

NOV 8 2011

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in "Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms" (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name St. Thomas African Methodist Episcopal Church
other names/site number n/a

2. Location

street & number 401 N. Dooly Street
city, town Hawkinsville (n/a) **vicinity of**
county Pulaski **code** GA 235
state Georgia **code** GA **zip code** 31036

(n/a) not for publication

3. Classification

Ownership of Property:

- private
- public-local
- public-state
- public-federal

Category of Property:

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property:	<u>Contributing</u>	<u>Noncontributing</u>
buildings	1	0
sites	0	0
structures	0	0
objects	0	0
total	1	0

Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: n/a

Name of previous listing: n/a

Name of related multiple property listing: n/a

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination 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 meets the National Register criteria. () See continuation sheet.

Richard Coates
Signature of certifying official

10.30.00
Date

W. Ray Luce
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

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

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency or bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register

Edson H. Beall

12/7/00

() determined eligible for the National Register _____

() determined not eligible for the National Register _____

() removed from the National Register _____

() other, explain: _____

() see continuation sheet

Jam

Keeper of the National Register

Date

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions:

RELIGION/religious facility/church

Current Functions:

RELIGION/religious facility/church

7. Description

Architectural Classification:

OTHER: Folk Victorian

Materials:

foundation	brick
walls	brick
roof	asphalt
other	n/a

Description of present and historic physical appearance:

The St. Thomas African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church is a large brick building situated on the northwest corner of the intersection of N. Dooly and Second streets (see National Register Map). The building is situated close to the street on the southwest corner of the lot. The surrounding neighborhood is historically African-American; however, the architectural integrity of the historic housing stock has been diminished due to modern residential development, nonhistoric additions and alterations to the buildings, and loss of historic housing.

The St. Thomas AME Church is a large brick building constructed 1908-1912. The exterior of the gable-front building features a tall side steeple constructed of brick featuring decorative wood shingles and a low-pitched hipped roof with overhanging eaves. An original entrance to the tower still remains. The main block of the building features a steeply pitched gable-front roof, overhanging eaves, and cornice returns. The front facade features brick buttresses, nonhistoric windows with historic fanlight transoms, historic wooden double doors with a fanlight transom, and brick round arches located over the windows and doors. Decorative brickwork is located along the corners of the tower and front and rear facades (see photos 1-4). An original cutaway corner features the building's cornerstone (see photo 5). The brick foundation was covered with stucco during the late 1980s. The side elevations feature brick buttresses, nonhistoric windows within the historic fenestration, and wide overhanging eaves.

The interior of the building consists of an open space with a pulpit located on the west end of the building. Within the sanctuary space, two aisles create three sections of pews (see Interior Floor Plan). The intact historic features include plaster walls, wainscoting, altar railing, wood panel doors, window surrounds, and light fixtures (see photos 6-8). The original tongue-and-groove ceiling is covered with tiles and the original wood floors are covered with carpet.

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Continuation Sheet**

Section 7--Description

The landscaping surrounding the property consists of nonhistoric shrubs and foundation plantings. A row of historic mature trees remains along the northern boundary line.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): N/A

A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions):

Ethnic Heritage: African American
Architecture

Period of Significance:

1908-1950

Significant Dates:

1908-1912 Construction of the St. Thomas African Methodist Episcopal Church.
1908-1950 Historic period of service.

Significant Person(s):

n/a

Cultural Affiliation:

n/a

Architect(s)/Builder(s):

Unknown.

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Section 8--Statement of Significance

Narrative statement of significance (areas of significance)

St. Thomas African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church, built 1908-1912, is one of the last remaining components of a historically African-American neighborhood located near the center of Hawkinsville. The property is significant in the area of Ethnic Heritage: African American as an excellent example of an extremely important community landmark building within a historically African-American neighborhood. Churches were often the first buildings constructed in African-American communities that developed following the end of the Civil War (1861-1865). The original St. Thomas AME Church was a wood-framed building constructed in 1877. The 1877 building was demolished and the current building was constructed on the same site in 1908-1912. To understand the overall significance of this historically African-American community landmark building, it is essential to understand the important role of the church in African-American communities. In *An Era of Progress and Promise 1863-1910: The Religious, Moral, and Educational Development of the American Negro Since His Emancipation*, the author explains that the most important and significant contribution to the African-American community was the construction of churches by those living within the communities. He continues to explain that one main reason why African-American churches were the main focus and were able to provide for those living within African-American communities was because "There was far more toleration for the Negro church than for any other Negro organization. In this way the church came to have a very large place in the life of the Negro people. It became and has remained the key to the higher progress of the masses." The significance of the St. Thomas AME Church extends beyond its period of construction. The church has served a significant role throughout the historic period as an extremely important community landmark building within the African-American community. The St. Thomas AME Church was historically the largest and only brick building within the African-American neighborhood. The church continues to survive in a neighborhood suffering the loss of its building stock, as well as continues to serve the African-American residents of Hawkinsville.

The building is significant in the area of architecture as an excellent example of a side-steeple church representing the Folk Victorian style. According to the *African-American Historic Places and Culture: A Preservation Resource Guide for Georgia*, African-American urban churches are typically located on corner lots, feature single or twin towers, and are larger than African-American rural churches. The exterior character-defining features of the building include the side steeple, steeply pitched gable-front roof, overhanging eaves, brick buttresses, wooden double doors with fanlight transom, decorative round arches above the windows and doors, and decorative brickwork along the corners of the front and rear facades. The character-defining features of the Folk Victorian style include the decorative brick wall buttresses, round arches over the windows and doors, decorative brickwork along the curved edges of the front facade and tower (see photos 1-4). The Folk Victorian style was popular in Georgia from the 1870s to the 1910s. The Folk Victorian style provided some hint of stylistic detailing on what was otherwise an unadorned traditional building type.

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The intact historic interior features a large open space with the pulpit located in the west end of the building. The significant architectural features include the machine-turned balustrade of the alter railing, decorative ironwork of the choir loft, paneled doors, plaster walls, wainscoting, windows surrounds, and light fixtures (see photos 6-8).

National Register Criteria

St. Thomas African Methodist Episcopal Church is eligible under National Register Criterion A for its association to the African-American historic of Hawkinsville and under National Register Criterion C for as an excellent example of the Folk Victorian style and as a significant community landmark building.

Criteria Considerations (if applicable)

St. Thomas African Methodist Episcopal Church is eligible under National Register Criterion Consideration A due to its architectural distinction and its historic importance to the African-American community in Hawkinsville.

Period of significance (justification)

The period of significance begins in 1908, the year construction started on the building, and ends in 1950, the end of the historic period. Since the building's construction, it has continued to serve as a significant community landmark building within the African-American community of Hawkinsville.

Contributing/Noncontributing Resources (explanation, if necessary)

St. Thomas African Methodist Episcopal Church is the only contributing resource in this nomination.

Developmental history/historic context (if appropriate)

****Note: The following history was prepared by Robin Nail, "St. Thomas AME Church," Historic District Information Form, June 1997 On file at the Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia.**

St. Thomas African Methodist Episcopal Church (AME) was organized in 1866 under the leadership of Reverend Henry McNeil Turner. Turner, who had been appointed by President Lincoln as the first black chaplain in the U.S. Army, arrived in Hawkinsville, Georgia in 1866. It is said that since he had no place to stay, he spent his first night in town in a large tree. The first church to house the St. Thomas AME congregation was constructed adjacent to that tree and dedicated on December 14, 1866. Reverend Turner went on to serve the African Methodist Episcopal Church as bishop for 35

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years following his consecration in 1880. He also served two terms in the Georgia legislature. Reverend Robert Anderson succeeded Turner as the second pastor of the church, a position he held until 1876.

The first known recorded legal transaction concerning St. Thomas AME Church occurred in 1877 when James E. Laidler sold a 200' x 210' lot at the corner of Dooly and Second streets to John Ward, James K. Brown, Silas Brown, Mack Ward, and Edward Thomas, Trustees of the AME Church and their successors for \$75. A more permanent church structure may have been constructed on the site at this time as suggested by a marble cornerstone, which reads A.M.E. Church, 1877, located on the current church's tower.

The present St. Thomas AME Church structure is believed to date from 1908, at which time it replaced the earlier building. Reverend A. Parker and Reverend T.M.N. Smith, Presiding Elder of the Americus Dublin District, spearheaded the project. Four years later in 1912, the church was rebuilt, according to the church's cornerstone. According to longtime members of the church, the church was remodeled not "rebuilt" in 1912. Reverend A.K. Woods was the pastor at that time, and W.A. Richie, W.H. Gary, and D.C. Warren served on the Building Committee. It is interesting to note that church Trustees W.H. Gary and D.C. Warren and Pastor A.K. Wood sold two adjacent tracts of land located north and west of the church to W.A. Richie for \$400 on October 23, 1912, thus leaving St. Thomas with the 130' x 120' church site at the northwest corner of North Dooly and Second streets. Perhaps Richie, a prominent teacher and businessman, purchased the property to provide the church with the money to fund the remodeling. Another member of the Building Committee, D.C. Warren, was a carpenter by trade, so it is possible that he may have had an active hands-on role in this project. Although it is not known who the craftsmen were, they likely were skilled members of the local African-American community.

The congregation of St. Thomas AME Church remained active through the years, most notably raising the impressive sum of \$687.52 during the depths of the Great Depression on the church's 68th anniversary in 1934. Church members Annie Grace Harden, Mary Pooler, and Jewell Williams spearheaded this successful fundraiser. Reverend A.M. Roberts was pastor at the time. In the 1960s, civil rights groups, such as the NAACP, met at St. Thomas AME Church.

Some changes have been made to the church structure since it was rebuilt in 1912; however, its overall architectural integrity remains intact. Included among these changes are the addition of restrooms (1950s); Celotex ceiling tiles (1960s); wall-to-wall carpeting (1982); interior partitions and new windows to replace broken colored glass ones (1987); new front steps (1988); and new pews and central HVAC system (1989). Most of the work on the church was made possible due to the generous gifts of church members.

Today, St. Thomas AME Church has a congregation numbering approximately 50

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members. The church continues to serve the Hawkinsville community in a number of ways, including providing space for any community meetings (NAACP regularly meets there) and rehearsal space for two community choirs. Members of other churches even attend St. Thomas community Sunday School. The church remains an important historic and religious landmark for the entire community.

9. Major Bibliographic References

The Pulaski Banking Company newsletter (Hawkinsville, June 1992, Vol. 7, No. 34),

Programs on the History of St. Thomas A.M.E. Church (12/84 and 12/86).

"St. Thomas A.M.E. Dates Back to 1866." *Hawkinsville Dispatch and News*. 6 February 1991: p. 6

Georgia Department of Natural Resources. "Georgia's Living Places: Historic Houses in Their Landscaped Settings." 1991.

Hartshorn W. N., ed. An Era of Progress and Promise 1863-1910: The Religious, Moral, and Educational Development of the American Negro Since His Emancipation. Boston: The Priscilla Publishing Co., 1910.

Merritt, Carole. Historic Black Resources: A Handbook For the Identification, Documentation, and Evaluation of Historic African-American Properties in Georgia. Georgia Department of Natural Resources, 1984.

Previous documentation on file (NPS): (X) N/A

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been issued
date issued:
- 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, Specify Repository:

Georgia Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): 13-H, Pulaski County Survey 1976

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property 0.37 acre.

UTM References

A) Zone 17 Easting 267,104 Northing 3,574,957

Verbal Boundary Description

The National Register boundary for the St. Thomas African Methodist Episcopal Church is indicated on the attached tax map by a heavy black line.

Boundary Justification

The National Register boundary for the St. Thomas African Methodist Episcopal Church includes the building located within the historic and current legal boundary.

11. Form Prepared By

State Historic Preservation Office

name/title Amy Pallante/ National Register Specialist
organization Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources
street & number 156 Trinity Avenue, Suite 101
city or town Atlanta **state** Georgia **zip code** 30303-3600
telephone (404) 656-2840 **date** November 2000

Consulting Services/Technical Assistance (if applicable) () not applicable

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- () consultant
- (X) regional development center preservation planner
- () other:

(HPD form version 02-24-97)

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Continuation Sheet**

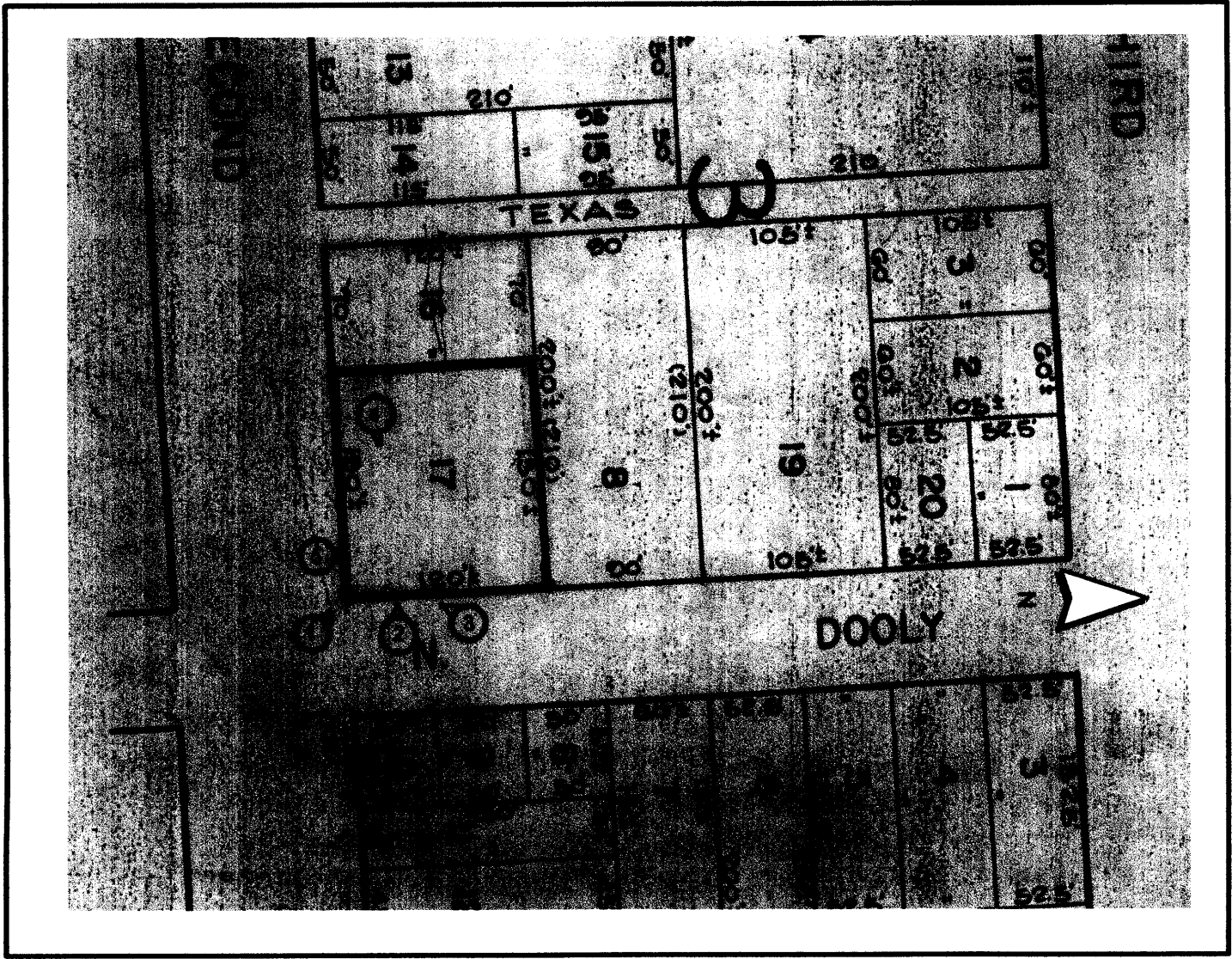
Photographs

Name of Property: St. Thomas African Methodist Episcopal Church
City or Vicinity: Hawkinsville
County: Pulaski
State: Georgia
Photographer: James R. Lockhart
Negative Filed: Georgia Department of Natural Resources
Date Photographed: March 1998

Description of Photograph(s):

- 1 of 8 View of the southwest corner of the St. Thomas African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church; photographer facing northwest.
- 2 of 8 View of the front facade of the building; photographer facing west.
- 3 of 8 View of the southeast corner of the building; photographer facing southwest.
- 4 of 8 View of the rear facade; photographer facing east.
- 5 of 8 Detail view of the cornerstone; photographer facing north.
- 6 of 8 View of the sanctuary from the main entrance.
- 7 of 8 Detail view of the pulpit area.
- 8 of 8 View of the sanctuary from the pulpit area.

NATIONAL REGISTER MAP
St. Thomas African Methodist Episcopal Church
Hawkinsville, Pulaski Co., GA.

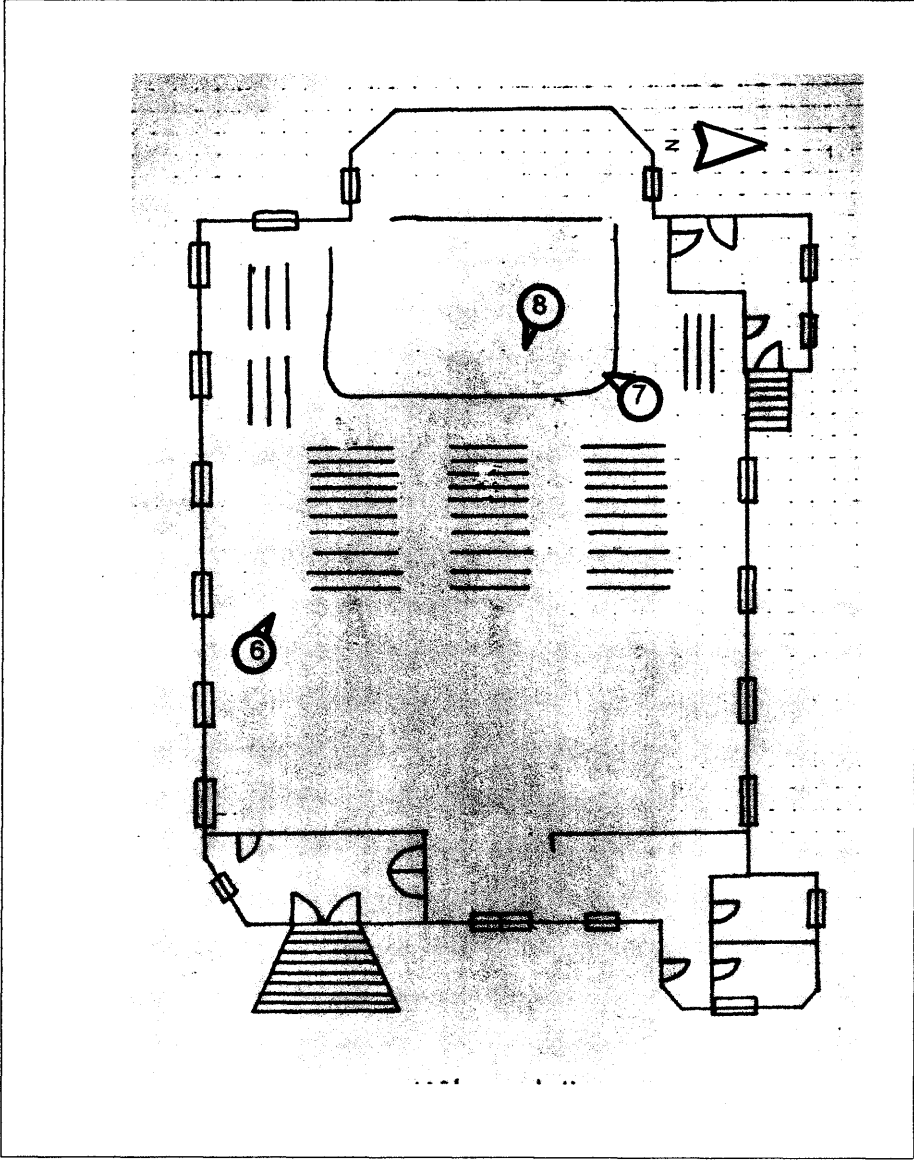


LEGEND

- = Phone number and direction
- = National Register boundary



FLOOR PLAN
St. Thomas African Methodist Episcopal Church
Hawkinsville, Pulaski Co., GA.



LEGEND

○➤ = Photo number and direction
Not to scale