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District #6 - Congressman Edward L. Young DATA SHEET Conscience

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

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The Rembert Community in what is now Lee County was one of the oldest Methodist areas in the state, with a Methodist Society meeting as early as 1785. James Rembert constructed a chapel ca. 1797 for area use, and in 1834 Caleb Rembert deeded eight acres to nine trustees for the use of the Methodist Church. An adjacent two-and-one-half acre area was given by John A. Coulough. In 1962 the Rembert Church Congregation relocated and the structure was closed except for special occasions. It is now maintained by the Rembert Church Cemetery Association.

EXTERIOR

The present meeting house was erected ca. 1835. This clapboard structure is rectangular with a gable roof; it sits on brick pillars. The double-doored entrance is simply paneled with a five-paned transom above. The windows are 20/20 with two smaller windows above the main ones on the front facade. There are two rear doors.

INTERIOR

The pews are original but the floor has been replaced and church school room partitions have been added in a portion of the structure. The walls and ceiling are of a narrow paneling.

GNIFICANCE			
PERIOD (Check One of More as	Appropriate)		
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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

One of the earliest Methodist congregations in South Carolina was located in the community around Rembert Church. In its early days it was frequently visited by Francis Asbury, the first Bishop of the Methodist Church in the United States. It was also important for the campmeetings that were held nearby. This kind of simple meeting house, once a typical South Carolina sight, is rapidly disappearing through decay, demolition, and the modernization of brick veneer.

ARCHITECTURE

Rembert Church is an example of what is commonly referred to as the meeting house style. Structurally a plain rectangular building with clapboard siding, such design affords only the essentials needed for worship. Interior furnishings were usually sparse with only hand-fashioned pews or benches and a simple pulpit and altar railing.

This once typical sight in South Carolina is rapidly disappearing through abandonment, destruction, and the modernization of brick veneer.

RELIGION/PHILOSOPHY

The Rembert Church congregation was one of the oldest Methodist societies in South Carolina. It was originally formed around Rembert Hall, about a mile from the present church. This imposing structure was the home of James Rembert, a well-to-do planter of French descent. Bishop Asbury stopped here on an early visit to South Carolina and continued to visit and preach at this location on many of some 40 visits that he subsequently made to the state in the mission of Methodist expansion. area was included in the Santee Circuit which was organized in 1786 to provide for regular visits from an itinerant minister. Asbury notes in his journal in March of 1797 that he preached at the new Remberts Chapel which James Rembert erected in the community. The cemetery was established in 1800 and the present clapboard church was erected ca. 1835. Campmeetings were held in the Rembert community starting in 1802 and 1803. These early meetings were mentioned in the journal of William Capers, later a Methodist Bishop. Wagons and tents accommodated the worshipers who were awakened at daybreak and again at sunrise by the blowing of a horn. Very little cooking was done, everyone eating cold provisions.

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Form 10-300a (Dec. 1968)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

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(Continuation Sheet)

(Number all entries)

Rembert Church

8. Significance

Services were held at various times amidst an atmosphere of religious revivalism and emotionalism. More permanent tents or cabins were built later around the church, although no trace of them remains today.



Form 10-300a (July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

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Rembert Church

8. Significance (continued)

Rembert Church continued the Methodist traditions which were established by Francis Asbury and aided by the Great Awakening in the early part of the 19th Century. The growth of Methodism brought about many enlarged as well as new congregations and, as a result, the necessary construction of new churches.

The Rembert Church building, constructed ca. 1835, served the rural Methodist congregation (with an 1850s enrollment of some 80 whites and 500 slaves) for over a century. It served as a religious and social center with its weekly services and annual camp meetings.

This structure remains as an example of the small church so important to nearly every aspect of life in the rural south during the development and growth of South Carolina.

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