

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

For NPS use only

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

received

date entered

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

1. Name

historic Christ Episcopal Church

and or common

2. Location

street & number 120 East Edenton Street not for publication

city, town Raleigh vicinity of

state North Carolina code 32 county Wake code 92

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<u> </u> district	<u> </u> public	<u>X</u> occupied	<u> </u> agriculture
<u>X</u> building(s)	<u>X</u> private	<u> </u> unoccupied	<u> </u> commercial
<u> </u> structure	<u> </u> both	<u> </u> work in progress	<u> </u> educational
<u> </u> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<u> </u> entertainment
<u> </u> object	<u> </u> in process	<u> </u> yes: restricted	<u> </u> government
	<u> </u> being considered	<u> </u> yes: unrestricted	<u> </u> industrial
		<u> </u> no	<u> </u> military
			<u> </u> museum
			<u> </u> park
			<u> </u> private residence
			<u>X</u> religious
			<u> </u> scientific
			<u> </u> transportation
			<u> </u> other:

4. Owner of Property

name The Vestry of Christ Church Parish

street & number 120 East Edenton Street

city, town Raleigh vicinity of state North Carolina

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Wake County Courthouse

street & number 310 Fayetteville Street

city, town Raleigh state North Carolina

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

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

date 1934, 1940 X federal state county local

depository for survey records Library of Congress

city, town Washington state DC

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Exterior: The walls of Christ Church exhibit the preponderance of solid over void and minimal use of surface decoration characteristic of the "Early English" Gothic style in which Richard Upjohn designed the building. It is constructed of rough local granite of varied color. All openings are of dressed stone. The red tile roof offers a pleasant contrast to the somber walls. The west front on Wilmington Street features a broad painted-arch portal with simple board and batten double doors. Above it is a narrow lancet window flanked by two shorter ones. The gable roof is terminated by a cruciform finial. At the corners there are angled buttresses rising in two stages with sloping shoulders. The nave to the crossing is three bays long. The bays are divided by perpendicular buttresses of similar design to those at the corners. There is a broad lancet window with deep splayed reveals in each bay, except the one at the western end of the north side. This bay features the side door from the vestibule to the three-bay arcade connecting the church to the free standing bell tower. This tower has corner buttresses; those on the north side are angled, those on the south are parallel projections of the corners. The tower is divided into three sections by simple masonry bands. The first level has a pair of small glazed lancets, the second a larger one, and the third an even larger louvered lancet. The tower is crowned by a solid stone broach spire terminated with a fanciful weathervane. The exterior of the transepts and the sanctuary are treated in the same way as the nave. Christ Church measures approximately 95 feet from east to west and 68 feet from north to south.

Interior: The plan of Christ Church is a latin cross with a rectangular sacristy in the northeast angle. The first bay of the nave has been partitioned to form an entrance vestibule. In the northwest corner is a circular stair to the gallery above. The nave has double aisles and the seating extends to the center of the crossing. There are galleries over the west end of the nave and over each transept. The gallery of the north transept serves as a choir loft. All of the galleries have solid wooden balustrades decorated with blind arcading. The walls have a high dado composed of vertical beaded sheathing. Above the dado the plaster walls are marked by very delicate rustication. The deep splay of the window reveals complements the handsome stained glass. The fine altar and reredos of Caen limestone were installed in 1915. It is in curvilinear "Decorated" style and features three ogee arches with fleur-de-lis finials and tracery composed of intersecting trefoils. Each arch is flanked by crosses alternating with small fleurs-de-lis. One of the most outstanding features of Christ Church is its superb hammer-beam roof. The truss system is composed of the hammer-beam supported by a diagonal brace with a curved soffit rising from the wall plane. This in turn supports the vertical strut which reaches the intersection of the principal rafter and the lower purlin. From the ends of the hammer-beams rise curved braces which form large pointed arches, are tangent to the upper purlin, and end in vertical struts which support the ridge.

8. Significance

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

Specific dates 1848, 1854, 1859, 1927
Builder/Architect Richard Upjohn (1802–1878) and Hobart Upjohn (1876–1949)

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Christ Church is one of the first Gothic Revival churches in the Southern states and it set the style in that region for a long time to come. Begun in 1846, it was recognized as a pioneering effort by the minister of the church when he wrote to Richard Upjohn in 1847: "I am heartily rejoiced we have got this far and I hope the erection of our church will be the means of introducing a new style of church architecture in the south."²

The Raleigh church is one of those English "parish" churches that was recommended by the Cambridge Camden Society. These modest asymmetrical buildings with a steeply pitched roof like St. Mary's in Burlington, New Jersey (1846) were derived from rural English models, sometimes quite specific structures. In January, 1846, Bishop L. S. Ives of Raleigh asked Upjohn to design "a neat Gothic church" to seat some 600 persons and suggested that he adapt the plan of St. Mary's Burlington, which Upjohn had recently designed after St. John's, Shottesbrooke in Berkshire, England - St. Mary's is the first church in America to be specifically copied from an English medieval building. Bishop Ives was born in Connecticut, and had been rector of churches in Pennsylvania and New York before coming to North Carolina in 1831, which is why he was completely familiar with Upjohn's work.

Christ Church Parish was formed August 1, 1821, under the guidance of Reverend John Phillips, Rector of Calvary Parish, Tarboro, North Carolina. Mary Summer Blount, widow of General Thomas Blount bequeathed her estate in trust to build the Raleigh church in 1829. The large frame church was constructed on land purchased from William Boylan. The builder of the frame building was Captain William Nichols, who had remodelled the first State House. This first church was built during the tenure of the Right-Reverend John Stark Ravenscroft, the first rector of the Parish and the first Bishop of North Carolina. The frame building served until 1853, but in 1848 the cornerstone was laid for the present church. It was consecrated and free of debt in 1854. A church history states:

Richard Upjohn, architect of Trinity Church in New York, was invited to design the new building in 1843 (while in Raleigh, Upjohn was also asked to design the chapel at St. Mary's Junior College). The construction was carried out by three Raleigh stonemasons, James Puttick, Robert Findlater, and James Martindale. The cornerstone was laid by Bishop Levi S. Ives on December 28, 1848; the building was completed in 1852. In January of 1853, the church was consecrated by Bishop Thomas Atkinson. The granite used for the exterior walls was taken from a nearby quarry. The bell tower was

9. Major Bibliographical References

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name Raleigh West

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

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3	9	6	1	9	8	5
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Zone Easting Northing

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Zone Easting Northing

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Verbal boundary description and justification

Parcel 1, Block 80, Wake County
Zone Map A-33

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Carolyn Pitts, Historian

organization National Park Service, History Division date _____

street & number 1100 L Street, NW telephone (202) 343-8166

city or town Washington state DC 20013-7127

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature _____

title _____ date _____

For NPS use only

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

date _____

Keeper of the National Register

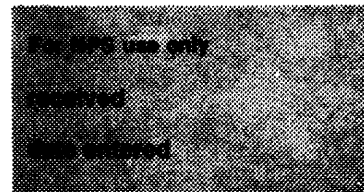
Attest:

date _____

Chief of Registration

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

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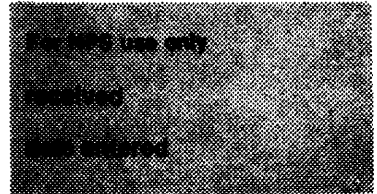
The 1927 parish house by Upjohn's grandson, Hobart B. Upjohn, blends very well in scale and texture with the older building. The gable motif was retained, but large windows with shallow segmental arches were employed rather than lancets.

Christ Church, as designed by architect Richard Upjohn is a strikingly consistent application of the Early English style, and is an important monument in the development of the Gothic Revival style. Thomas Waterman in The Early Architecture of North Carolina described the building as "the finest church of its period in North Carolina, and... a very creditable essay in the Early English period of Gothic architecture." It was begun in 1848, completed in 1852. In an analysis of architecture in North Carolina, he wrote of Christ Church that the

design is... the most clearly indicative of a birthright knowledge of the English parish church of the Middle Ages, even though he employed 14th-century diagonal buttresses to support walls pierced with 13th-century lancet windows. The Galilee porch connecting the church with its detached tower is a noteworthy feature, and its graceful broach spire of stone (completed 1861) is particularly admirable both in itself and for the part it plays in pinning the composition down to the corner of Capitol Square.¹

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begun in 1859 and completed in 1861. In 1869 a frame chapel and Sunday school combined was added to the church. This later building was demolished in 1913 for the purpose of building a new parish house and chapel, which were completed in 1921. The Parish House and the Chapel of the Annunciation were designed by Hobart Upjohn, grandson of the original architect.³

The education building and offices were placed on the back of the lot and can be reached by quiet entrances - they do not alter the basic character of the site.

In 1852 bequest of Dr. Josiah Ogden Watson enabled the vestry to build the tower. It was begun in 1859 and completed in 1861. The grave and graceful spire, resembles the one on St. Mary's in Burlington except that it stands free at Christ Church and is connected by a Galilee porch. Upjohn's broach spires used a continuous transition from the rectangle to the polygon upon it, suppressing the pyramidal masses usual at the corners of a broach and used inward-curving surfaces instead. The tower is crowned by a weather vane in the shape of a rooster symbolizing St. Peter.

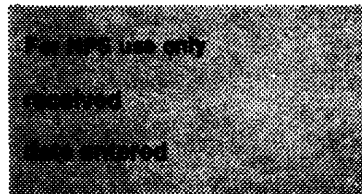
The Early English style in which the church is designed is characterized by massive walls, narrow pointed windows, plain white plaster walls, and a hammer beam ceiling on the interior. Of particular interest is the exterior stonework from local quarries worked by Scottish masons.

In November, 1847, the rector of Christ Church, the Rev. Richard Sharpe Mason, fearing that the church might have to be built of brick rather than stone, begged Upjohn to find a mason in New York who could come to North Carolina to do the stonework: "We are about to spoil your beautiful plan. We find so much difficulty in obtaining a mason whom we can trust!" The mason came from New York and thus Christ Church became the first and only stone Gothic Revival church in North Carolina with a design derived, if secondhand, from an English original. Rev. Mason recognized that Christ Church was something special when he wrote to Upjohn. Our church will be the most beautiful in the South. Reverend Mason also wrote: "I have been endeavouring to impress upon a lady who talks of building a house in Raleigh to procure a plan from you. We have such villainous barns called houses." No house by Upjohn was built in North Carolina. In the fall of 1849, Upjohn sent plans intended for a church to be built at Lexington to John M. Parker of Salisbury, but nothing is known of what became of them."⁴

Although the broach-spired church became something of an Upjohn trademark he was to employ throughout his career a wide variety of medieval styles as well as the Renaissance and Italianate models. In all of them, a personal quality based upon his response to composition and practical problems emerges. He wrote a critique in 1859 for a meeting at the American Institute of Architects on an article by J. Coleman Hart titled "Unity in Architecture."

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Upjohn was fifty-seven at the time and he could look back on twenty years of vigorous practice, years in which he had seen tastes change as architecture moved from the Trinity Church manner into late nineteenth-century Gothic and the introduction of other stylistic sources. He said that:

although most of his life has been spent in the study of Gothic architecture and although he intended to continue to devote his time and exertions toward its revival yet he could not but acknowledge that many of the most impressive Christian monuments were not Gothic. The Lombard and other Romanesque styles ... furnished some of the most ennobling and impressive religious edifices ... he had been affected by the majesty and simplicity of the Pantheon at Rome in a degree almost equal to that of the religious impressions produced by the best cathedrals.⁵

The critique applies to Upjohn as well. The architect's skill and devotion to the Gothic style was at least in part religious and historical while he later used the simple forms and austere surfaces of other styles. Still it is the Gothic that is so closely associated with his name. Christ Church in Raleigh is one of his finest expressions in that style.

Footnotes

¹Waterman, Thomas T. The Early Architecture of North Carolina, University of North Carolina Press. Chapel Hill. 1947, p. 30.

²Lane, Mills. Architecture of the Old South. North Carolina. The Beehive Press. Savannah, 1985. p. 20.

³Lecture notes. Christ Church, Raleigh, North Carolina. no date.

⁴Lane., Ibid. p. 21.

⁵Stanton, Phoebe. The Gothic Revival and American Church Architecture. John Hopkins University Press. Baltimore. 1968. p. 240.

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

Upjohn, E. M. Richard Upjohn: Architect and Churchman. Reprint. New York: DaCapo. 1968.

Upjohn, H. "Architect and Client a Century Ago." Architectural Record 74:374-382. 1933.

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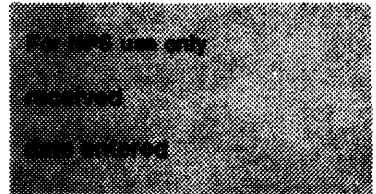
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Wake County Records, State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina.

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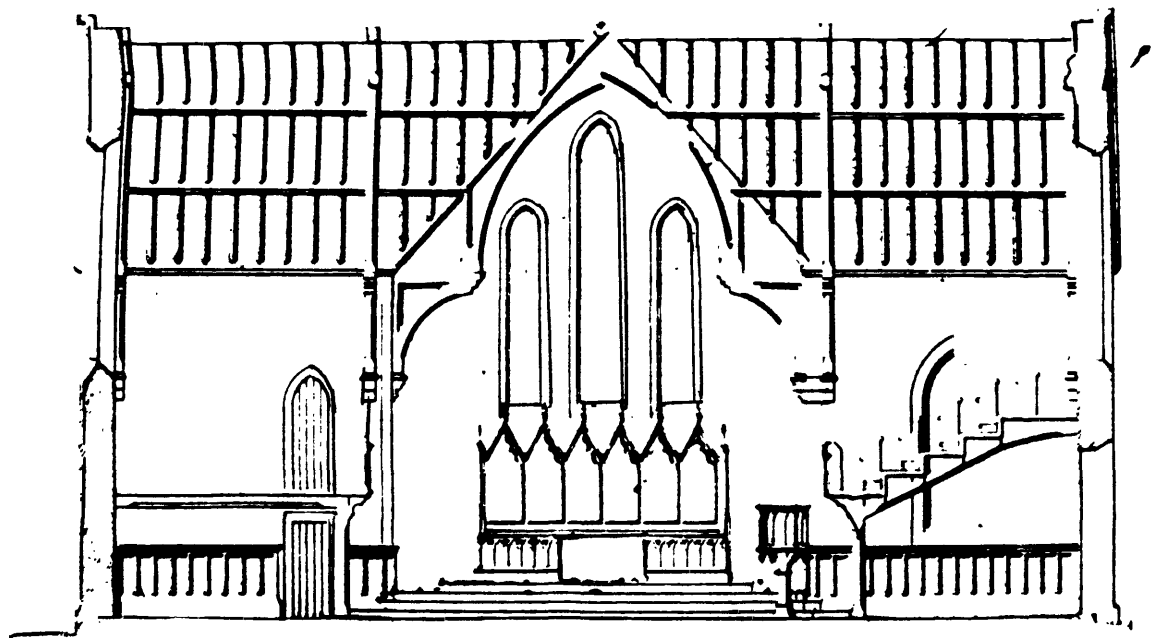
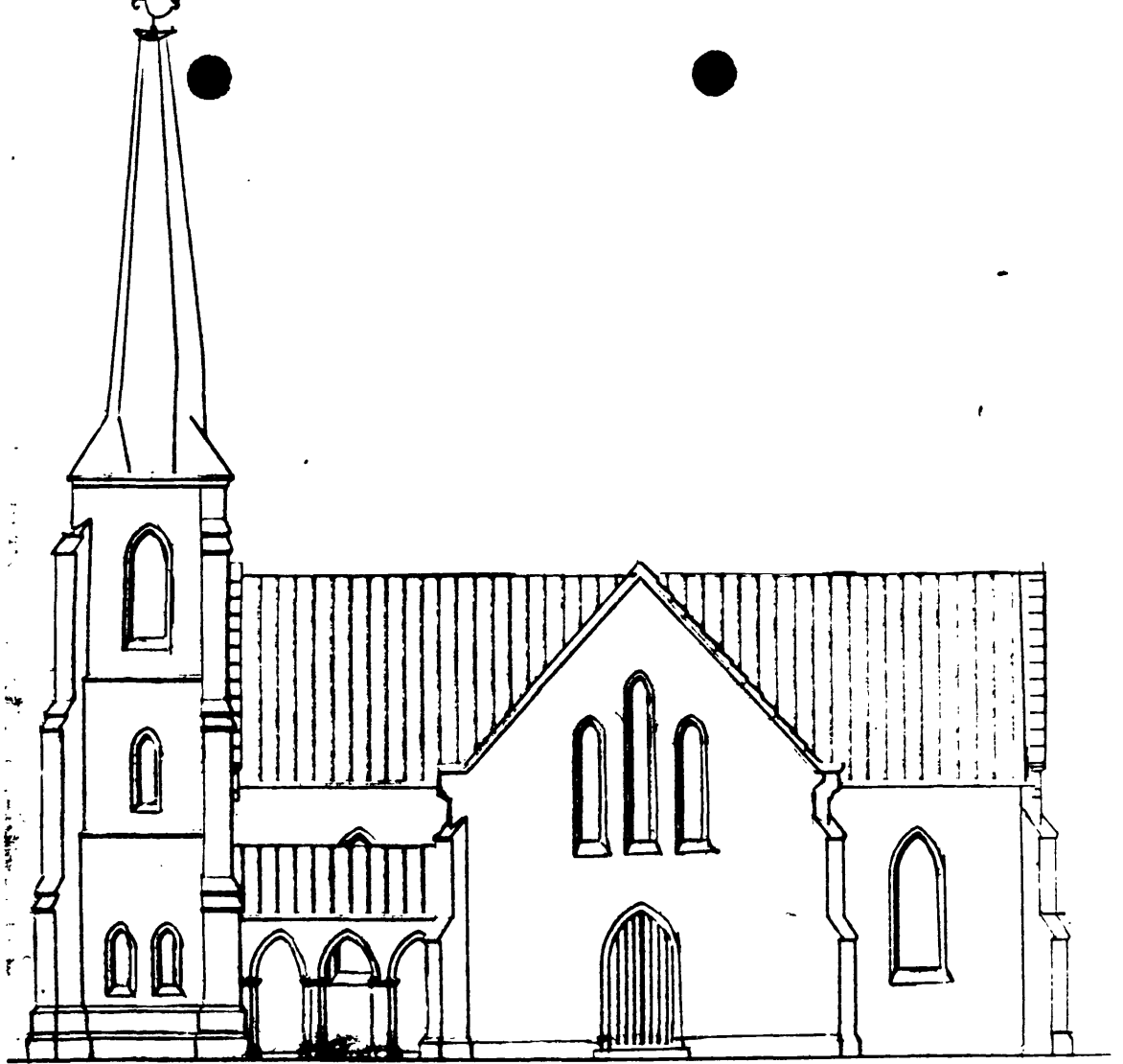
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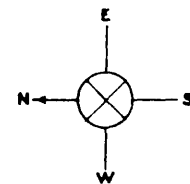
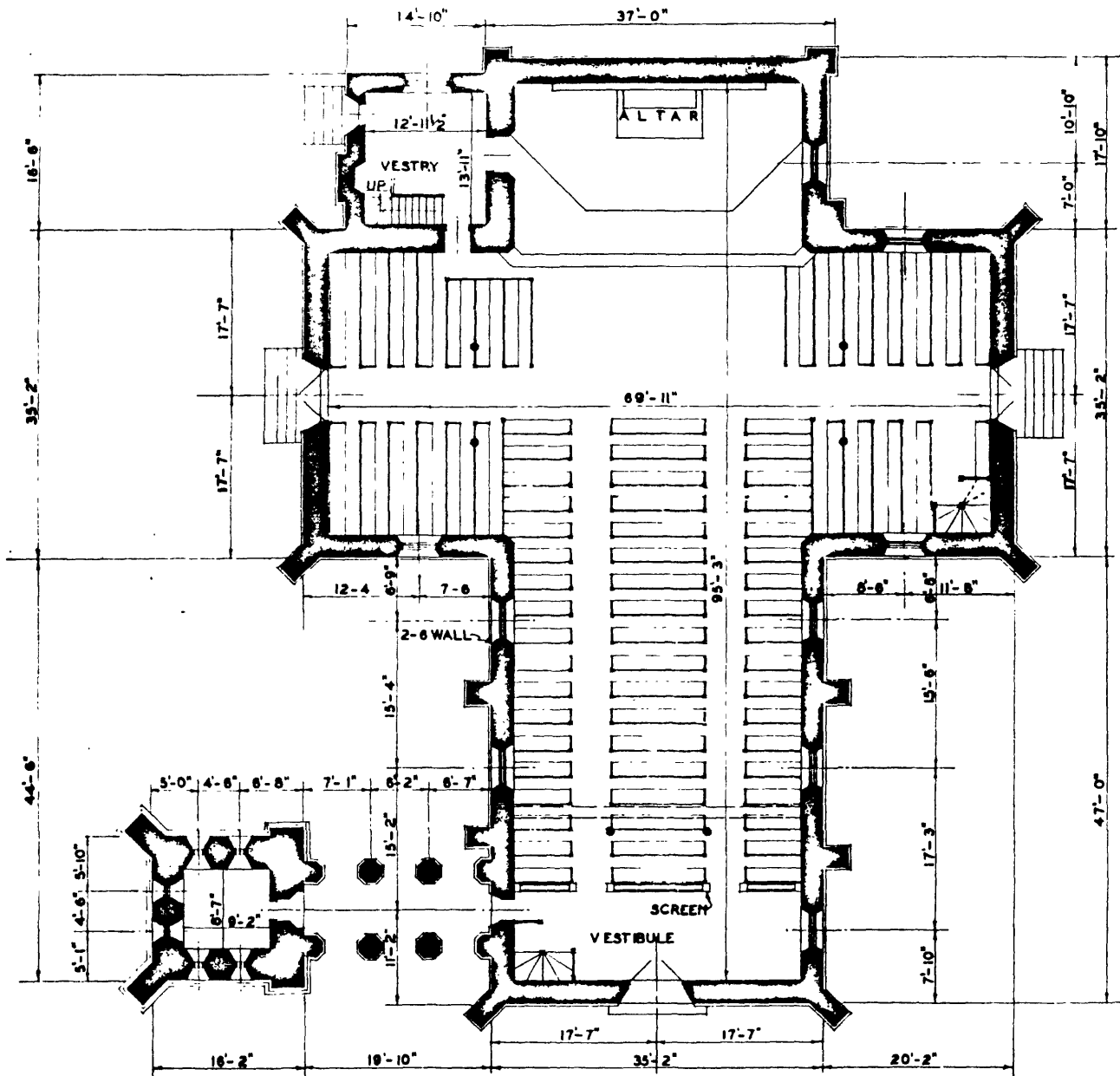
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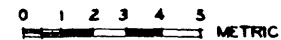
Wodehouse, Lawrence, "Architecture in North Carolina." North Carolina." North Carolina Architect. Part I. vol. 16, nos. 11, 12, Nov.-Dec. 1969. pp. 9-28; part 2, vol. 17, nos. 1, 2, Jan.-Feb. 1970, pp. 9-33.



Christ Church, Raleigh, drawings by Richard Upjohn, 1846. *Avery Library*



MAIN FLOOR PLAN
SCALE - $\frac{1}{8}'' = 1'-0''$



J. M. EDWARDS
JAS. A. MALCOLM, DEL' S.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
OFFICE OF NATIONAL PARKS, BUILDINGS, AND RESERVATIONS
BRANCH OF PLANS AND DESIGN

NAME OF STRUCTURE
CHRIST CHURCH
RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA

SURVEY NO.
12-D-4

HISTORIC AMERICAN
BUILDINGS SURVEY
SHEET 1 OF 6 SHEETS

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