

### Other Sites Considered

#### St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, South Carolina

Location: Berkeley County, on State 45 about 0.5 miles east of its junction with U.S. 52 at St. Stephens, South Carolina.

Ownership: St. Stephen's Episcopal Parish, The Reverend George L. Jacobs, Rector, St. Stephens, South Carolina.

### History and Condition

St. Stephen's Church, erected in 1767-69, is an excellent and well-preserved example of a small Georgian brick country parish church constructed on South Carolina's usual rectangular plan. The structure, however, exhibits unusual architectural pretensions, because it includes a high gambrel roof with Jacobean curvilinear gables, exterior Doric pilasters, and a ornamented tray ceiling.

By Act of Assembly in 1754 a portion of St. James' Parish, Santee, established in 1706, was laid off to form St. Stephen's Parish. The first church in the new parish was a wooden building erected as a chapel of ease. In 1762 an act was passed to replace this structure with a new brick church. Construction on the existing church began in 1767 and was completed in 1769. Francis Villepoux and A. Howard provided the brick and acted as architects; William Axson was the master mason. The initials of these men are cut into the brickwork. St. Stephen's was incorporated in 1788 and regular services were discontinued in 1808. Twice, however, the building was repaired during the 19th century and thus saved from destruction. In 1932 the church was again reopened for regular worship.

St. Stephen's Church is a small one-story brick structure with a rectangular plan; the building is 46 feet or five-bays long and 36 feet or three-bays wide. The design is unusual because of the gambrel roof with Jacobean, curvilinear, parapeted gables at the ends. In order to incorporate an ornamented tray ceiling like that at St. Michael's Church in Charleston (1752-61), the high gambrel roof used here is uncommonly heavy and the Palladian window over the altar at the east end is also too small. In spite of these defects of design, the church is pleasing as a whole. The walls are laid in Flemish bond. Doors and windows have fanlights above and are topped by segmental brick arches. The windows have exterior paneled shutters and each parapeted gable has a round window in its center. The roof line is marked by a wide wooden cornice. Another distinctive feature of the exterior architecture is the use of brick Doric pilasters, of which there are six on each side and four on each end. There are three entrances, one located in the center of each long (north and south) side and one in the center of the west (narrow) gable end.

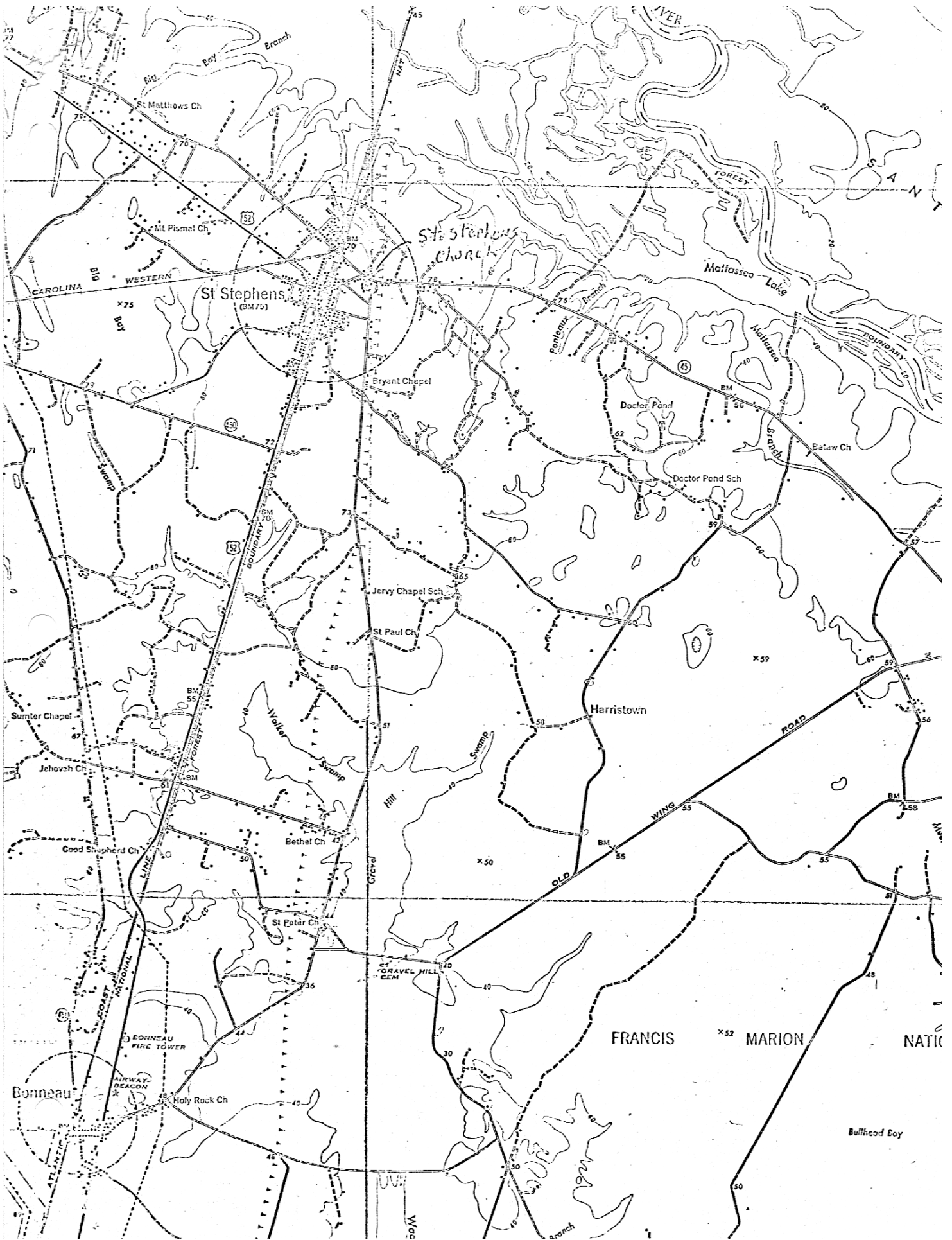
The church has a main (east-west) aisle and a cross aisle midway in the body of the church. The floor is of tile and there are 45 pews. A large gallery with pews is located at the west end. The reredos of the church are unusually impressive. On either side of the small east Palladian window, which is framed by fluted pilasters carrying a broken pediment, are taller dog-eared frames for the tablets of the Law. These frames are set between fluted pilasters supporting entablatures from which spring a higher denticulated pediment surmounting the whole window treatment. The space between the top of the window and the point of the pediment is ornamented by a gilded glory surrounding the letters IHS. The ornamented cedar pulpit is also modeled after that of St. Michael's Church.

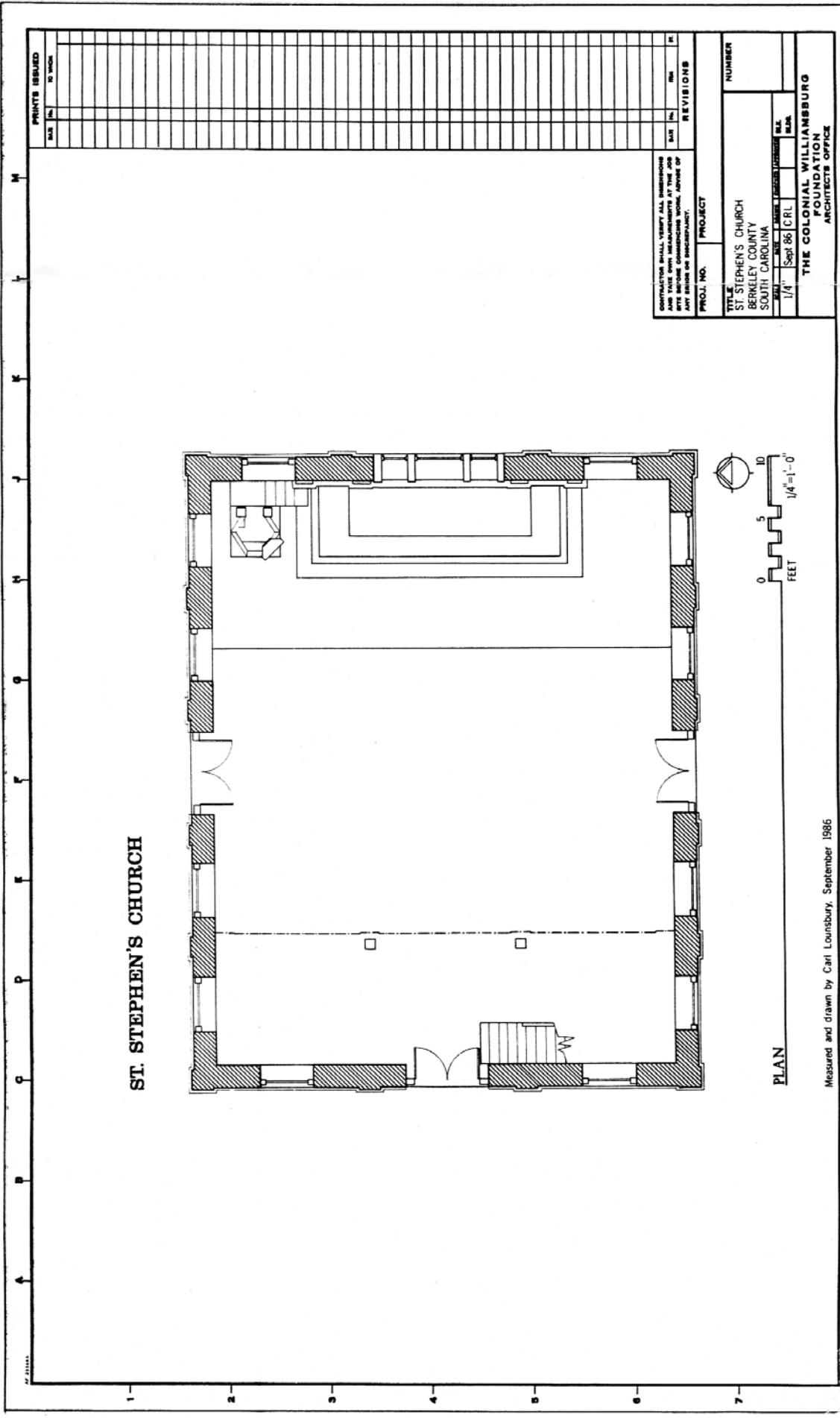
Following the earthquake of 1886 iron rods were run through each end from front to back and from side to side, to save the building from threatened collapse. The restored structure is in good condition and is still used for religious purposes. The fabric of the church, including its interior woodwork, appear to be original.

ST. STEPHEN'S CHURCH, BERKELEY COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA

Boundaries of the Historic Site:

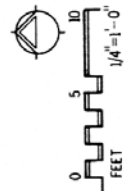
Approximately 4.59 acres of land in the shape of a trapezoid, including St. Stephen's Church structure and churchyard, starting at the northwest corner on the south edge of State Route 45 at latitude  $33^{\circ}24'21''$  N. - longitude  $79^{\circ}55'06''$  W., proceeding to the southeast along the south edge of the state road about 500 feet to the northeast corner at lat.  $33^{\circ}24'20''$  N. - long.  $79^{\circ}54'57''$  W., continuing to the southwest about 300 feet to the southeast corner at lat.  $33^{\circ}24'15''$  N., - long.  $79^{\circ}54'57''$  W., then going northwest about 500 feet to the southwest corner at lat.  $33^{\circ}24'16''$  N. - long.  $79^{\circ}55'06''$  W., then returning to the northeast about 400 feet to the beginning, the northwest corner. Precise boundaries, as described above, are recorded in red on a copy of U. S. Geological Survey Map: Bonneau Quadrangle, South Carolina 15 Minute Series (Topographic), 1943, on file with the Branch of Historical Surveys, Division of History, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, National Park Service.





**ST. STEPHEN'S CHURCH**

**PLAN**



CONTRACTOR SHALL VERIFY ALL DIMENSIONS AND TAKE OWN MEASUREMENTS AT THE JOB SITE BEFORE BEGINNING WORK. THE ARCHITECT ASSUMES NO RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ACCURACY OF THE CONTRACTOR'S MEASUREMENTS.

DATE	BY	REVISIONS
1/4	CR	
Sept 86	CR	

PROJECT	ST. STEPHEN'S CHURCH BERKELEY COUNTY SOUTH CAROLINA
TITLE	FOUNDATION
ARCHITECT	THE COLONIAL WILLIAMSBURG FOUNDATION ARCHITECTS OFFICE

Measured and drawn by Carl Lounsbury, September 1986