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

Begun in 1888, the (former) Emmanuel A.M.E. Church is a two-story rectangular, gable-front building with a three-story, pyramidal-roofed square tower at the east end of the south elevation, slightly recessed from the main facade. Tucked behind the tower, there is a small shed addition built to accomodate bathrooms. Located on a quarter-acre lot, the church is separated from a busy thoroughfare by a shallow front lawn. The lot slopes sharply downward from the front of the building so that there is a full ground story beneath the principal story at the street level. A cement walk inlaid with a brick cross links the sidewalk with the main entrance, located in the tower. Another cement walk leads from the sidewalk to the northeast corner of the building where cinder block steps descend an embankment to a side entrance at the ground level.

The Gothic Revival style (former) Emmanuel A.M.E. Church was constructed in solid brick with walls thirty inches thick; they were covered with stucco in 1962. Lancet windows filled with stained glass characterize most of the elevations. Five of them, the middle one taller and wider than the others, dominate the main facade. In the second story of the tower, the side lancet windows are filled with metal while the front one has double-hung sashes of frosted glass. On the side elevations, each bay (defined by buttresses that rise from the ground to the eaves where they merge with the wall as it flares outward slightly) contains two windows---a lancet window on the main level and rectangular double-hung sashes set in segmental arches at the basement. The rear elevation is plain except for a modified apse that is a shallow three-sided bay with small lancet windows in the clipped corners at the main story. The top third of the lancet windows have plain surrounds, which turn to points at their ends on the main facade. Throughout, all the windows have stone sills.

A variety of elements complete the decorative program of the buildings. The front gable contains a round vent with a wooden sunburst superimposed on the louvers. A narrow band runs across the facade at the base of the gable, separating the smooth stucco on the gable from the rough-cast stucco on the rest of the building. There is a marble cornerstone inscribed with "Emmanuel A.M.E. Church 1888" at the bottom northeast corner of the main facade. Around the main block of the building, there are curved rafter ends or brackets in all of the eaves. Replacement asphalt shingles cover all of the roofs.

The main entrance leads to a vestibule. A ladder formerly led to the top story of the tower where a 500 lb. bell was hung; the bell was removed in the 1960s after its wooden supports rotted. A pair of double swinging doors opens from the vestibule into the sanctuary, which occupies the entire first floor of the main block. Except for the partitioning of the northwest corner for a small vestry/office and the lining

8	SIGNIFICANCE
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PERIOD	AF	EAS OF SIGNIFICANCE CH	IECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW	
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1700-1799	ART	ENGINEERING	MUSIC	THEATER
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1900-	COMMUNICATIONS	INDUSTRY INVENTION	POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	X_OTHER(SPECIFY) neighbor- hood development; symbol of the Fitzgerald family
SPECIFIC DAT	<b>ES</b> 1888	BUILDER/ARCI	HITECT Capt. Peyton S	mith (builder)

#### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

A notable example of the popular use of the Gothic Revival style, the (former) Emmanual A.M.E. Church erected in 1888 is the oldest surviving religious edifice built by a Durham congregation. Its significance surpasses the purely architectural and ecclesiastical to represent the development of the black community in the neighborhood of West End in general and the achievements of Richard Burton Fitzgerald and his family in particular. The donor of the land and building for the church and a guiding force in the congregation for many years, Fitzgerald became Durham's leading brick manufacturer and was reported to be the town's first black millionaire. His diverse business interests included Durham's first black owned and operated pharmacy and the Coleman Cotton Mills of Concord, N.C., North Carolina's first textile mill managed and operated by blacks. In his community he provided jobs in his brickyards and assisted his neighbors in their spiritual needs with his and his descndants's continued patronage of Emmanuel A.M.E. Church. The West End black community's first religious institution, Emmanuel A.M.E. Church served as a community center as well as a spiritual sancutary for several decades.

#### CRITERIA ASSESSMENT

- A. The oldest surviving church erected by a Durham congregation, the (former) Emmanuel A.M.E. Church represents the emergence of the West End neighborhood's black community as its principal spiritual sancutary and community center for several decades.
- B. The land and building materials for the (former) Emmanuel A.M.E. Church were donated by Richard Burton Fitzgerald. Durham's foremost black businessman of the late nineteenth century, he and his family supported the church for more than eight decades.
- C. The (former) Emmanuel A.M.E. Church, built in 1888 of solid masonry construction, is a handsome example of the Gothic Revival style so popular from the 1880s onward.

#### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The significance of the (former) Emmanuel A.M.E. Church is multi-faceted. The building, architecturally noteworthy as a handsome example of the popular Gothic Revival style, is the oldest surviving religious edifice in Durham. As an early structure raised by a black institution in a city that experienced rapid growth and redevelopment almost continuously since it began in the 1850s, Emmanuel A.M.E. Church has gained additional importance in recent decades. Since the late 1940s, all of Durham's other early black churches, with the notable exception of St. Joseph's A.M.E. Church, have disappeared for a variety of reasons after their congregations erected replacement buildings, usually less distinctive than the originals. Furthermore, Emmanuel A.M.E. Church, serving as both a spiritual sanctuary and community center, represents the development of a black community in the neighborhood of West End. More particularly, it is the most distinguished of the few remaining buildings associated with one of Durham's most influential black families, the Fitzgeralds.

Durham's solid reputation as a center for black progress in the New South of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries today is generally equated with the success of the North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company led by John Merrick, Aaron Moore and Charles C. Spaulding, and with North Carolina Central University begun in the 1910s by John Shepard. While it is difficult to exaggerate the accomplishments of these men, the enduring successes of their ventures have tended to divert attention from the achievements of some of Durham's other early black leaders. One such individual who has not been studied by scholars of black history is Richard Burton Fitzgerald, who already had built a small business empire and reportedly had become Durham's first black millionaire by the late 1890s, when the North Carolina Mutual was just getting started. A major landowner, the foremost brickmaker in Durham County, and a moving force in several black enterprises, Fitzgerald took a strong interest in the development of Durham's black community in general and particularly in his neighborhood where he donated the land and building materials for the Emmanuel A.M.E. Church. Just as St. Joseph's A.M.E. Church stands as an institutional symbol of Hayti and the work of such men as Merrick and Spaulding to improve their community, the Emmanuel A.M.E. Church symbolizes West End's black community and the efforts of Fitzgerald and his family.

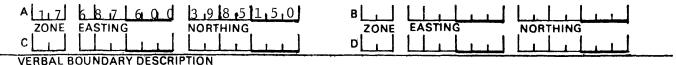
## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Durham County Register of Deeds, Durham County Courthouse, Durham, N.C. Johnson, Mrs. Irene and William Richard Fitzgerald, interview by Claudia Roberts Brown in Durham, 28 February 1984

Murray, Pauli. <u>Proud Shoes</u> (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1978, 2nd edition).

### **10**GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY <u>less than one</u> acre UTM REFERENCES



Durham County Tax Map 150, Block 11, Lot 18.

Continuation sheet	Emmanual A.M.E. Church	Item number	7	Page	<u> </u>	
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of the extremely shallow barrel vault of the ceiling with acoustical tiles, the sanctuary is intact. Rough white-painted plaster and wainscoting of alternating smooth and grooved boards placed on the diagonal and painted brown cover the walls. Simple varnished wooden pews are arranged in two rows so that there are center and side aisles. At the west end of the sanctuary there is a tiered horseshoe-shaped platform. An ornate altar rail with molded handrail and elaborately sawn pierced balusters typical of late nineteenth-century porches curves around the front of the platform at the second step. Each end of the rail has a bulbous turned and squared post of the sort normally used as newels. The altar occupies the front of the platform at the second tier. The third tier, one step higher, is taken up by the pulpit and folding chairs for the choir. The three-sided bay reminiscent of an apse marks the middle of the back wall. The colorful leaded stained glass in all of the windows brightens up the room. The windows contain identical geometric patterns of colored glass and stylized foliate motifs at the top; a rondel painted with a biblical symbol or scene individualizes each window. Two original brass chandeliers, each with four lamps at the end of long curved brackets, hang from the center of the ceiling along the eastwest axis. The ground floor is one large room used as a meeting hall.

The structure, of course, is closely related to the surrounding environment. Archaeological remains, such as trash pits, wells, and structural remains, which may be present, can provide information valuable to the understanding and interpretation of the structure. Information concerning use patterns, social standing and mobility, as well as structural details are often only evident in the archaeological record. Therefore, archaeological remains may well be an important component of the significance of the structure. At this time no investigation has been done to discover these remains, but it is probably that they exist, and this should be considered in any development of the property.

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A principal aspect of the historical background of Emmanuel A.M.E. Church is the story of Richard Burton Fitzgerald. In 1956, Pauli Murray, the granddaughter of Fitzgerald's brother Robert, wrote <u>Proud Shoes</u>, a biography of Robert Fitzgerald and his wife and children. Fortunuately Murray includes a detailed account of her grandfather's forebears, his early years, and the family's move to North Carolina. Robert and Richard Fitzgerald were the third and fourth oldest children, respectively, of Sarah Ann Burton and Thomas Charles Fitzgerald. Although Sarah Ann was white and Thomas was a free half-Irish mulatto, the couple raised their children to embrace their Negro heritage. The farming family started out near Wilmington, Delaware, and in 1855 moved to Chester County, Pennsylvania, where they bought a small farm. While scholarly Robert studied at the nearby Ashmun Institute, his brothers decided to pursue trades. Richard began his own brickyard on the family farm in Pennsylvania while Robert completed his studies and embarked upon a teaching career that eventually took him to Hillsborough, N.C.

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In Hillsborough, Robert became "so convinced his future lay in North Carolina" that he urged his family to join him there. His parents and two sisters arrived in April, 1869, and bought the 158-acre Woodside Plantation six miles east of Hillsborough on the Eno River. Richard soon followed and set up a brickyard on the new farm, and in 1870 he married Sarah Ann Williams, a teacher from Philadelphia whose father was preaching in the Methodist churches of Orange County. The brickyard remained a faltering operation until the brothers decided to solicit business in Raleigh, where they got a contract to make bricks for the new penitentiary. In spite of flooding at their Raleigh kiln site, they managed to produce more than a half million bricks during the summer of 1870, thereby establishing a reputation as "reliable brickmakers and good businessmen."

The brothers continued to manufacture bricks near Hillsborough through the 1870s. After Thomas died in 1879, the family moved to Durham, where "Richard set up his brickyard near Maplewood Cemetery and {Robert} started one down on Rigsbee Road in the northeast part of town." The Fitzgeralds settled in the sparsely settled area along the stretch of the Chapel Hill Road now named Kent St., near Richard's brickyard at the edge of the West End neighborhood.

In Durham's boom town atmosphere, the demand for bricks was heavy and Richard Fitzgerald's brickmaking business flourished. By 1884, with orders on hand for two million bricks, he was the town's leading brickmaker. He bought tracts rich in clay all across Durham, moving from site to site as the clay was deplated. Most of his brickyards were west of town close to the Fitzgerald houses.<sup>11</sup> With his keen business sense, it was natural that Fitzgerald included among his real estate purchases tracts desirable for their development potential rather than their clay content. Irene Johnson describes her father as "land poor." Like his brickyard property, most of his

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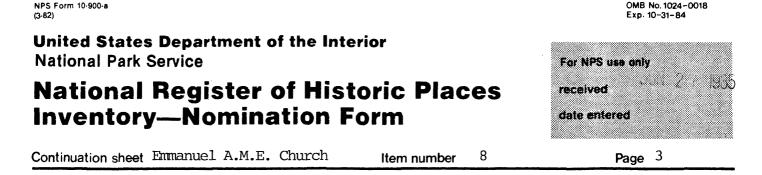
Continuation sheet Emmanuel A.M.E. Church

Item number 8

other real estate investments were concentrated near the Chapel Hill Road in West End. One of his purchases was a 13-acre parcel north of that road, on the west side of Gattis St.<sup>12</sup> There, in the 1890s, he built a two-and-one-half-story Queen Anne style house for his family that soon would number ten children. Known as "The Maples," it is described by Pauli Murray as "a fine eighteen-room slate-roofed house of many turrets and gables and a wide piazza, set in a maple-and-magnolia grove and surrounded by white sandy drives and terraced lawns." Behind the house, Fitzgerald established another brickyard that remained in operation into the 1910s.

Walter Weare, in Black Business in the New South, writes, "If Durham had a traditional aristocratic element, it would have been the Fitzgerald family ... Richard Fitzgerald became wealthy in his brick business, and until the rise of the North Carolina Mutual he enjoyed the highest status in the negro community."<sup>15</sup> In accordance with Weare's designation, Fitzgerald's interest in the well-being of his neighborhood went beyond real estate development, as exemplified by his pioneering role in the establishment of the Emmanuel A.M.E. Church. Although Hayti was the most heavily populated of the black settlements at the outskirts of Durham, by the late 1880s more and more blacks were moving to the edge of West End near Maplewood Cemetery. The need for a neighborhood church here soon became apparent. Due in part to the influence of her upbringing by a Methodist minister, <sup>16</sup> on February 11, 1887, Sarah Williams and Richard Burton Fitzgerald deeded a quarter-acre lot on the west side of the Chapel Hill Road (now 710 Kent St.) for one dollar to "Henry H. Hall, John W. O'Daniel, Samuel Ruffin, R.B. Fitzgerald and Radford Hughes and their successors in office forever, in trust, that they shall erect or cause to be built thereon a house or place of worship for the use of the members of the African Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America ... "The lengthy deed stipulates the conduct of the church according to the "rules and disciplines" of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the authorization of its ministers by the A.M.E. General Conference, and the method of electing trustees. The document also sets forth guidelines for raising funds for the church. The final clause states that "if at any time said land should cease to be used for the use and benefit of the African Methodist7Episcopal Church as herein provided it shall revert to the grantor and their heirs."

Historically, the African Methodist Episcopal Church symbolizes selfdetermination by blacks. It developed out of the first large secession of blacks from the Methodist Church, which began in 1787 when black parishioners of the Methodist Society of Philadelphia convened to discuss abusive treatment by fellow white parishioners. The black Methodists proceeded to build their own church and resigned from the Methodist Society when threatened with expulsion for their initiative. Legal difficulties about control of the new church and its revenues ensued, and it wasn't until Richard Allen proposed to erect a building on his property at his own expense that the new church gained solid footing. Named Bethel A.M.E. Church, it was consecrated by Bishop Francis Asbury, in spite of strong opposition by ministers of



the Methodist Church in Philadelphia. White opponents intent upon controlling the preaching of the new church attempted first to force it to pay the Methodist Society to supply Bethel with preachers and then to physically take charge of the Bethel pulpit, both to no avail.

At a general convention of black Methodists in 1816, the African Methodist Episcopal Church was formally established, with Richard Allen as its first bishop. A history of Methodism published in 1919 declared the A.M.E. Church "the largest Negro Church in the world, and well organized." By 1867, the church had ten Conferences, 550 ordained ministers, 1,500 lay preachers, and 200,000 members nationwide.<sup>18</sup> With the turmoil of Reconstruction, the A.M.E. Church grew in importance as a primary stabilizing focus of black life in the South, serving as a social center as well as attending to spiritual needs in a rapidly changing society.

Richard Fitzgerald donated the building materials for the new A.M.E. church in West End, and in 1888 construction began under the supervision of Capt. Peyton Smith. (It is interesting to note that the sawnwork altar rail is identical to the porch railing of the Fitzgerald family's first house on Chapel Hill Road/Kent St.) Services began to be held in the building later that year. Characteristic of the A.M.E. General Conference's method of assignment, a minister would lead the congregation for only two or three years before being replaced. Although the name "Emmanuel" was chosen, for many years the church was popularly known as "the Fitzgerald Church," indicating the important role the family continued to play in its direction. Richard Fitzgerald remained a trustee until his death, when he was succeeded by his son Thomas; Sarah Williams Fitzgerald was the church organist until her eyesight failed in the late 1920s; and the congregation, which averaged 150 people (about 75% of them from the neighborhood), contained many members of the Fitzgerald family (the notable exception being Robert's branch who were Episcopalians). Trustee John O'Daniel, the gardener and florist for whom Julian S. Carr named a small hosiery mill early in this century, D. Jackson Jordan who taught at the school that today is North Carolina Central University, and Dr. George Adams were among the other prominent longtime members. A couple of blocks south of the church, the Fitzgeralds allowed their land at the north edge of Maplewood Cemetery to be used as a private cemetery. Fitzgerald family members, Methodists and Egiscopalians alike, and members of the Emmanuel A.M.E. Church were interred there.

The rise of the North Carolina Mutual in 1898 may have reduced Richard Fitzgerald's status, as Weare contends, but it appears that it did nothing to dampen his business activity. In 1895, he and Dr. Aaron Moore, W.G. Pearson, J.E. Shepard and J.A. Dodson formed the Durham Drug Co. According to North Carolina Mutual historian William J. Kennedy, Jr., they formed the company "not...to make money for the stockholders, but to help provide work for the young pharmacists [Shepard\_and Dodson] and to set up a business to serve the colored citizens of the area."

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Fitzgerald was president of the company and Dodson, his son-in-law, managed the firm, which was renamed the Fitzgerald Drug Co. by 1902.<sup>22</sup> The same year the North Carolina Mutual was formed, Fitzgerald was elected president of the Coleman Manufacturing Co. of Concord, N.C., which operated the South's first cotton mill managed and owned by blacks.<sup>23</sup> In 1908, when Fitzgerald and North Carolina Mutual directors John Merrick and W.G. Pearson led in the creation of the Mechanics and Farmers Bank, Durham's first Negro bank, Fitzgerald served as its first president.<sup>24</sup> Around 1910, he and S.L. Warren, vice president of the Mechanics and Farmers Bank, formed the short-lived Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Co.<sup>25</sup>

Richard Burton Fitzgerald died in 1918. Sometime after, his wife moved to her son's house at the corner of Kent and Jackson streets. Sarah Fitzgerald was active in Emmanuel A.M.E. Church until her death in 1931. When her children settled her and her husband's estate, The Maples was sold to a speculator who in turn sold it to Duke University, and the house subsequently was dismantled for salvage. Although several of the ten Fitzgerald children left Durham, those who stayed, as well as the descendants of Richard's sister, Agnes Fitzgerald Clegg, remained active in Emmanuel A.M.E. Church. Due to philosophical differences among the congregation, in 1971 its pastor and about 75% of the members relocated the church at the southern outskirts of When the pastor and "the Trustees of the Church effectively abandoned and Durham. ceased to use the Church structure located at 710 Kent Street ... and effectively moved the Church's spiritual body to a new Church location," the Kent St. property 27 "reverted ... to the heirs of R.B. Fitzgerald" per the provisions of the 1887 deed. The property was turned over to Fitzgerald's grandson, William Richard Fitzgerald, and he and the members of the congregation who did not wish to move continued to hold services in the 1888 building. Faced with financial difficulties around 1975, the few dozen remaining worshippers transferred to St. Joseph's A.M.E. Church and William R. Fitzgerald put the Kent St. property up for sale. It was purchased by the Deliverance Temple Holy Church, which continues to use the building today.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Pauli Murray, <u>Proud Shoes</u>, Second Edition. (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1978), pp.56-71.

<sup>2</sup><u>Ibid.</u>, pp.87 and 92.

<sup>3</sup><u>Ibid.</u>, pp.92-94.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., pp.166-88.

<sup>5</sup><u>Ibid</u>., p.203.

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<sup>6</sup><u>Ibid</u>., pp.210-25. <sup>7</sup><u>Ibid</u>., pp.226-27. <sup>8</sup><u>Ibid</u>., p.238.

<sup>9</sup>Sarah and one or both of her sons and their families first lived in a house at the present-day corner of Kent and Jackson streets, just one block south of the lot where the Emmanuel A.M.E. Church would be built; in the 1910s this house would be replaced by Richard's son Thomas with the brick foursquare currently on the site. Robert bought the land with a vein of clay southeast of the Chapel Hill Road house, but he found it increasingly difficult to operate his brickyard there as his eyesight failed. Although he ended up losing most of his land, he kept about one acre on the hillside now fronted by Carroll St. and around 1890, in spite of his blindness, he succeeded in supervising the construction of a house for his family there. (Located at 906 Carroll St., at the east edge of Maplewood Cemetery, the house has been severely compromised by recent alterations that render it ineligible for nomination to the National Register.) Mrs. Irene Johnson and William Richard Fitzgerald, interview in Durham 28 February 1984, and Murray, p.25. There is a photograph of the first Fitzgerald house on Chapel Hill Road/Kent St. in Murray.

<sup>10</sup>Murray, p.28; also W.K. Boyd, <u>The Story of Durham</u> (Durham: Duke University Press, 1925), pp.278 and 279, and Hiram V. Paul, <u>History of the Town of Durham</u> (Raleigh: Edwards and Broughton, 1884), p.241.

<sup>11</sup>Johnson and Fitzgerald. City directories indicate that he had a brickyard on the Chapel Hill Road from 1884 to at least 1889. Paul, <u>Directory of the Business and Citizens of Durham City for 1887</u> (Raleigh: Levi Branson, Publisher); and Turner and Co.'s <u>Durham Directory for the Years 1889 and 1890</u> (Danville, Va.: E.F. Turner & Co., Publishers). Later he operated brickyards in nearby Jackson and Thaxton streets.

<sup>12</sup>Johnson and Fitzgerald.

<sup>13</sup>Murray, p.267. There is a photograph of The Maples in Murray.

<sup>14</sup>Johnson and Fitzgerald; also see Sanborn Map Co., "Durham, North Carolina," 1913 series, map 223.

<sup>15</sup>Walter B. Weare, <u>Black Business in the New South</u> (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1973), p. 43n.

16Johnson and Fitzgerald.

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<sup>17</sup>Durham County Register of Deeds (DCRD), Deed Book 9, page 552.

<sup>18</sup>Holland N. McTyeire, <u>A History of Methodism</u> (Nashville, Tenn.: Publishing House of the M.E. Church, South, 1919), p.556.

<sup>19</sup>Johnson and Fitzgerald.

20<sub>Ibid</sub>.

<sup>21</sup>William J. Kennedy, Jr., <u>The North Carolina Mutual Story</u>, (Durham: North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Co., 1970), p.5. The name of the firm has reverted to Durham Drug. Co.

<sup>22</sup>Ramsey's Durham Directory for the year 1892 (Durham: N.A. Ramsey, publisher).

<sup>23</sup>G.F. Richings, <u>Evidence of Progress Among Colored People</u>, Fifth edition (Philadelphia: Geo. S. Ferguson Co., 1899) p.481; and Robert F. Durden, <u>The Dukes of</u> Durham, 1865-1929 (Durham: Duke University Press, 1975), pp. 145-148.

<sup>24</sup>Murray, p.267; and Weare, p.81.

<sup>25</sup>Johnson and Fitzgerald; and <u>Durham City Drectory</u> (Richmond, VA; Hill Directory Co.), see directories for 1911-12 and 1915.

<sup>26</sup>Johnson and Fitzgerald.

<sup>27</sup>DCRD, Judgment recorded in Deed Book 372, p. 674.

<sup>28</sup>Johnson and Fitzgerald.

