

PH0692794

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED DEC 5 1978
DATE ENTERED JAN 18 1979

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

Thomas Chapel C. M. E. Church

AND/OR COMMON

Same

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Moscow Avenue

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Hickman

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

VICINITY OF

1

STATE

Kentucky

CODE
021

COUNTY
Fulton

CODE
~~105~~ 75

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

Thomas Chapel C. M. E. Church c/o Rev. J. R. Moody

STREET & NUMBER

Moscow Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Hickman

VICINITY OF

STATE
Kentucky

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Fulton County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

Wellington and Moulton Streets

CITY, TOWN

Hickman

STATE
Kentucky

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Survey of Historic Sites in Kentucky (Supplement)

DATE

1971

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Kentucky Heritage Commission

CITY, TOWN

Frankfort

STATE
Kentucky

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input 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 type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Thomas Chapel C. M. E. Church is a gable-roofed rectangular building of brick construction on the south side of Moscow Avenue in Hickman, Kentucky (1970 pop. 3,048). Modest dwellings are on either side of the church, a wooded area is to the rear, and a substantial late-nineteenth century commercial building is on the opposite side of Moscow Avenue.

Presently the largest black church in Hickman, the Thomas Chapel C. M. E. (Christian Methodist Episcopal) Church was built in 1895 to replace an earlier one destroyed by fire. There is a full basement exposed on the east and west sides due to the sloping site (see photo 1). Windows of the sub-ground level have segmental relieving arches above. The three-bay facade is symmetrically arranged--containing a double-door entrance with a fanlight overhead and flanked on each side by a blind lancet window. The masonry of the blind windows matches that of the walls, and these recesses may have been intended to contain plaques or other fillings. Corbeled brick hood-molds are above the three appurtenances on the facade, and their shapes match those of the heads.

A flight of five stone steps approaches the main entrance, and one riser is inscribed with the building's date of erection. Centered in the gable of the front is a rectangular stone plaque set into the wall, and this plaque is inscribed with the building's name.

The side walls are pierced by four lancet windows each. These windows, however, lack the rather ornamental corbeling of the blind windows of the front. The rear wall is unfenestrated.

The interior is unpartitioned save for a small, three-sided foyer beyond the entrance. The original pews have been retained. A pipe organ in the sanctuary's front was given by the Episcopal Church in Hickman in the 1940s.

The nominated property is the small lot on which the building is located--bounded by Moscow Avenue on the north, residential properties on the east and west, and a wooded area on the south.

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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

1895

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

Rev. Warren Thomas

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Thomas Chapel C. M. E. Church is important because of the role it played in the early history of education in the black community of Hickman, Kentucky, and the fact that it was the first black church founded in this small western town. The establishment of the congregation serves as a continuous stimulus for racial and religious pride for the black citizenry of Hickman.

Fulton County is situated in the southwestern part of the Jackson Purchase, a region added to Kentucky in 1818. Hickman, the county seat, was established by the Kentucky Legislature in 1834, eleven years before the formation of the county. This area, known as the Mississippi bottoms, was found suitable for farming, particularly the growing of corn, wheat, lumber, stock-raising and tobacco—a labor-intensive product that no doubt was largely responsible for the importation of slaves to that area.

Prior to the Civil War, it was common for slaves to attend the churches of their white masters, a practice continued after the conclusion of the war. In 1890, however, seventeen black citizens of Hickman, who were former slaves, decided to establish their own congregation and erected a house of worship which they called the Thomas Chapel Colored Methodist Church. The building was constructed on property given by the church's builder, first minister and namesake, Reverend Warren Thomas, a carpenter and brick mason by profession. Five years later, the church burned, but was shortly afterward rebuilt--Thomas again being chiefly responsible for the construction.

The second and present church building was provided with a full basement to accommodate school rooms for the black youth of Hickman. For fifteen years the Thomas Chapel C. M. E. Church was the principal educational institution for the black community of Hickman. Public facilities for the education of blacks in Hickman were sorely lacking in that town up to 1910, due to a discrimination legislation enacted by the state legislature. In 1837 a distribution of surplus revenue in the Federal treasury brought about the General School Law of Kentucky, but blacks were unaffected. After the Civil War a law was passed stating that no part of tax derived from the property of blacks could be used for schools until black paupers were all provided for. The Day Act, which prohibited the presence of blacks in white schools, was passed by the legislature in 1904. Throughout the history of black education in the state, however, the most damaging segment of the public school system was the manner in which funds were divided among black and

(continued)

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Collins, Lewis and Collins, Richard. History of Kentucky Vol II. Berea: Kentucke Imprints, 1976 (Originally published 1874), p. 281.
 Hamlett, Barksdale. History of Education in Kentucky, Frankfort: Kentucky Department of Public Instruction, 1914.
 McVey, Frank. The Gates Open Slowly. Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1949.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1/4 acre

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 6	3 0 4 1 2 0	4 0 4 9 3 7 0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

A rectangular lot of approximately one-quarter acre; bounded by Moscow Avenue on the north, by the property lots of those residences on the east and west, and by a wooded lot on the south.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Daniel Kidd, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION

Kentucky Heritage Commission

DATE

September 1978

STREET & NUMBER

104 Bridge Street

TELEPHONE

502/564-3741

CITY OR TOWN

Frankfort

STATE

Kentucky

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Eldred W. Melton

TITLE

State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

11-16-78

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST: *[Signature]*
 DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 1-18-79
 REGISTER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
 DATE 1/10/79

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	DEC 5 1978
DATE ENTERED	JAN 18 1979

Thomas Chapel C. M. E. Church
CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

white schools. Taxes collected from black-owned property was the sole means of support for black institutions. The problem was recognized in 1914 by Barksdale Hamlett, Kentucky's Superintendent for Public Instruction, who wrote: "In many counties the amount (of property taxes) received by the colored people. . . (is). . . totally inadequate to the support of a single school" (Hamlett, History of Education in Kentucky, p. 126).

Since Hamlett's fear was a reality in Hickman prior to 1910, the congregation of the Thomas Chapel Church specified that their church building should be equipped with an adequate space to serve as the black school for Hickman when the second building was erected in 1895. At one time, all of Hickman's black teachers were members of this congregation, and one outstanding member of the church and a former student of its school is Dr. Rufus Atwood (b. 1890), a veteran of World War I and President of Kentucky State University from 1929-62. Atwood's father was a former slave and a charter member of the church.

Today the Thomas Chapel is recognized as symbolizing the long period of educational neglect for the blacks of Hickman and of Kentucky.