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() NOT FOR PUBLICATION

SOUTH CAROLINA INVENTORY FORM FOR HISTORIC DISTRICTS AND
INDIVIDUAL PROPERTIES IN A MULTIPLE PROPERTY SUBMISSION

NAME OF MULTIPLE PROPERTY SUBMISSION: Lower Richland County Multiple
Resource Area

PREFERRED NAME OF PROPERTY: St. Thomas' Protestant Episcopal Church

HISTORIC NAME OF PROPERTY: Same

COMMON NAME OF PROPERTY: Same

LOCATION: West of South Carolina Highway 263, approximately 2 miles
northeast of Eastover (Turn left on Tillinghast Rd. then
left on Yelton Road)

CLASSIFICATION: Building

OWNER: Trustees of Protestant Episcopal Church in Upper South Carolina
Box 1789
Columbia, S. C. 29201

DESCRIPTION

St. Thomas' Protestant Episcopal Church, which was constructed in 1892-1893, is a simple, one-story, frame church building displaying elements of the Gothic revival style. Despite minor alterations, the church retains the ability to convey its historical and architectural significance.

The one-story, rectangular building is sheathed in weatherboard and has a longitudinal gable roof covered with standing seam metal and a brick pier foundation that has been filled in with concrete blocks. The facade (west elevation) features a one-bay, gable-roofed porch supported by wooden posts. The roof of the porch is open-ended with exposed braces. A modern concrete floor and ramp for handicapped access have replaced the original wooden floor of the porch. The porch shelters the main, Gothic-arched doorway, which contains double-leaf doors. Lancet

windows flank the porch and a small circular window is placed above the porch and below the gable peak of the main building. The side elevations (north and south) contain four evenly-spaced two-part lancet windows. The north side also contains a secondary entrance. The rear (east elevation) features a large tripartite lancet window flanked by smaller single lancet windows.

The interior of the church features a ceiling with exposed beams and trusses and beaded-board wainscoting.

The nominated acreage, which is located in an undeveloped area in the Sandhills, also contains the associated cemetery, site of St. Thomas' Mission School, and a modern concrete parish house.

SIGNIFICANCE

AREA OF SIGNIFICANCE: Architecture
Black History
Religion

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE: S (for office use only)

SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE

St. Thomas' Protestant Episcopal Church is significant for its association with the mission work of the Protestant Episcopal Church among the black population of lower Richland County and as a visual reminder of the religious faith of the members of the congregation in the late nineteenth century. Architecturally it is significant as an unusually intact late nineteenth century vernacular church building featuring influences of the Gothic revival style. The interior is particularly noteworthy.

After the Civil War the black membership of the Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina fell dramatically. Freedmen, who as slaves had been members of their masters' Episcopal churches, were generally attracted by other denominations or no longer attended church.(1) In the first years after the war, the work of the South Carolina Diocese of the Protestant Episcopal Church among the freedmen was generally limited to the establishment of several schools.(2)

In 1871 Bishop William Bell White Howe expressed his concern at the lack of mission work of the Episcopal Church among the black population. Beginning in that year several missions for blacks were established in the Columbia and Charleston areas.(3) Rev. Thomas Boston Clarkson, son of a prominent Richland County planter, was appointed by Bishop Howe to minister to the black residents of Lower Richland County, many the former slaves of Clarkson's father and uncle. A chapel was erected on Middleburg, the family plantation. When Middleburg was sold, the family

of Rev. Clarkson made their summer residence in the Sandhills near Eastover their permanent home. Rev. Clarkson's wife, Septima L. Clarkson, began a Sunday School there for the black children of the neighborhood. In 1885, with funds donated by Rev. James Saul of Philadelphia, a chapel, named Saul Chapel, was built in the Sandhills. Rev. Clarkson served as minister of both St. Stephens' and Saul Chapel, which made up the Wateree Mission, until his death in 1889. Mrs. Clarkson had founded a day school in association with Saul Chapel and she continued to serve as missionary teacher after her husband's death.(4)

In 1891 Saul Chapel burned and in 1892-93 the present building, named St. Thomas', was constructed on the site of Saul Chapel.(5) In 1892 Bishop Howe established an archdeaconry for the work among the black people of the diocese and the Wateree Mission became part of the archdeaconry. St. Thomas' was served by both black and white priests. (6) After the death of Mrs. Clarkson in 1911, her daughter, Julia L. Clarkson, served as missionary teacher until the early 1940s. The school was discontinued a few years after that.(7) Today the church continues to have an active congregation.

ACREAGE: 2.12 acres

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION: The boundary of the nominated property is shown as the black line on the accompanying Richland County tax map #37000, section 5, parcel 32, with a scale of 1 inch equalling 400 feet. It includes the historic building (church), a modern brick and masonry building, a cemetery and the remainder of the parcel.

QUAD NAME: Eastover, S. C.

QUAD SCALE: 1:24,000

UTM REFERENCE POINT: 17/529855/3751300

NOTES

(1) George Brown Tindall, South Carolina Negroes, 1877-1900 (Columbia, S. C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1952), pp.186- 87, 194; Albert Sidney Thomas, A Historical Account of the Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina, 1820-1957, Being a Continuation of Dalcho's Account, 1670-1820 (Columbia, S. C.: R.L. Bryan Co., 1957), pp. 446-47.

(2) Thomas, pp. 447-48.

(3) Ibid., pp. 448-49.

(4) Julia L. Clarkson, "Heroic Service Marks Story of Colored Mission: The Origin and History of St. Thomas' Mission, Richland County," The Piedmont Churchman 2 (March 1934): 3; Thomas, p. 448; Julia L. Clarkson to E.L. Green, 25 June 1924, Edwin L. Green Papers, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina, Columbia, S.C.; Chalmers G. Davidson, The Last Foray, The South Carolina Planters of 1860: A Sociological Study (Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1971, pp. 184-85; Francis O. Clarkson, comp., "Thomas Boston Clarkson of South Carolina: His Forebears and His Descendants Through His Son William," Charlotte, N.C.: n.p., n.p., 1973, in South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina, Columbia, S.C.

(5) Julia L. Clarkson, p. 3; Julia L. Clarkson to E.L. Green, June 25, 1924, Green Papers; cornerstone of building.

(6) Thomas, pp.451, 546; Tindall, pp. 199-20.

(7) Interview with Mrs. Janie Sims, Eastover, S. C., July 9, 1985; Julia L. Clarkson to E.L. Green, June 25, 1924, Green Papers.