

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY  
HISTORIC SITE SUMMARY SHEET

Survey #: P.G. #87A-10 Building Date: 1911

Building Name: St. Thomas Methodist Church

Location: 18810 Aquasco Road, Brandywine (Horsehead), Maryland

Private/Religious/Unoccupied/Fair/Inaccessible

Description

St. Thomas Methodist Church is a frame gable-roof meeting-house-style church. It consists of two parts: a main block which consists of entry vestibule and nave, and a rear wing which was added a short time later. The main block of the church is typical of early twentieth century meeting-house-style church buildings; one-story, front-gabled, and three bays in length. Siding is plain horizontal board, painted beige; the gable roof is covered with standing seam metal with fishscale pattern. Windows in the nave are gothic-arch, double-hung-sash, nine lights in tracery over six. Entrance to the nave is through a small gable-roof entry vestibule centered in the west gable end. Extending to the east is a slightly lower addition; its windows have tracery in the upper sash, but are narrower than those of the nave (5/4 lights). Northeast of the church building is a social hall, and along the north side of the unpaved entrance drive, is a graveyard bordered by woods on north and west.

Significance

St. Thomas Methodist Church is a frame meeting-house-style church building. Typical of rural chapels of the turn of this century, it stands on the site of the Freedmen's Bureau school and church which were established after the Civil War. In 1867, George E. Orme deeded one acre of his land to eight black trustees for the use of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and for a school. Completed in 1868, this building housed the Freedmen's Bureau School, and was also used for Methodist services. In 1911, the present church building was erected just to the west, and the old building was torn down. Somewhat later, the church was enlarged by the addition of altar space, a pastor's study, and storage space. Services continued in St. Thomas Church until 1973, when its congregation merged with that of John Wesley Methodist Church in Aquasco. St. Thomas Church is a good representative of the meeting-house-style churches which were being erected, particularly for black Methodist congregations, early in this century. Of four examples in Prince George's County, St. Thomas is closest to its original form and the best example of its type. With its historic graveyard, St. Thomas Church is an important representative of the early black churches in Prince George's County; for over a century, this site has been a focal point in the black community of southeastern Prince George's County.

Acreage: .75 acre

Survey No. PG#87A-10

Magi No.

DOE  yes  no

# Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

## 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic St. Thomas Methodist Church

and/or common

## 2. Location

street & number 18810 Aquasco Road (Maryland Route 381)  not for publication

city, town Brandywine Horsehead  vicinity of congressional district 4

state Maryland county Prince George's

## 3. Classification

| Category  | Ownership  | Status   | Present Use   |
|---|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> district               | <input type="checkbox"/> public                    | <input type="checkbox"/> occupied              | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> museum                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied | <input type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> structure              | <input type="checkbox"/> both                      | <input type="checkbox"/> work in progress      | <input type="checkbox"/> educational <input type="checkbox"/> private residence         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> site                   | <b>Public Acquisition</b>                          | <b>Accessible</b>                              | <input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> object                 | <input type="checkbox"/> in process                | <input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted       | <input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific                 |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> being considered          | <input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted     | <input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation             |
|   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable | <input type="checkbox"/> no                    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> military <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: |

## 4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Trustees of St. Thomas Church (Christ United Methodist Church)

street & number 18804 Aquasco Road telephone no.: 888-1283

city, town Brandywine state and zip code Maryland 2-613

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Prince George's County Courthouse liber #342

street & number 14735 Main Street folio 55

city, town Upper Marlboro state MD

## 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title Inventory of Historic Sites,

date 1974  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records History Division, 4302 Baltimore Boulevard

city, town Bladensburg state Maryland

## 7. Description

Survey No. PG#87A-10

|  |                                       |   |   |                    |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|---|--------------------|
| <b>Condition</b>                         |                                       | <b>Check one</b>                            | <b>Check one</b>                                  |                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> excellent       | <input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated | <input type="checkbox"/> unaltered          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site |                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> good            | <input type="checkbox"/> ruins        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered | <input type="checkbox"/> moved                    | date of move _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair | <input type="checkbox"/> unexposed    |   |   |                    |

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

St. Thomas Methodist Church is a frame gable-roof meeting-house-style church. It stands on the site of the Freedmen's Bureau school and church which were established after the Civil War, in a wooded rural area on the road between Baden and Aquasco.

The church building consists of two parts: a main block (circa 40 by 24 feet) which consists of entry vestibule and nave, and a rear wing which was added a short time later. The main block of the church is typical of early twentieth century meeting-house-style church buildings; one-story, front-gabled, and three bays in length. The frame building rests on concrete piers with brick reinforcement, all covered with a sheet of metal. Siding is plain horizontal board, painted beige and peeling. The gable roof is covered with standing seam metal with fishscale pattern, and has a narrow overhang. The plain cornice and corner boards are painted white. Windows in the nave are gothic-arch, double-hung-sash, nine lights in tracery over six. These windows are glazed with clear glass, but the lights in the upper sashes of the windows are presently covered (on the interior) with blue stained-glass-pattern contact paper. The windows have plain board surrounds painted white.

Entrance to the nave is through a small gable-roof entry vestibule centered in the west gable end. Siding, cornice and roof have the same treatment as the nave. Entrance into the vestibule is through a plain board door with plain board surround painted white. Above the door, also enframed within the plain board surround, is a single-pane gothic-arch transom, presently covered with the same contact paper as the side windows. Approach to this door is by a concrete stoop.

Rising from the south plane of the roof, between second and third bays, is a brick stove chimney; it marks the location of the original stove. At the southwest corner of the nave, on the west face of the foundation, is a carved cornerstone which reads:

St. Thomas  
M.E. Church  
A.D. 1911.

Extending to the east or rear of the main block, and on the same axis, is a slightly lower addition, one bay long, but wider than the nave, thus giving the building a T configuration. The roof of this frame addition has a shallower pitch than that of the nave. There is a single gothic-arch double-hung-sash window in each of the north and south

elevations; these windows have tracery in the upper sash, but are narrower than those of the nave (5/4 lights). Two exterior doors lead into this rear addition, each located in the west face of the projecting section of the addition where it joins the nave. Each of these doors has a small six-pane glazing over two vertical panels. There are four modern windows in the rear (east) elevation of the addition: each consists of two horizontal panes over two horizontal panes. The two center windows, which light the altar, are positioned side by side. The addition is sheathed with German siding, painted beige and peeling. It has a plain boxed cornice, painted white. The shallowly pitched roof is covered with green asphalt shingle, and there is an exterior concrete block chimney at the northeast corner.

Interior of the main block consists of one large space forming the nave. Below the chair-rail, the walls are sheathed with vertical beaded wainscoting painted brown. Above this the walls are coated with white plaster. At the east end of the nave, flanking the altar, two doors lead into the study and storage space which flank the altar space. The three-pane ceiling of the altar space is covered with narrow wainscot panelling, stained brown. Similar wainscoting, painted white, trims the higher three-pane ceiling of the nave. Two iron rods run across the nave at the juncture of ceiling and wall, reinforcing the structure.

A short distance northeast of the church building is a one-story gable-roof social hall, constructed at approximately the same time as the church addition. The building consists of two parts; the frame main block is three bays long, and attached to the rear is a one-bay (rear) kitchen addition. Entrance to the main block is through a panelled double door, centered in the west gable end, and flanked by 2 modern horizontal-paned windows. Siding is plain horizontal board painted white. Windows on the sides of the building are 6/6 double hung sash with plain board surrounds painted green, as are the corner boards. The gable roof is covered with green asphalt shingle, and a brick stove chimney rises from the south plane of the roof between first and second bays. The main block of the social hall rests on a poured concrete foundation.

Extending one more bay to the rear (east) of this social hall, and flush with both the north and south elevations of the main block, is a kitchen addition. It is built of concrete block painted white, and its gable roof (on the same axis as the main block) has a slightly lower ridgeline. There is an exterior brick stove chimney at the east gable end. Entrance to the kitchen is in the south elevation; the door is sheltered by a small pedimented gable-roof canopy supported by diagonal struts.

Just east of the social hall stands a small gable-roof outbuilding in deteriorating condition. It is side-gabled, with entrance in the east gable end.

Northwest of the church, along the north side of the unpaved entrance drive, is a graveyard bordered by woods on north and west.

# 8. Significance

Survey No. PG#87A-10

| 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture | <input 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 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) |
|   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> invention              |   |   |

Black history

Specific dates 1911 Builder/Architect

check: Applicable Criteria:  A  B  C  D  
 and/or  
 Applicable Exception:  A  B  C  D  E  F  G  
 Level of Significance:  national  state  local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

St. Thomas Methodist Church is a frame meeting-house-style church building. Typical of rural chapels of the turn of this century, it stands on the site of the Freedmen's Bureau school and church which were established after the Civil War, for more than a century a focal point of the black community of the Baden-Aquasco area.

Early in the nineteenth century, blacks and whites had worshipped together in the Methodist churches of Prince George's County (part of the Baltimore Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church). In the years before the Civil War, however, the issue of slavery divided the Methodist Church. In 1860, when the General Conference declared abolition of slaves a condition of church membership, southern conferences split off from the General Conference to form the Methodist Episcopal Church South. Baltimore, a border conference, voted to adhere to the General Conference in condemning the institution of slavery. This vote provoked some individual congregations to break from the Baltimore Conference and declare themselves part of the Methodist Episcopal Church South, independent of the "new chapter" which supported abolition.<sup>1</sup>

Such was the situation in the area of southeastern Prince George's County, part of the Prince George's Circuit of the Baltimore Conference. The church near Baden, known as Emory Chapel, became part of the Methodist Episcopal Church South; local blacks, who had formerly worshipped at Emory, sought a place of worship of their own.<sup>2</sup> In 1867 they acquired the site of what was to become St. Thomas Methodist Church.

George E. Orme was a local merchant and Justice of the Peace, who lived and farmed on land between Black Swamp Creek and the road from Brandywine to Woodville. In September 1867, he deeded one acre of his land to one white and eight black trustees (Henry Holland, Townly Thomas, William Addison, Robert Magruder, Thomas Gray, Charles Joy, Jacob Wood and Aaron Weems, all black, and William J. Tippet) of the Methodist Episcopal Church "for the use of the congregation of the said church and for a free school forever."<sup>3</sup> Joshua Tippet, a farmer and blacksmith whose dwelling was directly east of this acre of land, served as the white trustee, assisting in the establishment of the new church and school.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
STATE HISTORIC SITES INVENTORY FORM  
Statement of Significance (continued)

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Section 8 Page 2

Construction of the schoolhouse, under the auspices of the Freedmen's Bureau, began late in 1867, and was finished, after numerous delays, late in 1868. The first teacher was Aaron Weems, one of the trustees who had purchased the land from Orme.<sup>4</sup> In the fall of 1869, Weems was replaced as teacher by Annie R. Thompson, a young black teacher from New York.<sup>5</sup> She continued teaching there through the end of the 1873-74 school year, during the transition in management of black schools from the Freedmen's Bureau to the Board of County School Commissioners. A few years later, this school was replaced by the Black Swamp Schoolhouse, known as "Colored School #2, Election District #8."<sup>6</sup>

The building which housed the original Freedmen's Bureau School, was used from the beginning for Methodist services, and soon came to be known as St. Thomas Methodist Episcopal Church. After 1878, when the new Black Swamp Schoolhouse opened for black students, the St. Thomas building was used only for church services; it continued in use as a church for 43 years. In 1911, under the leadership of Reverend Robert Ferguson Coates, a new church (the present building) was erected just west of the original structure. To many of the older church members, this handsome new church was a sort of memorial to this dynamic pastor, who served the Woodville Charge from 1908 to 1920. The original church/school building, by then deteriorating, was torn down.<sup>7</sup>

In 1929, St. Thomas Church began the construction of a new social hall, a short distance northeast of the 1911 church and near the site of the original church/school building. The earliest graveyard had been located to the east, along the old lane which led eastward to the Tippet and Orme family farmhouses. The burial ground was enlarged during this period, with burials north and west of the church. In 1963, an addition was built onto the east end of the church; it was lower than the main block (or nave) with a more shallowly pitched roof, and provided altar spaced flanked by a pastor's study and a choir loft. The north and south elevations of this addition are lighted by gothic-arch windows, narrower than those of the nave, but distinctively compatible with them. At approximately the same time, the kitchen addition was constructed on the east end of the social hall.

Services continued in St. Thomas Church until 1973, when its dwindling congregation merged with that of John Wesley Methodist Church in Aquasco (Woodville). The combined congregation now worships at the old John Wesley Church building, today known as Christ United Methodist Church.<sup>8</sup>

St. Thomas Church has been vacant since 1973, and is beginning to show signs of neglect and deterioration. A hole in the roof is allowing water damage in the area of the altar, and many of the cornice boards are rotting. In spite of these roof and cornice problems, the church building is generally in sound structural condition. The social hall is also fairly sound, but its kitchen wing is in serious need of repair.

St. Thomas Church is a good representative of the meeting-house-style churches which were being erected, particularly for black Methodist congregations, early in this century. Other examples of the simple meeting-house with centered entry vestibule are Carroll Chapel in Mitchellville (from the end of the 19th century), Ross Memorial in Bowie (1909), and Ridgely Chapel in Landover (1921) which replaced an earlier similar building. Of the four, St. Thomas is closest to its original form and therefore the best example of its type; its gothic-arch windows have not been replaced by modern rectangular openings as is the case at Carroll and Ross Memorial Chapels, and its board siding has not been covered by synthetic material as is the case at all three other examples.<sup>9</sup> The gothic-arch windows of St. Thomas Church have particularly fine tracery in the upper sashes, and a careful attempt has been made to reflect but not reproduce them in the altar addition. Together with its peaceful and historic graveyard, St. Thomas Church is an important representative of the early black churches in Prince George's County. For over a century, this site has been a focal point, not only for religious but also for educational reasons, in the black community of southeastern Prince George's County.

Notes

- 1 Minutes Book, Methodist Episcopal Church South, 1842-1880 (M 1141, Maryland Archives); Those Incredible Methodists: a History of the Baltimore Conference of the United Methodist Church, 1972.
- 2 See Centennial Celebration, Immanuel Church 1979, by Sandra Cross.
- 3 Prince George's County Deed, FS #5:106.
- 4 Records of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands, 1867-1873. See Floyd, Bianca, Bible, Book and Voting Booth, Final Report of Black History Study, 1984-85, M-NCPPC.
- 5 ibid, and Census records for Prince George's County, Election District #8, 1870, 1880.
- 6 See MHT Form P.G. #87A-12.
- 7 Interview 1982 with Amy Hawkins and Rev. P. Woolridge.
- 8 ibid.
- 9 See MHT Forms #71B-2 (Ross Memorial); #72A-5 (Ridgely Church), and #74B-6 (Carroll Chapel).



87-A-10

Prince Georges - ~~82A-29~~  
St. Thomas M.E. Church  
Near Rte. 381  
Aguasco, MD 20608

1911

St. Thomas M.E. Church was erected in 1911. It has recently combined with Christ Church in Aquasco and is in danger of being abandoned. It served a rural black congregation (mostly field hands and sharecroppers) for over seventy years. When I visited this site the church had only seven members.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC St. Thomas M.E. Church  
AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER Near Rte. 381  
CITY, TOWN Aquasco VICINITY OF Baden CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT Fourth  
STATE Maryland COUNTY Prince Georges

3 CLASSIFICATION

| CATEGORY  | OWNERSHIP                                   | STATUS   | PRESENT USE  |
|---|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT               | <input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED   | <input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM                 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE | <input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED            | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE              | <input type="checkbox"/> BOTH               | <input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS      | <input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE      |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SITE        | <b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>                   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE | <input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT                 | <input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS         | <input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED       | <input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC              |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED   | <input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED     | <input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION          |
|   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> NO                    | <input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER                     |

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Trustees, St. Thomas M.E. Church Telephone #: 888-1283  
C/O Rev. Noel O. Beecham  
STREET & NUMBER Rt. 1, Box 325-C  
CITY, TOWN Brandywine VICINITY OF STATE, zip code MD, 20613

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Prince Georges Co. Court House Liber #: GNH 3  
Folio #: 16  
STREET & NUMBER  
CITY, TOWN Upper Marlboro STATE Maryland

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE N/A  
DATE  
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS  
CITY, TOWN STATE

**7 DESCRIPTION**

**CONDITION**

EXCELLENT  
 GOOD  
 FAIR

DETERIORATED  
 RUINS  
 UNEXPOSED

**CHECK ONE**

UNALTERED  
 ALTERED

**CHECK ONE**

ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED DATE 1911

**DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE**

If you turn left off of Rte. 381 immediately after you pass the Baden Vol. Fire Department you will come to St. Thomas M.E. Church. The structure is located some 150' down a dirt road. The building faces south and is built of weatherboard. It is 18' across the front and 22' long. There is another building (an abandoned Sunday School) behind the church (north-side). St. Thomas' is a simple gable-ended structure (North-South) it has 3 colored glass (blue) lancet windows (5') on the west side and 3 more identical windows on the east side. The entrance is a simple 2-panel wooden door with a blue glass arc atop.

**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 checked="" 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 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      1911      BUILDER/ARCHITECT

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

St. Thomas M.E. Church was erected in 1911. It has recently combined with Christ Church in Aquasco and is in danger of being abandoned. It served a rural black congregation (mostly field hands and sharecroppers) for over seventy years. When I visited this site the congregation consisted of seven communicants.

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

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

STATE \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY \_\_\_\_\_

STATE \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY \_\_\_\_\_

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

James W. Clark Historic Sites Surveyor

ORGANIZATION Maryland Commission on Afro-American History & Culture

DATE

STREET & NUMBER 20 Dean Street

TELEPHONE 269-2893

CITY OR TOWN Annapolis

STATE Maryland

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust  
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 267-1438



7: DESCRIPTION

|           |   |  |                               |                                       |   |                                    |
|-----------|---|--|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
| CONDITION | (Check One)                                 |  |                               |                                       |   |                                    |
|           | <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good | <input type="checkbox"/> Fair | <input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated | <input type="checkbox"/> Ruins                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed |
|           | (Check One)                                 |  |                               | (Check One)                           |   |                                    |
|           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered | <input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered       |                               | <input type="checkbox"/> Moved        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site |                                    |

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The present church sits on the site of an older church building. It is a frame structure with an A-roof and gable-end entrance porch. The windows on the sidewalls are pointed-arched, double-hung sash. The siding is weatherboard.

Behind the church is a frame building that was once a school. It has a central double doorway and flanking windows. The sidewalls have three double-hung sash windows.

Adjacent to the church is a cemetery.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**B. SIGNIFICANCE**

**PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)**

- Columbian
- 15th Century
- 16th Century
- 17th Century
- 18th Century
- 19th Century
- 20th Century

**SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)**

1911

**AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)**

- |  |  |   |   |
|--|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Historic</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Architecture</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Art</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Commerce</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Communications</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Conservation</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Education</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Engineering</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Industry</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Invention</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Literature</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Military</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Music</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Political</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Science</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Theater</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Transportation</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)</li> </ul> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> |
|--|--|---|---|

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Blank area for Major Bibliographical References.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

| LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES<br>DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY |                         |                         | O<br>R | LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES<br>DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY<br>OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES |                         |  |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|--------|---|-------------------------|--|
| CORNER   | LATITUDE                | LONGITUDE               |        | LATITUDE  | LONGITUDE               |  |
|  | Degrees Minutes Seconds | Degrees Minutes Seconds |        | Degrees Minutes Seconds   | Degrees Minutes Seconds |  |
| NW   | ° ' "                   | ° ' "                   |        | ° ' "   | ° ' "                   |  |
| NE   | ° ' "                   | ° ' "                   |        | ° ' "   | ° ' "                   |  |
| SE   | ° ' "                   | ° ' "                   |        | ° ' "   | ° ' "                   |  |
| SW   | ° ' "                   | ° ' "                   |        | ° ' "   | ° ' "                   |  |

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY:

Acreege Justification:

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

|        |  |         |  |
|--------|--|---------|--|
| STATE: |  | COUNTY: |  |

11. FORM PREPARED BY

|  |                    |                     |
|--|--------------------|---------------------|
| NAME AND TITLE:<br>Christopher Owens, Park Historian |                    | DATE:<br>17 June 74 |
| ORGANIZATION:<br>M-NCPPC                             |                    |                     |
| STREET AND NUMBER:<br>8787 Georgia Avenue            |                    |                     |
| CITY OR TOWN:<br>Silver Spring                       | STATE:<br>Maryland |                     |

12. State Liaison Officer Review: (Office Use Only)

Significance of this property is:

National  State  Local

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

P.G. #87A-10

1911

St. Thomas Methodist Church  
18810 Aquasco Road, Brandywine, Md.  
Priv/Unocc/Cemetery/Fair

St. Thomas Church is a simple frame gable-roofed structure, three bays long with pointed arch windows. Entrance is through a vestibule with pointed-arch door at the west gable end. At the southwest corner is a cornerstone indicating construction in 1911. There is a graveyard to the north of the church, and to the northwest is a three-bay frame social hall.

In 1867, George E. Orme, a local merchant and landowner, deeded one acre of his land to eight Black trustees of the Methodist Episcopal Church, for the establishment of a church and school for local Blacks. The small church building was soon constructed and became an important center for the local Black population. The school was opened under the supervision of the Freedmen's Bureau, and by 1870, Annie Thompson, a young Black teacher from New York, conducted classes in the original church building. In 1911, under the leadership of Reverend Coates, the present church was built just west of the original building, and the older building, by then deteriorating, was torn down. Newer schools in the Baden, Westwood, Aquasco areas were by then serving the local Black students. The 1911 church structure continued in use for approximately sixty years; ca. 1970 the dwindling St. Thomas congregation merged with that of John Wesley Methodist Church in Aquasco, and the combined congregation is known as Christ United Methodist Church. The old St. Thomas Church stands vacant and deteriorating, but it is significant as the site of one of the early post-Civil War Black churches established in Prince George's County.

Survey No. P.G. 87A-10

Magi No. 1704964708

DOE  yes  no

# Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

## 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic St. Thomas Methodist Episcopal Church

and/or common

## 2. Location

street & number 18810 Aquasco Road  not for publication

city, town Brandywine  vicinity of Baden congressional district 4

state Md., county P. G.

## 3. Classification

| Category  | Ownership  | Status   | Present Use                            |  |
|---|--|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> district               | <input type="checkbox"/> public                    | <input type="checkbox"/> occupied              | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture   | <input type="checkbox"/> museum            |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied | <input type="checkbox"/> commercial    | <input type="checkbox"/> park              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> structure              | <input type="checkbox"/> both                      | <input type="checkbox"/> work in progress      | <input type="checkbox"/> educational   | <input type="checkbox"/> private residence |
| <input type="checkbox"/> site                   | <b>Public Acquisition</b>                          | <b>Accessible</b>                              | <input type="checkbox"/> entertainment | <input type="checkbox"/> religious         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> object                 | <input type="checkbox"/> in process                | <input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted       | <input type="checkbox"/> government    | <input type="checkbox"/> scientific        |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> being considered          | <input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted     | <input type="checkbox"/> industrial    | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation    |
|   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no         | <input type="checkbox"/> military      | <input type="checkbox"/> other:            |

## 4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Trustees of St. Thomas Methodist Episcopal Church

street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone no.:

city, town \_\_\_\_\_ state and zip code \_\_\_\_\_

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. P.G. Co. Courthouse liber 2741

street & number Main Street folio 277

city, town Upper Marlboro state Maryland

## 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title P. G. C. Inventory of Historic Sites

date 1974  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records History Division M-NCPPC

city, town Riverdale state Md., 20737

# 7. Description

Survey No. P.G.#87A-10

**Condition**

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

**Check one**

unaltered  
 altered

**Check one**

original site  
 moved      date of move \_\_\_\_\_

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

The present church stands near the site of an earlier church, built shortly after 1867. It is a simple frame gable roofed structure, 3 bays long with pointed-arch windows. Entrance is through a vestibule with pointed-arch door at the west gable end. The siding is weather-board. The roof is tin, and has a brick chimney between the first and second bays of the south slope. At the south west corner foundation is the cornerstone indicating construction in 1911.

At the rear of the church is a wider addition, covered with German siding, and with an exterior cinderblock chimney.

A short distance northwest of the church building stands a 3-bay gable-roofed frame social hall.

# 8. Significance

Survey No.P.G.#87A-10

| 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 type="checkbox"/> education              | <input type="checkbox"/> military               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799        | <input type="checkbox"/> art                    | <input type="checkbox"/> engineering            | <input type="checkbox"/> music                  | humanitarian                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899        | <input type="checkbox"/> commerce               | <input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement | <input type="checkbox"/> philosophy             | <input type="checkbox"/> theater             |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900- | <input type="checkbox"/> communications         | <input type="checkbox"/> industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> politics/government    | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation      |
|   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> invention              |   | <input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)     |

**Specific dates**      1911      **Builder/Architect**

---

check: Applicable Criteria:     A     B     C     D  
and/or  
Applicable Exception:     A     B     C     D     E     F     G

Level of Significance:     national     state     local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

In September, 1867, George E. Orme, a locally-known merchant, landowner, and justice of the peace, deeded one acre of his land to eight black trustees for the use of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and for a free school. Within the next few years, the church was constructed, and served as a focal point for the Black community in the Baden-Brandywine area. The school was opened under the supervision of the Freedmen's Bureau, and by 1870, Annie Thompson, a young Black teacher from New York, conducted classes in the original church building.

In 1911, under the leadership of the Reverend Coates, a new church was built just west of the original church, and the older building, by then deteriorating, was torn down. By this time, school was no longer held in the church building, but in other schoolhouses which had been constructed for local Black students.

The 1911 St. Thomas Church building, now vacant, is skirted on north and east by the graveyard. Directly northeast of the church stands a somewhat more recent social hall. In recent years (circa 1970) the dwindling St. Thomas congregation merged with that of John Wesley United Methodist Church in Aquasco, and this newly formed congregation meets at the John Wesley church building, now called Christ United Methodist Church.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. P.G.#87A-10

P.G. Co. Deeds: FS #5:106; #2741:271

P.G. Co. Census, 1870; interview with Rev. P. Woolridge (Christ U.M. Church), and with Amy Hawkins.

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle name \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle scale \_\_\_\_\_

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

|   |                      |                      |                      |
|---|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| A | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
|   | Zone                 | Easting              | Northing             |

|   |                      |                      |                      |
|---|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| B | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
|   | Zone                 | Easting              | Northing             |

|   |                      |                      |                      |
|---|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| C | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
|---|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|

|   |                      |                      |                      |
|---|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| D | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
|---|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|

|   |                      |                      |                      |
|---|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| E | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
|---|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|

|   |                      |                      |                      |
|---|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| F | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
|---|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|

|   |                      |                      |                      |
|---|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| G | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
|---|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|

|   |                      |                      |                      |
|---|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| H | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
|---|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|

Verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

| state | code | county | code |
|-------|------|--------|------|
|       |      |        |      |
|       |      |        |      |

# 11. Form Prepared By

|                 |   |         |                    |
|-----------------|---|---------|--------------------|
| name/title      | Susan G. Pearl; Historic Sites Research Coordinator |         |                    |
| organization    | History Division                                    | M-NCPPC | date October 1982  |
| street & number | 4811 Riverdale Road                                 |         | telephone 779-2011 |
| city or town    | Riverdale   | state   | Md., 20737         |

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust  
Shaw House  
21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 269-2438

# AQUASCO DIST.

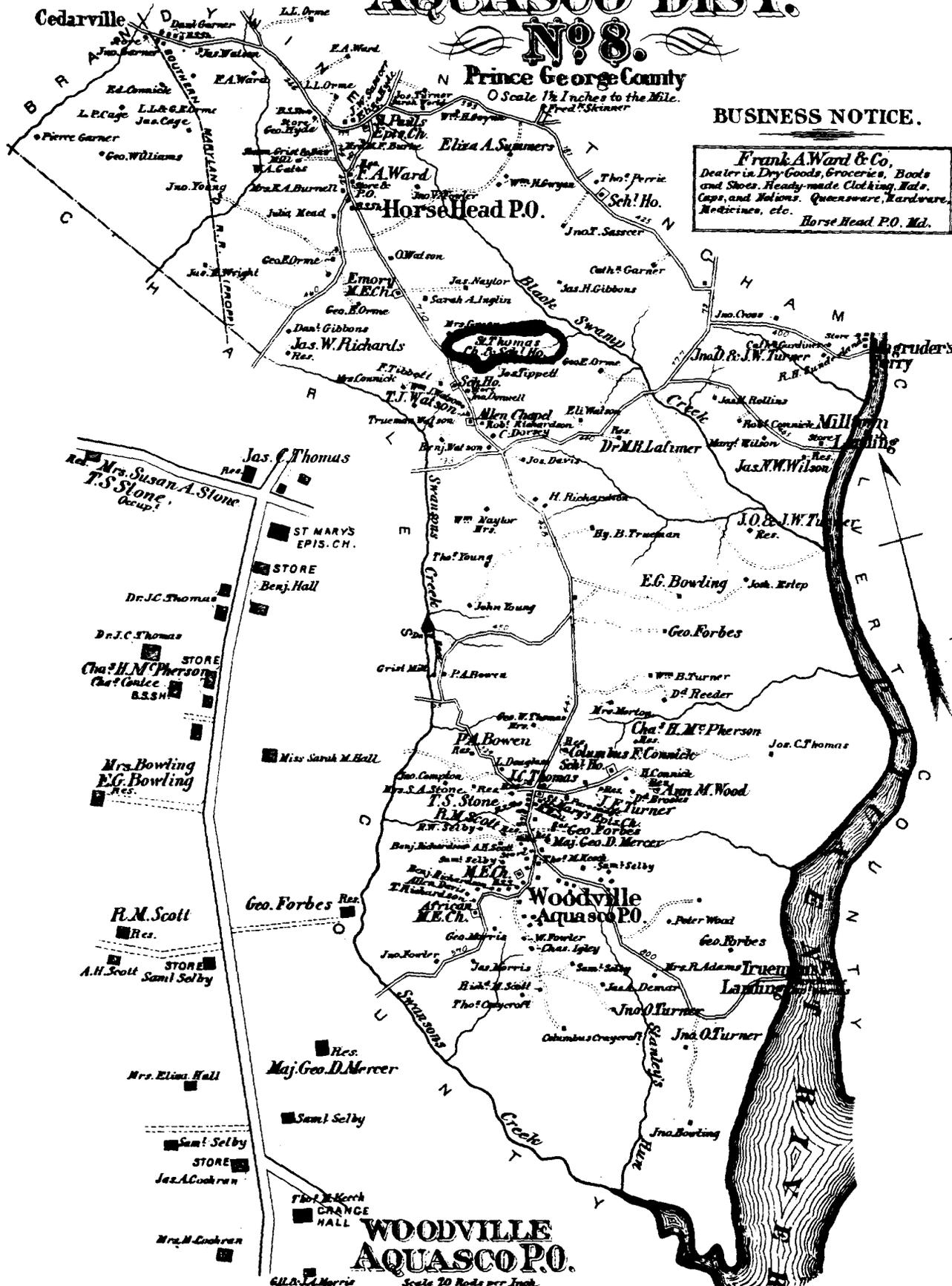
## No. 8.

Prince George County

Scale 1/4 Inches to the Mile.

### BUSINESS NOTICE.

**Frank A. Ward & Co.**  
 Dealer in Dry Goods, Groceries, Boots and Shoes, Ready-made Clothing, Hats, Caps, and Hosiery, Queensware, Hardware, Medicines, etc.  
 Horse Head P.O. Md.



**WOODVILLE**  
**AQUASCO P.O.**

Scale 20 Rods per Inch  
 Entered according to Act of Congress in the year 1878 by G.M. Hopkins, in the Office of the Librarian of Congress at Washington D.C.

*Hopkins Atlas 1878*

O-S

AQUASCO

FANNIE WATSON  
2554-247  
1.00 A  
P.83

MARGARET E. BROOKS  
1114 - 325  
47.00 A  
P. 82

381

ORME SCHOOL  
1963/136  
10.78 A  
P. 20

HELEN A. JONES  
2005/178  
14.00A

M 174  
P. 6

ROAD

FORESTVILLE ASPHALT CO.  
6259/438  
36.34A.  
P. 89

ST. THOMAS  
METHODIST CHURCH  
2741/277  
12.26A.  
P. 88

S 290961.7  
E 870606.0

PG 87A-10

6285/459  
1.00A.  
P.84

ST. THOMAS  
CHURCH  
1.81 A.  
P. 98

ST. THOS.  
CHURCH  
1.01 A.  
P. 86

EDNA M.  
WILSON  
P.30

ROBERT T. HENSON  
H.B. 9-99  
5.00A.  
P. 29

O-S

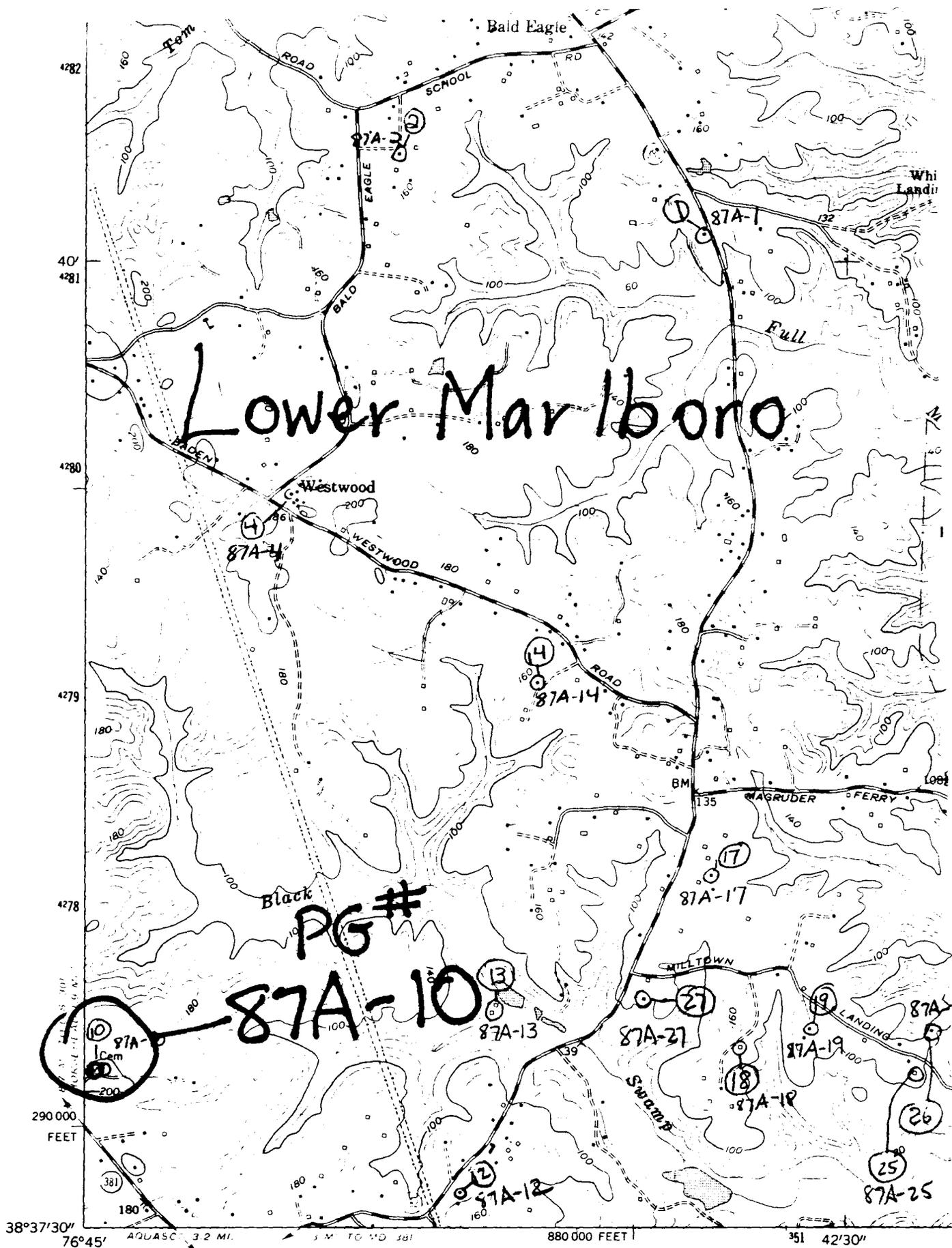
ATION CENTER

2.15 A.  
P. 54

3.61A  
P.73

JOHN A. FLEWELLING, JR.  
5871/753  
45.73A  
P.27

3.00A  
P.18



(HUGHESVILLE)  
866' III SE

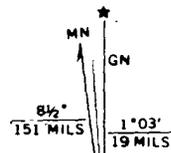
Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey

Control by USGS and USC&GS

Culture and drainage in part compiled from aerial photographs taken 1953. Topography enlarged from 1:62,500 scale map of Prince Frederick quadrangle, 15-minute series. Original map by plane-table surveys 1934-1935. Revised 1953

Hydrography from USC&GS chart 539, dated 1951

Polyconic projection, 1927 North American datum





Pg = 87A-10

St. Thomas Methodist Church  
Prince Georges Co 1105  
Lorton Va  
March 1989

Wesleyan Methodist Church

Wesleyan



Depth STA. 10

ST. THOMAS ANTIQUARIAN CHURCH  
PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MD

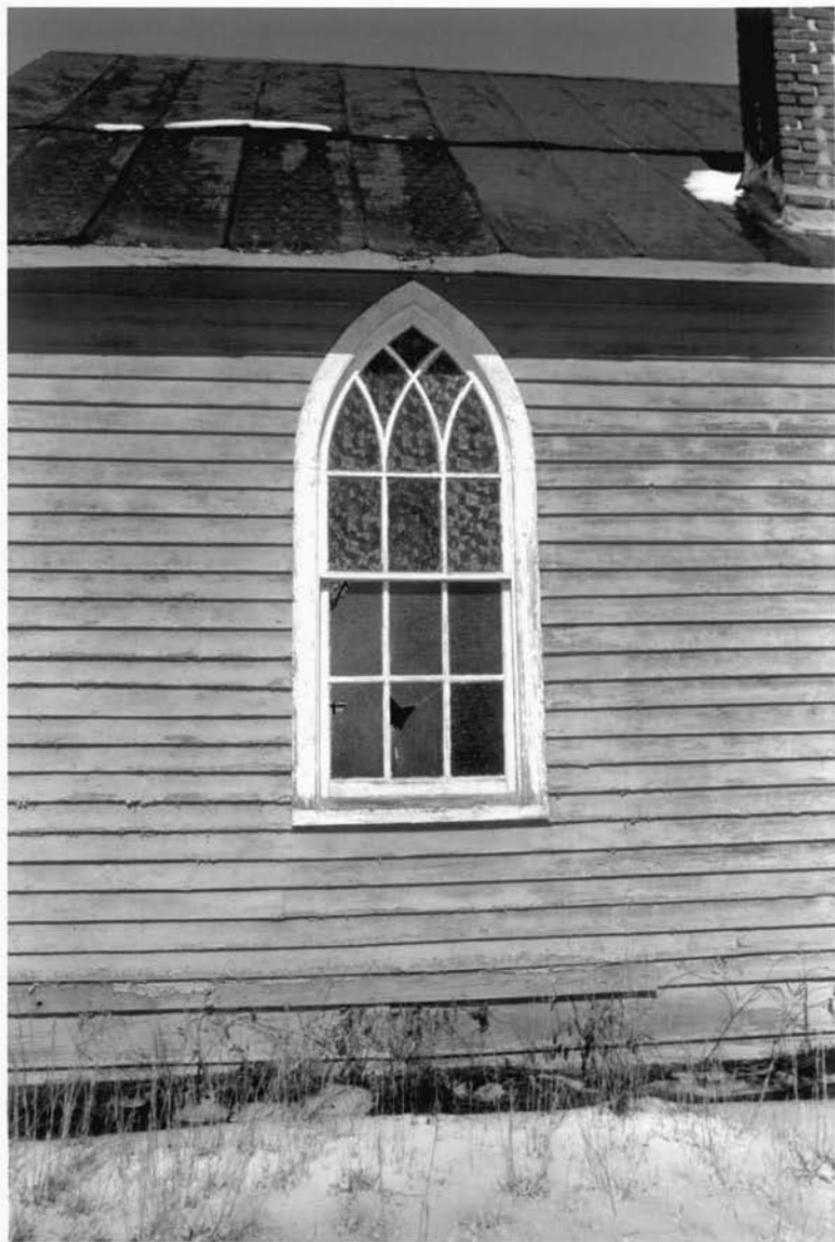
SUSAN G. PENK

MARCH 1959

NORTHWEST

MES: MD. HIST. TRUST

2084



PG# 874-10

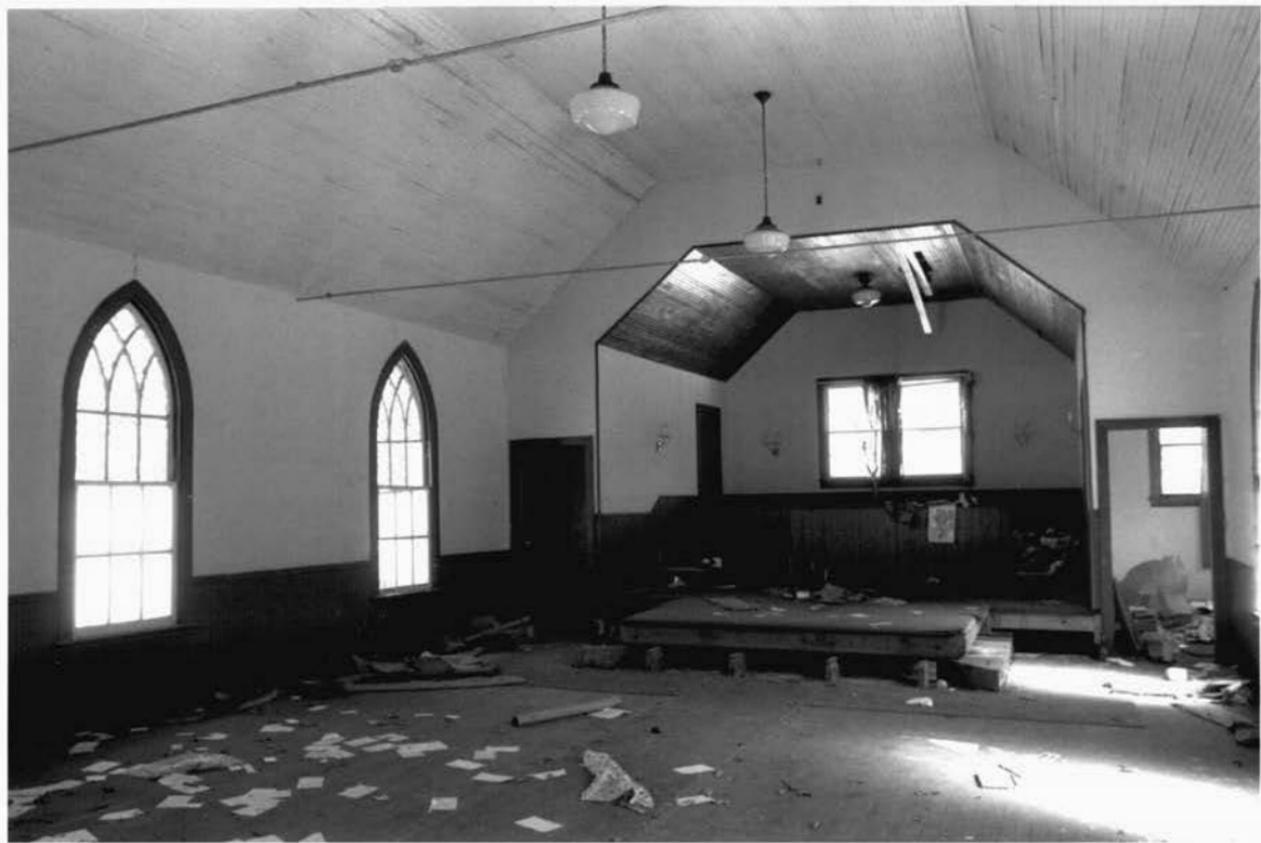
ST THOMAS METHODIST CHURCH  
PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MD  
SUSAN C. PEARL

MARCH 1989

DEPT. SOUTH WIXOMAN

NEG: M. L. TRUST

3 OF 4



M, E, T, A, I, S

ST. THOMAS METHODIST CHURCH  
PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MD.

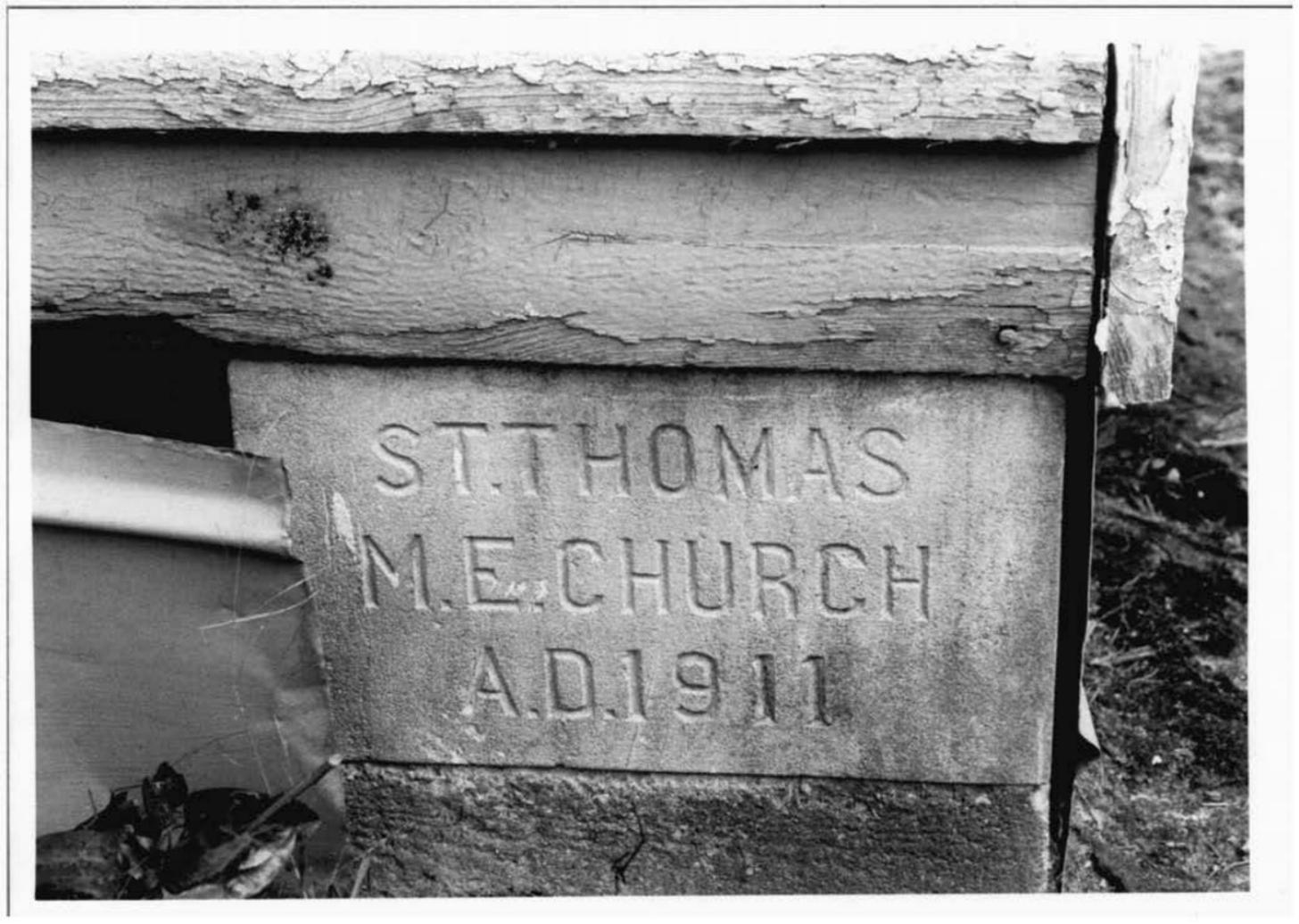
SUSAN G. PEARL

MARCH 1989

AMERICAN

NATL. MD. HIS. TRUST

4 OF 4

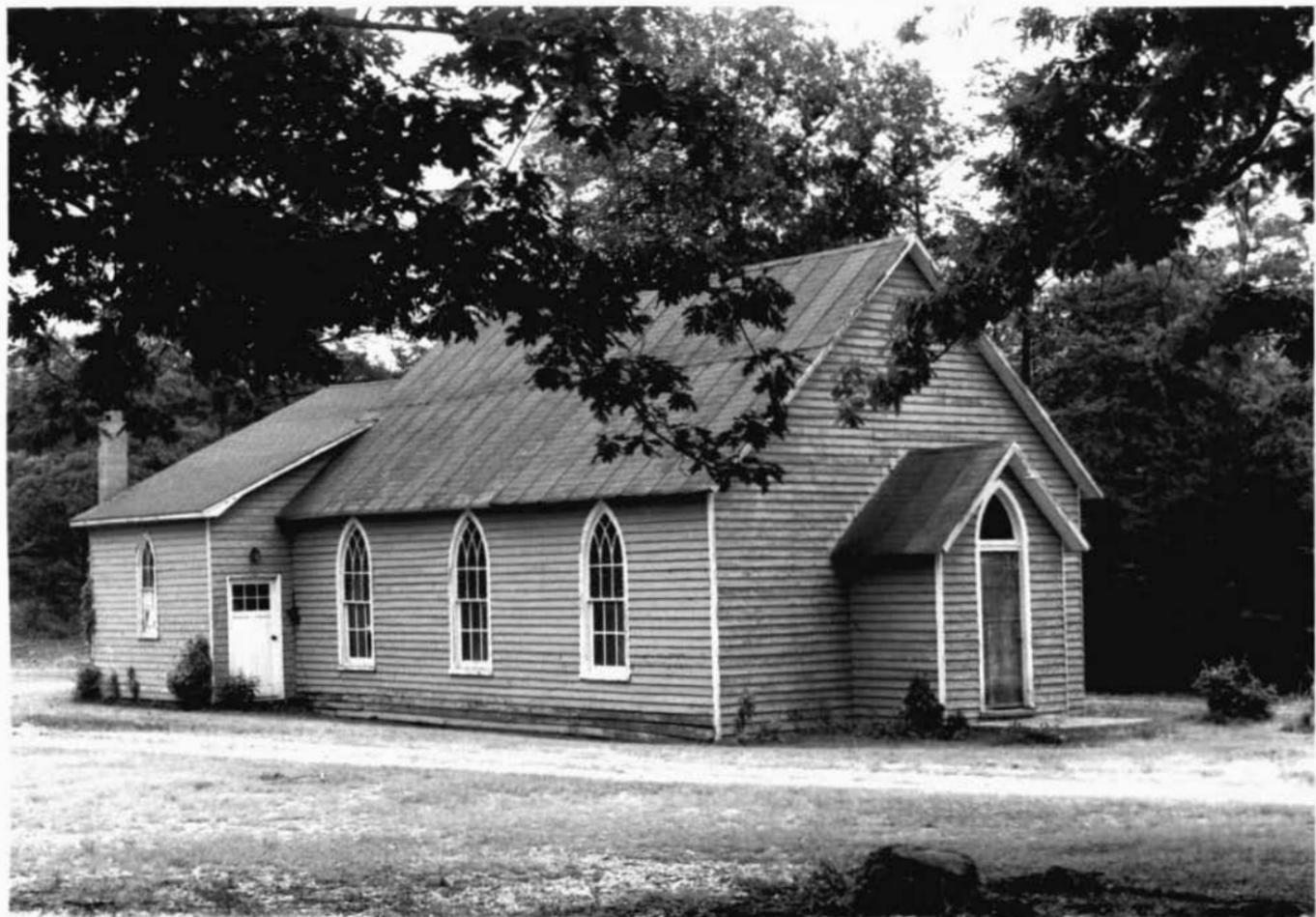


ST. THOMAS  
M.E. CHURCH  
A.D. 1911

P.G. # 87A-10

P. G. #87A-10

St. Thomas Methodist Church  
Prince George's County, Md.  
Susan G. Pearl  
October 1982  
Cornerstone, Southwest Corner  
Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, Md.



P. G. #87A-10

St. Thomas Methodist Church  
Prince George's County, Md.  
Susan G. Pearl  
May 1983  
Northwest 3/4 Elevation  
Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, Md.



1914  
No. 10  
10-17

St. Thomas Methodist Episcopal Church 87A-10  
Aquasco, Prince George's Co., MD PG82A29  
Michael Hosford

Maryland Historical Trust, Annapolis, MD  
Southeast elevation  
1/81



St. Thomas Methodist Episcopal Church *87A-10*  
Aquasco, Prince George's Co., MD PG82A29  
Michael Hosford

Maryland Historical Trust, Annapolis, MD  
South elevation  
1/81



P. G. #87A-10

St. Thomas Methodist Church  
Prince George's County, Md.  
Susan G. Pearl  
October 1982  
Southwest 3/4 elevation  
Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, Md.



NAME ST. THOMAS CHURCH #87A-10

LOCATION Rt 381 AQUASCO, Md

FACADE NW

PHOTO TAKEN 6/17/74 MOWYER