

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECEIVED	APR 1 1975
DATE ENTERED	APR 14 1975

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

Allen University ~~Historic District~~

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

1530 Harden Street

— NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Columbia

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

#2

STATE

South Carolina

— VICINITY OF

CODE

045

COUNTY

Richland

CODE

079

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- MUSEUM
- COMMERCIAL
- PARK
- EDUCATIONAL
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- ENTERTAINMENT
- RELIGIOUS
- GOVERNMENT
- SCIENTIFIC
- INDUSTRIAL
- TRANSPORTATION
- MILITARY
- OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Allen University

STREET & NUMBER

1530 Harden Street

CITY, TOWN

Columbia

— VICINITY OF

STATE

South Carolina

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Richland County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

1508 Washington St.

CITY, TOWN

Columbia

STATE

South Carolina

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Inventory of Historic Places in South Carolina

DATE

1973

— FEDERAL STATE — COUNTY — LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

South Carolina Department of Archives & History

CITY, TOWN

Columbia

STATE

South Carolina

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED	(interior)	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Allen University, founded in 1881 by the African Methodist Episcopal Church, has historically been chiefly controlled and managed by blacks. Named for Richard Allen, founder of the AME Church, Allen was one of several universities established by the A.M.E. Church in the South following the War Between the States.

Allen University grew out of Payne Institute, established at Cokesbury in 1871 by the Abbeville District of the African Methodist Church. In 1880 the Columbia and South Carolina Annual Conferences of the church merged Payne into Allen University, which was opened in Columbia the following year.

In 1881 Allen University purchased its first property in Columbia. Joseph M. English was paid a sum of \$6000 for a four acre lot in the Waverly area, the site of the present campus. In January of 1882, Allen purchased additional property on Sumter Street and operated there for a short time. Records documenting the exact date of Allen's permanent placement at its present site have not been located; however, the first major building was erected and in use on the present site in 1888.

Founded primarily to provide an educated clergy for the A.M.E. Church, Allen also offered law and vocational degrees. Beginning with sixty students and a faculty of six, the school graduated in its first nine years seventy-five students: twelve from the collegiate department, fifteen from the law department, and forty-eight from the normal department. Allen was among the few southern colleges for blacks to have a law department, which lasted until the early 1900s.

During the late 19th and early 20th Century, Allen's curriculum had an industrial and agricultural emphasis following the example set by Tuskegee Institute and articulated by Booker T. Washington in his 1895 speech at the Atlanta Exposition. Part of this philosophy included having all students do manual labor. In 1888-89, for example, all students boarding at the university were required to do manual work for one hour each day and in the catalogue of 1896-97, it was specified that "all ladies in each Department must sew."¹

Architecture of Allen University is typical of many university buildings in the United States, characterized by red brick and white columns. The campus historic district contains four major buildings situated around a campus green. Other more recently constructed buildings are located east of the historic district.

Arnett Hall: In 1891 the cornerstone of Arnett Hall, the oldest building standing on the Allen campus today, was laid. Although still not completed in 1896, the building, called originally the Ladies Industrial Hall, was in use. Although the exact completion date is unknown, Allen University catalogues indicate that the fifty-room building was finished by 1905. Named for president of the Allen Board of Trustees, the Right Reverend

¹CATALOGUE OF ALLEN UNIVERSITY, 1896-97, p.30.

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 type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) Black History
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1881, 1891, 1906, 1922, 1941 BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE
BLACK HISTORY (EDUCATION)

Among the many private schools and universities for blacks founded during the post-War-Between-the-States period, Allen University was probably the first private black school founded and operated by blacks in South Carolina. Established by a major black denomination, the African Methodist Episcopal Church, Allen was influenced by the denomination's emphasis on education and a trained clergy. Begun four years after the University of South Carolina was closed to blacks, Allen helped fill the pressing need for black education in South Carolina.

Although plagued by problems of overcrowding and lack of sufficient funds, Allen University has had distinguished faculty members and presidents. One of the ablest black lawyers in the state in the 1880s, Daniel Augustus Straker, taught at Allen. Straker, a native of Barbados, came to the United States in 1868. A graduate of Howard Law School, he moved to Charleston in 1875 to work as a customs house inspector. In 1882 Straker moved to Columbia to teach at Allen and to practice law in the local courts.

The first graduates who had been Straker's students scored so high on the state Supreme Court examination that they received a special commendation from the Judges. Straker was a vocal participant in South Carolina politics and was an unsuccessful candidate for Lieutenant Governor in 1884. However, by 1887 Straker found teaching and law so unremunerative in the South that he moved to Detroit.

One of the most famous early graduates was E.J. Sawyer, who graduated from Allen in 1882. Sawyer founded the Bennettsville, South Carolina, PEE DEE EDUCATOR in 1879. Published semi-monthly for over twenty years, it was one of the strongest black-owned newspapers in South Carolina. Sawyer, a successful merchant, also served as principal of the Bennettsville Graded School and practiced law.

William David Chappelle, a graduate and later president of Allen, was an A.M.E. Church minister, who established the A.M.E. Printing House in Nashville. As secretary and treasurer of the African Methodist Sunday School Union, he prepared and edited Sunday School literature for eight years. After serving as president of Allen University, 1898-1899 and 1908-1912, he became a bishop in the church in 1912.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE one

Benjamin W. Arnett, Arnett Hall served as a women's dormitory, class rooms, and later as a men's dormitory and industrial building. Vacated in 1965, the exterior appears to have been unchanged since the Hall was built.

The three story brick building with basement has a hipped roof and a projecting center gable with shingles. Second and third floor of front facade have twelve windows with slightly rounded arches. First floor windows have segmented transoms. Center gable contains a divided fanlight, and a cupola surmounts the building. Entrance has a portico with victorian latticework.

Interior is in a bad state of repair with broken windows and deteriorating wooden stairways and floors.

Coppin Hall: The cornerstone of Coppin Hall was laid in 1906. The builder was Reverend John D. Smart of Winnsboro, a traveling minister of the A.M.E. Church. Completed on March 1, 1907, the building cost \$22,000. According to the University's catalogue of 1907, it was built of "fine red brick, 110 by 45 feet, and four stories high with Mansard roof covered by artistic tin shingles, while four stately Grecian columns adorn the front portico of the building."²

In 1912 the first floor contained eight rooms used for an office, library, and recitation rooms. Entire second floor was the chapel with a seating capacity of 700. Third and fourth floors were used as girls' dormitories. Building is presently used as a women's dormitory.

Coppin Hall has three stories plus mansard roof with a belt course between second and third floor. There are nine bays on each floor; windows (two-over-two) on first and second floor have keystone and voussoirs. Front facade has four monumental fluted Doric columns which support a portico surmounted by balustrade. Center section of building is painted white and has four pilasters. Dentil work is found below cornices of mansard and portico.

Chappelle Administration Building: Both Coppin Hall and Chappelle Administration Building face Harden Street, one of Columbia's major through streets. Chappelle was under construction in 1922 and was completed in 1925 at a cost of \$165,000. Use of the building remains much as originally planned. Basement contains kitchen and dining hall, print shop, and mail room. Assembly hall and administrative offices are on first floor; while the second and third floors are used as classrooms. Library, located in 1930 on first floor, is now in a separate building.

Chappelle is a three story brick building with basement. Three stories of front facade have fourteen bays each, and there are five gabled dormer windows on the hipped roof. Detail work includes keystone over first and second floor windows, and a por-

²CATALOGUE OF ALLEN UNIVERSITY, 1907, p.4.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7

PAGE two

tico with balustrade and arches. Front door has a semicircular fanlight. There is dentil molding under roof cornice. Chappelle has a round cupola with a clock and chimes. Destroyed by lightning in September of 1974, the cupola has been restored.

Flipper Library: The Joseph Simon Flipper Library, named for a prominent A.M.E. Bishop, was erected in 1941. It contains a lecture hall, browsing room, the offices of the librarians, and approximately 54,000 books. The basement of Flipper Library was renovated in the late 1960s and contains a Reading Library, Material Laboratory, and Learning Resource Center.

Library is of stone, two stories with hipped roof. Second level has arched windows, three on each side of projecting gabled entrance. Circular stairs lead to entrance.

The Canteen, a one-story frame structure located adjacent to Coppin Hall, is presently being utilized by the campus canteen, the campus bookstore, and the Office of Information Services. Early catalogues attest to its use as the University cafeteria prior to the construction of the Chappelle Administration Buildings, from 1922-1925.

SURROUNDINGS

In 1975 the main campus of Allen University is located, as it was in the 1880s, on Harden Street and is bounded by Taylor, Hampton, and Pine Streets. According to the catalogue of 1888 the location was then "in the suburbs of Columbia, S.C."³ The location is now close to the central downtown section of the city. Harden and Taylor Streets are two of the most heavily traveled streets in Columbia. Across Taylor Street is Benedict College, another institution with a primarily black student body.

The only intrusion within the historic district is a small cinder-block building, attached to side of library.

³ CATALOGUE OF ALLEN UNIVERSITY, 1889, p.23.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9

PAGE three

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Meriwether, Colyer. HISTORY OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN SOUTH CAROLINA, Washington, D.C. Government Printing Office, 1889.

MINUTES OF THE SEVENTH ANNUAL SESSION OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA CONFERENCE OF THE AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, Columbia, S.C. J.W. Denny, Book and Job Printer, 1871.

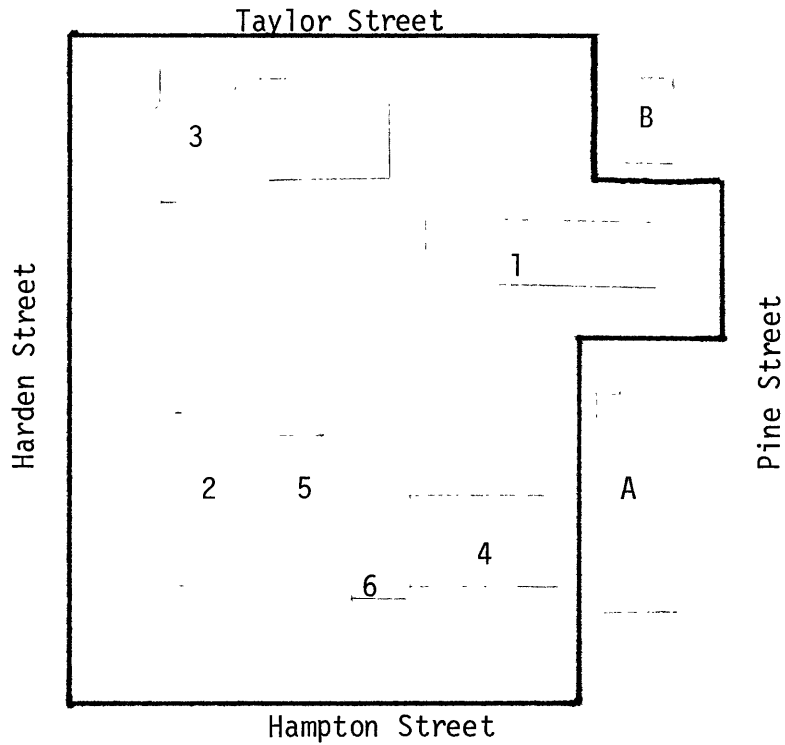
MINUTES OF THE TENTH ANNUAL SESSION OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH. Columbia, S.C.: Republican Printing Company, Job Printers, 1874.

Newby, I.A. BLACK CAROLINIANS, A HISTORY OF BLACKS IN SOUTH CAROLINA, FROM 1895 TO 1968, Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1973.

Tindall, George Brown. SOUTH CAROLINA NEGROES 1877-1900, Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1952.

Allen University Historic District Sketch Map

— line indicates boundary lines
(map not drawn to scale)



1. Arnett Hall
2. Coppin Hall
3. Chappelle Administration Building
4. Joseph Simon Flipper Library
5. Canteen Building
6. Cinder-block building (intrusion)

Outside boundaries of district (intrusions)

- A. Gibbs Science Building
- B. Faith Hall