

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
(NATIONAL HISTORIC INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM
LANDMARKS)

(Type all entries complete applicable sections)

STATE: Virginia
COUNTY: Richmond (Ind. City)
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:
St. John's Episcopal Church

AND/OR HISTORIC:
St. John's Episcopal Church (New Church) (Church on Richmond Hill)

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
East Broad Street at 25th Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Richmond

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:
third (3rd)

STATE: **Virginia** CODE: **51** COUNTY: **Richmond (city)** CODE: **760**

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Congregation of St. John's Episcopal Church

STREET AND NUMBER:
East Broad Street at 25th Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Richmond

STATE:
Virginia

CODE:
51

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
City Hall

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:
Richmond

STATE:
Virginia

CODE:
51

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Historic American Buildings Survey Inventory

DATE OF SURVEY: **1957** Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Library of Congress/Annex

STREET AND NUMBER:
Prints and Photographs Division

CITY OR TOWN:
Washington

STATE:
D.C.

CODE:
II

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Virginia
COUNTY: Richmond
ENTRY NUMBER
DATE
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7. DESCRIPTION

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

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The church in which Patrick Henry made his stirring speech was built in 1740-41 on land donated by Col. William Byrd and remained the only Episcopal church in Richmond until 1814. It was originally constructed as a simple rectangular building, 25 feet wide and 40 feet long, with the long axis running east and west. The church was enlarged in 1772 by the addition of a nave on the north side of the building, and the construction of a belfry over the west end at the same time. This was the church which existed at the time of Henry's speech.

St. John's Episcopal Church has been altered several times since 1772. In 1880 the nave of the church was increased in size and the interior was rearranged. Soon after, the original belfry was taken down and replaced by a tower and bell at the north end of the church. A vestry room was added to the south end in 1880, giving the church the cross shape it now has. A hurricane blew down the church spire in 1896 and the replacement was similar to the original spire standing at the time of Henry's speech. It is not an historic reconstruction. The exterior is in need of paint, but appears to be sound structurally.

BOUNDARIES

St. John's Episcopal church and St. John's cemetery share a 2-acre plot of land in Richmond which is bounded by the inside curblines of broad street to the northeast, north 25th street to the southeast, grace street to the southwest and north 24th street to the northwest. The boundaries are described by the red line on the accompanying sketch map A, titled "St. John's Episcopal Church" and dated October 31, 1974.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian; | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 19th Century | |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 3/23/1775

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Phi- | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | losophy | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Human- | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | itarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

In St. Johns' Church, on March 23, 1775, Patrick Henry delivered the stirring "Liberty or Death" speech which sounded a call to arms for his fellow Virginians. The speech swept the Virginia Convention which met there from a tone of conciliation to the adoption of resolutions putting the colony into a state of defense. The church has been altered several times since 1772.

St. John's is one of Richmond's most noted historic sites. Despite a lack of adequate parking space, visitation averages about 60,000 persons a year. Its cemetery contains the graves of George Wythe and Elizabeth Arnold Poe, mother of the famous poet and author.

HISTORY

In St. John's Church on March 23, 1775, Patrick Henry delivered his stirring "Liberty or Death" speech which sounded a clarion call for his fellow Virginians. There, in the third great speech of his career, the great orator attained a measure of fame which none of his active services gained for him.

Henry had been in the public eye for a dozen years, since his brilliant defense of colonial self-government in the "Parson's Cause" of 1763. Two years later, his "Virginia Resolutions" respecting the infamous Stamp Act stirred the colonies and brought Henry to recognized leadership of the radical party in Virginia. His second great speech, made in the Capitol at Williamsburg, ended with the words: "Caesar had his Brutus, Charles the First his Cromwell, and George the Third--" he continued, as cries of "treason" filled the chamber--"George the Third may profit by their example. If this be treason, make the most of it".

During the succeeding decade of increased colonial agitation, Henry continued to be a strong proponent of radical action. He was a delegate to the First Continental Congress in 1774, and his conduct gave evidence of heavy nationalist leanings.

Back in Virginia, the royal governor, Lord Dunmore, called a meeting of the General Assembly for late in November, but had it prorogued when he learned of the p...

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Aldon, John R., The South in the Revolution, 1763-1789, (vol. III, A History of the South La. University Press, 1957)

Moore, Joseph S., History of Henrico Parish and Old St. John's Church, Richmond, Virginia, 1611-1904, Richmond, 1904.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES	
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		UTM	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds			
NW	° ' "	° ' "			
NE	° ' "	° ' "			
SE	° ' "	° ' "			
SW	° ' "	° ' "			

18.286180.4156370

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 2

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Stephen Lissandrello, Historian, Landmarks Review Project

ORGANIZATION: **Historic Sites Survey, National Park Service** DATE: **2/11/75**

STREET AND NUMBER:
1100 L. Street, N.W.

CITY OR TOWN: **Washington** STATE: **D.C.** CODE: **11**

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name (NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

Title _____

Date (NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

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

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS) **Landmark** *Jan 20, 1975*
 Designated _____ date

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS) **Boundary** *7-2-75*
 Date _____ date

ATTEST: _____ date
 Chief of State Arch. Surveys

Box _____ date
 Keeper of The _____ *7/3/75*
 Director O.N.P. _____ date

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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DATE ENTERED

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

(NATIONAL HISTORIC
LANDMARKS)

CONTINUATION SHEET

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ITEM NUMBER 8

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learned of the participation of some Virginia leaders in "The Association" to boycott British goods. Members of the prorogued assembly arranged to meet in Richmond on March 20, 1775. They chose as their meeting place the largest building then standing, the "New Church" or the "Church on Richmond Hill," as it was variously known at the time.

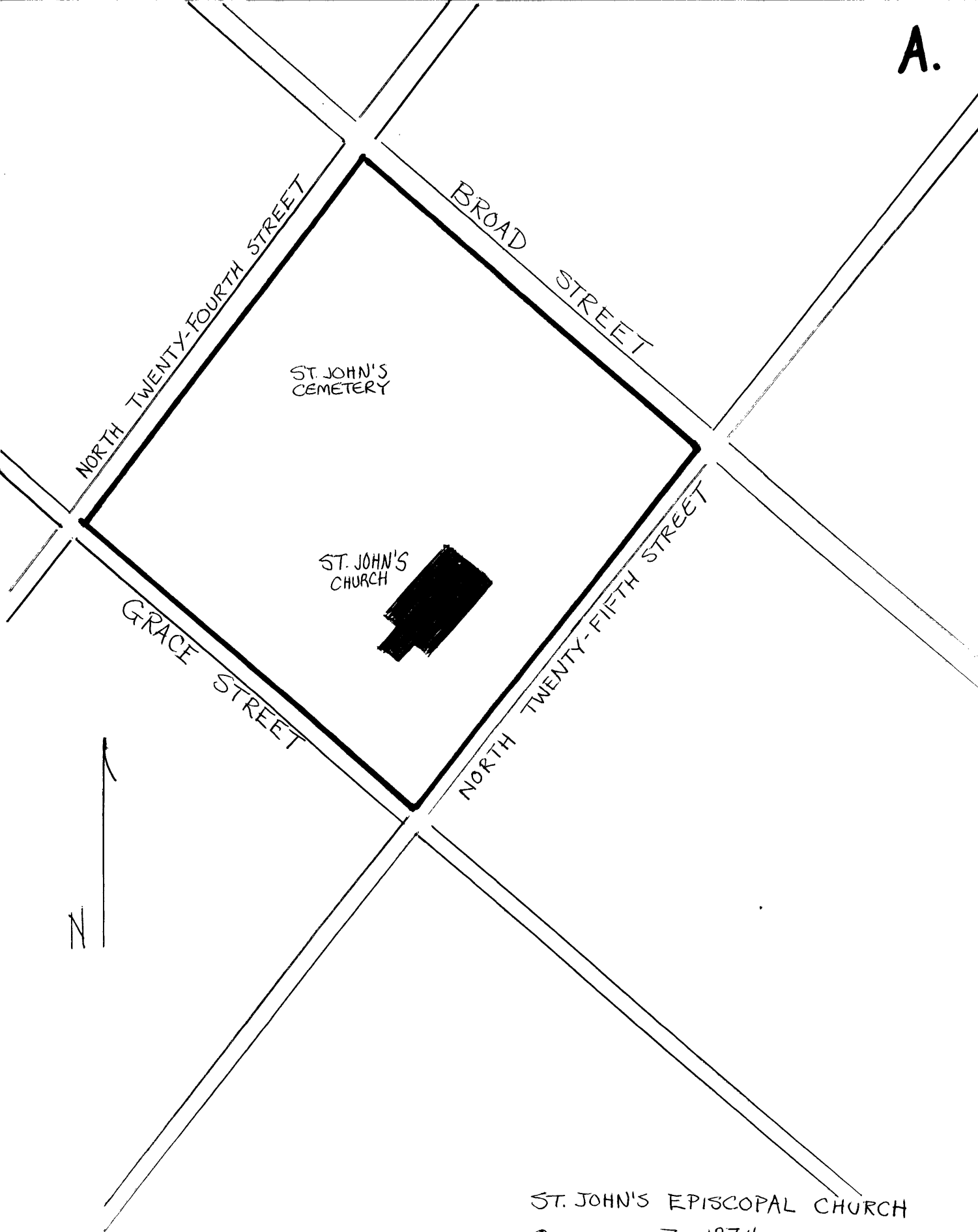
When the convention assembled, its membership included most of the leaders in Virginia politics. The approximately 120 men attending included George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, George Wythe, Benjamin Harrison, Edmund Pendleton, Robert Carter Nicholas, Carter Braxton, George Mason, Richard Henry Lee, Thomas Nelson, Jr., Richard Bland, Andrew Lewis, and Patrick Henry.

The tone of the convention was at first conciliatory, but soon Henry offered a series of resolutions to put the colony into a state of defense. Henry's resolutions were defended by Washington, Jefferson, and Richard Henry Lee, though the conservative leaders—including Pendleton, Bland, Nicholas, and Harrison—attacked them as rash and provocative. On March 23, Henry rose to defend the resolutions in a short speech which closed with these words:

"There is a retreat but in submission and slavery! Our chains are forged. Their clanking may be heard on the plains of Boston! The war is inevitable—and let it come!! I repeat it, sir, let it come!!! It is vain, sir, to extenuate the matter. Gentlemen may cry peace, peace, but there is no peace. The war is actually begun! The next gale that sweeps from the north will bring to our ears the clash of resounding arms! Our brethren are already in the field! Why stand we here idle? What is it that gentlemen wish? What would they have? Is life so dear or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God--I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty or give me death!"

Henry's speech swept the convention to his point of view, and his resolutions were passed. News of the fighting at Lexington and Concord arrived soon after, and the colonies were at war.

A.



ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
OCTOBER 31, 1974
(NOT TO SCALE)