

VLR: 11-5-68
NRHP: 4-16-69
NHL: 11-11-71

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

Form 10-300
(Dec. 1968)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Virginia	
COUNTY: Richmond (in cit.)	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER 69-04-45-0004	DATE 4/16/69

1. NAME

COMMON:
Monumental Church

AND/OR HISTORIC:
Monumental Episcopal Church

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
1224 E. Broad Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Richmond

STATE: Virginia CODE: 760 COUNTY: CODE:

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both <input type="checkbox"/>	Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes: Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No: <input type="checkbox"/>
Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input type="checkbox"/>	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered <input type="checkbox"/>		

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/>	Government <input type="checkbox"/>	Park <input type="checkbox"/>	Transportation <input type="checkbox"/>	Comments <input type="checkbox"/>
Commercial <input type="checkbox"/>	Industrial <input type="checkbox"/>	Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/>	Other (Specify) <input type="checkbox"/>	
Educational <input type="checkbox"/>	Military <input type="checkbox"/>	Religious <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Entertainment <input type="checkbox"/>	Museum <input type="checkbox"/>	Scientific <input type="checkbox"/>		

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNERS NAME:
Virginia Commonwealth University (Medical College of Virginia)

STREET AND NUMBER:
MCV Foundation 6-9734

CITY OR TOWN: Richmond STATE: Virginia CODE: 760

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
Chancery Court, Richmond City Hall

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Richmond STATE: Virginia CODE: 760

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 1/2 acre

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Historic American Buildings Survey Inventory

DATE OF SURVEY: 1957 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Library of Congress

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Washington STATE: D. C. CODE: 08

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	Excellent <input type="checkbox"/>	Good <input type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Deteriorated <input type="checkbox"/>	Ruins <input type="checkbox"/>	Unexposed <input type="checkbox"/>
INTEGRITY	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	Altered <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Unaltered <input type="checkbox"/>		Moved <input type="checkbox"/>	Original Site <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The design of Monumental Church takes into account its dual function: first, to serve as a monument to those who perished in the tragic theater fire; and second, to serve as an Episcopal parish church. Thus the stone portico which shelters the actual monument to the deceased becomes almost a separate structure from the stuccoed church behind it. The portico is in antis on all three sides, having two free-standing Greek Doric columns framing each opening. Instead of a pediment, the portico is crowned by a triangular parapet. The funereal quality of the portico is heightened by the frieze decorated with a series of lachrymatories rather than triglyphs.

The church itself is a two-story octagonal structure crowned by a low circular dome topped with a lantern. Mills intended that the church have a tall spire attached to the rear side, but only the bottom section of this was built. The three-part windows on both the first and second stories originally contained sashes with small, clear glass panes, but these were removed and replaced with stained glass.

The interior of Monumental Church is the auditorium type containing box pews with a gallery stretching around the rear. Alterations to the interior include the remodeling of the apse and chancel, and the removal of the four wooden tablets which hung over the altar. The organ has been removed from the rear choir gallery and a new organ case has been placed in the bay to the right of the altar.

A two-story wing was added to the east side of the church circa 1840. Although some repair work was undertaken on the portico, circa 1965, the interior of the church is much in need of restoration. The late-nineteenth century alterations and redecoration has sadly obscured the clear architectural statement that Mills's interior originally made.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

B. 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) 1812-1814

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

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

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Include Personages, Dates, Events, Etc.)

Monumental Church was erected during the years 1812-14 on the site of the American French Academy which burned December 26, 1811, during a theatrical performance. The church was built as a monument to the seventy-two people, including the Governor, George William Smith, who died in the fire.) John Marshall, a pew holder, headed the committee which raised funds by public subscription to build the church. (The city of Richmond contributed \$5000.00 and the site, and the church served as an Episcopal parish church until 1965 when the property was transferred to the Medical College of Virginia.) Other important persons connected with the church were the Reverend Richard Channing Moore, later Bishop of Virginia, who served as first rector, and Edgar Allen Poe who attended the church as a small boy. The building now serves as an inter-faith chapel for students at the Medical College.

In addition to its historical association, Monumental Church is one of America's earliest and most distinctive Greek Revival churches, the work of the famous architect, Robert Mills. The noted architectural historian, Talbot Hamlin, summed up the architectural significance of Monumental Church when he wrote: ". . . it is thus as prophetic of the Greek Revival still to come as it is expressive of the freedom of design which characterizes Mills' early work."

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

STATE Virginia	
COUNTY Richmond	
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Monumental Church (Continuation Sheet)

(Number all entries)

Statement of Significance **NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK**

The Monumental Church in Richmond, Virginia, is the work of the nationally prominent architect Robert Mills. The church was built from 1812-1814 to commemorate the seventy-two persons, including the Governor of Virginia, who died in a theatre fire on that site in 1811. The building was erected to serve as a memorial and as an active church. This double purpose is brilliantly expressed by the stone memorial portico and the stucco octagonal church behind it. By designing in 1812 an octagonal auditorium plan church covered with a shallow dome and casting the whole composition in the severest forms of the Greek Revival style, Robert Mills created a wholly original and unprecedented building, which, despite a certain heaviness of proportion, has come to be regarded as a milestone in the development of American architecture.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Hamlin, Talbot, Greek Revival Architecture in America, New Jersey: Dover Publications, 1964.

Scott, Mary Wingfield, Old Richmond Neighborhoods, Richmond: Whittet and Shepperson, 1950.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN ONE ACRE		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		37° 32' 24"	77° 25' 45"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Edward P. Alexander **CHAIRMAN**

ORGANIZATION: Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission DATE: March 27, 1969

STREET AND NUMBER: Room 1116, Ninth Street State Office Building

CITY OR TOWN: Richmond STATE: Virginia CODE: 760

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name Dr. Edward P. Alexander

Title Chairman, Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

Date March 27, 1969

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

Ernest Allen Connelly
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date APR 16 1969

ATTEST:
William J. Swintz
Keeper of The National Register

Date APR 16 1969

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

