K-613 19th Century

Site of Massey Methodist Episcopal Church 1900-1927

Near Massey

Private

A Massey Methodist Episcopal Church was located a little less than a mile east of Massey on the road to Delaware for much of the nineteenth century and until 1927, when it was sold. The rise of this church was part of the growth of Methodism in Kent County during the nineteenth century, until almost every community, black and white, had its own church. Accompanying the general spread of Methodism were the prosperity and growth the railroad brought to Massey after 1869 and 1870, when the village became the location of not only a station but also the junction of the Kent and Queen Anne's Railroad with the Kent County Railroad. Canneries and other business were established there and flourished. However, as the community and population declined and changed during the early twentieth century, largely as a result of the changes in agricultural technology, the church declined with it. Perhaps a factor in the decline of the Methodist church was its inconvenient distance from town.Nothing except a small, disrupted cemetery now remains to mark the former existence of this Methodist church within a church-related cluster of buildings just west of Pudding Branch. To the east of the Methodist church was the eighteenth century Shrewsbury Chapel, which became the church of North Kent Parish when Shrewsbury Parish was divided but which was abandoned when St. Clement's Church was built closer to the crossroads in the 1880s. To the west was the rectory of the Episcopal church. Little evidence remains of any of the structures today. A slightly sunken area may mark the site of Shrewsbury Chapel; a small untended cemetery remains to the east of it. Only the burned ruins remain of the old rectory.

Survey No. K-613

Magi No. 1506135608

DOE __yes __no

Maryland Historical Trust
State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Site of Massey Methodist Episcopal Church

and/or common

2. Location

street & number North side Massey-Delaware Rd., .7 mile east of Rt. 299, east of Massey ___ not for publication

city, town Massey X vicinity of congressional district

state Maryland county Kent

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
___ district	___ public	___ occupied	___ agriculture	___ museum
___ building(s)	X private	X unoccupied	___ commercial	___ park
___ structure	___ both	___ work in progress	___ educational	___ private residence
X site	**Public Acquisition**	**Accessible**	___ entertainment	___ religious
___ object	___ in process	___ yes: restricted	___ government	___ scientific
	___ being considered	X yes: unrestricted	___ industrial	___ transportation
	X not applicable	___ no	___ military	X other: cemetery

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

name Trustees, Massey Methodist Episcopal Church

street & number telephone no.:

city, town Massey state and zip code Maryland 21650

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Kent County Courthouse liber N/A

street & number folio

city, town Chestertown state Maryland

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys NONE

title

date ___ federal ___ state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Survey No. K-613

SITE - NOT APPLICABLE

Condition		Check one	Check one
___ excellent	___ deteriorated	___ unaltered	___ original site
___ good	___ ruins	___ altered	___ moved date of move _____
___ fair	___ unexposed		

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

A frame Massey Methodist Church was located on the north side of the Massey-Smyrna road a little less than a mile east of the Massey crossroads. It was located between the site of Shrewsbury Chapel (K-612) (which after the division of Shrewsbury Episcopal Parish became the church of North Kent Parish until the new building was erected closer to Massey in the 1880s) and the 1870s rectory of North Kent Parish. Little evidence now remains of any of these church-related structures clustered a short distance west of Pudding Branch. The old rectory to the west burned a few years ago, though the ruins have not been removed, and the old brick Shrewsbury Chapel is gone on the east. Between the rectory ruins and a new (1970s) house behind the old Shrewsbury Chapel site is the Methodist cemetery, a small part of the now-reduced church lot. Many of the stones have been removed from their original locations, and some are broken, possibly due to grazing livestock. Some of the stones from the remains of the early Shrewsbury Chapel cemetery, in a small woods to the east of the Shrewsbury Chapel site, may have become intermingled with the Methodist cemetery stones. There are no above-ground structural remains relating to this church.

8. Significance

Survey No. K-613

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

Specific dates 1880, 1901 **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.

Methodism became the predominant religious denomination in Kent County during the nineteenth century. A Methodist church seems to have been built for almost every community, black and white. However, as county population declined during the four decades after 1900 with the revolution in agricultural technology, and also shifted within the county, many of these rural communities declined as well, resulting in the closing of many churches. The Massey Methodist Church was a victim of this sort of change in rural Kent County. From the colonial period there had been a settlement at what was then called Massey's Crossroads, for it was on an important north-south route from Queen Anne's County, through Kent County (via Millington, Massey and Sassafras), into Cecil County and northward. However, it was the railroad that brought expansion and prosperity to the Massey area, in 1869 and 1870. Massey not only had a station, but it was the junction of the Kent and Queen Anne's Railroad line (which came up from Queen Anne's County through Millington) and the slightly later Kent County Railroad (whose track ran west through much of Kent County and then south to Chestertown).. From the junction of these two lines a single line ran to Townsend in Delaware, where it connected with the north-south main line through Delaware up to Philadelphia. Canneries and other businesses located in Massey because of proximity to the railroad; and the crossroads village grew. The church seems to have been established before the railroad period but prospered during the early railroad years. However, as the community declined and changed during the 1920s, the church failed to thrive and was closed in 1927.

(Continued)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. K-613

E.C. Hallman, Garden of Methodism. Dover, Del.: Published for the Peninsula Conference of the Methodist Church, (1948).

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____ **Quadrangle scale** _____

UTM **References** do NOT complete UTM references

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
A				B			
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

Verbal boundary description and justification

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

state	code	county	code
state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Margaret Q. Fallaw, Survey Consultant		
organization	County Commissioners of Kent County Historical Society of Kent County	**date**	February 19, 1985
street & number	Courthouse Church Alley	**telephone**	778-4600 778-3499
city or town	Chestertown	**state**	Maryland

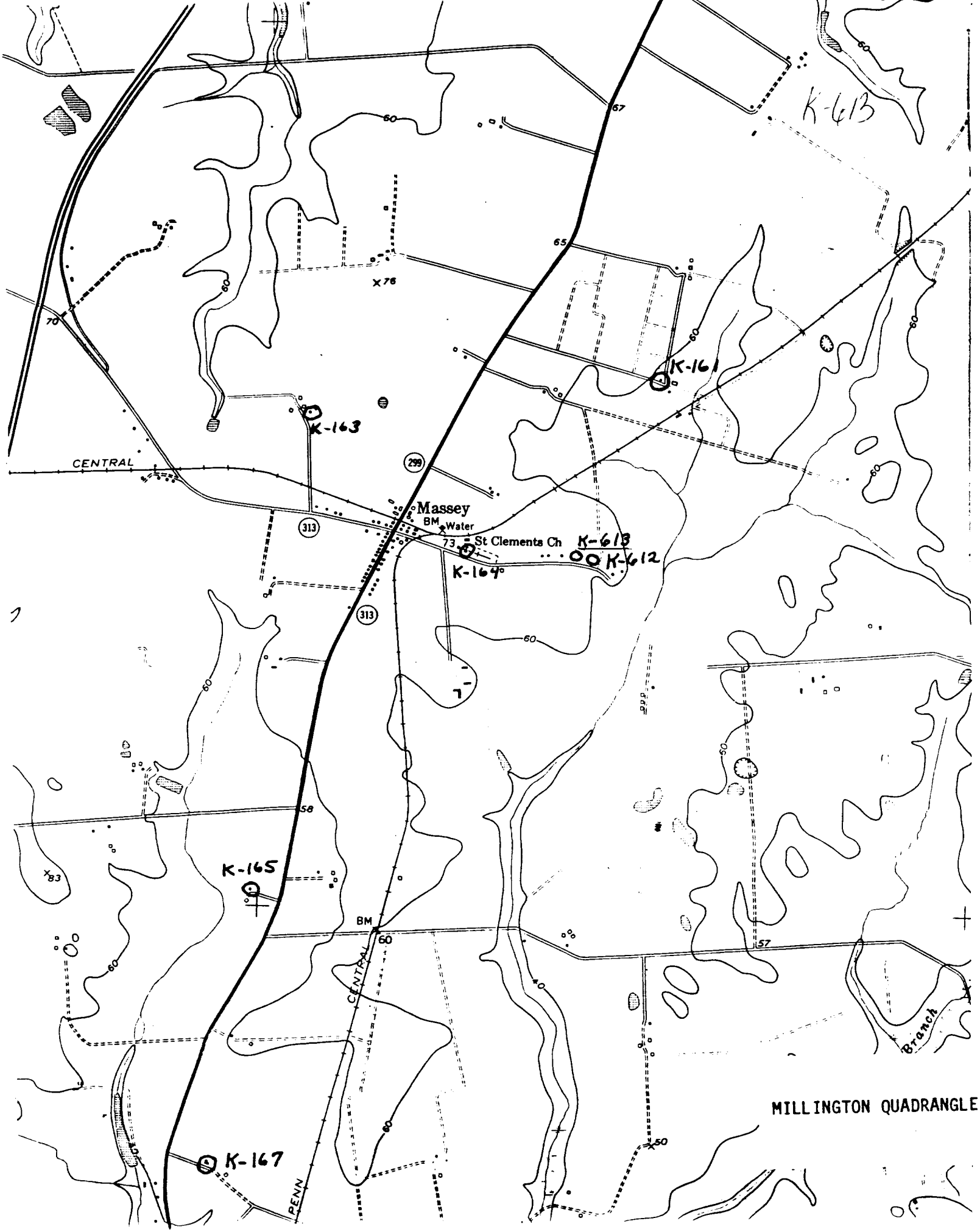
The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438

PS-2746

A deed could not be found for the Massey Methodist Church. It is possible that the Methodist lot came from the Shrewsbury Chapel plot, which in the eighteenth century had been about 4-1/2 acres, larger than was really necessary. Or it could have come from the farm to the north. The church is shown on both the 1860 Martenet map of Kent County and the 1877 atlas of Kent County map of the first election district. Information provided by Hallman in his catalogue of Kent County Methodist churches (pp. 316-317) is quite sketchy and perhaps inaccurate. He states that there had been a Massey Mission Church built in 1880 that was repaired in 1887. If this was the case, it was not the first building. He then says that "the Massey town church society bought a lot in 1898, and they tried to move an old church into town, and while doing so it fell to pieces." It is quite possible that the Methodists tried to move the old brick Shrewsbury Chapel building that had been abandoned by North Kent Parish after the new St. Clement's Church had been built closer to town in the 1880s. It is quite likely that the Methodists also found the location some distance out of town to be disadvantageous and preferred an in-town location. Hallman says further that a new church was built in 1901 and improved in 1921. By 1927, however, it was ordered sold. The well-being of the Methodist church in this vicinity may have been hindered by the fact that the prominent, prosperous farming families of the area were Episcopalians. The remaining population simply may not have been numerous enough to be able to support the church.


K-613
K-161
K-163
CENTRAL
299
Massey
BM
Water
313
73
St Clements Ch
K-613
K-612
K-164
313
K-165
BM
60
CENTRAL
K-167
PENN
Branch
MILLINGTON QUADRANGLE