

B-4441

WHATCOAT METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH AND RECTORY

BALTIMORE CITY, MD

This three-bay, narrow, red-brick church was built in 1871 and is representative of Gothic church forms popularized by pattern books. The building form is characterized by a central spire, flanked by sloping nave arcade walls. The rectory is a three-story Italianate red-brick rowhouse. Access to the church is available when church is open.

MD INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES FORM
SANDTOWN-WINCHESTER SURVEY

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name Whatcoat Methodist Episcopal Church and Rectory

other names/site number Sharon Baptist Church/ B-4441

2. Location

street & number 1373 & 77 Stricker St. not for publication _____

city or town Baltimore vicinity N/A
state Maryland code MD county Baltimore City code 510
zip code 21217

3. State/Federal Agency Certification N/A

4. National Park Service Certification N/A

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

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

Category of Property (Check only one box)

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

Number of Resources within Property

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: RELIGION

Sub: religious facility

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: RELIGION

Sub: religious facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Romanesque

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation marble

roof

walls BRICK

other WOOD, VINYL

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

8. Statement of Significance

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Religion

Community Planning and Development

Ethnic Heritage

=====
Period of Significance 1871-1940

Significant Dates 1871

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder John W. Hogg (architect)
William Funk (builder)

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property
on one or more continuation sheets.) See continuation sheet.

=====
9. Major Bibliographical References
=====

Maps

Bromley, G.W. and Co. Atlas of the City of Baltimore, Vol. 1. Philadelphia:
1885, 1896.
Hopkins, G.M. Map of the City of Baltimore, Maryland. 1876, 1877.
Sanborn Map Company. Insurance Maps, Baltimore, Maryland, Vols. 2,3, and 7.
New York: 1890, 1901, 1914, 1928.
Simmons, Isaac. 1852 Revision of the Thomas H. Poppleton Map. Baltimore:
1852.

CHAP file, Sharon Baptist Church.

Enoch Pratt Free Library, vertical file, Sharon Baptist Church.

=====
10. Geographical Data
=====

Acreage of Property Lot = 80' x 40'

SDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form
(Whatcoat Methodist Episcopal Church & Rectory)
(Baltimore City, MD)

B-4441
(Page 4)

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	—	_____	_____	3	—	_____
2	—	_____	_____	4	—	_____

— See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Block 35, Lot 38

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries are based on a city lot(s) retaining original property lines.
The boundaries contain the church and rectory.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Elizabeth Jo Lampl & Kay Fanning/Architectural Historians
organization Robinson & Associates date July 1992
street & number 1710 Connecticut Ave., NW telephone (202) 234-2333
city or town Washington state DC zip code 20009

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Sharon Baptist Church, Inc.
street&number 1377 Stricker St. telephone _____
city or town Baltimore state MD zip code 21217

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 5 & 6 Page 1

Whatcoat Methodist Episcopal Church
and Rectory
name of property
Baltimore City, Maryland
county and State

HISTORIC CONTEXT

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Geographic Organization: Piedmont

Chronological/Developmental Period(s): Industrial/Urban Dominance

Prehistoric/Historic Period Theme(s): Architecture, Landscape
Architecture, and Community Planning; Religion;
Social/Education/Cultural

Resource Type:

Category: building(s)

Historic Environment: urban

Historic Function(s) and Use(s): religion

Known Design Source: John W. Hogg

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 1

Whatcoat Methodist Episcopal Church
& Rectory
name of property
Baltimore City, Maryland
county and State

DESCRIPTION

This three-bay, narrow church was built in 1871 and is representative of Gothic church forms popularized in the era through church pattern books (see attached). The building form is characterized by a central spire, flanked by sloping nave arcade walls.

The church shows the influence primarily of the Gothic style, but has Romanesque traits as well, such as the extensive Lombard brick corbelling, a hallmark of mid-nineteenth-century Romanesque Revival church architecture before the advent of the Richardsonian Romanesque.

The tower contains the primary entrance in its base. A single gabled roof covers the nave, and a separate, one-story narthex block under a roof of the same pitch intersects the tower. Pointed windows are set both singly and in groups of two, with larger windows at the second level; in the tower these have bulls-eye windows above them. All windows have simple brick surrounds inset with stone quoins. Stepped buttresses with stone coping define the corners of the tower, narthex block, and sanctuary; those on the narthex carry blocky finials. Similar buttresses along the sides mark the bay divisions.

The current tower is a prefabricated replacement installed on the church in 1981. The original tower was destroyed in a storm of 1954. Today's tower is much smaller in height, and contains no upper spire. The tower is composed of a vinyl-sided steeple with a chunky base and narrow, abbreviated spire. Both base and spire contain pedimented features; at the base of the tower, the pediment occurs as a variegated cornice line over a grouping of round-headed (and a single round) louvered openings. In the spire itself, the pediment occurs over a single, round-headed louver.

The church has been renovated several times. All exterior brick has been cleaned and repointed. Lexan glass was installed to protect the stained glass windows.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 1

Whatcoat Methodist Episcopal Church
& Rectory
name of property
Baltimore City, Maryland
county and State

SIGNIFICANCE

This church structure may be the oldest, unaltered church in the survey area.¹ It was home to one (or, possibly, two) Methodist congregation(s) before becoming the home of an African American Baptist congregation. Since 1915, when the Sharon Baptist Church moved into the building, it has been a center of African-American cultural heritage.

The Whatcoat Methodist Episcopal congregation built the structure in 1871. The \$7,000 piece of ground was donated to the church by John T. Ford, Esquire. The local newspapers described the church in an 1871 article: "In design the edifice is purely Gothic, and is regarded as the handsomest church. . . ." ² The church was equipped with a Sunday school as well. The total construction cost was \$54,000.

The architect was John W. Hogg and the builder, William Funk. The stained glass was produced locally.

Whatcoat--both the church and street of the same name--were named for Reverend Richard Whatcoat, a white Methodist minister who traveled with Richard Allen in the 1820s. The church occupied the building between 1871 and c. 1896, when it was succeeded by the West Baltimore Station, Methodist Episcopal Church. (This may actually be the same congregation with a new name.)

In 1894, the building erected the Frederick Rice Memorial Building in honor of its patron, Frederick Rice, the butcher who amassed substantial land holdings in Sandtown and formed the Lafayette Square Association. The building cost \$6,000, and was paid for by Rice's heirs. The 40'x58' one-story addition still stands as the rear portion of the church facing

¹ The two other oldest churches in the survey include St. Peter Claver Church (the core of the building, which contains a pre-1876 church) and Salem United Brethren Church, constructed in 1872 on Frances Street in Penn-North.

² Baltimore American article, May 15, 1871 (CHAP file, Sharon Baptist Church).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 2

Whatcoat Methodist Episcopal Church
& Rectory
name of property
Baltimore City, Maryland
county and State

Presstman Street. The contractor was Edgar M. Moel.

In 1915, West Baltimore Station sold the building to the Sharon Baptist Church, formerly of the building at the intersection of Presstman and Carey.

African American Baptist Churches

The First Colored Baptist Church of Baltimore was created in 1836. After functioning out of several small houses of worship, a formal church was erected in 1881 at the intersection of Caroline and McElderry Streets. The congregation received financial support in this endeavor from the Baptist Church Extension Society. The second large African-American Baptist congregation in Baltimore was the Macedonia Baptist Church, which began in a stable loft in Vincent Alley. It too raised funds and built a brick church.

Sharon Baptist Church

Inspired to instruct African American children, several members of the Macedonia Baptist Church founded the Whatcoat Mission in a stable on Whatcoat Street in 1881 in order to instruct children.³ (The Whatcoat Mission was affiliated with Macedonia Baptist Church, not with the Whatcoat Methodist Episcopal Church.) By 1890, the Mission occupied a building at the southeast corner of Calhoun and Riggs (then Patterson), which became known as the Patterson Avenue Chapel. (This building no longer stands). By 1901, the Church renamed itself the Sharon Baptist Church, and it moved into the former Fuller Memorial Baptist Church (see B-4443) at the northeast corner of Presstman and Carey Street. Finally, in 1915, the church purchased the West Baltimore Station, Methodist Episcopal Church at Pressman and Stricker for \$33,000.

The Sharon Baptist Church's first pastor was William M. Alexander. His success at organizing the first school for African-American children on the west side resulted in the formation of Public School No. 112, regarded as the first black elementary school in the city (see B-4468). In addition, he

³ The 1901 Sanborn Map still identified a Whatcoat Mission at 1006 Whatcoat Street, between Mosher and Riggs.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 3

Whatcoat Methodist Episcopal Church
& Rectory
name of property
Baltimore City, Maryland
county and State

helped to found the Southern Life Insurance Company, was an active member of the Brotherhood of Liberty, which sought to assure equal status for African-American lawyers and teachers, and worked to furnish aid to Liberia.

Reverend Alexander was also a businessman and an entrepreneur. He started an advertising newsletter, called "the Afro American," which he edited for five years. When the Reverend was forced to sell his assets at public auction in 1892, the name of the publication, and the printing equipment, were purchased by John H. Murphy, Sr.⁴ Mr. Murphy, and then his descendents, began a full-fledged newspaper business, expanding the paper into a national publication (the Afro-American) which today celebrates its 100-year anniversary.

The church's second pastor, who took over the leadership of the church in 1919, was Beal Elliott, one of the first African American graduates of Yale University. School No. 108, located at Gilmore and School Streets, was named after him but destroyed by fire. Pastor Elliott oversaw two renovations to the church structure. The third pastor was Reverend James L. Moore, who began his service in 1946. He has instituted many community programs, including the Baltimore Opportunities Industrialization Center, which prepares the unemployed and underemployed for jobs.

⁴ Information courtesy of Ms. Peters, historian for the Afro-American.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 9 Page 1

Whatcoat Methodist Episcopal Church
name of property
Baltimore City, Maryland
county and State

BIBLIOGRAPHY

CHAP file, Sharon Baptist Church.

Enoch Pratt Free Library, vertical file, Sharon Baptist Church.

SANDTOWN-WINCHESTER/PENN-NORTH
RECONNAISSANCE-LEVEL SURVEY FORM

Survey No. B-4441

Neg. No. 5/10

Historic Name Whatcoat M.E. Church

Current Name/Use Sharon Baptist Church & Rectory

Address(es) 1373 Stricker Street & 1377 Stricker Street

Resource/Property Type

<input type="checkbox"/>	Rowhouses
<input type="checkbox"/>	Commercial Structure
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Public/Institutional Building
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public Housing
<input type="checkbox"/>	Site
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other

Attached
 Freestanding

Note:

Stories 2

Primary Material brick Secondary Material marble

Roof Form gable (church)

No. of Bays in Unit/Facade 3 If Rowhouse: Flat Front Swell Front Porch

Window Type: Double-Hung 1/1 Sash 2/2 Sash 2/1 Sash Other Sash Transom

Door Type: Single-Leaf Double-Leaf Number of panels (if visible) Transom

Architectural Style Romanesque Revival Date c. 1852-90

Noteworthy Features: Romanesque Revival church with Lombard brick corbelling. Centered entrance in tower, vinyl(?)-sided steeple with paired, rounded vents and gabled dormers. Low narthex bays flank entrance, support tower block. Stepped buttress 3662xatners, along sides.

Alterations:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Formstone	<input type="checkbox"/>	Stucco
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Vinyl/Aluminum	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Window/Door Changes
<input type="checkbox"/>	Awnings	<input type="checkbox"/>	Missing Cornice Elements
<input type="checkbox"/>	First-Floor Use Change	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other: _____

Status: Occupied Vacant Mixed

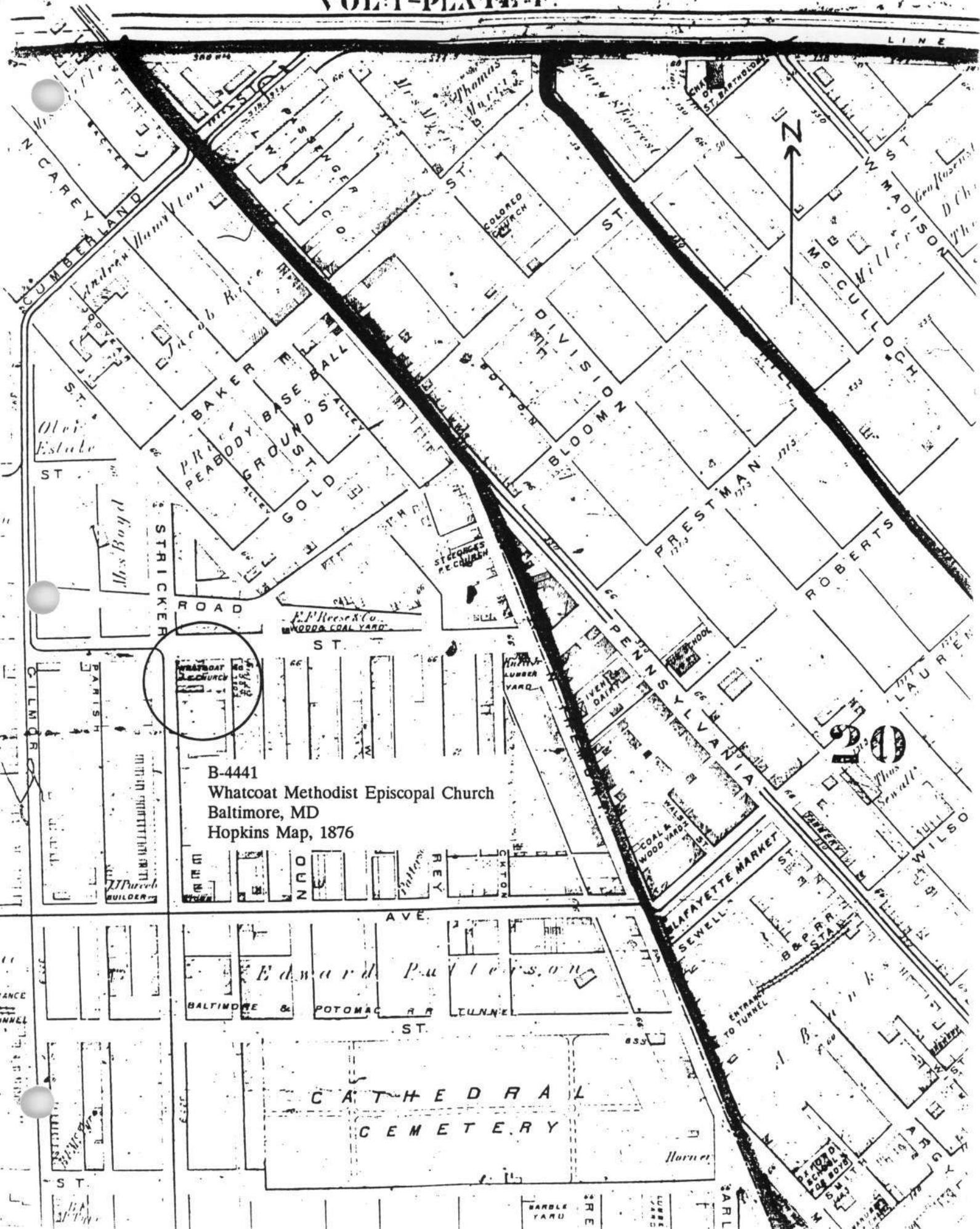
NR Evaluation: Contributing Non-Contributing

Recommended for Intensive Level: Yes No

Surveyor: Joey Lampl

Affiliation: Robinson & Associates

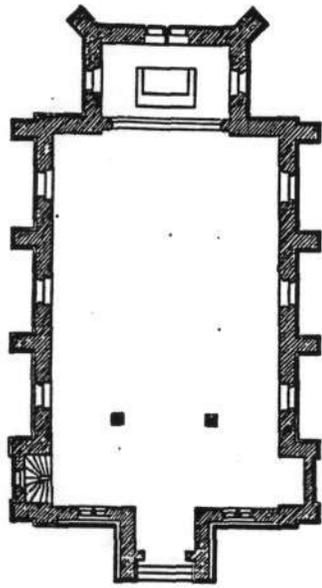
Date: February-April 1992



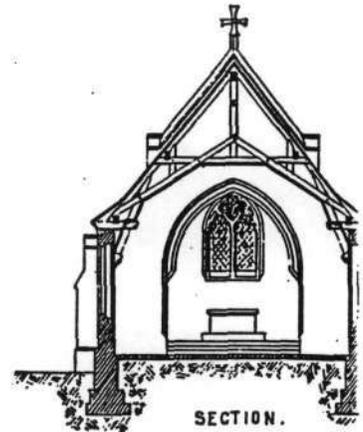
B-441
Whatcoat Methodist Episcopal Church
Baltimore, MD
Hopkins Map, 1876

Edward Patterson
BALTIMORE & POTOMAC R.R. TUNNEL
CATHEDRAL CEMETERY

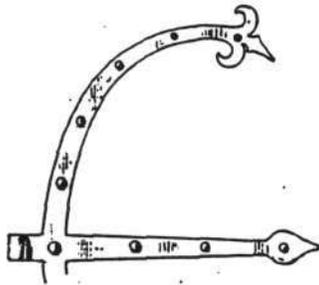
20



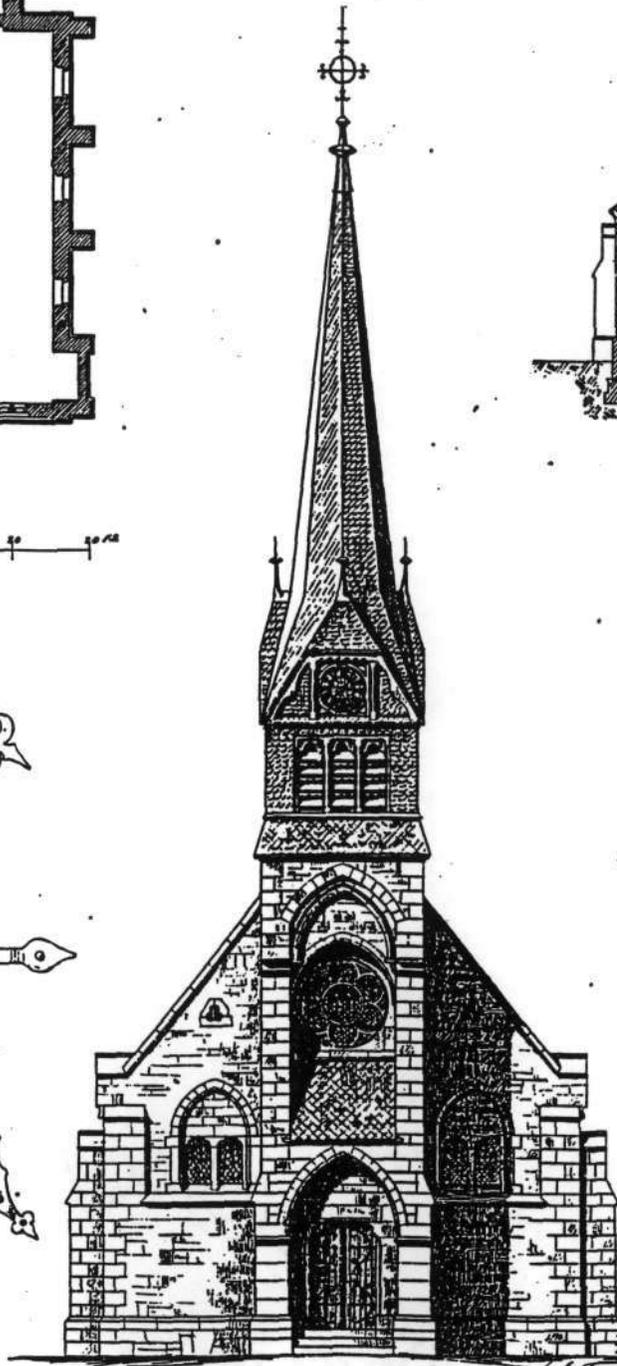
PLAN.



SECTION.

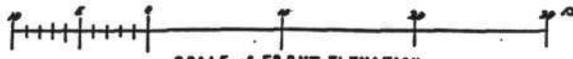


DETAILS of DOOR.



FRONT - ELEVATION.

*V. B. Bicknell del.
Franklin N.Y.*



SCALE of FRONT-ELEVATION.



FINISH of SPIRE.



Sandtown - Winchester / Penn - North

#B-444E

Baltimore, MD

Leonard Jackson

July 1992

City of Baltimore, Commission for Historical
and Architectural Preservation

Historic: WHATCOAT M.E. Church

Current: SHARON BARTIST

1377 STR. CASE 21.
WEST ELEVATION

Roll 9 / Neg 14

(of 2

PAPER
TUBED

PAPER
TUBED



SANDTOWN - WINCHESTER / PENN-NORTH

#B-444

BALTIMORE, MD

ELIZABETH Q LAMPL

MARCH 1992

CITY OF BALTIMORE, COMMISSION FOR HISTORICAL
AND ARCHITECTURAL PRESERVATION

HISTORIC : WHATCOAT M.E. CHURCH @ 1373 N.
CURRENT : SHARON BAPTIST STRICKER ST.
CHURCH : RECTORY

1373 and 1377 Stricker St.

WEST ELEVATIONS

ROLL 5 / NEG 10

2 of 2