

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: North Carolina	
COUNTY: Craven	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:
Christ Episcopal Church and Parish House

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
320 Pollock Street

CITY OR TOWN:
New Bern (First Congressional District, The Hon. Walter B. Jones)

STATE: North Carolina CODE: 37 COUNTY: Craven CODE: 49

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) _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Comments _____ _____ _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Christ Episcopal Church

STREET AND NUMBER:
320 Pollock Street

CITY OR TOWN: New Bern STATE: North Carolina CODE: 37

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Craven County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:
302 Broad Street

CITY OR TOWN: New Bern STATE: North Carolina CODE: 37

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY: Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE:

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input 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

Christ Episcopal Church, a restrained Gothic Revival structure, is situated with its parish house, church offices, and small cemetery in a pleasant wooded lot bounded by an ornamental cast-iron fence. This fence has thin vertical bars terminating in fleur-de-lis finials and heavy intermediate posts. The brick church, set well back from Rock Street on a north-south axis, is a rectangular structure, three bays wide and six bays in length, below a gable roof. The present building incorporates the brick shell that remained after an 1871 fire which gutted the previous church built in 1824. This early structure was only nominally Gothic Revival, for although the nave windows terminated in pointed arches, the placement of the spire, the tall pedimented entrance porch, and the contained massing of the structure evidenced the retention of the Georgian tradition.

The brick walls of the present building indicate that the structure was rebuilt from the eaves upward, and an additional bay was added to the chancel end. The original portions of the nave walls are laid in Flemish bond, with a projecting brick foundation with a low water table of molded brick. The buttresses with sloped weatherings which separate each side bay are laid in one-to-three common bond, and the entrance tower on the main (south) facade is laid in one-to-five common bond above the first stage. This new tower, 110 feet in height, which projects slightly from the facade and rises in three stages to a sharply pointed spire, is emphatically medieval in feeling, and the buttresses, which did not exist on the original structure, completed the thorough Gothicizing of the earlier building.

Entrance to the church is through a tall flat-paneled double door, recessed at the base of the tower, which has a sandstone sill and flat-paneled soffit and reveals. A tall pointed-arched opening above the entrance, a vestige of the earlier facade, is bricked in. An oculus with wooden muntins radiating from a center hub marks the second tower stage, and each face of the third stage contains a large louvered pointed-arched vent. Simple corner buttresses extend from the base to the brick corbel table which terminates the tower. The tower is capped by a pyramidal roof with bracketed eaves above which rises a soaring octagonal spire. Four gablets, each pierced by an arched louvered vent and crowned with a finial, ease the transition between the pyramidal roof and the spire.

In each flanking bay of the facade is a large arched window containing stained glass overlaid by wooden tracery and framed by a wide stucco surround. The high gable roof is covered with composition shingles. The four-course brick corbel cornice of the eaves returns on the buttresses at the corners of the main facade. Each of the six side bays is marked by a window identical to those flanking the tower. The rear (north) wall of the projecting apse contains a similar but slightly larger arched window.

A Stick Style porch, small in scale for the facade, was added at the base of the tower in 1884. The porch roof, composed of a central steep gable and flanking shed roofs, is supported on turned posts with chamfered marble bases which are set on high brick foundation walls. Beneath the bracketed eaves is a wooden frieze with alternating pierced and projecting circular ornament. The front gable end contains a pointed-arched opening above a

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pattern of pierced circles, the whole overlaid by an applied chamfered frame-work. The side gables are diagonally sheathed. The porch ceiling, covered with beaded sheathing, has open truss supports.

The interior is divided into vestibule, nave, and chancel. The spiral stairs that rise at either end of the vestibule are set off from the central area by segmental arches with paneled soffits and reveals. Each stair balustrade is composed of a heavy molded handrail with turned balusters and a polygonal paneled newel. The open-string is ornamented with curvilinear brackets, and the stair spandrel is flat-paneled. Molding has been applied to the sheathed vestibule ceiling to form a vaulting pattern. A double door, set in a segmental-arched opening with a wide architrave, leads from each of the three sections of the vestibule into the nave.

In the nave, as in the vestibule, heavy dark wooden trim contrasts strongly with stark white plaster walls. A vertically sheathed wainscot exists on the side and rear walls. The concave ceiling is covered with thin sheathing to which molding has been applied, creating a coffered effect. The splayed reveals of the casement windows are flat-paneled. Grouped in four sections flanking the center aisle and two side aisles, the dark stained pews are ornamented on the ends with flat trefoiled lancet panels. Similar panels articulate the solid railing at the head of the pews. At the rear of the nave, the gallery which bows out is supported on four asymmetrically reeded columns. The railing contains a band of trefoil lancet panels between raised-paneled friezes. The balcony soffit is finished like the nave ceiling.

The north end of the building was changed considerably during 1913-1914 remodelling. Originally the north wall was broken only by a large arched window divided by wide tracery into three narrow arches and filled with stained glass. The chancel area was raised a few steps above the level of the nave and defined only by the large pipe organ case on the west and the sacristy, partitioned off by paneled walls, on the east. Both the organ and the sacristy reached about halfway to the ceiling and were Gothicized by turretted, paneled pilasters.

During the remodelling, the central bay of the north end of the church was extended and the whole chancel area made much more elaborate. A partition wall was installed immediately north of the last window bay. It is broken by three pointed arches, a large central one flanked by smaller ones. Each arch, with a molded archivolt, springs from piers composed of clustered engaged colonnettes with heavy molded caps and bases. The three arches are repeated on the original north wall, with the central one open, the flanking ones blind. The intervening open space between the partition wall and the north wall suggests the crossing of a cruciform church, but the east and west side walls actually continue unbroken, each marked only by a blind arch that repeats the design of the others and serves to reinforce the crossing-like appearance. Within each of these blind arches is a small trefoil arch that encloses a memorial plaque.

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The large central arch on the rear wall opens into the raised projecting chancel that was added. When this area was extended, the original chancel window was retained and is still located behind the reredos. A wainscot with flat trefoil panels continues around the chancel walls, and high in each side wall are two pointed-arched windows with stained glass. Against the rear wall are a reredos with quatrefoil and fleur-de-lis motifs and an elaborately carved altar.

In each of the blind arches flanking the chancel arch is a smaller trefoil-headed arch topped by a cross. That on the west is open and leads back into the parish house. This doorway is of strikingly handsome design, with a deeply splayed archivolt accented by tiers of narrow, stylized trefoil-arched panels. The arch on the east is blind and frames a glazed case displaying the church's eighteenth century communion service. This eastern bay of the "crossing" space formerly contained a pipe organ but is now open and serves as a baptistry.

The parish house, constructed between 1904 and 1908, extends westward at right angles to the church. It is quite sympathetic in style to the Gothic Revival church. The two-story rectangular red brick structure, three bays wide and five bays in length, has a steep slate gable roof with a low parapet at each gable end. Buttresses with sloped weatherings articulate the side bays and exist in pairs at each corner. The main (west) gable end has an arched doorway at the first level, and at the second level the flanking bays are marked by tall pointed-arched windows. In the gable is an oculus in a stucco surround, featuring a masonry cross in relief. The bays of the sides of the building are marked at the first level by trabeated windows and at the second by arched ones. A band of three arched windows occurs at the second level on the east gable end.

The interior of the parish house has undergone little alteration. A vestibule leads into a large open auditorium on the first floor. Cast-iron columns in the center serve as ceiling supports. Wainscots formed of vertically beaded sheathing and symmetrically molded architraves with corner blocks and roundels occur throughout the interior. The stair to the second story, which rises in three flights at the left of the vestibule, has turned balusters beneath a molded handrail terminating in a large paneled newel.

Additions built in two stages extend eastward from the original parish house. These structures, which contain offices and Sunday school rooms, are of red brick in a utilitarian style which blends unobtrusively with the simple Gothic Revival church and parish building.

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian; 16th Century 18th Century 20th Century
 15th Century 17th Century 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

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

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Craven Parish of the Church of England, which was established in 1715, included the New Bern area. In 1741 there was further division and delineation of parishes, and Christ Church Parish was created. At some point before 1751 the lots on the north side of Pollock Street between Middle and Craven streets were "saved" for a church, and every church constructed by the congregation since that date has been built on this property.

The first church building was finished about 1750 and is indicated clearly on C. J. Sauthier's 1769 map of New Bern, at the corner of Middle and Pollock streets. This is the structure which William Attmore described in his diary of 1787 as "a small church . . . with a square tower, Cupola and Bell and it is the only place of Worship in the Town." A drawing of the church, on Jonathan Price's map of New Bern, published in 1810, corroborates Attmore's description.

When North Carolina adopted the first state constitution in 1776, it included a clause disestablishing the Church of England. Shortly thereafter the Reverend James Reed died, in 1777, ending twenty-four years as a rector of the local congregation. The church was not served by a full-time rector again until 1785, though there is a relatively unbroken line after that date. A new church structure was proposed in 1820, to be situated in the center of the church lot, facing south on Pollock Street. It was to be of brick, seventy feet long and fifty-five feet wide. Stephen F. Miller, in his "Recollections" attributes the construction to Bennett Flanner, noting that Flanner

was among the leading men of his line [brick masons], and completed the new Episcopal church edifice in 1824. He was bold and fearless and persevering. He moved on the scaffolding high in the air, apparently with as much indifference as if standing on the pavement below. I saw him stand erect nearly a half hour on the apex of the steeple, not less than 150 feet high, with no other surface of support than the twenty or thirty inches diameter on which his feet rested.

Though the actual height of that tower is unknown, it seems from photographs to have been higher than the present 110-foot tower, and it became a New Bern landmark, visible from any approach to the town.

Apparently the roof placed on the 1824 structure was too heavy to be borne by the side walls, and extensive repairs were necessary in 1833. The roof was removed, the walls brought back to plumb, and a new roof with

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cypress shingles placed on the church. This was substantially the appearance and condition of the church when the town was taken by Union forces early in the Civil War. The day after that capture, March 15, 1862, was a Sunday and General Burnside ordered all churches opened, with army chaplains officiating and "thanks were returned to God for the signal victory he granted the patriot armies." Throughout the war this church, along with the First Baptist Church and the First Presbyterian Church, received intensive use from Union forces.

A. W. Mann noted in his history of the 45th Massachusetts Volunteers that

The Episcopal Church was open in the morning, Major Sturgis in the absence of the Rector reading the service and a sermon. The singing was by a quartette of male voices, two from our regiment, and two who were on detailed service in the city; it was a great attraction to all lovers of music. The church building was of stone, and prettily situated on Pollock Street in an old burying ground filled with elms and willows and moss covered tombstones. The interior of the church was finished in good taste, and there was a very good organ to aid the music.

Perhaps the brick church had been stuccoed during the 1832-1833 repairs, which would account for Mann's description of it as stone, but the earliest known photograph, taken before 1871, seems to indicate that the side walls were exposed brick. On January 10, 1871, a fire, which had started across Pollock Street from the church, ignited the cypress roof, and the church burned. When the fire was finally extinguished, only the brick walls and base of the tower remained.

By 1875 a new church had been completed, utilizing the remaining walls of the 1824 church. It was consecrated on May 23, 1875, though the steeple was not completed until 1885. The Stick Style porch was added to the church in 1884, and the chancel enlarged and remodelled to its present form and finish in 1914.

A parish house, designed by Herbert W. Simpson, was begun in 1904 and completed in 1908. An addition to the parish house was completed about 1935, but the basic form of the nineteenth century church and Simpson's 1904 parish house remain.

On display in the church is the 1752 communion service, a gift to the congregation from George II, made by Mordecai Fox to the royal specifications. This gift was accompanied by a Bible printed in 1717, and a prayer book printed in 1752. These also are on display in the church.

The church still stands in the midst of its cemetery. Although many stones were moved from here to Cedar Grove when that burial ground was opened by Christ Church in 1800, a number of historically significant markers remain. The early Christ Church served royal governors and colonists prominent in colonial affairs. The later church served governors of the state of North

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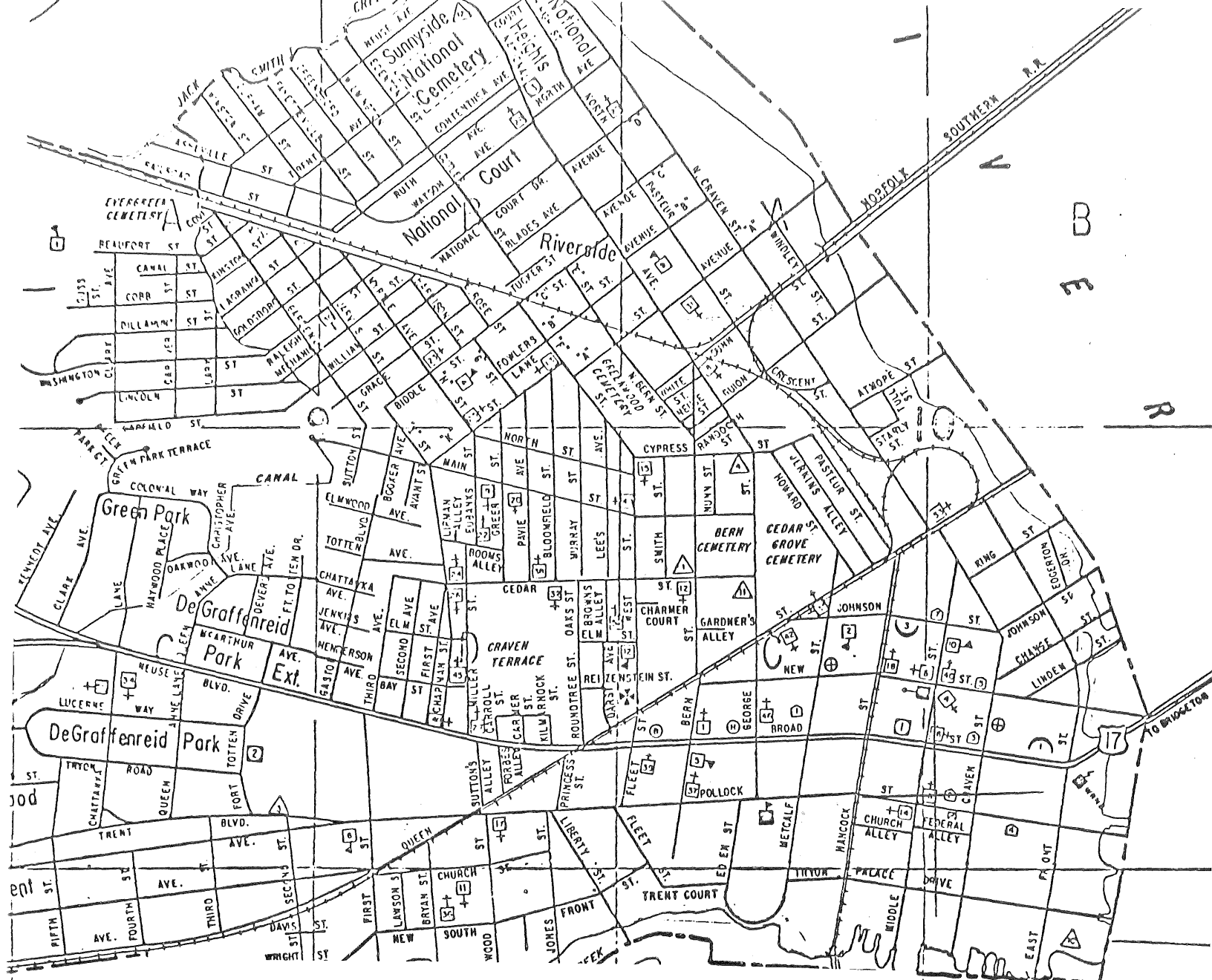
(Number all entries)

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Carolina and other well-known men. John Wright Stanly is buried here, as is James Reed, the first rector of the church, and Charles Elliot, attorney general of the colony, who died in 1756. Elliot's epitaph serves as an unusual commentary on the legal profession of his day: "An Honest Lawyer Indeed." The foundations of the circa 1750 church have been marked by new brick walls and an open-air chapel established over the site.

At the corner of Pollock and Middle streets, which in January of 1778 had been designated as the point from which a new survey of the town would begin, a cannon from the British ship Lady Blessington was set into the ground. That cannon had been captured during the Revolution in an encounter between an armed privateer owned by John Wright Stanly and the British ship. It was given by Stanly, a member of Christ Church, to mark the survey point, and remains there today.

Christ Church is an interesting example of a rather late Gothic Revival structure built from the walls of an earlier church of the kind described by Thomas Waterman as "embryonic Gothic." Among its notable features are the well-executed interiors, the tower topped with a crown weathervane, and the fine Stick Style entrance. The church is historically significant as the successor to a parish established in 1715, and the center of its own parish established in 1741. The early gravestones and the Georgian silver, Bible, and prayer book recall the long history of the parish, the third oldest in the state.



Meadow

Christ Episcopal Church and Parish House
 320 Pollock Street
 New Bern, North Carolina

Map of New Bern and Vicinity, New Bern Chamber of
 Commerce, drawn by: Gilfredo Gonzalez
 Scale: 1"/1200 feet
 no date

