

K-128

Rehobeth Methodist Protestant Church  
Sassafras  
1859

At the east corner of the intersection of Caldwell Corner Road and Route 290, in the village of Sassafras, stands a deteriorating Greek revival style frame chapel. This building was constructed in 1859 by the Methodists of the area around the village.

In the 18th and 19th Centuries "Head of Sassafras", as it was called before the Post Office shortened the name, was one of two points of crossing on the Sassafras River. The first was at Georgetown where the river could be crossed by ferry and the second was at Head of Sassafras where crossing was accomplished via a road over two mill dams. Located on the main route north, Head of Sassafras had one hotel, four stores, two churches, a mill, restaurant and ten houses in 1860. All of these helped to support the local agrarian economy, as well as travelers.

Although certainly not the most impressive Methodist church of the style in Kent County, Rehobeth M. P. Church was one of the few buildings to have a distinctive style in the village, (The Rock Hall M. E. Church was far more sophisticated with its full temple portico). In many ways, Rehobeth was like dozens of Eastern Shore methodist chapels built in the 19th Century. It differed, however, in the treatment of its facade with corner pilasters, full pediment and double architrave entrances. These are unique in Kent. Like many of the chapels of the period there was a small chancel projection on the opposite gable, where the table would have been located, lighted on both sides by a tall narrow window.

The interior of the church possesses two aisles and three rows of pews, wainscoting and a balcony supported on two exaggerated columns. Most of the woodwork has been grained in imitation of oak.

Rehobeth Church was last used in 1976 for a homecoming festival.

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1859

Rehobeth Methodist Protestant Church

Sassafras

Private

Rehobeth Church is a long vacant, rapidly deteriorating frame, gable-roofed church built in a vernacular Greek Revival style in 1859. It has two handsome main entries--a pair of double doors with transoms and hoods--in each of the two bays of the approach gable-end. Above each entry is a double-hung window with 6-over-6 lights to light the gallery. A secondary entry is on the southeast side, in the south corner, and opens into a small stair hall. On each long side there are three tall double-hung windows with 12-over-12 lights, many of them broken. There is a small, shed-roofed "chancel" projection at the rear gable-end with a tall, narrow window on each side. The approach gable-end is covered with horizontal tongue-and-groove boards to provide as flat and smooth an appearance as possible. At this end there are also corner pilasters, and the gable is pedimented. The remainder of the building is covered with horizontal, lapped weatherboard, without corner pilasters. On the interior, movable-louver shutters hang at the windows. The lower walls are wainscoted, the upper plaster. The large slanted-floor gallery, partially supported by a pair of entasized columns, has a handsome, solid, panelled balustrade at its front. The pews, arranged into three sections divided by the two aisles leading from the main entries, are of pine grained to resemble oak, as is much of the other church furniture. Rehobeth Church, if not the only frame church ever built in Kent County in a Greek Revival style, is the only survivor, though its continued existence is questionable. Working with the least expensive material, wood, not usually thought of as material

suitable for these "temple-like" buildings, the building's probably local designers managed with the pilasters, the pedimented gable, and the front gable-end tongue-and-groove material to produce a building that is identifiably Greek Revival. Like many other county village churches, this one was the victim of the many changes during the first half of the twentieth century, but especially in agricultural technology, that caused the decline of rural villages and led to the closing of many churches.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## State Historic Sites Inventory Form

### 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Rehobeth Methodist Protestant Church

and/or common

### 2. Location

street & number East side Sassafras-Massey Road (Rt.290) at Cold Well  not for publication  
Corner Rd.

city, town Sassafras  vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ congressional district First

state Maryland county Kent

### 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: unused

### 4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Trustees, Rehobeth Methodist Church

street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone no.: \_\_\_\_\_

city, town Golts state and zip code Maryland 21637

### 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. \_\_\_\_\_ liberDeed not found

street & number \_\_\_\_\_ folio Deed not found

city, town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_

### 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title Maryland Historic Sites Inventory-HABS Inventory

date July 19, 1968  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Maryland Historical Trust

21 State Circle  
city, town Annapolis

state Maryland

# 7. Description

Survey No. K-128

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" 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 of move _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

Rehobeth Methodist Protestant Church, northeast of the intersection in the village of Sassafras, is a long vacant, rapidly deteriorating frame, gable-roofed church built in a vernacular Greek Revival style in 1859. It has two handsome main entries, a pair of double doors with transoms and hoods, in each of the two bays of the approach gable-end. Above each entry is a double-hung window with 6-over-6 lights to light the gallery. A secondary entry is on the southeast side, in the south corner, giving secondary access to the gallery stair. On each long side there are three tall double-hung windows with 12-over-12 lights, many of them broken. There is a small, shed-roofed "chancel" projection at the rear gable-end with a tall, narrow window on each side. The approach gable-end is covered with horizontal tongue-and-groove boards to provide as flat and smooth an appearance as possible. At this end there are also corner pilasters, and the gable is pedimented. The remainder of the building is covered with horizontal, lapped weatherboard, without corner pilasters. On the interior, movable-louver shutters hang at the windows. The lower walls are wainscoted, the upper plaster. The large slanted-floor gallery, partially supported by a pair of entasized columns, has a handsome, solid, panelled balustrade at its front. The pews, arranged into three sections divided by the two aisles leading from the main entries, are of pine grained to resemble oak, as is much of the other church furniture. The work was done at about the turn of the twentieth century. At the ceremonial end of the nave there are the two platforms usually found in middle to late nineteenth-century churches in Kent County, the second, however, showing unusual bold edge detail. The church has a large, well-kept cemetery to the northeast.

(Continued)

# 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/
<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 type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input 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** 1859 **Builder/Architect**

check: Applicable Criteria:  A  B  C  D  
 and/or  
 Applicable Exception:  A  B  C  D  E  F  G  
 Level of Significance:  national  state  local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

Rehobeth Church, if not the only frame church ever built in Kent County in a Greek Revival style, is the only survivor, though its continued existence is questionable. Working with the least expensive material, wood, not usually thought of as material suitable for executing these "temple-like" buildings, the building's probably local designers managed with the pilasters, the pedimented gable, and the front gable-end tongue-and-groove material to produce a building that is identifiably Greek Revival. Like many other county village churches, this one was the victim of the many changes during the first half of the twentieth century, but especially in agricultural technology, that caused the decline of rural villages and led to the closing of many churches. Rehobeth once was one of three active churches in the crossroads village at the head of the Sassafras River that was long important for its milling operations (both grain and lumber). The brick St. John's Methodist Episcopal Church, has been demolished, and only the cemetery remains, though it recently has been bulldozed. Only John Wesley Methodist Church, a black congregation, still holds services, in the frame building built at the rear of the St. John's property.

(Continued)



The main, nave section of the church measures about 30 feet wide by 40 feet deep. The shallow "chancel" projection is about 10 feet wide by 3 feet deep.

The long sides and the rear gable end, as well as the chancel projection, are covered with horizontal, lapped weatherboard of clear pine with 5 to 6-1/2" exposure. At the rear corners there are single 4" corner boards applied to the long sides. On the northwest side, where the sill appears to be on the ground and partially rotted away, the siding reaches the ground. The entry gable-end is covered with what appears to be tongue-and-grooved 5-7" boards applied horizontally. At the front corners double, wide (7-1/2" and 8-3/4") corner boards have been applied and treated to become corner pilasters. The east pilaster has been partially replaced. The west one retains only part of its base, which was perhaps plain and protruded from the "shaft" only about 3/8". Below the bed molding of the cornice there are double pilaster caps, both created with the same applied moldings: a plain fillet and a cyma reversa below. About four inches separate them.

The church rests on brick piers with wide joints (ca. 1/2"), many of which are badly deteriorated, especially on the northeast side. Apparently in search of treasures thought to be inside, the pier at the south corner was vandalized and the cornerstone removed. The piers, which seem to have been only 8" deep, have been painted maroon. The heavy, hewn sills (ca. 8-1/2" wide by 6" high) are badly rotted in some areas or entirely missing or shifted. The joists rest on a summer beam that is supported by rubble-laid stone piers and runs the length of the building. The joists are lapped over the summer beam.

On each side just south of the center bay there is an exterior tall, 17" square chimney for use with stoves. Built of uniformly dark red brick, they stand away slightly from the wall; weatherboard is behind them. They are deteriorated and beginning to lean. Originally each had a two-course band one course below the top. On the southeast side, on the interior, a gas heater remains in place, the last method of heating.

The roofs are covered with rusted corrugated metal applied over wood shingles. On both long sides and approach gable-end there is a deep boxed cornice, with the roof overhanging the walls about 12". There is a large (c. 5") cyma recta crown and a large (c. 4") bevel bed on a deep frieze (about 11-12" deep). On the front gable end the cornice returns completely across it, pedimenting it with a pent eave. The same trim is used on the sloping roof ends as well, except for the deep frieze. The tympanum has the same horizontal tongue-and-groove boards as the end wall below the pent eave. At the rear gable end the roof edges are finished with flush verge, and there are no cornice returns. The lapped weatherboard is continuous up the main end wall to the top of the gable.

Identical main entries are in each side bay of the southwest gable end. Each is now reached by a precast concrete stoop and three steps with pipe rails. The original steps probably were wooden. The handsome architraves  
(continued)

are 5'-3" wide by 10'-1" tall. The sills are bold and of wood. The plain, wide (6") jamb trim has projecting 6"-wide bases that are 9" high. At the height of the top of the transom there is a cap made of the same moldings as the corner pilasters, but smaller--a plain rectangular piece above a cyma reversa molding. The transom has four lights with clear glass (some broken). The center pair are twice the size of the outer ones. The transom bar is 5" deep overall and is composed of composite moldings as used in the caps. The lintel trim is a deep, plain (c. 10-1/2") frieze. Above it is a projecting full box cornice, or hood that is c. 9" deep. It has a large cyma with upper fillet and a bed molding of a cyma reversa. It is returned to the walls. Electric lights have been installed on the frieze at each entry. The doors at each entry are double, each with 1-over-1 twice-recessed panels. The inner panels are formed by the application of thin (1/4") material that has a small round-headed arch at top and bottom center. The outer panel is molded with heavy, wide (2-1/4") bolection molding.

The secondary entry is in the southeast side, adjacent to the south corner pilaster. The steps are gone. This entry opened into a small stair hall with the start of the stair run to the right and a door to the nave straight ahead. The door has 2-over-2 panels that are recessed; the applied panel molding is ogee-and-bevel (some is missing); the upper panels are taller, and the lock rail is deep. The door knob is gone. The jamb trim is 3-5/8" wide and plain. The head trim is 6" deep, with a 1" drip cap above. The head trim ends overhang the jamb trim about 1/2". This device is also used on the windows, though there, because of the greater size of the windows, the overhang is about 1". Whether or not the jamb trim is battered could not be ascertained after the application of aspenite sheets.

On the sides of the main section large double-hung windows' sash have 12-over-12 lights. Each light is c. 8-3/4" x 18-3/4". The trim is bold and plain, executed in the same manner as that of the secondary entry. The entry gable-end windows for the gallery are quite small and have 6-over-6 lights. There the trim is flush with the tongue-and-groove weatherboard so as not to disrupt the smooth surface that was desired. Shadow lines were not wanted. There is no sign of there ever having been exterior shutters, indicating that the interior shutters are probably original to the building rather than a later addition. The chancel projection's side windows are double hung with four lights in each sash. They are tall and narrow. There are no windows on the north end of either nave or chancel projection.

The church seems to have been used, if only occasionally, into the 1970s. Inside, bulletins from both 1961 and 1976 homecoming services were found. Hallman's catalogue of Delmarva peninsula churches offers conflicting information about this church (pp. 297, where it is mistakenly listed as a Cecil County church). He says first that it was closed permanently around 1920 and then that it was improved in 1937 at a cost of \$1,300. Perhaps he is referring to the nearby St. John's church that did close at about that time. However, especially after the Methodist union of the 1930s, it is likely that at least one church in this village was retained. He does say, possibly accurately, that the church was organized and built under the leadership of Rev. Daniel Ewell and that it was dedicated in 1859. The establishment of this Methodist Protestant church so close to the Methodist Episcopal church in Sassafras suggests that there may have been a schism within the latter.

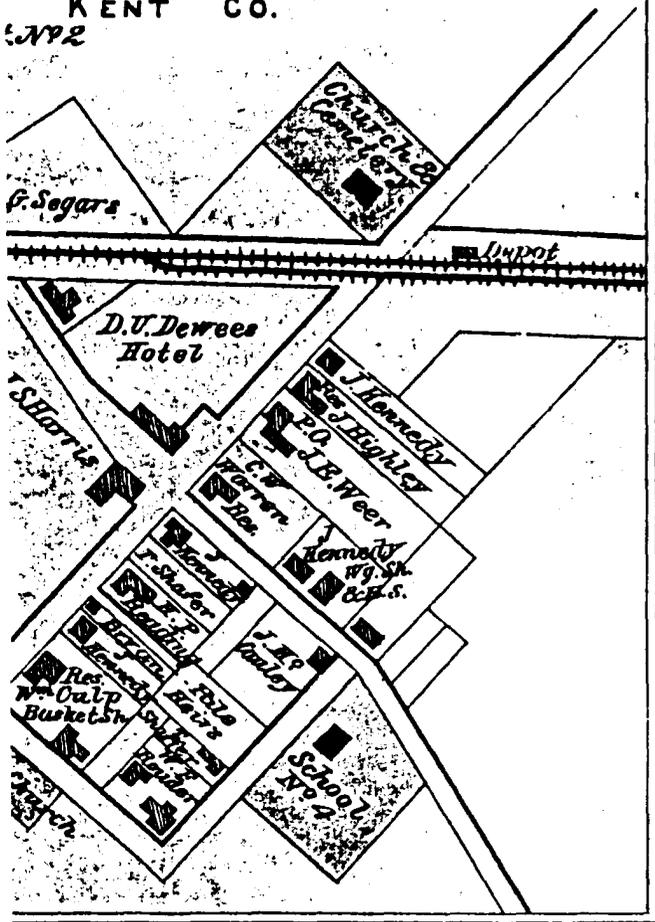
1. STATE Maryland COUNTY Kent TOWN Sassafras VICINITY STREET NO. No. 299 (east)  ORIGINAL OWNER ORIGINAL USE religious PRESENT OWNER Renoboth M.P. Church PRESENT USE religious WALL CONSTRUCTION frame NO. OF STORIES one	HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY INVENTORY K-123
	2. NAME Renoboth M.P. Church  DATE OR PERIOD 1859 STYLE Greek Revival ARCHITECT BUILDER
	3. FOR LIBRARY OF CONGRESS USE
4. NOTABLE FEATURES, HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE AND DESCRIPTION OPEN TO PUBLIC yes  <p>Renoboth M.P. Church in Sassafras is a very plain Greek Revival building which was constructed in 1859. The south facade is two bays long, both double doors with transoms and decorative cornices. On the balcony level are two windows with 6/6 sash. There is a pedimented gable, and pilasters at the corners of the building. Each side, which are three bays deep, is covered with clapboard and has 12/12 sash in the windows with interior louvered shutters.</p> <p>The building stands on a brick foundation and there is a brick chimney on each side of the building.</p>	
5. PHYSICAL CONDITION OF STRUCTURE Endangered ? Interior Exterior fair	
 6. LOCATION MAP (Plan Optional)	7. PHOTOGRAPH
8. PUBLISHED SOURCES (Author, Title, Pages) INTERVIEWS, RECORDS, PHOTOS, ETC.	9. NAME, ADDRESS AND TITLE OF RECORDER Michael Bourne  DATE OF RECORD July 19, 1968

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION AND PHOTOGRAPHS MAY BE ADDED ON SHEET OF SAME SIZE

# KENNEDYVILLE

KENT CO.

Dist. No. 2



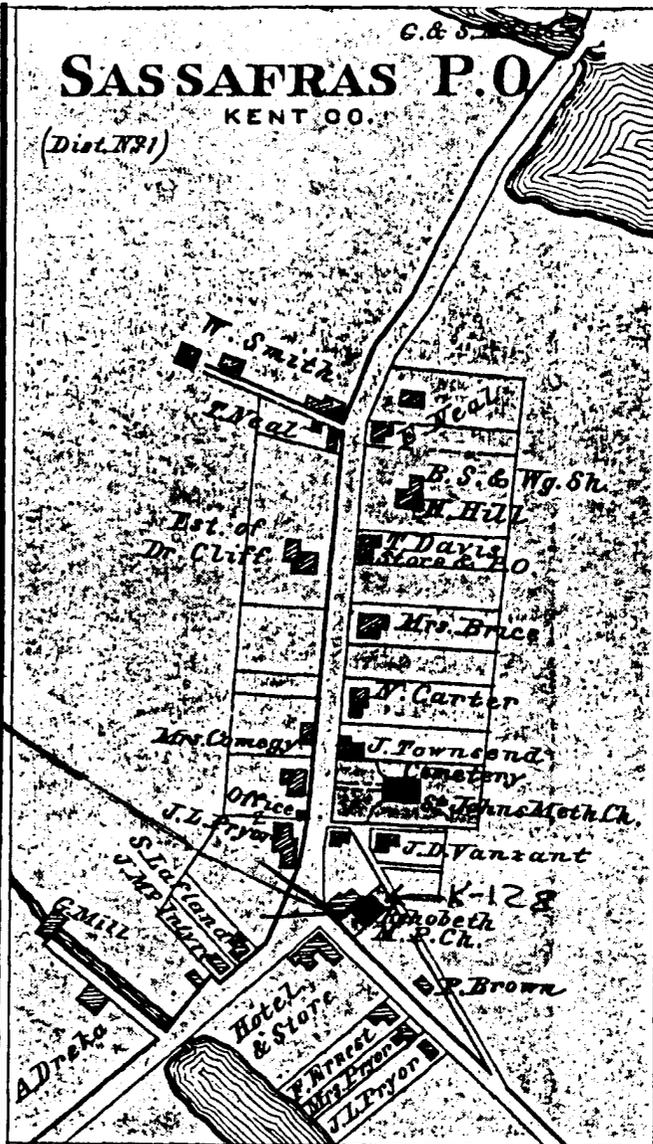
**HOPKINS**, Proprietor of Urieville Mill. Best Grades of Family Flour manu-nd kept on hand for sale at all times, also work done at all times. All persons are to give me a call. 2½ miles from Kenne-

Blacksmith at Urieville. All kinds of ring done with neatness and dispatch. All wanting anything in my line will please call. 2½ miles from Kennedyville.  
 Wheelwright at Urieville. All kinds of righting done with neatness and dis- rsons wanting anything in my line will give me a call. Shop 2½ miles from lie.

# SASSAFRAS P.O.

KENT CO.

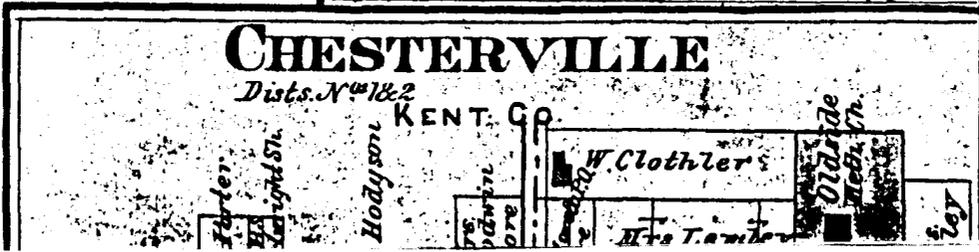
(Dist. No. 1)



# CHESTERVILLE

Dist. No. 182

KENT CO.



L. H. GRIFFIN & STEVENSON 1877

K-128





REHOBOTH  
AFRICAN  
M.P. CHURCH

K-128

Rehobeth Methodist Protestant Church

Coldwell Corner Rd., Sassafras

M. Q. Fallaw - 4/19/86

View to north

K-128

# 32A

7 sec



K-128

Rehobeth Methodist Protestant Church

Coldwell Corner Rd., Sassafras

M. Q. Fallaw - 4/19/86

View to southeast

K128

#34A

9 sec 10/10/86