

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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

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

**1. Name**

historic St. George's Protestant Episcopal Church

and/or common St. George's Episcopal Church

**2. Location**

street & number 800 Marcy Avenue \_\_\_ not for publication

city, town Brooklyn \_\_\_ vicinity of **congressional district**

state New York code 036 county Kings code 047

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <span style="margin-left: 100px;"><input type="checkbox"/> museum</span>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial <span style="margin-left: 100px;"><input type="checkbox"/> park</span>
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <span style="margin-left: 100px;"><input type="checkbox"/> private residence</span>
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <span style="margin-left: 100px;"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious</span>
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <span style="margin-left: 100px;"><input type="checkbox"/> scientific</span>
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <span style="margin-left: 100px;"><input type="checkbox"/> transportation</span>
	<u>N/A</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <span style="margin-left: 100px;"><input type="checkbox"/> other:</span>

**4. Owner of Property**

name St. George's Episcopal Church

street & number 800 Marcy Avenue

city, town Brooklyn \_\_\_ vicinity of state New York

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Kings County Register's Office, Brooklyn Municipal Building

street & number Joralemon Street

city, town Brooklyn state New York

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

New York City Landmark Preservation Commission (LP-0946) has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date January 11, 1977  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, 20 Vesey Street

city, town New York state New York 10007

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date <u>NA</u>

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

St. George's Episcopal Church is a picturesque building constructed of red brick with light stone trim. It was designed in the vivid polychrome tradition of Victorian Gothic architecture and is particularly notable for the use of the eccentric decorative forms favored by its architect Richard Mitchell Upjohn. The church has a cruciform plan with nave, side aisles and transepts. On Marcy Avenue, the sanctuary is entered through a pair of double doors with ornate iron hinges. These doors are recessed within a banded, pointed-arched enframement that is set into a steep entrance gable crowned by a Greek cross. Projecting from a low entrance porch, this gabled element echoes the form of the nave facade that rises behind. This entrance porch has a pitched roof that is supported by squat columns, a particularly unusual decorative device. Two tall pointed-arched windows and a circular window, all with banded brick and stone enframements, articulate the nave facade above the porch. The brick facade of the nave is enlivened by stone bands and, like the entrance gable, is crowned by a Greek cross. The slope of the nave roof is interrupted by an odd, angular stone projection, typical of the eccentric details of R.M. Upjohn's Victorian Gothic buildings. Supported by the porch roof and rising to the left of the nave, and corresponding to a buttress found to the right, is a polygonal tower--the most distinctive feature of the building. The tower, with its uneven checkerboard pattern of brick and stone, serves as a chimney. The tower is characteristically Victorian Gothic in style with its polychromed patterning, its slender colonnettes, and gablets. The side aisles that flank the central nave have simple front facades, each with one wide pointed-arched window subdivided by wooden tracery.

The side facades of St. George's use a design vocabulary similar to that of the front facade. The side aisle to the south is lit by three pointed-arched windows, while that to the north has two windows and a door. Rising above the side aisles is a shallow clerestory that is lit by rectangular windows and supports the slate-roofed nave. Wide, gabled transepts project from the nave. In detail these transepts are related to the front gable; similar forms include the stone banding, the odd, angular projection on the roof slopes, and the crowning Greek cross. Each transept has three pointed-arched windows separated by a pair of buttresses. Above each central window is a large rose window divided into an intricate tracery pattern. A polygonal vestry room extends from the west side of the north transept and echoes the form of the chancel which rises behind it. Some of the windows of the vestry room have been closed up.

The small, one-story, peak-roofed Sunday school building, to the west of the church, resembles the form of the transepts, with its brick and stone facing, pointed-arched window flanked by buttresses, and Greek cross. This building has an asphalt roof that is pierced by a shed dormer. The school is included in the nomination.

The church interior retains its integrity and is well maintained. Notable details include:

1. open-beamed roof of Georgia pine supported on wooden cluster columns
2. wooden arcade of Georgia pine with wide pointed arches attached to the cluster columns by lateral struts

(See Continuation Sheet)

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3. original wooden pews of ash--seats about 800 people
4. ribbed chancel of ash raised on stone steps
5. raised choir with wooden stalls and mosaic floor
6. simple iron altar rail
7. small stone altar
8. stained-glass windows, including two, located in the transepts, designed by Tiffany Studios
9. Sunday school has a simple utilitarian interior.

# 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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates** 1887–8, 1889 **Builder/Architect** R. M. Upjohn.

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

St. George's Episcopal Church, located in the Bedford-Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn, is among the finest Victorian Gothic style churches in New York City. Designed in 1886 by Richard Michell Upjohn, a leading American exponent of the Victorian Gothic style, St. George's is a sophisticated essay in the use of polychromatic stone and is particularly distinguished for its unusual and frequently eccentric architectural forms including an entry porch with squat columns and polygonal tower constructed with a checkerboard stone pattern.

St. George's Protestant Episcopal Church was organized in 1868 when the Rev. Alvah Guion (1796–1872), one of Brooklyn's most prominent 19th-century ministers, chose to set up a new parish in the Bedford section of Brooklyn--an area that was just beginning to be developed as a middle-class residential neighborhood. Guion's new parish was incorporated in 1869 as St. Thomas Protestant Episcopal Church and the congregation built a wooden, Gothic Revival style church on Greene Avenue between Marcy and Tompkins Avenues, completed in 1871. Soon after its formation, the vestry of St. Thomas' changed the name of the congregation to Guion Church, but in 1873, when the church applied for membership in the diocese of Long Island, the name had to be changed again since the diocese did not consider the use of proper names to be acceptable. Meanwhile, another St. Thomas Church had been organized in Brooklyn and the name of the Guion Church was changed to St. George's Church of the City of Brooklyn.

In the 1870s and 1880s the population of Bedford grew at a tremendous pace as the construction of substantial rowhouses brought more and more families to the area. With this increase in population came a corresponding increase in the size of the congregation of St. George's. In 1883 a site on the southwest corner of Marcy and Gates Avenues was purchased by the congregation and in 1886 the cornerstone of a new church designed by R.M. Upjohn was laid.

Richard Michell Upjohn (1828–1903) was the son of the noted church architect and Gothic Revivalist Richard Upjohn (1802–1878). Although born in Shaftsbury, England, Upjohn spent most of his life in Brooklyn. In 1846 he entered his father's architectural firm and in 1851 became a partner in the firm of Upjohn & Co. While associated with his father, R.M. Upjohn designed such notable Brooklyn structures as the Greenwood Cemetery Gates (1861) and St. Paul's Episcopal Church (1867). After his father's death, R.M. Upjohn continued to practice independently. Upjohn is known primarily for his Victorian Gothic style buildings, many of which use eccentric details; this is particularly true of Upjohn's most famous work, the Connecticut State Capital at Hartford (1872–79). Like his father, R.M. Upjohn was a confirmed Gothicist, and even after Henry H. Richardson had popularized the use of the Romanesque Revival style for Episcopal churches, Upjohn continued to work in a fresh and original Victorian Gothic mode.

(See Continuation Sheet)

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St. George's is a late example of the use of the Victorian Gothic style in American church architecture, but the building is, nevertheless, a strikingly original composition. In 1889, two years after the completion of the church, R.M. Upjohn designed a Sunday School building at the rear of the church, on Gates Avenue.

In the course of the 20th century the neighborhood surrounding St. George's saw a great shift in population as the Bedford-Stuyvesant area changed from a wealthy, upper middle class community to a more troubled inner-city neighborhood. While many of the churches in the Bedford-Stuyvesant area were sold by their original congregations as the population shifted, St. George's changed with the neighborhood, is still used by the original congregation, and remains as a visual and historic anchor in the community.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Brooklyn Daily Times. June 25, 1887, p. 5.

(See Continuation Sheet)

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than one acre

Quadrangle name Brooklyn

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A 

1	8	8	8	8	5	0	4	5	0	4	2	2	0
Zone		Easting				Northing							

B 

Zone		Easting				Northing							

C 

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D 

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E 

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F 

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H 

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Verbal boundary description and justification

The nominated property occupies Borough of Brooklyn Tax Map Block 1813, lot 41, as outlined on the enclosed map with a scale of 1" = 60'. The property measures 99.6' on the east, 100' on the west, and 145' on the north and south.

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

NA

state code county code

state code county code

# 11. Form Prepared By

See continuation sheet.

name/title Larry E. Gobrecht

organization Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau date May 1983

street & number Agency I, E.S.P. telephone 518-474-0479

city or town Albany state New York 12238

# 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Albert E. Buccese

title Deputy Commissioner and Counsel date 8/5/83

For HCRS use only

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

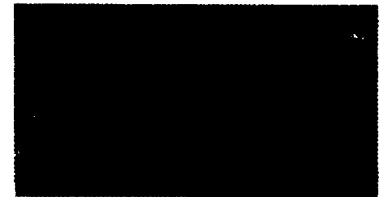
Keeper of the National Register

Attended

Chief of the National Register

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Churchman. July 23, 1887, p. 92; June 21, 1888, p. 64.

Dolkart, Andrew S. "The City of Churches: The Protestant Church Architecture of Brooklyn 1793-1917," unpublished master's thesis, Columbia University, 1977.

"Services Commemorating the Thirteenth Anniversary of St. George's Church, Brooklyn, New York," 1899.

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Form Researched and prepared by:

Andrew Scott Dolkart,  
Senior Landmarks Preservation Specialist  
Landmarks Preservation Commission  
20 Vesey Street  
New York, New York 10007

212-566-7577





St. George's P.E. Church  
800 Marcy Ave. Kings Co, N.Y.  
UTM Reference: 18/88850/4504220  
Brooklyn Quadrangle



42°30'

4506

4505

6165 11 NE  
NEW JERSEY CITY

40'

402