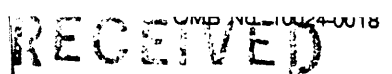
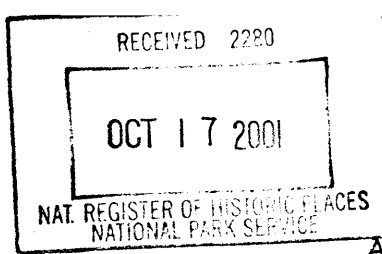


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

1299



AUG 4 2000

Ala. Historical Commission

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Sardis Baptist Church

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number SR 223S at jct Co Rd 22 not for publication N/A

city or town Union Springs vicinity

state Alabama code Al county Bullock code 011 zip code 36089

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature] 8/31/01
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

ALABAMA HISTORICAL COMMISSION (STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE)
State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

[Signature] 11/29/01
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Edson H. Beall

Sardis Baptist Church
Name of Property

Bullock County Alabama
County and State

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
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Religious
Funerary

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Vacant / Not in use
Cemetery

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Greek Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick
walls Wood: Weatherboard

roof Metal: tin
other _____

Narrative Description

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

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.) N/A

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

Circa 1850

Significant Dates

Circa 1850

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data: N/A

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: _____

Sardis Baptist Church
Name of Property

BullOCK County, Al
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 6

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	16	61168110	3155107110
Zone	Easting	Northing	
2			

3			
Zone	Easting	Northing	
4			

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Pauline C. Banks, Treasurer, Sardis Baptist Church Building Fund

organization Sardis Baptist Church Building Fund date August 1, 2000

street & number 2004 Highpoint Drive telephone (334) 704 0004

city or town Opelika state Alabama zip code 36801

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

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

name Sardis Baptist Church Building Fund, c/o Nancy Adams and Pauline Banks

street & number 2004 Highpoint Drive telephone 334-704-0004

city or town Opelika state Al zip code 36801

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Sardis Baptist Church
Bullock County, AL

7. NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

Located in the heart of the community of Sardis, in Bullock County, Alabama, the Sardis Baptist Church was organized on June 10, 1837. On June 12, 1841, four and one half acres were deeded to the church for a building and a cemetery. The first building, a log cabin, was constructed in 1841. The present church building is relatively unaltered since construction in the 1850's.

The church is located at the intersection of SR 223 and Bullock County Road 22. The cemetery is on County Road 22 next to the church. The cemetery today includes an additional one and one half acres adjoining, to the south, the original four and one half acre property. There are more than 150 grave markers that make up the contributing cemetery with the earliest marker dated 1848 and the latest 1999. Nineteenth Century iron railing defines some of the plots.

The one-story Greek Revival style frame building is set three to five feet above ground on brick pillars rising from either rock or concrete bases. It is 40' 8" wide and 58' 4" from front to back. The framing is mortise and tenon, and the exterior construction is horizontal lapped weatherboard, fastened with square nails.

The main roof, now clad with galvanized roofing, extends forward to cover a front porch and is supported by four boxed columns with plain bases and capitols. Pilasters of similar design join the porch to the front of the building. The front gable is substantial but plain and supported by a large wooden entablature decorated with inlaid handmade individual-piece molding. The porch ceiling is planked boards. Four concrete steps to the porch are centered between the front two middle columns. There are two front entryways closed by double doors with recessed panels. The two rear doors have been covered from the exterior, but the interior reveals two hinged single hand-planed doors with recessed panels. There are four nine-over-nine pane, double hung windows, most with original glass and with original tripartite louvered exterior shutters, in each of the two side walls of the building.

The interior is one open room with two rows of original oak pews with an aisle along each wall, and one between the rows, leading from the front end of the church to the raised dais and pulpit in the rear end of the church. The ceiling is wide hand-planed planks; the walls are plaster over lath, trimmed by chair rails, horizontal hand-planed plank wainscoting, a wide hand-planed plank baseboard, and base molding. The floor is hand-planed wood planks.

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Continuation SheetSection number 7,8 Page 2Sardis Baptist Church
Bullock County, AL

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION (continued)

The current structural condition of the church building is good due to the combined efforts of concerned individuals who have donated time and money for extensive repairs in 1989. The pump organ, decorative oak pews, flower stands and pulpit furniture were all the victims of unauthorized removal in 1980. Exterior repairs in 1989 included: rebuilding of five pillars with cement footings; replacement of rotten sills; replacement of rotted porch planks; stabilization of porch columns with new decking; replacement of broken window panes; repair and rehangng of shutters; repair of exterior trim, flashing, frieze and soffet; securing back doors; repair of loose rafters, roof decking and metal roofing. Repairs at that time to the interior included: replacing rotted flooring; repairing baseboard, repairing cracked original plaster, repairing the pulpit steps, rehangng doors with authentic donated hardware, repairing and rebuilding pews, replacing fallen ceiling planks and securing all ceiling planks. After repairs were completed, the pews and the building interior and exterior were repainted.

A review of the present condition reveals the building to be intact and sound but in need of interior cleaning, removal of honeybee infestation from a front porch column, and exterior painting.

Archeological component: Although no formal archeological survey has been made of this area, the potential for subsurface remains is good. Buried portions may contain information which may be useful in interpreting the entire area.

8. NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The 1850's-era Sardis Baptist Church building is eligible for the National Register under *Criterion C* for architecture. The building reflects the rural carpenter's version of the Greek Revival style adapted to religious purposes. It remains unaltered with the exception of a metal roof, and concrete steps which replaced the wooden steps. The building reflects the popularity of the Greek Revival design in the rural setting during the antebellum period.

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National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 3Sardis Baptist Church
Bullock County, AL

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

Also of Greek Revival style and of similar construction is the 1840's Dozier-Martin-Fuqua home on the adjacent property. This weatherboard home, now covered with vinyl siding, exhibits a hipped roof extending over a deep porch, supported by six plain square wooden columns, with plain capitals and bases. The windows are nine-over-nine double hung sashes, which had functional, louvered external shutters, now in storage. The interior reflects similar hand-planed chair rails and doors, wide planked wainscoting, and wide baseboards, as seen in the church interior. This house is of significance due to family tradition that it was built by the same carpenters who built the church. This tradition is supported by the fact that the building of this home was commissioned by the same John M. Dozier who deeded the land for the church building in 1841. John M. Dozier bought this property in the Sardis community and moved here from Edgefield District, South Carolina in 1834.

Mt. Hilliard United Methodist Church, located approximately 12 miles to the southwest, on County Highway 14 (Ridge Road) in Bullock County was organized in 1835 in what was then Pike County. This is an additional example of the use of Greek Revival style in an antebellum church of a different denomination. This rectangular building has four square wooden columns with plain capitals and bases supporting the gable end of a pitched roof extended over the porch. Additional similarities to the Sardis Baptist Church are the position of the two front doors and the four windows in each side wall.

As indicated by a statewide survey by the Alabama Historical Commission, the Sardis Baptist Church is one of the oldest Baptist Church buildings still standing anywhere in Alabama.¹ According to Robert S. Gamble, Architectural Historian of the Alabama Historical Commission, the Sardis church is one of the most important and also one of the most immediately endangered due to neglect and abandonment.² In another letter, Mr. Gamble describes the Sardis church as an "exceptionally fine example of rural church architecture following the Greek Revival style."³

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 4

Sardis Baptist Church
Bullock County, AL

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

Historical Summary

The Sardis Baptist Church is located in the heart of the community of Sardis, in Bullock County, approximately 5 miles south of Union Springs, at the corner of Alabama State Road 223 and Bullock County Road 22, both of which traverse the church property. The 1814 Treaty of Ft. Jackson opened to white settlement the part of the area that was to become Bullock County, and the Cusseta Treaty of 1832 opened the rest of the area. Homesteads and farms in this community began to be established soon after the area opened for white settlement in 1832. Local settlers came primarily from South Carolina, many from Edgefield District. The church site was located in Macon County until 1866, when Bullock County was formed out of parts of Macon, Pike, Barbour, and Montgomery Counties.

The Sardis Baptist Church was organized on June 10, 1837, with The Rev. William Thomas and the Rev. J. R. Smith officiating.⁴ The Church became a part of the Salem Association in November, 1839. Ministers serving the churches of this Association were J. R. Smith, J. Sims, G. G. McClendon, and William M. Tryon.⁵

Macon County Courthouse records indicate that in 1841 John M. Dozier and his wife Amy Youngblood Dozier, for 6 dollars & 62½ cents, deeded the Sardis Church four and one half acres for the church site and cemetery. The first church building was a log cabin.⁴ The present building is believed to have been constructed during the 1850's.⁶

In 1870, the Sunday School Superintendent of the Sardis Baptist Church, W. A. Martin, reported 5 officers and teachers and 40 scholars to the 49th Annual Session of the Baptist State Convention of Alabama.⁷

According to the minutes of the 42nd Annual Session of the Bullock County Centennial Baptist Association, October 17-18, 1917, the Sardis Baptist Church had twenty-three active members in 1917.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 5

Sardis Baptist Church
Bullock County, AL

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

Historical Summary (continued)

By 1940, the church had become less active, and the building neglected to the point that parts of the roof had fallen in. At that time, only one of the former members of the church still lived in the community. The Sardis Home Demonstration Club led a successful effort to repair the church and to raise money for that effort.⁸ As a result, for several years thereafter, the church was opened occasionally for Sunday services, funerals, and other church-related activities conducted by visiting ministers.

After the early 1950's, church activities ceased and the building once again suffered neglect, until the late 1980's. Unauthorized removal of church furnishings in the 1970's and 1980's, by people in the community, created a need for preservation and securing of the building. In an effort to save the church building, a committee comprised of Pauline C. Banks, Jacqueline Martin Fuqua, and Louise Shaw Murray organized another effort to repair and maintain the building. With the help of many volunteers, extensive repairs were made to the building and the few remaining pews. This was largely completed by 1993, when the building was cleaned and the floor repainted in preparation for a wedding held there in May of that year. In 1992, the building was added to the Alabama Register of Landmarks and Heritage. There is a small fund for the upkeep of the building.

The cemetery, which is located on the eastern end of the church property, served both the white and black communities, before the establishment of a nearby black church and cemetery. The earliest death date on a tombstone is 1848. Some time after 1860, as additional space was required for the cemetery, William A. Martin and his wife Nancy Martin, owners of the adjacent property, gave the church permission to extend the cemetery onto an additional one and a half acres of their land, just south of the existing cemetery. Today, an association of concerned neighbors oversees the maintenance of the cemetery.

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Sardis Baptist Church
Bullock County, AL

NOTES

- ¹ Letter from Robert S. Gamble to Pauline C. Banks, October 13, 1988.
- ² Letter to Wayne Flynt, February 6, 1989.
- ³ Letter to Quentin Porch, March 10, 1989.
- ⁴ Article on the 100th Anniversary of the Church *Union Springs Herald*, July, 1937.
- ⁵ Hosea Holcombe, *History of the Rise and Progress of the Baptists in Alabama*, 1840, p. 298.
- ⁶ "Restoring old Churches," *Home Demonstration Clubs, Annual Report*; December, 1940--December, 1941, p 63.
- ⁷ Minutes of the session, Opelika, Alabama, November 11-15, 1870.
- ⁸ See footnote 6.

9. BIBLIOGRAPHY

The Alabama Cooperative Extension Service. *Home Demonstration Clubs Annual Report, December 1940--December, 1941.*

Bullock County Historical Society. *Collections and Recollections of Bullock County History*,
Ed. by William H. & Rubye M. Garner. Herff-Jones Co, 1977.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9,10 Page 7

Sardis Baptist Church
Bullock County, AL

BIBLIOGRAPHY (continued)

Gamble, Robert S. letter to Pauline C. Banks, October 13, 1988.

_____ . letter to Wayne Flynt, February 29, 1989.

_____ . letter to Quentin Porch, March 10, 1989.

Holcomb, Hosea. *History of the Rise and Progress of the Baptists in Alabama*. Philadelphia, King & Baird, 1840.

"Homecoming Day at Sardis Baptist Church," *Union Springs Herald*, July, 1937.

Minutes, *49th Annual Session of the Baptist State Convention of Alabama*. Opelika, AL, November 11-15, 1870.

Minutes, *42nd Annual Session of the Bullock County Centennial Baptist Association*, Midway, AL, October 17-18, 1917.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries of the Sardis Baptist Church building and cemetery property are shown as parcel # 13, in the SE ¼ of Section 20, Township 13 North, Range 23 East, on the accompanying portion of the Bullock County Tax Map. The Tax Map Number is 09-12-04.

Boundary Justification

The nominated property includes the entire parcel historically associated with the Sardis Baptist Church and its associated cemetery.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number Photos Page 8

Sardis Baptist Church
Bullock County, Alabama

Additional Documentation

Photographs

Photographs #1 through # 9 are of the Sardis Baptist Church building, Bullock County, AL.

1. North facade, looking south.
2. North facade and east side, looking southwest.
3. North front porch and north end of east side, looking southwest, showing detail on entablature, columns, shutters; note bees at top of column.
4. Detail of front porch, looking west; note wide boards in ceiling.
5. Detail of one front door on north porch, looking southwest.
6. View of interior, looking southwest from entrance to pulpit area; note original wide ceiling boards.
7. View of interior, looking southeast from entrance to pulpit area.
8. View of interior, looking north from pulpit to entrance doors from front porch; note design of pews and chair rail between doors.
9. View of interior, looking north from pulpit area.

Photographs #10 and # 11 are of the Sardis Baptist Church Cemetery, Bullock County, AL

10. View of cemetery from northeast corner, looking southwest; note old wrought iron fencing.
11. View of cemetery from southeast corner, looking northwest; note old wrought iron fencing.

All photographs were taken June, 2000; Photographer: Nancy Martin Adams.
Negatives submitted with the nomination to the AHC for storage.