

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

VLR: 12/04/96
NRHP: 02/21/97

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name St. Paul's Vestry House

other names/site number VDHR File No. 118-78

2. Location

street & number 308 Seventh Street not for publication N/A

city or town Lynchburg vicinity _____

state Virginia code VA county Lynchburg (Independent City) code 680 Zip 24504

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide X locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature]
Signature of certifying official

12/30/96
Date

Virginia Department of Historic Resources

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is: removed from the National Register
entered in the National Register other (explain): _____
See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the _____
National Register Signature of Keeper
See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register Date of Action _____

St. Paul's Vestry House
Lynchburg, Virginia

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
 public-local
 public-State
 public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- building(s)
 district
 site
 structure
 object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u> 1 </u>	<u> 0 </u>	buildings
<u> 0 </u>	<u> 0 </u>	sites
<u> 0 </u>	<u> 0 </u>	structures
<u> 0 </u>	<u> 0 </u>	objects
<u> 1 </u>	<u> 0 </u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

 N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: RELIGION Sub: religious facility

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: COMMERCE/TRADE Sub: business

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

 Classical Revival

St. Paul's Vestry House
Lynchburg, Virginia

Significant Dates 1855
1903
1916

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)
N/A

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

- 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 # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: Va. Dept. Of Historic Resources (Richmond); Jones Memorial Library, (Lynchburg)

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property .04 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	17 641 200	42 35 000	2		
3	_____	_____	4	_____	_____

See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

St. Paul's Vestry House
Lynchburg, Virginia

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Nancy Jamerson Weiland

Organization: Lunan Preservation date August 24, 1996

street & number: 619 First Street telephone (804)528-4530

city or town Lynchburg state VA zip code 24504

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name William V. Giles, Jr.

street & number 1050 Greenway Court telephone (804)845-8172

city or town Lynchburg state VA zip code 24503

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Saint Paul's Vestry House
Lynchburg, Virginia

Narrative Description:

Building: Exterior

308 Seventh Street is a single-story Classical Revival-style building with a simple low-pitched gable roof and a rectangular plan with regular bays of four windows on each side elevation. The front elevation features a simple pedimented porch cover supported by two scrolled brackets. The front entrance has a symmetrically-placed, single, recessed-panel wood door with divided side lights and a transom. The steps at the front door are likely a 1900s addition.

The foundation is at grade level at the south elevation, with a full-height brick basement wall at the north side elevation, which features three equally-spaced ornamental diamond-shaped staggered brick vents and a simple-cut brick watertable.

The facade is painted brick, common bond with 6th-course headers. The windows are six-over-six wood double-hung sashes, with wood sills and contemporary louvered wood shutters with metal scroll holdbacks. The roof is standing-steam metal with integral gutters at the cornice, with a simple extended overhand 18 inches wide at both gable ends and the cornice line, which is made of a 6' crown and flat rim board combination.

Building: Interior

The interior of this building has been partitioned for contemporary use. The entrance portion of the building, however, retains its original configuration. Although the details are made to match the original trim, the interior window trim has been carefully preserved and appears to be original. All crown molding on the interior matches what is believed to be the original molding. It is possible that the molding along the outer walls is original.

The front door dimensions are 8' high by 3'3" wide. There are side lights and transom which appear to be original. At the rear is a second entrance with a small vestibule running the width of the building. The entrance door from the vestibule to the main portion of the building is also original, as the trim matches the front door trim.

The windows are 6'7" high by 3'6" wide. The lights are six-over-six. The glass size is 10.5" wide by 17.5" high. All walls have a chair rail and painted wainscot. The base boards are 10" high, matching original examples from a Minard Lafever handbook. The ceilings throughout the principal spaces of the building are 12 feet in height.

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Saint Paul's Vestry House
Lynchburg, Virginia

8. Statement of Significance

The St. Paul's Vestry House in Lynchburg, Virginia, is significant Under Criteria C as likely the only vestry house built exclusively for the governing body of an Episcopal Church in Virginia. In other Episcopal churches, the Vestry met either in the church itself or in a parish house built to house Sunday school rooms or other administrative offices of the church. The fact that a separate building was erected for the vestry is indicative of the prominent position of the members of that governing body of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in mid-19th century Lynchburg as well as of the financial well-being of the congregation. The Episcopal Church in Virginia, in decline for more than a half century following disestablishment in the late 18th century, saw a resurgence of its position and membership in the 1840s and 1850s. The construction of a large Gothic Revival church for St. Paul's in 1851 with an insured value of \$12,000 underscores the affluence of the church. Under Criteria A, the Vestry House also derives its significance from having served as the first home of the Lynchburg Woman's Club from 1903 to 1916, an educational and philanthropic organization that contributed to the cultural life of the community. Although no longer housing the Woman's Club, the small, classical-revival building remains an important symbol of the Lynchburg Woman's Club's influence in the city's cultural enlightenment. The building also symbolizes the Lynchburg Woman's Club's place in the late-19th and early 20th-century movement around the country to form associations of women for the "social, intellectual and cultural benefits of their members."¹

Historical Background

In September of 1822 a group of people interested in the Episcopal Church met at the Franklin Hotel in Lynchburg with plans to organize a church. By 1824 a building fund drive had generated \$2,804. Mrs. George Cabell donated the lot at Seventh and Church streets on the southeast corner where the first Episcopal Church in Lynchburg was completed in 1826. As part of the deed requirements, the gift of land by Mrs. Cabell was to revert to the Cabell heirs if the building ceased to be used for religious purposes. Mrs. Cabell was the former Sarah Winston, a daughter of Judge Edmund Winston, and wife of Dr. George Cabell, physician to Patrick Henry.

¹Anne Firor Scott, *Making the Invisible Woman Visible*, (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1984) 2.

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Saint Paul's Vestry House
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In addition to her donation of the land, Mrs. Cabell also gave \$300 to the project. Other large supporters included Rev. John Early, Elijah Fletcher, Chriswell Dabney, Thomas T. Bouldin, David Kyle and members of the Mason from Marshall Lodge No. 39.

The newly appointed vestrymen in 1822 included: The Honorable George Tucker, Chriswell Dabney, James Bullock, Dr. Howel Davies, Elijah Fletcher--Mr. Fletcher was father of Mrs. Indiana Fletcher Williams, the founder of Sweet Briar College-- and Henry Morris, all prominent residents of Lynchburg. Colonel Alexander, William Radford and Seth Ward were appointed to represent New London, with Bedford being represented by Patrick P. Burton, Nathaniel J. Manson and Nicholas H. Cobbs.

Prior to the building of a church, Episcopal services were held at the Masonic Hall which stood at the corner of Church and Ninth streets, then known as Third and Water streets. Reverend Franklin G. Smith, a native of New England, was the pastor in 1824. During Christmas of that year, he administered the first Holy Communion in the City of Lynchburg to seven communicants. The new building for St. Paul's was consecrated on May 18, 1826, during the Convention of the Dioceses, the first Episcopal Convention held in Virginia outside Tidewater. At the first service, when the Rt. Rev. Richard Channing Moore, Bishop of Virginia, preached the sermon, 31 persons were confirmed. The first funeral at the new church was for Mrs. George Cabell on May 21, 1826.

By the late 1840s, the congregation had out grown the small church building. Vestry Minutes record concern for the needed repairs to the church and the need for a Vestry House. At a Vestry meeting on November 11, 1846, it was resolved that a committee be appointed to investigate the cost of building repairs and the cost of constructing a Lecture and Vestry Room at the upper end of the church. Minutes of November 17, 1846, show the lowest bid for a Vestry House was about \$1,000 plus \$200 to repair the steps of the church. It is not known whether an addition was built at that time. As the needs of the church and Vestry grew, a resolution was made at their meeting on December 5, 1849, to build a new and larger church on the site of the 1826 church. The Vestry engaged the services of William S. Ellison to design the new church. The cornerstone was laid on June 11, 1850, and the first services were held on Easter Sunday, 1851. Ellison was later responsible for the design of the stately Greek Revival Courthouse in Lynchburg (1855).

The Vestry minutes do not reflect further discussion on the construction of a Lecture and Vestry Room, but it was shortly after the completion of the new church that the Vestry House was erected. It is not known if Ellison had a hand in the design of the vestry house, but since he was still working in Lynchburg at the time, it would not be unlikely that he did, given his familiarity with the classical vocabulary. Throughout its history, the Vestry House has also been referred to as the "Old

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Saint Paul's Vestry House
Lynchburg, Virginia

Rectory;" however, it appears that the building was never intended for use as a rectory but as a meeting house for the Vestry, Trustees and other committees of the church.

The vestry system developed in Colonial Virginia when the Anglican Church was the established religion for the colony. Vestry members usually came from the gentry of the congregation. Among their duties were to appoint the minister, investigate moral offences, see that the parish lived within its means and to care for the indigent of the parish. St. Paul's Vestry House appears to be the only surviving "Vestry House" in Virginia today.

The Vestry House remained the site of vestry business until the church underwent remodeling in 1870-71 when the small building became space for Sunday School classes. Growth in the church continued, and once again a larger building was called for. In 1891 the cornerstone was laid for the third St. Paul's church sanctuary. The last service on November 15, 1895, was the funeral of General Jubal A. Early, renowned Civil War hero. The new St. Paul's was located at Seventh and Clay streets where it stands today.

In April of 1903 the trustees of St. Paul's transferred the Vestry House to Mrs. Sally D. Tompkins, (Lynchburg Deed Book 71, page 470), who in turn rented the building to the Woman's Club of Lynchburg. The Woman's Club occupied the building until 1916. In 1902 eleven Lynchburg women had gathered to form a study group to learn parliamentary procedure. For a fee of \$8.00 a month, they held their regular meetings in the Vestry House at 308 Seventh Street. This group of enthusiastic and energetic women decided to expand the organization to include civic, cultural and educational endeavors throughout the city. To this end, they established the Woman's Club of Lynchburg, stating in its by-laws that "The object of this club shall be benevolent, philanthropic and educational."² Members still remember this building as their first home. From its humble beginnings and its first gathering of eleven ladies, the club membership now numbers about 400.

The formation of the Lynchburg Woman's Club was part of a much wider social movement that took place throughout the country between 1868 and 1910. Following the Civil War there were no secular organizations for women. The greatest growth of woman's clubs in the South began in the 1880s with the pioneer efforts of a woman's association in New Orleans whose mission was to "assist the intellectual growth and spiritual ambition of the community."³ Virginia women were

² *The Lynchburg Woman's Club, 1905-1906, Article Two of the Constitution.*

³ Anne Firor Scott, *Making the Invisible Woman Visible*, Urbana: University of Illinois, 1984), 216.

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Lynchburg, Virginia

somewhat slower to organize with the Woman's Club of Richmond forming in 1894 and the Woman's Club of Petersburg organizing in 1897. They had, however, a strong tradition of woman's associations to follow with the founding of the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities in 1889 and the Virginia Daughters of the American Revolution, the Virginia Society of Colonial Dames, and the United Daughters of the Confederacy, all organized in the 1890s. The motivation for the establishment of women's clubs in general seems to have been for self-development and self-education in a period when few women attended college. Often fellow members who had traveled to foreign lands shared information about their travels with their colleagues. According to a history of the American family written in 1919, early women's associations were more study clubs whose members usually already knew each other socially. Clubs tended to be exclusive, limiting their memberships to the upper and upper-middle classes. Ironically, the same writer in addressing the problem of divorce, blames "clubs and social frivolities" for the increase in divorce in the early years of the 20th century.⁴

Writing in 1922, Sallie Southall Cotten, described the results of the woman's club movement:

Club experience has been the university in which they (the women) have learned [about] themselves and other women and have seen men as one of the species and not as individual husbands and fathers. They have gained respect for their own opinions, toleration for the opinions of others...Their knowledge has been increased...Gossip has decreased because clubs have given women better things to think about and having seen the needs of the world they have become interested in striving to make their own part of it a little better.⁵

During the early days, the Lynchburg club sparked new ventures as it strived for its own education and cultural awareness. In 1907, the Lynchburg club took the initiative and hosted the gathering that established the Virginia Federation of Women's Clubs. From its earliest years the women invited lecturers, speakers and performers to come to the meetings and present programs that

⁴ Arthur W. Calhoun, *A Social History of the American Family*, Volume III, "Since the Civil War," (Cleveland, 1919), 192-93.

⁵ Sallie Southall Cotten, "Accomplishments of Women's Clubs," SSC Papers, 1922, University of North Carolina. Quoted in Anne Firor Scott, *From Pedestal to Politics, 1830-1930*, (University of Chicago Press, 1970), 151.

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Saint Paul's Vestry House
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varied from the study of foreign lands to the enjoyment of a play. It was the theatrical interest that sparked the Little Theatre, a theatrical group with the longest unbroken series of regularly scheduled plays in Lynchburg. The plays began as a friendly rivalry between two groups of theatre-minded people, one group from Diamond Hill and one from Rivermont, residential neighborhoods in Lynchburg. One group of women was inspired by dramatic readings given at the Woman's Club by Robert Dempster, an actor, playwright and teacher at Sweet Briar College. After his performance the group formed the Little Theatre League in 1920. Although the Little Theatre never used this building as its performance venue, its actors would occasionally give special performances for the Women's Club membership meetings.

By 1916 the Woman's Club had outgrown the small Seventh Street Vestry House and purchased the spacious Carrol Home at 1020 Court Street to which they added a 400-seat auditorium. After the club moved, Mrs. Robert M. Strother opened a school of drama called "The School of Expression," in the Vestry building. It was here that many would-be actors took lessons for their roles on stage at the Little Theatre. Mrs. Strother left in 1926. From 1928 to 1934, the small building continued to provide the community with a cultural outlet in the hands of Grace Homes who gave music lessons there.

After 1928 the building was used for a variety of community activities. A gift shop operated in the building from 1938-39, and a photo company used the space in 1941-42. After World War II the building was used by Kingdom Hall Jehovah's Witnesses for several years and then intermittently for commercial enterprises. Since 1957 the Vestry House has housed offices for architects, insurance agents, and other professionals.

From its earliest use as a Vestry House for St. Paul's Episcopal Church, this tiny building has been the meeting site for many of Lynchburg's leading citizens, many of whom have helped to create the City of Lynchburg as it is today. From this building, Lynchburg women were inspired to go into the world and make a difference. Because of their quest for knowledge and an improved cultural environment, they sparked in others the desire to create. From a single stimulating performance by Robert Dempster grew the inspiration to create a theatrical landmark. In its well preserved and largely unaltered condition, the St. Paul's Vestry House remains an important landmark and symbol of Lynchburg's religious and cultural history.

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Lynchburg, Virginia

9. Bibliography

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Lynchburg, Virginia**

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_____ *The Southern Lady From Pedestal to Politics, 1830-1930*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970).

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10. Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated parcel is depicted on the accompanying page. The parcel is known as Lot # 19 on the City of Lynchburg Tax Map number 024-35. The parcel contains .04 acres. The property abuts the boundaries of the Court House Hill Historic District, a locally designated historic area. Court House Hill contains the present-day St. Paul's Episcopal Church, the historic property owner of St. Paul's Vestry House.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the nominated parcel correspond to the present boundaries of the property and include the principal contributing resource, St. Paul's Vestry House.

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Saint Paul's Vestry House
Lynchburg, Virginia

Photographic List

1. Name: St. Paul's Vestry House
Location: Lynchburg, Virginia
Credit: William V. Giles
Date: June 10, 1996
Negative # 14938: Department of Historic Resources
Front elevation from the east

2. Name: St. Paul's Vestry House
Location: Lynchburg, Virginia
Credit: William V. Giles
Date: June 10, 1996
Negative # 14938: Department of Historic Resources
South elevation from the south

3. Name: St. Paul's Vestry House
Location: Lynchburg, Virginia
Credit: William V. Giles
Date: June 10, 1996
Negative #14938: Department of Historic Resources
Detail of interior door

4. Name: St. Paul's Vestry House
Location: Lynchburg, Virginia
Credit: William V. Giles
Date: June 10, 1996
Negative # 14938: Department of Historic Resources
Interior of main entrance door

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5. Name: St. Paul's Vestry House
Location: Lynchburg, Virginia
Credit: William V. Giles
Date: June 10, 1996
Negative # 14938: Department of Historic Resources
Interior of hallway



25' ST. PAUL'S
 VESTRY
 HOUSE
 17/641200/4235