
6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION/Religious Structure

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION/Religious Structure

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Gothic Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation concretewalls brick

roof asphaltother

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

St. Mark's Episcopal Church (1905) stands near a busy intersection on the southwestern edge of downtown Shreveport. Two stories in height with an oversized accompanying bell tower, the brick church is an example of the Gothic Revival style. Its chancel suffered some fire damage early in the church's history, but immediate restoration replaced much of what was lost. Other changes to the building have been minor. Thus, the church's eligibility for the National Register remains intact.

St. Mark's resembles an English parish church in its plan and decoration. The plan consists of four distinct parts: a soaring nave whose steeply pitched roof reaches two stories in height, a massive four stage bell tower which almost overpowers the nave at its side, a small single story chapel directly behind the tower, and a two story wing which projects from the nave's rear corner. The building's decoration combines elements of the Perpendicular and Decorated periods of English Gothic architecture. Motifs from the Perpendicular period include:

- 1) small two-stage corner towers surmounting the bell tower, and
- 2) the use of elaborate crenelation on the bell tower and along the roofline of the chapel and wing.

Elements from the Decorated period include:

- 1) lancet arches with trefoil insets,
- 2) the use of voluminous multiple brick inset panels on the buttresses and the tower, and
- 3) the nave's hammerbeam ceiling, which incorporates trefoils, quatrefoils and pendants within its design.

Other elements of interest in the church's design include a French rose window in the nave, the dark brick banding found on the roughly textured exterior walls, brick roundels located on the tower's second stage, Gothic wainscoting on the interior, and the treatment of the small chapel. The chapel incorporates the stained glass windows, pews, altar, and chancel rail of the original St. Mark's Church, which was built on another Shreveport site c. 1861.

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

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Continuation Sheet**

St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Shreveport, Caddo Parish, LA

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The changes to the 1905 church since its construction are as follows:

- 1) the above mentioned fire and resulting restoration, which occurred in 1919. Damage was confined to the chancel area, with the most important loss being a memorial window which had been installed sometime after the church's construction. Because parishioners had saved the original chancel window which the memorial had replaced, they re-installed the original during the subsequent restoration.
- 2) the installation of a large pipe organ in 1920, and
- 3) the loss of most of the original furnishings.

Although the 1919 fire was unfortunate for the church's parishioners, its end result was to restore the authenticity of the chancel. Other changes to the church have been insignificant. As a result, St. Mark's massing, plan, and Gothic decorative features remain intact, and the church looks much as it did in 1905. St. Mark's still anchors the block on which it stands and is an important landmark in downtown Shreveport. As such, it is a strong candidate for National Register listing.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1905

Significant Dates

1905

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Architect: C. W. Bulger

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

St. Mark's Episcopal Church is locally significant in the area of architecture because it is a visual landmark among the buildings of downtown Shreveport.

Until fairly recently Shreveport was Louisiana's second largest city. Its central business district is still regarded as second only to New Orleans in terms of architectural distinction. Downtown Shreveport was largely rebuilt in the early twentieth century as the result of a local oil boom. Therefore, most of the city's older structures tend to date from this period. There are somewhere around 500 buildings in the greater downtown area, most of which appear to be at least 50 years old. The vast majority of these are party wall commercial buildings or warehouses. But there are also eighteen or so grander structures -- free-standing monumental buildings which constitute the architectural gems of the Central Business District. St. Mark's Episcopal Church enjoys a special place among this group because it is one of only two examples of the Gothic Revival style in the downtown. In addition, few of downtown Shreveport's other monumental buildings can rival the church's emphatic, intensive massing and articulation. Most other examples tend to be more severe.

Historical Note

The parishioners of St. Mark's Episcopal Church left their downtown location in 1953. However, a small group from within the church wished to purchase the building and establish a new downtown parish. As a result, a Diocesan Convention which met January 20-21, 1954, designated the building as a mission of the Episcopal Church. The first service was held on February 14, 1954. Two years later, the mission became a full fledged parish known as the Church of the Holy Cross.

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Thomson, Bailey, ed. Historic Shreveport: A Guide. Shreveport, LA: Shreveport Publishing Co., 1980.

Raymond, Helen Marbury. "Holy Cross Church: Background, Beginnings and Development," n. p., 1972.

Building cornerstone.

- Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A
- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
 - 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 # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of property less than an acre

UTM References

A 15 | 429450 | 3596650
 Zone Easting Northing

C _____ | _____ | _____

B _____ | _____ | _____
 Zone Easting Northing

D _____ | _____ | _____

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Please refer to sketch map.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

Boundary lines to the front and sides follow property lines, as noted. The rear boundary line was drawn as it was in order to exclude modern buildings belonging to the church.

See continuation sheet

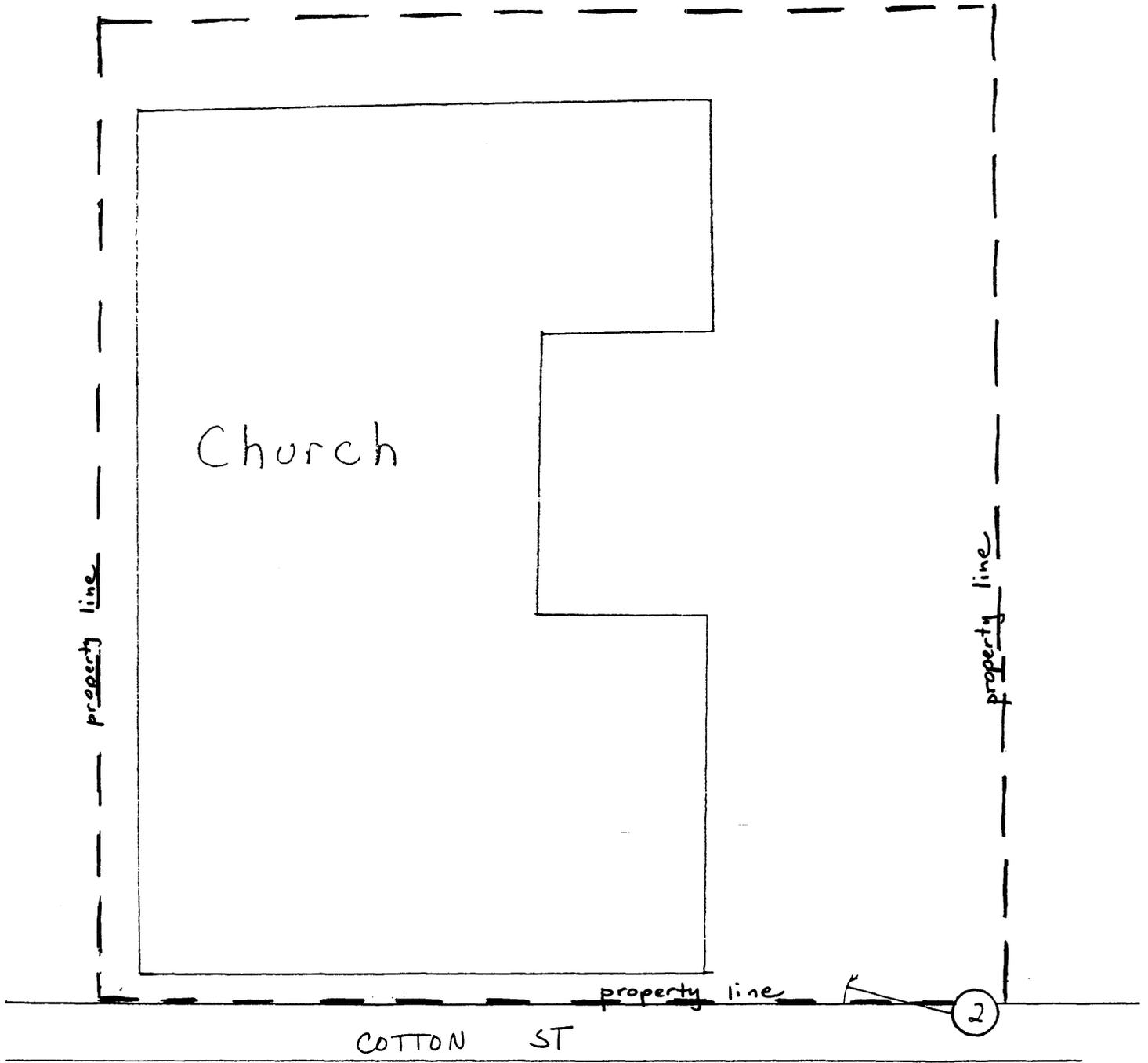
11. Form Prepared By

name/title National Register Staff
 organization Division of Historic Preservation date February 1991
 street & number P. O. Box 44247 telephone (504) 342-8160
 city or town Baton Rouge state Louisiana zip code 70804

Owner: Church of the Holy Cross
 875 Cotton Street
 Shreveport, LA 71101

St. Mark's Episcopal Church
Shreveport, Caddo Parish, LA

3



North ↙

Scale: 1" = 20'

Boundary: - - -

1