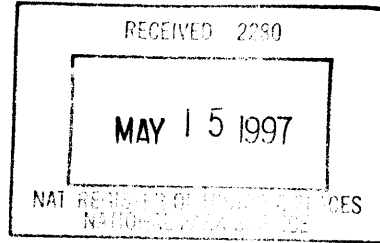


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



Resubmission

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 an 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 Old Trinity Episcopal Church (preferred)
other names/site number Trinity in the Field Episcopal Church, Trinity Episcopal Church

2. Location

street & number Charleston Road - four miles northeast of Mason NA not for publication
city or town Mason vicinity
state Tennessee code TN county Tipton code 167 38049

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant

nationally statewide locally (See continuation sheet for additional comments)

Herbert L. Hays 5/8/97
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historical Commission
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 certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet
- determined eligible for the National Register.
 See continuation sheet
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper M. J. M. [Signature] Date of Action 5/21/97

Old Trinity Episcopal Church
Name of Property

Tipton County, Tennessee
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in count)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	2	buildings
1		sites
		structures
		objects
2	2	Total

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

N/A

Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION: religious facility

FUNERARY: cemetery

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION: religious facility

FUNERARY: cemetery

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: Gothic Revival Influence

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Limestone

walls weatherboard

roof Asphalt shingles

other Wood

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** moved from its original location.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property
- G** less than 50 year of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1847 - 1921

Significant Dates

1847

Significant Person

(complete if Criterion B is marked)

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

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

- 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:

MTSU- Center for Historic Preservation

Old Trinity Episcopal Church
Name of Property

Tipton County, Tennessee
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.8 acres Mason 415 NE

UTM References

(place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>16</u>	<u>271460</u>	<u>3926300</u>	3	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	4	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

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

Boundary Justification

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Anne Crawford, C. Van West, and Tim Sloan
organization MTSU Center for Historic Preservation & N/A date May 1996
street & number Box 80 Middle Tennessee State University & N/A telephone (615) 898-2947
city or town Murfreesboro, & Covington state TN zip code 37132

Additional Documentation

submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets**Maps**

A **USGS map** (7.5 0r 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 SHPO or FPO.)

name Diocese of West Tennessee, c/o Neville Seay
street & number 39 Washington Avenue telephone
city or town Mason state TN zip code 38049

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 listing. 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 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 Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

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Old Trinity Episcopal Church Tipton County, TN

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VII. Narrative Description

Old Trinity Episcopal Church, sometimes known as Trinity in-the-Fields Church, is located on Charleston-Mason Road four miles northeast of Mason in Tipton County, Tennessee. Situated beneath a shelter of large cedar trees on a 1.8 acres rural lot, the church built in 1847, has changed little since its initial construction. Also located on the church grounds is a historic cemetery.

The church is an unadorned vernacular building, characterized largely by its gable front entrance with its pedimented gable and diagonal weatherboards. If the church has any semblance to an academic style, it is as a minimal adaptation of a gable front Gothic Revival church. The building measures twenty feet wide by forty feet long. It rests on limestone piers, has an asphalt shingle roof, and is sheathed in weatherboard siding. The east facade has three bays. Original nine over nine double hung windows flank the original double leaf, wood paneled door. Wood shutters, added circa 1921, protect the historic windows. A simple shed roof overhang protects the door and the three circa 1921 concrete steps.

The north elevation has two symmetrically placed original nine over nine double hung windows, with circa 1921 shutters. A survey in 1994 showed the bottom three boards of the church had been replaced by three strips of aluminum siding. The siding was removed in 1995 and replaced by new compatible boards. The north elevation also shows the small circa 1921 vestibule addition with a shed asphalt roof. On this elevation is a modern wood, six paneled door added circa 1990.

The west elevation shows the symmetrically located vestibule addition of 1921. Placed in the center of the vestibule is a single light square window. Flanking either side of the vestibule are original nine over nine double hung windows, with the circa 1921 shutters.

The south elevation identical to the north elevation, and has two symmetrically placed, original nine over nine windows, with circa 1921 shutters. On this elevation, the vestibule has a square single light window.

The interior of the church is an open rectangle space, with no partitions. It retains its original pine plank floor as well as the original tongue and groove pews. There is no electricity in the building. The chancel area consists only of a six inch raised platform, surrounded by a wood railing with equally spaced balusters. Within the chancel area is the altar, a plain wood table. In 1994, vandals destroyed some of the railing and balusters. In 1995, these missing or broken elements were repaired or replaced. Asymmetrically placed in the west wall is a wood door, circa 1921, which leads to a small vestibule, which originally served as a place for the clergy to hang their clothes and store their vestments. The specific function of the room is discussed in a 1929 letter written to the "newly-appointed committee for the care of Old Trinity" by James M. Maxon, Bishop Coadjutor of the Diocese of Tennessee. In the letter he requests that the "vestry

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Old Trinity Episcopal Church Tipton County, TN

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room be put into condition, with a shelf, two feet wide, and three and one half from the floor, be built into the back end, in which to lay vestments, etc. of clergy, with proper hooks, etc. to hang up clothes.”¹

The cemetery is a contributing site to the property. It contains forty-five extant headstones, with thirty of these dating prior to 1945. The most captivating marker is a life size statue, made in Italy, for the wife of Judge John Y. Peete. There are many other large family monuments scattered throughout the cemetery bearing the names of Taylors, Somervells (also spelled Somervill) Peetes, Whitleys, and others. Although African American slaves were considered members of the early church, they were buried in other nearby graveyards.

Among the tombstones there are two large metal memorial signs. One of these lists those buried nearby at Vineland, the plantation home of George Tarry Taylor and Mary Goodloe Somervill. The other sign lists those buried nearby at Richland, the plantation home of William Alexander Somervill. A wrought-iron sign near the road reads “Old Trinity Episcopal Church, 1847.”

Also on the property are two privies, one for men and one for women (NC). These are located on the rear corners, and have no modern conveniences.

Because of its isolated rural location, Old Trinity Church retains a remarkable sense of historical integrity, as a small plantation church for the local planter elite of southeastern Tipton County.

¹ Maxon, James M. , Bishop Coadjutor of the Diocese of Tennessee. Letter to four individuals, appointing them as a committee for the care of “Old Trinity,” June 24, 1929.

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VIII. Statement of Significance

Old Trinity Episcopal Church, on Charlston-Mason Road, in Tipton County, Tennessee, is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C as a significant example of vernacular church architecture in Tipton County. The gable front church is characterized by a pedimented gable with diagonal boards, multi-light windows, and wood ceilings and floors inside. Remarkably for a rural church, the Old Trinity Episcopal Church has had few changes since 1921, when it began to be used for once a year services. The adjacent cemetery is an integral part of the setting and contains numerous old gravestones.

Old Trinity Episcopal Church is the oldest remaining church building in Tipton County and an extant artifact of the religious life and social history of the county before the development of sizable urban centers here during the middle decades of the nineteenth century. Built in 1847 on an acre of land donated by planter Major William Taylor, the church's acreage has expanded over the years as the adjacent cemetery grew in size. Since 1921, the church parcel has been 1.8 acres.

The congregation began around 1837 when the Reverend John Drummond moved to the county as a missionary. Under his leadership, a congregation was organized and a vestry elected. For its first ten years, the congregation used a small storehouse, purchased from Robert Hightower, as its place of worship. Known as St. Andrew's, the congregation remained active until about 1840-1841 when services lapsed. Regular monthly services began again in 1844, under the direction of the Reverend Samuel Litton, who was followed by the Reverend James W. Rogers in 1845. However, that same year the St. Andrew's building burned. The congregation remained without a church until the present building was constructed in 1847. The congregation renamed the church from St. Andrew's to Trinity with the construction of the new building.

By this time, the plantation economy of Tipton County was in full development. The church became a meeting place for both the surrounding families of white planters and of African American slaves from those same plantations. By 1854, the Reverend J.A. Whellock was holding alternating services for white and African American parishioners. When the Reverend Charles F. Collins took over this ministry, he counted forty-one white members and twenty-one African American members. It was not unusual to find African Americans as members of antebellum Episcopal churches. It was church policy, according to Bishop Leonidas Polk: "to elevate the spiritual condition of the slaves through religious instruction." He expressed the ideal of this Christian duty in his statements to the 1843 annual convention of the diocese:

the Gospel of Christ ... seeks to equalize the human condition; and to compensate, by the richness of its spiritual provisions, for the disparity existing in the worldly circumstances of our race.²

However, rhetoric did not always match reality. As Richard Betterly has concluded:

for the antebellum planters, religion provided a means of maintaining control over their slaves. Their need to control slave behavior and compel them to work overshadowed any ideals of Christian fellowship or the

² Betterly, Richard D., "St. John's Episcopal churchyard: Material Culture and Antebellum Class Distinction," Tennessee Historical Quarterly 53 (Summer 1994): 95

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Old Trinity Episcopal Church Tipton County, TN

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salvation of black souls. Antebellum southern churches ... institutionalized the broad social realities of slavery, racism, and ruralism.³

Old Trinity Episcopal Church survived the Civil War unmarked; when Bishop Charles Todd Quintard visited on December 31, 1865, he confirmed thirteen new white members and thirteen African American members. However, the church would not survive post-war demographic and socio-economic changes. Back in 1855 the Memphis & Ohio Railroad had been completed through southeastern Tipton County, and by 1855 a new railway town called Mason's Depot, was created and platted out upon the lands of James Mason. At the end of the Civil War, the new town prospered and grew. Then, in 1868, a railroad connecting Paris and Memphis was completed and the tracks passed through southern Tipton County. Entrepreneurs and railroad officials combined efforts to plat and create a new railroad town, also called "Mason." Within two years, most social and economic activity in southeastern Tipton County had concentrated at the new town. In 1870, a new Gothic Revival Trinity Church (NR 3/15/84) was designed by Memphis architect James B. Cook. The new church was consecrated in 1871 and the families abandoned the small frame rural church for the much larger, brick, and architecturally ornate Trinity Church in Mason. However, the founding families still used the rural cemetery at "Old" Trinity for their family burials. In addition in the late 1850s, Tipton County planters and residents in Covington had banded together to build the magnificent frame Carpenter Gothic St. Matthew's Episcopal Church (NR 8/16/77) in nearby Covington. This new church undoubtedly attracted some white families who once held allegiance to the rural Trinity congregation and families that may have evacuated to the city during the war.

In 1921, families began returning to the Old Trinity Church on Trinity Sunday, the Sunday after Whitsunday or Pentecost. The initial leaders of this pilgrimage were Judge John Young Peete, J. N. M. Taylor, Sr., and Bishop James M. Maxon. The annual services have continued ever since due to a special bequest left in the will of Judge Peete. He left a farm to be sold, with the proceeds to be given to the Episcopal Endowment Corporation. In return for an annual service at the church, to be presided over by an Episcopal bishop. This fund has been used to keep the church in good repair over the last seventy years.

The cemetery is an important element of the antebellum settlement landscape represented by the Old Trinity Episcopal Church property. Most of the gravestones date from the nineteenth century. There are also two historical markers dedicated to the memory of people buried on the property of two plantations in the area. The cemetery especially focuses on six families who once operated plantations in the area. The church and cemetery are the only extant elements of the plantation landscape these families once controlled. Although not architect designed nor a formal style church, Old Trinity Episcopal Church, along with the cemetery, retains a high degree of integrity and documents the vernacular nature of antebellum churches in this West Tennessee community.

The period of significance for this nomination is 1847 - 1921. This encompasses the date the church was erected in 1847 and the date of the last major changes (shutters, rear addition) that were added to the building. Most burials in the cemetery date from the mid to late nineteenth century, with a few being later. Because the cemetery is an integral part of the setting and lies adjacent to the church, the continual period of significance encompasses the cemetery as a contributing resource.

³ Ibid., 95.

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Old Trinity Episcopal Church
Tipton County, TN

IX. Bibliography

Andrews, James G. "Special Sunday at Old Trinity." Memphis Commercial Appeal, July 6, 1975.

Beasley, Gaylon N. True Tales of Tipton: Historical Accounts of Tipton County, Tennessee. Covington: Tipton County Historical Society, 1981.

Betterly, Richard D. "St. John's Episcopal Churchyard: Material Culture and Antebellum Class Distinction." Tennessee Historical Quarterly 53(Summer 1994): 88-99.

Gwinn, David. Interview at Old Trinity Church, Tipton Co., October 16, 1995.

Maxon, James M., Bishop Coadjutor of the Diocese of Tennessee. Letter to four individuals, appointing them as a committee for the care of "Old Trinity," June 24, 1929.

Noll, The Reverend Arthur Howard. History of the Church in the Diocese of Tennessee, New York: James Pott & Co., Publishers, 1900.

Rodgers, Ellen D. Heirs Through Hope: The Episcopal Diocese of West Tennessee. Brunswick, TN: The Plantation Press, 1983.

Seay, Nevil. Interview at Trinity Episcopal Church, Mason. October 16, 1995.

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Old Trinity Episcopal Church
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X. Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The property of Old Trinity Church is marked as parcel 3 on the attached property tax map 105 of the Tipton County tax maps.

Boundary Justification

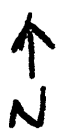
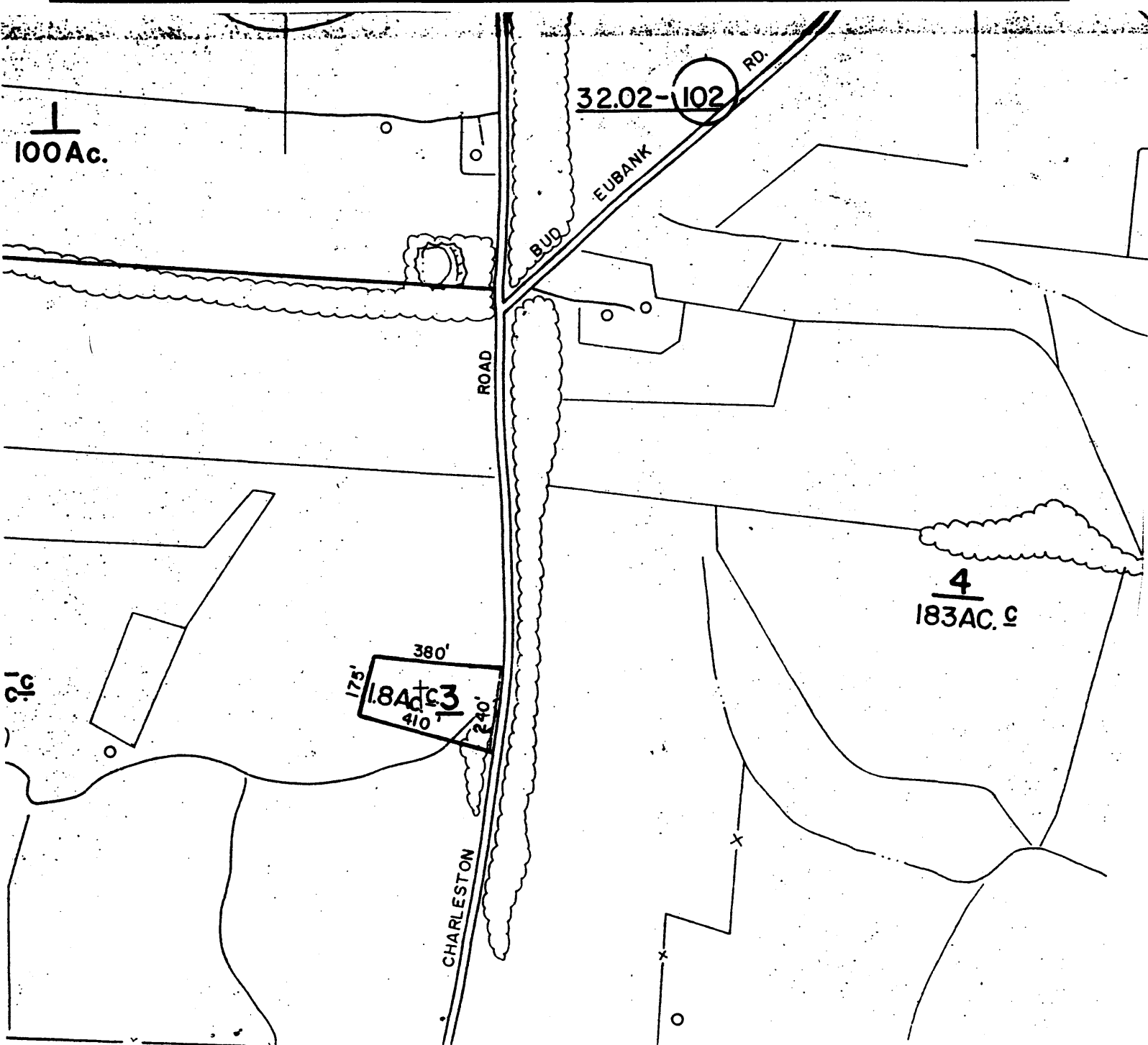
The nominated boundaries contain all of the extant historical property associated with Old Trinity Church and cemetery.

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Old Trinity Episcopal Church
Tipton County, TN



Scale 1" = 200'

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Old Trinity Episcopal Church
Tipton County, TN

Photographs

Photographs by: Carroll Van West and Anne Crawford,
MTSU Center for Historic Preservation
Theodore B. ("Tim") Sloan
Covington, TN

Date: November 1994, October 1995, April, 1996

Negatives: Tennessee Historical Commission
2941 Lebanon Road
Nashville, TN 37243

Church and cemetery, facing West
1 of 18

East facade, facing West, 1994
2 of 18

East facade, facing West, 1995
3 of 18

North elevation, facing Southeast, 1994
4 of 18

North elevation, facing South, 1996
5 of 18

East facade and south elevation, facing northwest, 1996
6 of 18

West elevation, facing East, 1995
7 of 18

South elevation, facing Northwest, 1995
8 of 18

East facade and south elevation, facing Northwest, 1995
9 of 18

Interior, facing West, 1995
10 of 18

Interior, facing West, 1996
11 of 18

Interior, facing West, 1996
12 of 18

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Tipton County, TN

Interior, 1996
13 of 18

Interior, 1996
14 of 18

Interior, 1996
15 of 18

Peete marker, facing West
16 of 18

Cemetery, facing Southwest
17 of 18

Cemetery, facing Northwest
18 of 18