

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received APR 19 1984  
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Shiloh-Marion Baptist Church and Cemetery

and or common Same

2. Location

GA 41

street & number Georgia Highway 41 at Marion/Webster County line N/A not for publication

city, town Buena Vista v.c. X vicinity of

state Georgia code 013 county Marion code 197

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	N/A in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Shiloh-Marion Baptist Church, Mrs. Margaret Welch, Clerk

street & number Route 1, Box 99-A

city, town Buena Vista vicinity of state Georgia 31803

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Superior Court

street & number Marion County Courthouse

city, town Buena Vista state Georgia

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Historic Structures Field Survey:

title Marion County, Georgia has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1982  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Historic Preservation Section, Georgia Dept. of Natural Resources

city, town Atlanta state Georgia

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## 7. Description

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**Condition** excellent good fair deteriorated ruins unexposed**Check one** unaltered altered**Check one** original site moved

date \_\_\_\_\_

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**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

The Shiloh-Marion Baptist Church at Church Hill is a one-story frame structure with a gable roof, built on stone piers. The rectangular building contains a single room with a rear bay or apse. It is entered by a pair of symmetrically placed doors and has a one-story porch inset into the front facade. The church is covered in pine weatherboarded siding, with boxed, pedimented cornices on the front and rear, and a tin roof. The exterior has no ornamentation of note. The porch columns are hexagonally shaped, the windows are nine-over-nine, and the front doors are the original, paneled variety. The interior of the church is the aforementioned single, large room. The pews are set off into three sections by two parallel aisles leading from the two front entrances. There are six choir pews in the pulpit area of the church, three on either side. The pulpit is slightly raised above the main floor and extends into the rear apse or bay. The interior walls are tongue-and-groove paneling, and many of the original heart-pine floorboards remain, although some have been replaced with narrower board flooring. The walls are painted white and the doors are varnished. The pews are handmade, as is the pine pulpit furniture. The church is located in a wooded area. The only cleared space is occupied by the church and the adjacent historic cemetery. The cemetery is very rural and has no formal landscaping. It sits on a flat piece of land with a cedar tree. Burial markers include simple, vertical ones, as well as some fairly unusual stone burial coverings either in rectangular or triangular shapes. A path through the woods leads to the baptismal pool, which is located at the head of two springs. There are neither outbuildings nor structures near the secluded site of the church and cemetery. The church and the adjacent cemetery are separated by a dirt road that was originally a part of the Federal road running from Columbus to St. Marys, Georgia. The road was later moved to the other side of the cemetery. It is now Georgia 41 but is no longer the main route between Columbus and St. Marys. The only known changes to the church are the replacement of flooring and some paneling with the more modern tongue-and-groove variety after 1870, and the removal and replacement of the original central stove, which connected to the chimney.

# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

**Specific dates** c. 1835      **Builder/Architect** Unknown

## Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Shiloh-Marion Baptist Church at Church Hill is significant in architecture as a good intact example of a simple, rural Georgia church built in antebellum times. Its simple Greek Revival styling reflects the barest minimum of details and use of space, including a one-room sanctuary, handhewn church pews, simple windows and a covered front porch, all under a gable roof. It is devoid of any elaborate ornamentation, stained-glass windows, church furniture, or extra rooms. It more likely reflects the workmanship of local craftsmen rather than the hand of any architect. The cemetery is significant as a good example of a rural cemetery with fairly representative forms of burial markers as well as some fairly unusual stone markers. For the latter, stones were used to build a house-type covering for a burial. Some are rectangular, while others are elongated triangles. These stones were probably gathered locally, while the more formal markers would have been carved elsewhere. The church is significant in exploration-settlement as the remaining structural vestige of the once-important community of Church Hill. Organized at a site where a pre-white settlement mission was said to have existed, the settlement arose after 1828 and was named Church Hill after a number of churches that marked the community. The five churches included those of the Baptist, Free Will Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian and Christian Union faiths. Only this, the Baptist one, remains. At one time, there was an academy here, and even a telephone line in 1885. The U.S. Post Office for the community closed in 1903. A number of important trading roads also crossed at this point. In religious history, the church is important for representing the intensity of churches that once existed here, including the important Christian Union faith, which was founded by the Reverend George Lynch Smith. It had all of its few churches in this area. It is important that in the deep, tradition-rooted antebellum South, a minister could gather a flock, albeit small, around the tenets of a new faith, an offshoot of the Church of Christ movement. Although it lasted only a few decades, it is important in Georgia's religious heritage, and this is the only vestige of the community in which it was located. Traditional accounts are that many meetings were held in other church structures, for the Christian Union faith did not always have its own churches. Thus, some of their meetings had to be held in other churches, such as this one.

These areas of significance support property eligibility under the National Register criteria B and C and under Criteria Consideration A.

### Historical Narrative

The Shiloh-Marion Baptist Church is the most significant extant physical link with the history of the once-substantial community of Church Hill. It is

[continued]

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 10 acres

Quadrangle name Church Hill, Georgia

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

### UTM References

A 

1	6	7	3	1	4	7	0	3	5	6	0	6	9	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

B 

1	6	7	3	1	7	8	0	3	5	6	0	6	4	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

C 

1	6	7	3	1	7	9	0	3	5	6	0	5	5	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

D 

1	6	7	3	1	4	7	0	3	5	6	0	5	5	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

E 

Zone	Easting				Northing									

F 

Zone	Easting				Northing									

G 

Zone	Easting				Northing									

H 

Zone	Easting				Northing									

### Verbal boundary description and justification

The nominated property is the current legal boundary of the church and cemetery property and is all that is associated with the church. It is marked on the enclosed plat. It includes the church, its cemetery, the baptismal pool and immediate surroundings.

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	N/A	code	county	code
state		code	county	code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kenneth H. Thomas, Jr., Historian  
Historic Preservation Section  
organization Georgia Dept. of Natural Resources date March 26, 1984  
street & number 270 Washington Street, S.W. telephone (404) 656-2840  
city or town Atlanta state Georgia 30334

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Elizabeth A. Lyon  
Elizabeth A. Lyon

title State Historic Preservation Officer date 4/5/84

### For NPS use only

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

John Helms Bryan Entered in the National Register date 5/17/84  
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

Chief of Registration

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Continuation sheet

Significance

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the only remaining church of the five churches that gave the crossroads town of Church Hill its name.

Traditional accounts place the settlement's beginning with a Methodist mission in the 1810s, but no proof has been found to substantiate this. Methodist records indicate the first official mission to the Creek Indians took place in 1821 under William Capers, who journeyed across what is now Georgia to establish the Asbury Mission across the Chattahoochee River in what is now Alabama. It lasted until 1830. The records are silent as to any earlier, officially sanctioned mission establishment. The present Baptist congregation's founding date is generally given as 1835, when as a congregation of eleven members, they joined the Bethel Baptist Association, a regional grouping of Baptist churches, that began that year. In 1859, Shiloh left Bethel and joined the newly formed Friendship Baptist Association.

Worship services were held at Shiloh on Saturdays and Sundays from the founding date in 1835 to 1935. After that date, church records indicate no participation in the Friendship Association or of services being held at Shiloh until 1947. At that time, under the leadership of the Reverend Edgar Welch, Shiloh-Marion Baptist Church was reorganized. In 1952, Shiloh-Marion was voted back into the Friendship Association. The present membership of this, the oldest church in the Friendship Baptist Association, consists of twelve active members.

The area now known as "Church Hill" was opened for white settlement by the Land Lottery of 1827. It was first in Lee County; in 1828, it was in Randolph County, and then in 1830 became part of Stewart County until 1847, when the "Cut Off District" was added to Marion County. In 1853, the adjacent area of Stewart County, where many Church Hill residents lived, became part of newly created Webster County. This influx of white settlers after 1827 was accompanied by the improvement of the old trading paths and the creation of a network of new roads. Where these roads crossed, new communities were often established.

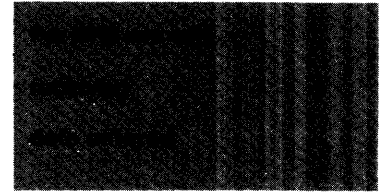
Such is presumed to be the case with the mission's location that became the site of the Shiloh-Marion Baptist Church. Between 1830 and 1840, several roads were built in the area of what is now southern Marion and northern Webster counties. The most important of these roads was St. Marys (also known as the Old Salt Trail), begun in 1832, which essentially followed Timothy Barnard's Path from Columbus to St. Marys on the Georgia coast.

At a point between Kinchafoonee and Lanahassee creeks, where three other roads crossed St. Marys Road, a community sprang up that became known as Church Hill because five churches formed the core of the settlement. These churches and the dates of their organization were: Mt. Pisgah (Kinchafoonee) Free Will Baptist (dates unknown); Christian Union (1840-1870); Smyrna Presbyterian (1838-1925); Evan Chapel Methodist (1838-1898); and Shiloh Baptist (1835-present).

[continued]

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The Smyrna Presbyterian Church, whose cemetery remains north of this church, was formed in 1838 as an Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church (A.R.P.). Another nearby ARP Church, called Union, merged with it in 1843. The unified Smyrna ARP Church became regular Presbyterian in 1865.

It is not definitely known when the name "Church Hill" first began to be officially used. It first appears on a Georgia map in 1870. In 1838, the Centerville Academy or school was established with members of Smyrna as trustees. It is, therefore, possible that "Centerville" was an earlier name for the community. Twenty-four families were here in 1865. The 1886-87 Georgia Gazetteer describes the town:

Church Hill, Marion County.

22 miles from Americus [which has] bank, depot, express and telegraph office . . . [Church Hill] has Baptist, Methodist, and Presbyterian churches, excellent academy, common schools and steam gins and grist mills. One thousand bales of cotton the main export. Mail weekly.

Among the townspeople listed are the following occupations: postmaster and general store keeper, cotton gin, grist mill, harnessmaker, a justice, and a Baptist minister.

A United States Post Office was established here from 1893-1903. A telephone line was established to Preston in 1885. As late as 1898, a gazetteer reported a sawmill, cotton gin, and blacksmith at Church Hill.

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Continuation sheet Bibliography

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Campbell, Susan H. "Shiloh Baptist Church," Historic Property Information Form, September 10, 1982. On file at the Historic Preservation Section, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia. This is based on county histories, gazetteers, place-name directories, maps and Baptist church records.

Estill, J.H., et al., eds. Georgia State Gazetteer, Business and Planters Directory, Vol. 4. Savannah: 1886-87.

Barclay, Wade C. History of Methodist Missions: Part One, Early American Methodism, 1769-1844; Vol. 2, To Reform the Nation. New York: The Board of Missions, 1950.

SHILOH-MARION BAPTIST CHURCH AND CEMETERY  
Near Buena Vista, Marion County, Georgia

FLOOR PLAN

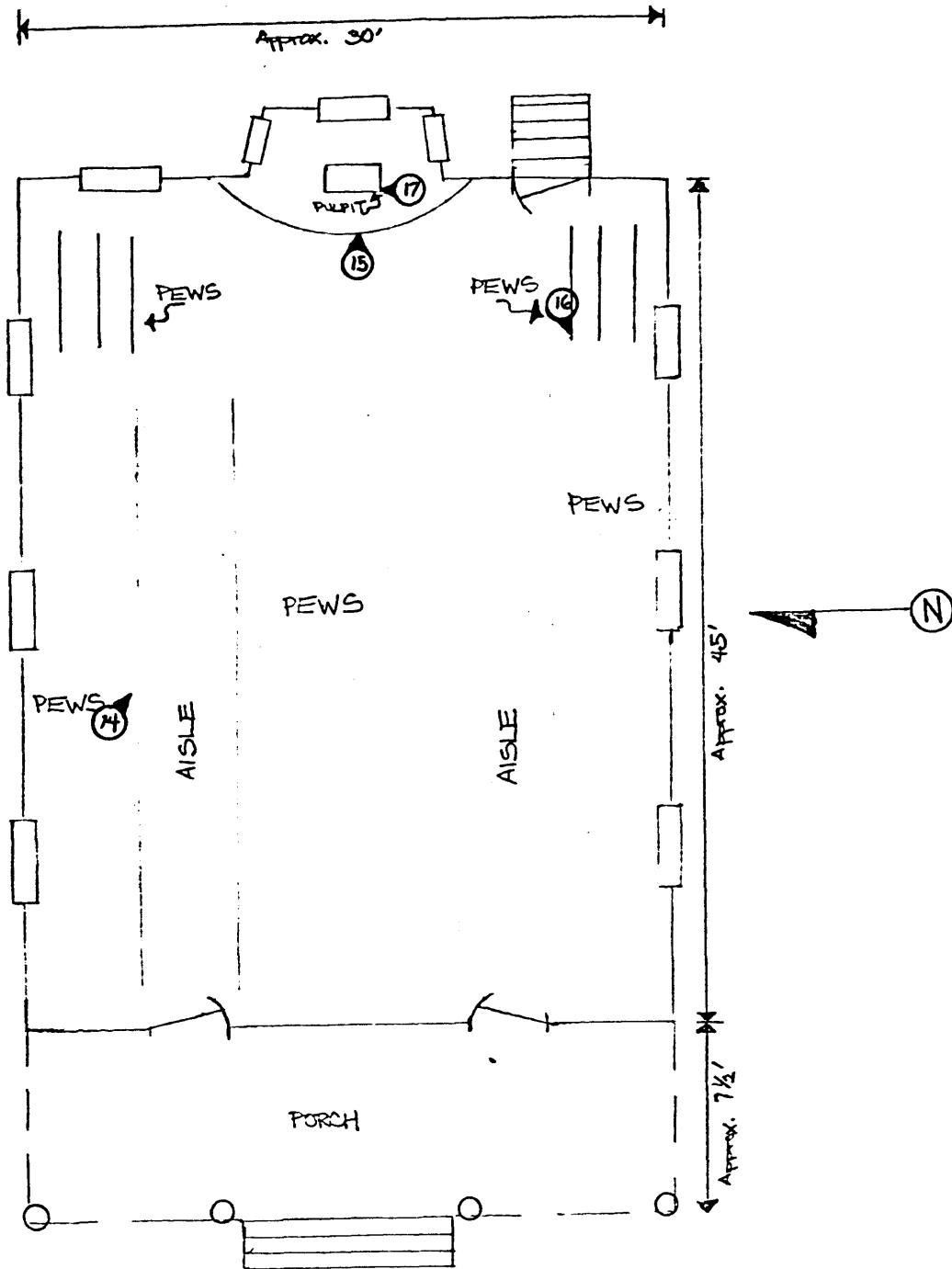
Scale: 1" = 7½"

Source: Drawn for the nomination

Date: 1982

Key: Numbers are irrelevant, as they refer  
to a different set of photographs than  
those with nomination.

FLOOR PLAN



○ Photographs

SHILOH-MARION BAPTIST  
CHURCH

NOT DRAWN TO SCALE



SHILOH-MARION BAPTIST CHURCH AND CEMETERY  
Near Buena Vista, Marion County, Georgia

PLAT

Scale: 1" = 200'

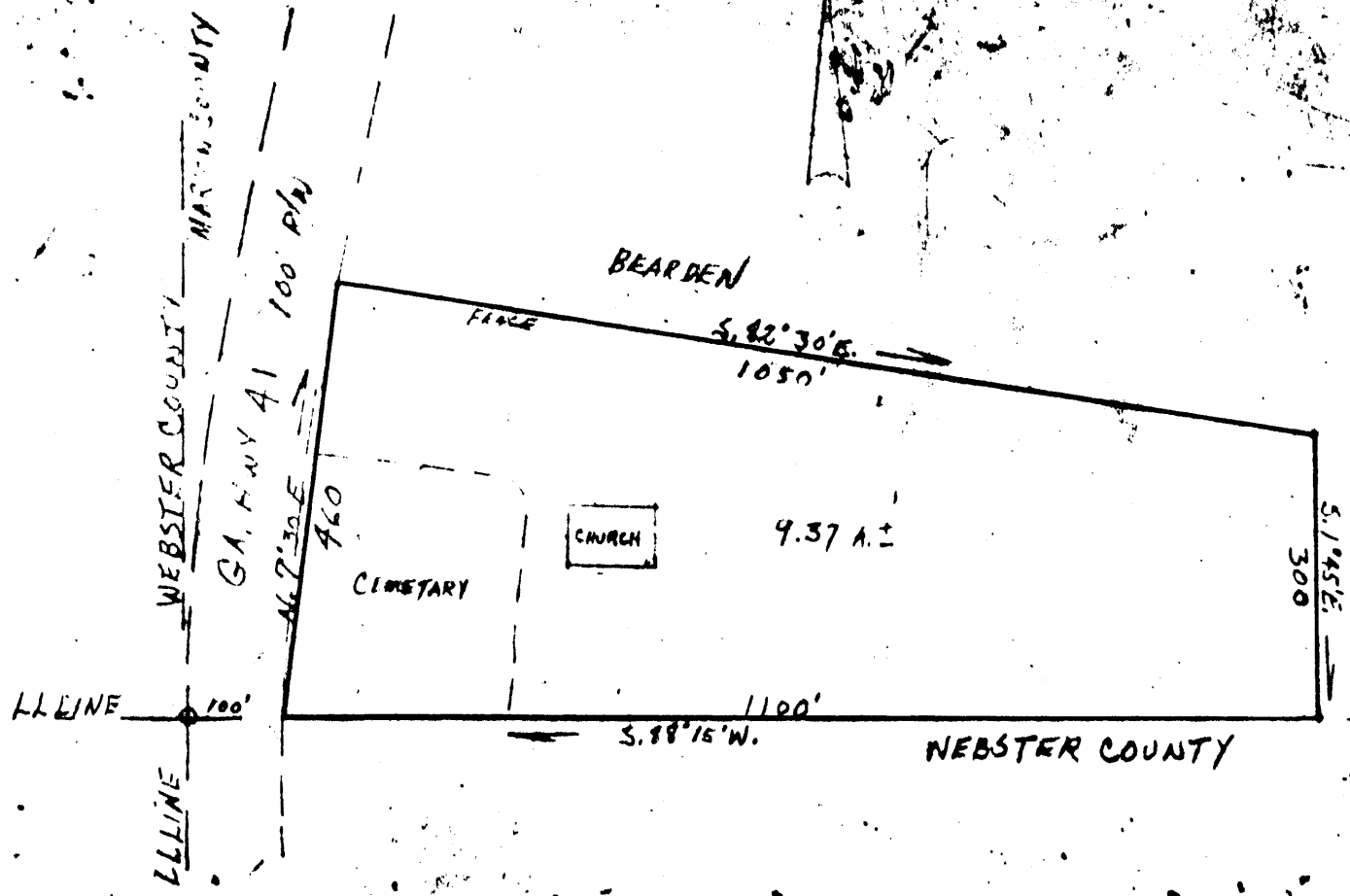
Source: Drawn by Webster County Surveyor

Date: Unknown

Key: The nominated property is marked by a heavy black line.

THIS IS A PRELIMINARY SURVEY  
NOT FOR RECORDING. A MORE DETAILED  
PLAT WILL BE FURNISHED LATER FOR THAT  
PURPOSE

*Love Kumbrough*  
COUNTY SURVEYOR, WEBSTER COUNTY



LAND LOT 12 OF THE 25TH  
DISTRICT OF MARION COUNTY

WEBSTER COUNTY

MARION COUNTY