manufactured by H. Stellwagen after designs by St. Thouron, of Philadelphia. Edward J.N. Stent Co. of New York did the interior painting and wall decorations. The company, a prominent decorator of church interiors, had done the polychrome interior for St. Mark's in Mauch Chunk, Pennsylvania by Richard Upjohn; the interior of St. Luke's in Germantown, Philadelphia for Henry Congdon; and had recently completed a rich scheme for St. Stephen's, Wilkes Barre for Burns. Archives of the George W. South Memorial Church of the Advocate. Also, *Shinn*, pp. 118, 162, 198.

21 *Shinn*, pp. 233-234.

from the main religious buildings by the use of red brick and sandstone which connects it visually to the color and style of the neighboring rowhouses. However, the pointed arches over the door and windows and its conical turret form a transition from the brick rowhouses to the church complex.

For the next three years, Burns worked on his plans for the church building, not completing them until June 1890 (although he had announced earlier that "the hint for the design is the Cathedral of Amiens.")[22] The design was a vast essay in the French Gothic, a style little used in America where the English Gothic Revival was the principal source of inspiration. This reflected Burns' conviction that the French Gothic surpassed the English in its quality of detail and refinement of moldings. Just as Burns lavished years on the design, now years were to be lavished on the construction. Guided by Cook, who had become the arbiter of architectural style for the South women, the church was built in a series of discrete annual campaigns. This slow and deliberate pace of work permitted an unusually high degree of refinement and study of detail in the design. Rarely are architects in a position to devote most of their creative energy to a single design for any prolonged period. But the scale of the Advocate and Burns' own determination that it be his masterpiece ensured an almost single-minded concentration on this one project. Burns repeatedly exhibited his drawings of the church, in particular at the prestigious annual exhibitions of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts.[23]

Contracts were awarded for the tower foundations in June of 1890; the following year foundations for the church itself were laid.[24] Another year passed before construction of the superstructure began; $68,130 was allocated in May 1892 to raise the church to the height of the aisle roof but the work was not finished until 1894. Financial considerations contributed to the delays in progress and ultimately resulted in several significant changes from the original conception. The slowdown coincided with a national economic downturn in 1893 that surely affected the funds invested for the building. In his annual speech at the choir dinner, Cook noted "much criticism has reached me... impatient of delay, dubious as to final results, and boldly critical of financial management."[25] The detached tower that Burns had proposed for the corner of the site was first postponed and then abandoned in 1894, although its foundations were laid. Most serious was the decision to postpone the vaulting in stone of the ceiling. In 1896 it was elected to build temporary vaults of wood and plaster, which would be replaced with stone vaults when circumstances permitted.[26] In the end, this reduction in the purity of the design caused a rift between Cook and Burns.

---

22 *Shinn*, p. 234.

23 *Sixty-second Annual Exhibition of the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts Exhibition* (1892), no. 486, p. 59; *Sixty-third Annual Exhibition of the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts Exhibition* (1893/94), no. 66, p. 55. Of these drawings only the interior perspective, dated 1890, is known to survive. The others were presumably returned to the architect upon his dismissal and lost when the architect's papers were dispersed upon his death. The surviving drawing is on permanent loan at the Athenaeum of Philadelphia. See George E. Thomas, "George W. South Memorial Church of the Advocate," *Drawing Toward Building: Philadelphia Architectural Graphics* University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 1986), pp. 157-159.

24 *Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide* (June 11 and 25, 1890; February 4, 1891).

25 *The Advocate*, Volume 4, number 2 (March 1895), p. 7.

26 Privately Burns conceded that it would "be many years before any heavier ceiling be built." Letter, Charles M. Burns to

The contractor for all phases of the construction was the prominent Philadelphia building firm of Arthur H. Williams and Son.[27] The masonry they used was of the highest order, maintaining the vigorously rusticated Port Deposit granite of the original buildings, and replacing the sandstone of the first phase which had visibly deteriorated in the intervening years with Indiana limestone. The effect was to make the interior of the building more monochrome in character, emphasizing its French rather than English Gothic sources.

Another Philadelphia firm, J. Franklin Whitman & Co., was contracted to execute Burns' sophisticated sculptural program. It followed the doctrine of the great English author, John Ruskin, whose 1849 book, *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, argued that Gothic sculpture must not be an affair of copyism, where the workman slavishly copied designs made by an artist. Instead, the workman must participate and be encouraged to invent his own designs, drawn from both imagination and the studied arrangement of forms found in nature. Never on such a large scale did American sculptors follow this Ruskinian doctrine as in the Church of the Advocate.[28] Burns provided the workmen with general guidelines for the sculpture, but insisted that the "individual workmen should be encouraged to develop their own ideals of the artist's design."[29] This doctrine was established to combat one of the most pernicious effects of the Industrial Revolution, the replacement of guild-oriented handwork by rote work in factories.[30] As such, it demonstrates the same concern for social philanthropy which led the Souths to locate their church in the middle of the new industrial neighborhood.

The consistently high quality of the sculpture reflects the distinctive and unusual work method established by Burns. He avoided the conventional approach of having sculptors work directly from full-sized drawings prepared by the architect. Instead, in order better to gauge the effect of the sculpture, the workmen first made plaster models at full scale which would be judged and corrected before the stone version was carved. Such a process of study is quite rare in America and helps to account for the consistency of the sculpture, its quality, and the smooth integration of sculpture and architecture. Perhaps it also represents a peculiarity of Philadelphia whose sculpture-laden City Hall was likewise studied in plaster models.[31]

Richard Y. Cook, November 19, 1896. Archives of the George S. South Memorial Church of the Advocate.

27 Arthur H. Williams & Sons built, among many other commissions, the Church of the Holy Communion at Broad and Arch Streets and St. James Church at Twenty-second and Walnut Streets in Philadelphia; St. John's, Camden, New Jersey; Christ Church, Riverton, New Jersey; and Christ Church, Germantown. See letter, Arthur H. Williams to Charles M. Burns, March 29, 1887. Archives of the George S. South Memorial Church of the Advocate.

28 Only in the twentieth century, after the Gothic Revival had passed, was the idea revived. This was in the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York, which is again under construction and whose sculptors are encouraged to develop their own ornamental forms.

29 W. South Memorial Church of the Advocate, Dedication pamphlet, pp. 7-8. Also, Archives of the George W. South Memorial Church of the Advocate.

30 Chief promoter of Ruskin's idea was the social reformer William Morris in England. Ultimately this led to the Arts and Crafts movement of the turn of the century, which eventually lost much of the intensity of its social reform component. Burns' citation of Ruskinian theory strikingly illustrates his fidelity to the older reformist doctrine.

31 See Michael J. Lewis, "Silent, Weird, Beautiful: Philadelphia's City Hall," *Nineteenth Century*, Volume 11, nos. 3 &4, (1992). pp. 13-21.

The reredos and altar were also of exceptionally high quality. These were designed by Burns and carved by the sculptor Robert D. Kelly, who designed and carved the pulpit after Burns' dismissal from the project. The altar and reredos were conceived as a memorial to honor Mrs. South and funds were raised from the congregation to pay for the work. To help raise the money, Cook paid for photographic reproductions of Burns' drawings of the church interior and the altar which were then sold at $.75 a copy for the benefit of the memorial fund. The total amount to be raised for the altar was $10,000, less than 2% of the total cost of the complex.

The last great component of the design to be completed was the superb stained glass windows by the studio of Clayton & Bell.[32] In this, perhaps more than any other part of the design, Cook played a direct role. In the summer of 1896, he traveled to England and had detailed proposals drawn by two of the leading designers of the period, Clayton & Bell in London and John Hardman & Co. in Birmingham.[33] While Burns may have suggested the two companies, it is clear that Cook had made his own deliberate study. Both firms provided Cook with proposals for a complete stained glass program that included watercolor studies of their designs.[34] Cook commissioned Clayton & Bell to complete the work and arranged for someone from the studio to visit the building (which was now being roofed over) and measure the window openings. From the fall of 1896 through the spring of the following year, the firm made and shipped over sixty-five windows, thirty-four figural and thirty-one temporary windows. It was intended that the simpler glass of the temporary windows would be gradually replaced by commissioned windows, but this was not to be. Instead, the Church of the Advocate provides a rare and highly significant example of a complete stained glass program by this very important English firm.[35]

The substitution of plaster for stone in the church ceiling eventually led to Burns' dismissal from the project. More and more committed to making the church a test case of Ecclesiological orthodoxy, Burns bristled against the compromises forced by the tightened budget. By November 1896, he and Cook were engaged in a struggle for control over the contractors' work

---

32 John Richard Clayton (1827-1913) and Alfred Bell (1832-95) formed their partnership in 1855. Their firm became one of the largest stained glass studios in London during the Victorian period and one of the most prolific working in the Gothic Revival style. The firm continued under John Clement Bell (1860-1944), and is still in existence. Unfortunately the firm's pre-World War II archives were destroyed in bombings during the 1940s. Information on Clayton & Bell and the stained glass windows at the Church of the Advocate was provided by Jean M. Farnsworth.

33 John Hardman & Co. was one of the most important English stained glass studios established in the nineteenth century and an early proponent of the Gothic Revival. John Hardman (1811-1867) established his studio in Birmingham in 1845, with the preeminent architect A.W.N. Pugin serving as his chief designer until 1852. John Hardman's nephew, John Hardman Powell (1828-1895), then took over the studio. The firm is still in existence. Information compiled by Jean M. Farnsworth. See also Martin Harrison, *Victorian Stained Glass*, London, 1980.

34 The water color drawings and plan that John Hardman prepared are located in the Archives of the Church. Only one drawing from Clayton & Bell's successful proposal was located, but it is of significance because all the pre-1940 records of the firm were destroyed.

35 There are many churches in the region which have Clayton & Bell windows, including St. Mark's Episcopal Church (a National Historic Landmark); St. Mary's, Hamilton Village; and St. James the Less (a National Historic Landmark). However, these churches have only a few examples of the firm's work interspersed with windows from other studios. The only other complete Clayton & Bell program is in the Cathedral of the Incarnation on Long Island. Information from the stained glass survey by Jean M. Farnsworth.

and he expressed his dismay when Cook omitted the step of modelling all sculpture in plaster before carving in stone. With most of the church already complete, Cook gambled that they could do without the services of the uncompromising architect. In April 1897, Burns was discharged from the project.[36] Insult followed injury when Burns' portrait, which had been carved over the eastern entrance, was chipped away.

The final work was supervised by Cook himself. As he had promised the congregation in 1895, Cook held the dedication ceremony and officially opened the church on October 11, 1897. Although largely complete, there were still interior decorations to be finished. With Burns no longer acting as a sounding board to the layman, Cook now needed professional advice on artistic matters. He began to lean on the prominent Philadelphia art connoisseur F.S. Darley who helped to revise the design for the stone pulpit that Kelly submitted in 1898.[37] Work proceeded until the turn of the century, consisting chiefly in the completion of the sculptural program and the construction of the roof. Not until 1900, after the church was completed and free of debt, was it admitted into the Pennsylvania Convention of the Episcopal Church.[38]

By choosing for their church a neighborhood with a middle or working class population, the Souths demonstrated that community mission work would be as important as architectural splendor. North Philadelphia was then at the height of its industrial and residential growth but Episcopal congregations were not well-represented, Philadelphia's working class populations being largely Methodist, Baptist, and Catholic. The site selection reflected the Souths' intention to provide missionary service to this new section of the city, an area that they thought would grow to become a significant city center. Even prior to construction, mission work in the form of religious services, Sunday school and community hall functions were begun in the house that originally stood on the site. As the complex went up, community services expanded as did missionary activities which grew to include support of missions in other city neighborhoods as well as missionary work with Native American populations in the westen states. In this respect, its site choice parallels the earlier construction of Bethany Presbyterian Church at 22nd and Bainbridge Streets, the mission church erected by John Wanamaker to serve his store employees who lived south of the city. However, the Advocate was by far the most lavish and architecturally sophisticated church in Philadelphia that was not built to serve a socially elite neighborhood.

However, this mixing of social philanthropy with architectural ambition taxed the limits of the $50,000 endowment given for the upkeep of the property. Without income from pew rents, the church faced an operating deficit every year which was filled quietly by private donations from Richard Cook until his death in 1917. During the next three decades, this dilemma was borne out, as the church was affected by drastic social and economic changes in the surrounding

---

36 Burns' final settlement with the Trustees called for his drawings to be returned to him. Letters between Cook's lawyer and Burns indicate that this arrangement was carried out. As a consequence, the only original drawings that remain at the church are early blueprints of the chapel. The interior perspective of the church is on loan to the Athenaeum of Philadelphia.

37 Letter, F.S. Darley to Richard Y. Cook, March 14, 1898. Archives of the George W. South Memorial Church of the Advocate. Burns was also Darley's architect of choice, altering the latter's mansion at 510 South Broad Street in 1899.

38 *Twelves*, pp. 207-208.

neighborhood. Shortly after the turn of the century, the church reached its peak of membership, with over 1500 communicants and more than 600 attending Sunday School.[39] Already by the 1910s, the original population of the area was changing, particularly as East European Jewish immigrants moved in, escaping from the older immigrant ghettos along the Delaware River. Church leaders now began to worry about declining membership.[40] A second change to the neighborhood occurred in the 1930s and 1940s as a consequence of black immigration from the south. With relatively few black Episcopalians, membership fell to 330 in 1969, roughly a fifth of its previous high.[41]

The Church found a new role for itself however during the rise of the Civil Rights movement in the late 1950s and 60s. Beginning with the ministry of the Rev. Paul M. Washington in 1962, the church has become an important center of civil rights activism and a pioneer in providing social services to its severely disadvantaged community. Rev. Washington enlarged the missionary aims of the church's founders to help people who "were hopeless and discouraged because they lacked power, political power." As he and his ministry became nationally known as advocates for civil rights and minority empowerment, the Church became a leader in the movement, serving as the site of numerous landmark events including the Third Annual National Conference on Black Power in 1968 and the notorious Revolutionary Peoples Constitutional Conference held by the Black Panthers in 1970.[42] In 1974, the Church held the first ordination of eleven women in the Episcopal Church. While the ceremony prompted controversy because it took place two years before the national church voted to make ordination of women canonically possible, the Church is considered the first site to ordain women as priests in the country.[43]

The Church also has become a leader in providing social services to its community. Since the 1960s, the church has operated a program that feeds, clothes and councils hundreds of people on a daily basis. The Advocate Community Development Corporation, founded in 1968, has successfully rehabilitated and repopulated a substantial part of the area within its community. It is one of the largest and most successful programs of its type.

The Church of the Advocate is one of the principal monuments of the Gothic Revival in United States, and the only major one of its period to be based systematically on French sources. It is the best representative of its particular building type: the cathedral type built in accordance with

---

39 *Twelves*, pp. 207-208.

40 A series of articles in the monthly newsletter of the church record an on-going debate over the role of the church in the changing neighborhood. There was some consideration given to whether its mission could be accomplished with the loss of the congregation as Episcopalians left the area and were replaced by people of other faiths. *The Advocate*, 1912-1913. Archives of the George W. South Memorial Church of the Advocate.

41 *Twelves*, p. 208. Sunday School membership fell even further, only 81 by 1969.

42 See clipping binder, "Father Washington's News," Archives of the George W. South Memorial Church of the Advocate.

43 The church is routinely cited in secondary sources on the history of the church and women's rights. See Catherine M. Prelinger, ed. *Episcopal Women: Gender, Spirituality, and Commitment in an American Mainline Denomination*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1992. The church was also featured in numerous news stories published in 1984, on the tenth anniversary of the ceremony. Clipping file, Archives of the George W. South Memorial Church of the Advocate.

English Gothic ecclesiastical theory.[44] Its intact and complete program of stained glass by one of the leading English firms of the period is a rare and significant monument in the decorative arts. Finally, its lavish program of allegorical sculpture is an exceptional example of the Ruskinian doctrine of involving workmen in the design process the striking counterpart in architectural terms to the socially progressive program of the church.

Typically, American architects during the nineteenth century used English forms in accordance with English ecclesiological theory, and the vast majority of Gothic Revival Churches in America are reflections of English buildings. Throughout the Gothic Revival, the principal theoretical ideas came from England, in particular through the writings of such men as John Ruskin, A.W.N. Pugin, and the editors of the English journal, the *Ecclesiologist.* Chief of these ideas were the fidelity to medieval sources, the honest use of materials, and a doctrine of irregular planning that expressed function rather than formal symmetry. America's architectural Anglophilia was reinforced through multiple factors, including the presence of many English emigre architects, profound connections between the English and American religious communities and the great influence of English journals.

Burns was to his death one of America's most loyal adherents to English Ecclesiological doctrine, including the notion of the honest use of materials and the idea that workmen should be involved in the process of design. His great achievement was to take the theoretical ideas of the English Ecclesiological movement and to apply them to French motifs. This was no random juxtaposition, but the outcome of a rational and highly intellectual assessment of architectural history.

Burns judged that English architecture excelled in the small parish church, with its rambling character and intimate scale. But he felt that the large church type reached its perfection in France. Here, he saw the apogee of refinement in the treatment of the nave wall, the highest development of the plan, and the most expressive form of moldings.[45] In a letter to Cook, who basically shared his views during the time they were at odds over the ceiling construction, he expressed his aims for the building "...the best French standards have been our guides. That any should undertake such work... with only a limited knowledge of a few English ceilings, and without knowing that the ceiling of almost all French cathedrals are constructed on finer and

---

44 One interesting counterpart bears noting. The Cathedral of the Incarnation in Garden City, New York (1877-1883), parallels the history of the Church of the Advocate in many ways. Built as a memorial to Alexander T. Stewart by his wife, the church was conceived as an Episcopal Cathedral with an ambitious philanthropic educational mission. The plan for the building also was executed by a legal advisor and long-time friend of the family who managed Mrs. Stewart's financial affairs. The design, however, was not carried out with the same excruciating attention to a theoretical program or to the details of construction. A pamphlet with a brief history of the church records that when the advisor saw the scale of the plans he drew a line across the aisle and transepts, substantially reducing the size without concern for the consequences in terms of the design. The English Perpendicular style of the design is more typical of cathedral churches of the period, and it is not distinguished by the quality of the interior carving and details as is the Church of the Advocate. The Cathedral of the Incarnation, however, does have a complete program of stained glass by Clayton & Bell, and is perhaps the only other complete example in the country. *Godfrey*, "The Cathedral Church of the Incarnation."

45 In this Burns differed from his contemporaries who built cathedral churches based on English models. The greatest of these Anglophile cathedrals are the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., and Robert W. Gibson's Albany Cathedral in New York.

quite different lines and principles, it strikes me will only make our work a matter of reproach from those who know, and you, of all your Board, are building for those who know..."[46] Thus his complex assembles French masses but groups them according to English asymmetry; likewise it uses flying buttresses of the French High Gothic in order to proclaim the English principle of truth in materials.

This knowing marriage of English ideas and French forms has no parallel in American architecture nor does it have close counterparts in England or France. Instead, it shows the peculiar freedom of nineteenth-century American architectural practice to extrapolate from the range of European prototypes, simultaneously, and in a single building.

That Burns was the only Gothic Revivalist to attempt such a synthesis was the result of historical accident. When the Ecclesiological movement was at its height, American Episcopalians did not build cathedrals. The great cathedrals of the mid-nineteenth century were not Protestant but Catholic, such as St. Patrick's in New York.[47] By the late 1870s, when the Episcopalian Church began seriously to build cathedrals, Ecclesiological theory was in decline in America. The victory of a Byzantine design in the competition for the New York Cathedral of St. John the Divine ended the phase of dogmatic ecclesiology. The size of the South fortune, and Cook's programmatic and architectural sophistication, gave Burns the unique chance to build a cathedral-sized church in the French Gothic.

Burns' church is unique too for its geographic orientation. Gothic Revival doctrine held that churches should be oriented to the east, in medieval fashion, as an image of resurrection. This was done where possible, although churches invariably deferred to the street line. In American cities, churches generally aligned according to the street which ran closest to the east. In Philadelphia, this meant the deviation of about 17 degrees from true east. The Church of the Advocate, alone of the great American Gothic churches, departs from the conventional real estate grid. This is rare in America where real estate considerations usually take precedence over custom and tradition.

The Church of the Advocate represents the mature flowering of the Gothic Revival in America, the culmination of ideas nearly fifty years old. Its architectural importance lies in the perfection and refinement of a type. As a crowning monument of Ecclesiological design in America, documenting the extent of this international movement, the building is of national importance. The philanthropic legacy of its founders, who provided one of the largest bequests for the erection of a church to remain free in perpetuity, is continued in the ministry and social activism of the Church today which, for the past thirty years, has been at the forefront of national movements in civil and human rights.

---

46 Letter, Charles M. Burns to Richard Y. Cook, April 23, 1897. Archives of the George W. South Memorial Church of the Advocate.

47 These buildings were far more eclectic than ecclesiological doctrine demanded and they often drew from the forms of Catholic Germany rather than Protestant England. See William Pierson, *American Buildings and their Architects*, Doubleday, New York, 1978.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

MANUSCRIPTS

Archives of the George W. South Memorial Church of the Advocate, Philadelphia.

Charles M. Burns, clippings file, Athenaeum of Philadelphia.

Charles M. Burns, clippings file, Free Library of Philadelphia.

Diary of Henry A. Sims, private collection, Ottawa, Canada.

George W. South Memorial Church of the Advocate, file, Philadelphia Historical Commission.

REFERENCES

Addison, James Thayer, *The Episcopal Church in the United States, 1789-1931*, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1951.

Albright, Raymond W., *A History of the Protestant Episcopal Church*, The MacMillan Company, New York, 1964.

The Advocate (monthly newsletter of the Church of the Advocate), Philadelphia, 1892 ff.

Bach, Penny Balkin. *Public Art in Philadelphia.* Temple University Press, Philadelphia, 1992.

Clark, Kenneth, *The Gothic Revival: An Essay in the History of Taste*, Humanities Press, New York, 1970.

Competitive Designs for the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City, Reprint. Rev. James Parks Morton, introduction. Da Capo Press, New York, 1981.

"George W. South Memorial Church of the Advocate," Dedication pamphlet, Philadelphia, 1897.

"George W. South Memorial Church of the Advocate," Handbook, n.d. (after 1922), photocopy from the files of the Philadelphia Historical Commission.

Godfrey, Rev. Canon William C., "The Cathedral of the Incarnation, Diocese of Long Island, Garden City, New York," Kenneth R. Sanderson, Inc., New York, 1971.

Grodecki, Louis, *Gothic Architecture*, Abrams, New York, 1977.

Hersey, George L., *High Victorian Gothic: A Study in Associationism*, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1972.

Jantzen, Hans, *High Gothic: The Classic Cathedrals of Chartres, Reims, Amiens*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 1984.

Jordy, William H. and Ralph Coe, eds., *American Architecture and Other Writings by Montgomery Schuyler*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1961.

Kowsky, Francis R., *The Architecture of Frederick Clarke Withers and the Progress of the Gothic Revival in America after 1850*, Wesleyan University Press, Middletown, Connecticut, 1980.

Leonard, John, ed., *Who's Who in Pennsylvania*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1908), p. 121.

Lewis, Michael J., "Silent, Weird, Beautiful: Philadelphia's City Hall," *Nineteenth Century*, Vol. 11, no. 3 & 4, (1992), pp. 13-21.

Loth, Calder and Julius Trousdale Sadler, Jr., *The Only Proper Style: Gothic Architecture in America*, New York Graphic Society, Boston, 1975.

Manton, John Charles, *A Splendid Legacy, St. Timothy's, Roxborough, 1859-1984*, Philadelphia: privately printed, 1984.

Meryweather, Rev. Thomas A., "Church of the Advocate, Sermon in Stone," The Cathedral Age, Christmas 1949.

Milner, John, Associates, Inc., "An Assessment of the Church of the Advocate," Stewardship Planning Project, Religious Properties in the Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania, 1992.

Mullin, Robert Bruce, *Episcopal Vision/American Reality: High Church Theology and Social Thought in Evangelical America*, Yale University Press, New Haven, Ct, 1986.

Pennell, Joseph, *Charles M. Burns, Artist and Teacher*. Philadelphia: privately printed, 1922.

Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Sixty-second Annual Exhibition (1892), no. 486, p. 59.

Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Sixty-third Annual Exhibition (1893/94), no. 66, p. 55.

Philadelphia Evening Bulletin, 2 September 1884, Death notice, "George W. South."

_____, 4 September 1884, "Funeral of Mr. George W. South," p. 3.

_____, 30 May 1892, "Corner-Stone Laid, That of the New George W. South Memorial Church of the Advocate, at Eighteenth and Diamond Streets," p. 2.

_____, 28 December 1906, "Death of Mrs. Harriet More," p. 1.

_____, 31 December 1906, "Mrs. Harriet More Buried."

_____, 8 December 1917, "Richard Y. Cook, Banker, Is Dead." p. 1.

_____, 22 February 1918, "Art Club Suspends Burns." p. 1.

Philadelphia Inquirer, 31 May 1892, "Another New Church." p. 5.

_____, 4 July 1897, p. 18

_____, 22 July 1922, "Charles M. Burns."

Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide (14 February 1887; 11 June 1890; 25 June 1890; 4 February 1891; 13 January 1892; 23 March 1892; 12 February 1895; 1 May 1895)

Philadelphia Record, 12 October 1892, "South Church Opened." p. 10.

_____, 29 December 1906, "Mrs. H. L. South More, Founder of the Memorial Church of the Advocate." p. 8.

_____, 9 December 1917, "Banker Richard Y. Cook Dead at Country Home." p. 2.

Pierson, William H., Jr., *American Buildings and their Architects: Technology and the Picturesque, The Corporate and the Early Gothic Styles*, Doubleday & Co., Garden City, New York, 1978.

Prelinger, Catherine M., ed., *Episcopal Women: Gender, Spirituality, and Commitment in an American Mainline Denomination*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1992.

Prichard, Robert W., *A History of the Episcopal Church*, Morehouse Publishing, Harrisburg, 1991.

Public Ledger and Transcript, 3 September 1884, "Death of a Former County Treasurer." p. 4.

_____, 12 February 1887, "Plans for the New Memorial Church of the Advocate." p. 1.

_____, 31 May 1892, "George W. South Memorial, The Corner-Stone of the Advocate Laid." p. 2.

_____, 12 October 1897, "A Fortunate Parish." p. 3.

_____, 9 December 1917, "Richard Y. Cook, Financier, Dead." p. 3.

Shinn, Rev. George Wolfe, *King's Handbook of Notable Episcopal Churches in the United States*, Moses King, Boston, 1889.

Stanton, Phoebe, *The Gothic Revival and American Church Architecture*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1968.

Summer, David E., *The Episcopal Church's History: 1945-1985*, Morehouse-Barlow, Wilton, Connecticut, 1987.

Tatman, Sandra L. and Roger W. Moss, "Charles Marquedant Burns," *Biographical Dictionary of Philadelphia Architects: 1700-1930*, G. K. Hall & Co., Boston, 1985.

Thomas, George E., "Charles M. Burns, AIA," *Drawing Toward Building: Philadelphia Architectural Graphics*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 1986, p. 157.

_____, "George W. South Memorial Church of the Advocate," *Drawing Toward Building: Philadelphia Architectural Graphics*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 1986, pp. 157-159.

_____, "George W. South Memorial Church of the Advocate," National Register of Historic Places Inventory -- Nomination Form, 1979.

Twelves, J. Wesley, "Church of the Advocate, Philadelphia," *A History of the Diocese of Pennsylvania of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the U.S.A.*, Diocese of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, 1969.

Webster, Richard, *Philadelphia Preserved*, Temple University Press, Philadelphia, 1976.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary Location of Additional Data:

___ State Historic Preservation Office
___ Other State Agency
___ Federal Agency
___ Local Government
___ University
_X_ Other (Specify Repository): Archives of the George W. South Memorial Church of the Advocate

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Acreage of Property: 1 (one) acre

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing
A 18 486035 4425980

Verbal Boundary Description:

From the northwest corner of 18th and Diamond Streets, north 242 feet along the west curb of 18th Street, then west 172'10" to Gratz Street, then south along the east curb of Gratz Street to the intersection with the north curb of Diamond Street, then east along the north curb of Diamond Street 172'10" to 18th Street and the point of beginning.

Boundary Justification:

The boundary encompasses the original property boundaries of the church complex and includes the entire building complex that has historically been part of the Church of the Advocate and that maintain historic integrity.

11. FORM PREPARED BY

Name/Title: Susan Glassman, Director
Wagner Free Institute of Science
1700 West Montgomery Avenue
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19121
Telephone: 215/763-6529
Date: November 30, 1994

Edited by: Carolyn Pitts, Architectural Historian
National Historic Landmarks Survey
National Park Service
P.O. Box 37127, Suite 310
Washington, DC 20013-7127
Telephone: 202/343-8166