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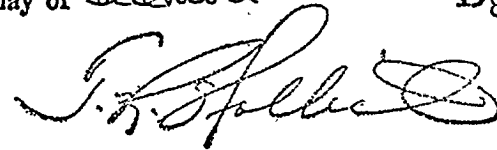
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CITY OF ST. CATHARINES

BY-LAW No. 80-439

A BY-LAW to designate the Property
at No. 92 Geneva Street of
architectural value and of historic
interest.

BY-LAW read a first, second and third
time and passed this 15th
day of December 1980.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "J. H. Spiller", is written over the text of the resolution.

Clerk

CITY OF ST. CATHARINES

BY-LAW NO. 80-439

A By-law to designate the Property at No. 92 Geneva Street of architectural value and of historic interest.

WHEREAS The Ontario Heritage Act, 1974, authorizes the Council of a municipality to enact by-laws to designate real property including all the buildings and structures thereon, to be of historic or architectural value or interest;

AND WHEREAS the Council of the Corporation of the City of St. Catharines has caused to be served upon the owner of the lands and premises known as No. 92 Geneva Street and upon the Ontario Heritage Foundation notice of intention to so designate the aforesaid real property and has caused such notice of intention to be published in a newspaper having a general circulation in the municipality once for each of three consecutive weeks;

AND WHEREAS the reasons for designation are set out as Schedule "B" hereto;

AND WHEREAS no notice of objection to the said proposed designation has been served upon the Clerk of the municipality;

NOW THEREFORE THE COUNCIL OF THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF ST. CATHARINES enacts as follows:

1. There is designated as being of architectural and historic value or interest the real property, more particularly described in Schedule "A" hereto, known as No. 92 Geneva Street.
2. The City Solicitor is hereby authorized to cause a copy of this By-law to be registered against the property described in Schedule "A" hereto in the proper Land Registry Office.
3. The City Clerk is hereby authorized to cause a copy of this By-law to be served upon the owner of the aforesaid property and upon the Ontario Heritage Foundation and to cause notice of this By-law to be published in a newspaper having general circulation in the City of St. Catharines.

PASSED this

15th

day of

December

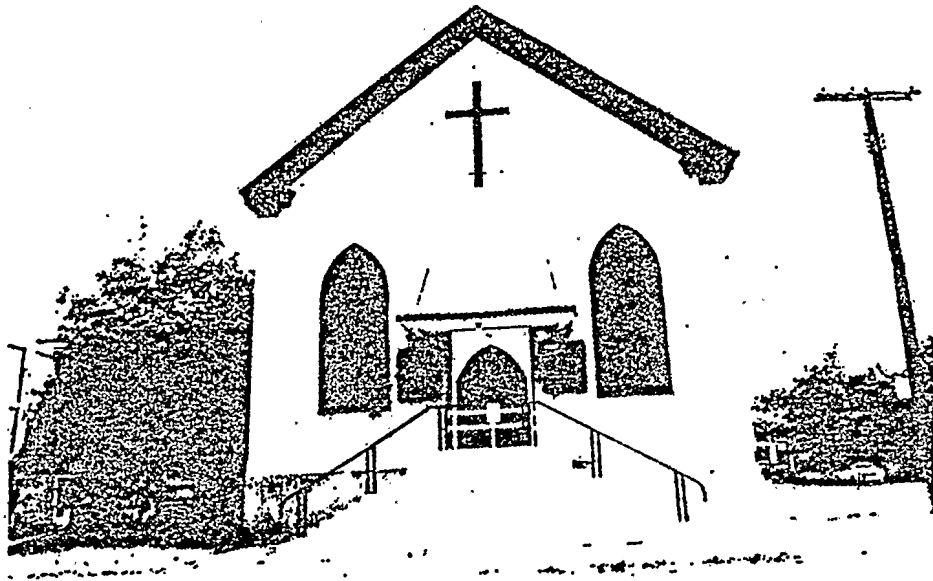
1980.

J. R. Pollock
CLERK

J. Roy Adams
MAYOR

SCHEDULE "A"

ALL AND SINGULAR that certain parcel or tract of land and premises situate,
lying and being in the City of St. Catharines in the Regional Municipality
of Niagara and being composed of all of Lot No. 3753, Corporation Plan No. 2.

SCHEDULE "B"BRITISH METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

ADDRESS: 92 Geneva Street

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: a) Present-Lot 3753, Corp. Plan 2
b) Past-Pt. Lot 16, Concession 6, Grantham

BUILT: Circa 1855

ARCHITECT:

BUILDER:

PRESENT OWNER AND USE: BME Church

ORIGINAL OWNER AND USE: BME Church

SIGNIFICANCE

Blacks came to settle in the St. Catharines area along with the Loyalists as early as the 1780's, and they were part of the early social fabric of the Niagara Peninsula. In 1833, slavery was abolished throughout the British Empire and this marked the beginning of the underground railroad which brought thousands of escaped slaves across the border to Canada. Many came to settle in St. Catharines and began to organize two churches, one Baptist and one Methodist.

Most of the Black community lived close to the Geneva, Welland and North Street district and in 1840, William Hamilton Merritt and Oliver Phelps sold a small lot on Geneva Street at the corner of North Street for use as the "African Methodist Episcopal Church". The A.M.E. Church was founded in the United States by Negro freedmen and slaves and was officially incorporated in 1796. Canadian branches were organized by Richard Williams who was sent to Canada by the New York Annual Conference in 1837. In 1838, he organized A.M.E. Churches in St. David's and St. Catharines with about 70 members. The creation of the B.M.E. Church arose for a specific reason to give, it was hoped, a greater protection to the runaway slave, by having a Canadian institution and have the Blacks become Canadian Citizens. On Oct. 3, 1856, the B.M.E. Church was founded in Chatham and the St. Catharines A.M.E. Church became the B.M.E. Church.

The present building was the second structure on the site, the first church being a crude log building. It was removed to make way for the larger building. The congregation received support from the St. Paul Street Methodist Church in constructing the single room church. The building was started in October 30, 1855 and the service of dedication was held November 15, 1855 by the Rev. Dr. Payne, Bishop of Cincinnati.

The church was built with the memory of the churches left behind in the southern United States, but the church is not only significant because of its architectural rarity but also because of the social significance of the Black community in St. Catharines. It is interesting to note that in 1852 when the total population of the town was 4368, over 700 were listed as "coloured".

This church has been in continuous use by the Black community for over one hundred years.

Black Churches were built in Niagara Falls, Guelph, Brantford, Fort Erie.

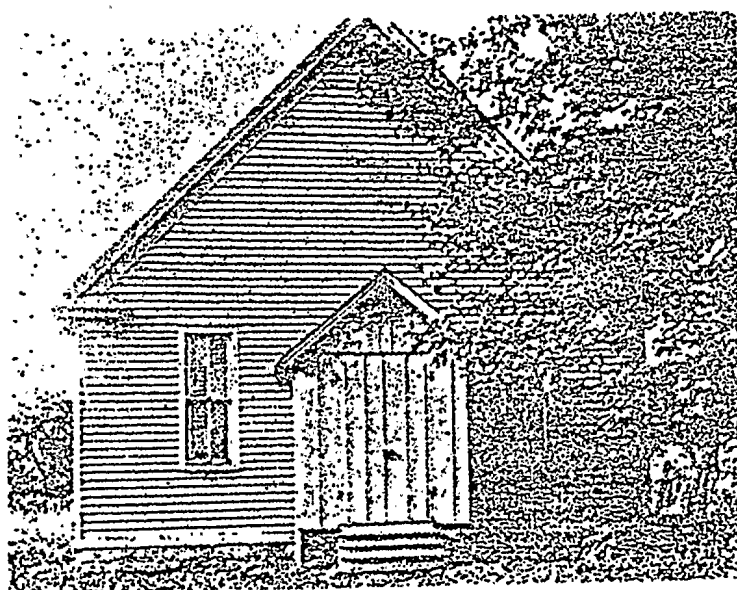
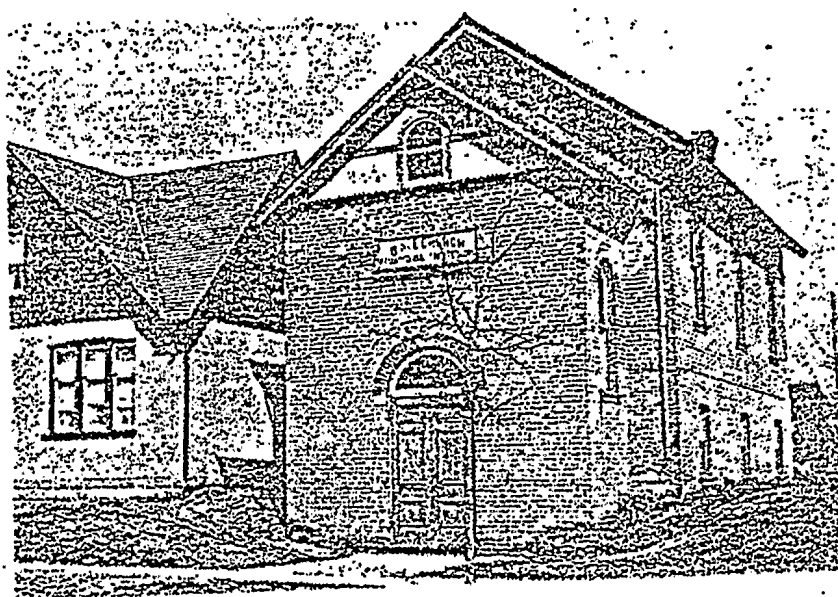
DESCRIPTION

The BME Church is a small white wooden frame building with stucco over the original clapboard. It is set on a rubble foundation which has been reinforced with concrete and supported by walnut timbers. The front facade is three bays wide with two long gothic windows flanking a doorway. The doorway itself has been greatly altered with a protective platform suspended over it. The original square doorway has been altered to accept gothic doors.

The front facing gable has a boxed cornice with short returns.

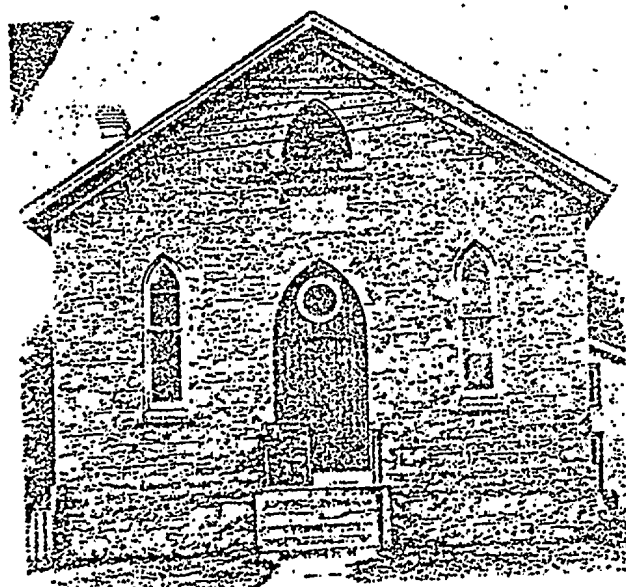
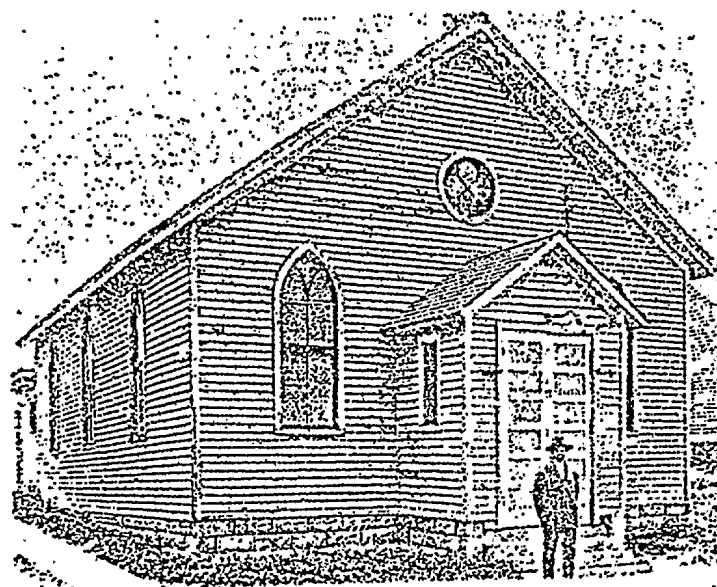
Both sides of the building have four gothic windows identical to those at the front.

The architecture is unique in Ontario in that the church is an exact replica of any southern baptist church.



TOP - B.M.E. Brantford

BOTTOM - B.M.E. Fort Erie.



TOP - B.M.E. Niagara Falls

BOTTOM - B.M.E. Guelph

**The African Methodist
Episcopal Church
and
The British Methodist
Episcopal Church**

The A.M.E. Church was founded in the United States by Negro freedmen and slaves, and was officially incorporated in 1796. Canadian branches were organized by Richard Williams who was sent to Canada by the New York Annual Conference in 1837. In 1838 he organized A.M.E. Churches in St. David's and St. Catharines with about 70 members. Reports to the 1839 New York Conference indicated the establishment of churches at Toronto, Amherstburg, Hamilton, and Brantford. When the British Methodist Episcopal Church was founded in Canada in 1856, the A.M.E. Church was dissolved.

The creation of the B.M.E. Church arose for a specific reason. In 1856 the A.M.E. Church held a conference where resolutions were adopted for a new organization to be known as the British Methodist Episcopal Church in Canada, with the Rt. Rev. Willis Nazrey of the A.M.E. Church as the presiding Bishop. This action was taken

because the U.S. Fugitive Slave Act had been passed, and slave owners were making every effort to secure the return of runaway slaves. It was felt that if the runaway slaves became citizens of Canada their safety would be assured; and, likewise, if the Church became a Canadian institution it would be in a better position to secure help. Thus on Oct. 3, 1856, the B.M.E. Church was founded in Chatham. Later, the A.M.E. Church was re-established.

B.M.E. Church, Brantford

B.M.E. Church, Fort Erie