

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

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

For NPS use only

received DEC 16 1986

date entered

JAN 29 1987

## 1. Name

historic Plantersville Multiple Resource Area

and/or common

## 2. Location

street & number See individual inventory forms NA not for publication

city, town Plantersville NA vicinity of congressional district 7

state Alabama code 01 county Dallas County code 047

## 3. Classification

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

## 4. Owner of Property

name See individual inventory forms

street & number

city, town \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Dallas County Courthouse

street & number 105 Lauderdale Street

city, town Selma state Alabama

## 6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Alabama Inventory has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☒ no

date 1970-present ☐ federal ☒ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records Alabama Historical Commission

city, town Montgomery state Alabama

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved      date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed	See individual forms.	

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

- A. Plantersville is located on a ridge that runs through flat, agricultural lands. Mulberry Creek to the east forms the boundary between Dallas and Autauga Counties. This was the "Big Mulberree" of the Indians. It empties into the Alabama River a short distance east of Selma and thus is a part of the prehistoric transportation system. Autauga Creek, north, and Ocamulgee, west, retain their Indian names. The site of Plantersville is believed to have been the crossing of the Choctaw Trail and the Old Plantersville Road, along which most development is located. This road was once the main route between Huntsville (NR 1-4-73) and the first capital of Alabama at Cahawba (NR 5-8-73). The 1970 census records a population of 600. Development is not dense; and the buildings, the resources that convey the development and decline, are scattered.
- B. The Talladega National Forest is just a few miles west of Plantersville. There one can still find specimens of the chestnut, beech, poplar, gum, pine, hickory and oak trees that were cleared for farm land in the 1830s. The Indians were removed from their former hunting grounds. By 1832 Richard Chandler had established a sawmill on Big Mulberry Creek. Frontier dwellings of logs were replaced by frame buildings as cotton planters prospered. In the 1850s the railroad, built by Irish labor, added to the importance of Plantersville as a commercial center for the surrounding plantations. The Civil War brought a halt to this era of development. At the turn of the century there was a period of activity when farmers from outlying areas moved to town, primarily for social and educational advantages.
- C. This nomination is a defined resource of a small town in a rural area. A comprehensive survey of the area has been made and those resources of significance and possessing eligibility for inclusion in the National Register have been isolated and form the components of this nomination.

The buildings represent the architectural continuum which in turn illustrates the historic development of the subject area. Therefore, the types, styles and periods are various and include:

1. The pioneer dwelling, the seat of a self-sufficient farm, which also served as an Inn, the center of social exchanges, and though of limited architectural pretensions, reflects the Federal period in the frontier. This building, however, has been compromised by recent additions.
2. Excellent Greek Revival buildings, a residence and a professional office, illustrating the period of greatest prosperity in the town's development and the awareness in this remote place of the national architectural theme.
3. A Gothic Revival dwelling which bespeaks the return of prosperity following the Civil War and also indicates the awareness of national architectural trends.

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4. Two vernacular buildings, one representative of the commercial aspect of the community and one representing the importance of the church as a social and cultural center.

Within the spectrum there is considerable variation in the workmanship and design quality. The structures are all of wood. The scale is 19th century, typical of their periods.

1. The resources are scattered, with many open spaces between all structures in the area. There is an abundance of native trees, shrubs, vines and bushes. There are vacant lots where former buildings once stood and numerous abandoned buildings, now overtaken by the flora. Primary development parallels the Old Plantersville Road along the ridge.

2. Residential 111  
Commercial 11  
Religious 11

D. Not applicable.

- E. Nicholas H. Holmes, FAIA, SOPA, has been retained by the Dallas County Historic Preservation Society to inventory the historic resources of Dallas County. He is assisted by Nancy N. Holmes, Preservation Consultant. Federal and State surveys and locally published books and manuscripts provided source material. A map rating structures by degree of architectural merit was made following on-site inspection of the area. Interviews were held with local residents. All collected material and information was then organized and evaluated against National Register criteria. The Holmes possess recognized expertise as historians and architectural historians. Mr. Holmes is a historic architect with many years of experience, and is also an archaeologist.

## 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 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 checked="" 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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates** 1828–1900 **Builder/Architect** See individual inventory forms.

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

- A. The selected historic resources illustrate the development and the life-styles of a small town which became the social and commercial center of a rich agricultural area. The variety of architectural styles represented shows an awareness of national architectural evolution.
- B. The area was well known to the aboriginal Upper Creeks with its dense forest, well populated with game, including turkey, deer, squirrel and rabbit. There was an abundant water supply. The site was a crossing on the Choctaw Trail which ran from North Alabama to the Mississippi settlements.

Land entries commenced at the Federal Land Office at Cahawba in 1832. The white settlers were, in the main, of English, Scottish and Irish descent. They came from the southern states of the Atlantic Seaboard. The main routes of migration were from Tennessee, down the Huntsville Road or by water up to Montgomery, or across the Federal Road from Georgia to Montgomery and thence across the prairie to what is now North Dallas County. This area was formerly included in Perry County, then Bibb, then Baker, then Chilton. The present county boundaries and names exist since 1871.

Goods and supplies from the eastern United States and from Europe came up the Alabama River from the port of Mobile to Selma, where they were carried 20 miles over land by wagon. Thomas Driskell (Inv. #1) represents the affluent merchant whose trade depended on the wealth of the surrounding plantations. The road between the small settlements of Kingston and Perryville crossed the Huntsville-Cahawba Road at Plantersville and furthered its development as a social and commercial center. Horse trading and horse racing were among the activities which drew the planters into town. By the 1850s railroad development furthered the function as a distribution center. The Alabama Blue Mountain and Tennessee Railroad ran from Selma to the present site of Anniston and there connected with service to the east. This line became the Selma, Rome and Dalton or the S R & D, said by local wags to stand for "Slow, Rough and Dangerous." The name was changed to East Tennessee, Virginia and Georgia and E.T.V. & G. translated by its passengers to "Eat Turkey, Venison and Goat." The Southern Railroad operates a freight line on the old bed but Plantersville is no longer a stop.

The business was agriculture and trade. Cotton was the cash crop. Wealth was counted in slaves. Commerce--from the drovers with their herds of hogs and horses, who put up at Davis McGee's Inn, to the proprietors of the stores along First Avenue, Old Plantersville Road (Inv. #2) and including those in the professions, (Inv. #3)--existed to serve and supply the planters.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Owen, Thomas. "Miscellaneous communities of Dallas County," manuscript, verticle files, Box 23, File 51, County Records, Alabama Department of Archives and History.  
Brewer, Willis. Alabama: Her History, Resources, War Record and Public Men. The Reprint Company, Spartanburg, SC, 1975  
Jackson, Walter M. The Story of Selma. The Birmingham Printing Company, 1954.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property see individual forms

Quadrangle name Plantersville

Quadrangle scale 1:62500

UTM References See individual forms.

A 

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Zone Easting Northing

B 

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Zone Easting Northing

C 

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D 

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E 

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F 

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G 

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H 

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### Verbal boundary description and justification

Section 1, Township 19N, R 11E & Section 36, T 20N & R 11E

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

state	code	county	code
NA			

state	code	county	code
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## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Nicholas H. & Nancy M. Holmes, and  
Tom Dolan/Architectural Historian

organization Alabama Historical Commission date September 1986

street & number 725 Monroe Street telephone 205 261-3184

city or town Montgomery state Alabama

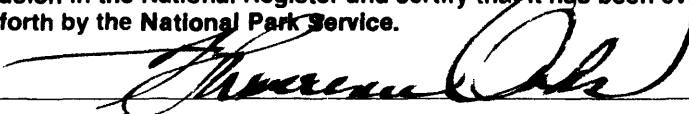
## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

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



title State Historic Preservation Officer

date 12-11-86

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

See Continuation sheets for listing  
Keeper of the National Register

date

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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Initially, in character with the early 19th century interest in things Greek, the community was named Corinth. But, as Carthage became "Moundville" and Mesopotamia became "Eutaw," the name was changed to Plantersville, which conveyed its importance as a gathering place, the site of churches, schools, stores and offices.

The extant historic and architectural resources represent development from the early white settlement to the peak of prosperity before the Civil War. The Todd House (Inv. #5) shows the continuum up into the early 20th century. The overall state of the fabric represents the decline of Plantersville and similar small towns with gradual, then overwhelming, ascendancy of the automobile.

- C. The major historical event appears to have been the invasion of Plantersville by the troops of Federal Major General James Harrison Wilson on his march from Ebenezer Church, near Stanton to Selma. The Driskell House (Inv. #1) was commandeered for Union headquarters under the command of General Alison. General Wilson occupied the bedroom above the present living room.

At the battle of Ebenezer Church, April 1, 1865, Confederate General Nathan Bedford Forrest, seeking to defend the arsenal at Selma, led a cavalry charge of 1500 men against General Wilson, moving south with 7500 troops. Forrest was wounded, aid was not forthcoming and he was forced to retreat.

The Union or Methodist Church in Plantersville, no longer extant, served as a hospital for Union soldiers and some were buried in the adjacent graveyard.

- D. In the variety of architectural expression between 1828 and 1900 the resources of Plantersville show the penetration of popular national styles to a remote rural area. The plan and details of the mantels in the Davis McGee home place it within the Federal style, the predominant architectural theme along the eastern seaboard at the time of migration to the Alabama frontier lands. However, this building was determined ineligible because of alterations, including synthetic siding, that occurred over time. The Greek Revival home of merchant Driskell (Inv. #1) conveys full understanding and skillful interpretation of what was the national architectural expression between 1830 and 1860. The Gothic Revival home of Dr. Samuel Todd could have come from the pages of Alexander Jackson Davis' volume on cottage residences that dictated tastes from Maine to Missouri. The romantic and picturesque reached the south land following the Civil War, spread by the arts of painting, theatre and literature. The Christian Church (Inv. #4), a vernacular expression, is a part of the scene of the rural South and symbolizes a broadening class structure making its mark on a society previously dominated by the planter class.

E. Not applicable.

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- F. Most of the resources are preserved through continuing use. The Selma Dallas County Historic Preservation Society has stimulated interest throughout Dallas County in the understanding of and preservation and restoration of its historic resources.
- G. The Multiple Resource form was chosen over a district nomination because the resources are scattered and the rural aspect of Plantersville prevents the immediate visual impact of a district. The Multiple Resource form also makes possible selective listing of those properties individually eligible for National Register inclusion. There is not a concentration of buildings eligible within the town proper, and outlying resources in the vicinity are and were a contributing element to the town.
- H. Generally exempted properties include the Christian Church. It is included because the location of churches in Plantersville contributed to its importance as a center for the surrounding plantation dwellers and in the period of significance, religion was a major force in the life of the community. It also represents the late 19th century in the architectural continuum.
- I. Survey and nomination results will be incorporated into the statewide inventory of the Alabama Historical Commission. The Alabama-Tombigbee Regional Commission does take into account the presence and significance of historic resources. Promotional efforts of the Selma-Dallas County Chamber of Commerce and the Selma-Dallas County Historic Preservation Society will increasingly be based on the comprehensive county inventory.

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Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic Group

dnr-11

Name Plantersville MRA  
State Dallas County, AL

Nomination/Type of Review

1. Antique Store

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Attest

Date/Signature

1/29/87  
Delores Byers

2. Christian Church and  
Parsonage

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Attest

1/29/87  
Delores Byers

3. Doctor's Office

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Attest

1/29/87  
Delores Byers

4. Driskell-Martin House

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Attest

1/29/87  
Delores Byers

5. Todd House

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Attest

1/29/87  
Delores Byers

6.

Keeper

Attest

1/29/87  
Delores Byers

7.

Keeper

Attest

1/29/87  
Delores Byers

8.

Keeper

Attest

1/29/87  
Delores Byers

9.

Keeper

Attest

1/29/87  
Delores Byers

10.

Keeper

Attest

1/29/87  
Delores Byers