**St. Mary's Chapel**

**LOCATION:**
- **STREET AND NUMBER:** 900 Hillsborough Street
- **CITY OR TOWN:** Raleigh
- **STATE:** North Carolina
  - **CODE:** 37
- **COUNTY:** Wake
  - **CODE:** 163

**CLASSIFICATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY (Check One)</th>
<th>OWNERSHIP</th>
<th>STATUS</th>
<th>ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Occupied</td>
<td>Yes: Restricted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Unoccupied</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure</td>
<td>Historic</td>
<td>Preservation work in progress</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Object</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>Other (Specify)</td>
<td>No</td>
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**PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate):**
- Agricultural
- Commercial
- Educational
- Entertainment
- Government
- Industrial
- Military
- Museum
- Natural
- Religious
- Scientific
- Transportation
- Parks
- Other (Specify)

**OWNER OF PROPERTY**
- **OWNER'S NAME:** Trustees of St. Mary's Junior College
- **STREET AND NUMBER:** 900 Hillsborough Street
- **CITY OR TOWN:** Raleigh
  - **STATE:** North Carolina
    - **CODE:** 37

**LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**
- **COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:** Wake County Courthouse
- **STREET AND NUMBER:** 310 Fayetteville Street
  - **CITY OR TOWN:** Raleigh
    - **STATE:** North Carolina
      - **CODE:** 37

**REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TITLE OF SURVEY</th>
<th>DATE OF SURVEY</th>
<th>DEPARTMENT FUND SURVEY RECORDS</th>
<th>STRETCH AND NUMBER</th>
<th>STATE</th>
<th>CODE</th>
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</thead>
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</table>
Exterior: St. Mary's Episcopal Chapel was originally a simple board-and-batten, rectangular structure with a steep gable roof. In 1905 transepts were added giving the chapel its present cruciform plan. The south (main) gable contains a pointed segmental-arch portal flanked by narrow lancet windows. Above the entrance is a hood supported by curved brackets with geometric open-work featuring trefoil in the gable. A cartwheel "rose" window is situated in the center of the gable, above the hood, and below a louvered quatrefoil. The roof is terminated by a cruciform finial.

The nave to the crossing is four bays long. Each bay contains a triangular-headed lancet framed by a simple projecting molding and resting on small molded brackets. The gable end of the east transept is identical to the south (main) entrance except the hood has been replaced by a shed porch which connects to a covered walkway leading to the main school building. The west transept contains a large narrow lancet flanked by two smaller ones. The north gable at the end of the sanctuary features a large stained glass lancet window below a louvered quatrefoil. Later additions have been constructed adjacent to the transepts in the northeast and northwest angles.

Interior: The plan of St. Mary's is essentially a Latin cross. It has walls of plaster above a flat paneled wainscot. This rather austere treatment is relieved by beautiful stained glass windows set in deep splayed reveals. Large three-centered arches with wooden tracery are located in the north wall of each transept and serve as organ screens. The timber roof is finished with simple wooden sheathing. It is of a much lower pitch than the exterior gable and rises in two distinct stages with the change of angle occurring at the lower of the two purlins. The bays of the roof are divided by simple rafters resting on molded brackets. At the crossing each opening is framed by a collar-brace. These members rise from the floor, are tangent to the rafter just below the upper purlin and form shallow pointed arches below the ridge. At the apex of each collar-beam is a vertical strut supporting the ridge. The sanctuary features a simple altar with a small highly carved wooden reredos.
In May, 1833, the convention of the Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina passed a resolution establishing the Episcopal School for Boys. A 159-acre tract was purchased near Raleigh from Col. William Polk and construction of the school buildings was begun within a year. But, in July, 1837, the trustees were forced to close the institution because of financial difficulties and the property was sold to Duncan Cameron. Cameron was a prominent local politician and businessman—serving as a State Senator from Orange County, a judge of Superior Court, president of the State Bank, and as chairman of the committee appointed to rebuild the State Capitol in 1831.

With the aid of Judge Cameron, the Rev. Albert Smedes reopened the school as St. Mary's School for Girls on May 12, 1842, and served as the institution's rector for thirty-five years. In 1897 the school property was purchased by the Diocese of North Carolina from the Cameron family and in 1899 the school's charter was amended to include the Diocese of South Carolina.

The early religious services at St. Mary's School were held in the parlor of Smedes Hall; later they were moved to another room fitted with pews and an organ. In 1855 St. Mary's Chapel was built with money donated by the Cameron family. The architect was Richard Upjohn, who also designed Christ Church in Raleigh and Trinity Church in New York City. Bishop Thomas Atkinson, visiting the chapel for the first time in 1856, remarked, "I was gratified by its beauty, its appropriate arrangements, and its adaptation to its purpose."

In 1905 the transepts were added but, most of Upjohn's work was left unaltered. Upjohn, who normally restricted his efforts to more important projects, created in St. Mary's Chapel a simple, but delightful board- and-batten edifice, which is a fine example of Gothic Revival church architecture.
As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National [ ] State [x] Local [ ]

Name: Dr. H. G. Jones

Title: Director, State Department of Archives and History

Date: November 13, 1970

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register
9.

Wake County Records, State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina. (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills, Estate Papers, Census Reports.)

St. Mary's Chapel
Hillsborough Street
Raleigh

Map of City of Raleigh
City of Raleigh
Scale: 1"/400'
June 1967

Latitude
degrees minutes seconds
35 46' 59"

Longitude
degrees minutes seconds
78 39' 11"