

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries complete applicable sections)

STATE: North Carolina
COUNTY: Chatham
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:
Ebenezer Log Church

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
See continuation sheet #2, not for publication

CITY OR TOWN:
Pittsboro vicinity

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:
Fourth

STATE:
North Carolina

CODE:
37

COUNTY:
Chatham

CODE:
037

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <input type="checkbox"/> Comments

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
U. S. Army Corps of Engineers

STREET AND NUMBER:
P. O. Box 1890

CITY OR TOWN:
Wilmington

STATE:
North Carolina

CODE:
37

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
Chatham County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:
Pittsboro

STATE:
North Carolina

CODE:
37

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY:
 Federal
 State
 County
 Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:
STATE:
CODE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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2. Location

End of lane, northwest of S.R. 1008, 1.2 mi. south of S.R. 1900.

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE:

Ebenezer Church is a small log structure picturesquely sited on a hill in a grassy clearing amid pine woods. It is approached by a winding dirt lane that leads in from the road, past the site of the later nineteenth century church of the same name. The small log structure, which consists of a single room, measures roughly 21 feet by 18 feet, with the ridge of the gable roof running parallel to the long side. The squared logs are joined at the corners in a diamond notch. There is a door opening on the northerly side, openings for a door and a window on the southerly side, and a window opening in the west gable end. The gable roof, which once extended out to cover porches on each side, is covered with wooden shingles. (Notches in the log facades for the porches survive.) This also extended out a few feet to the east to cover the chimney. The gables are covered with plain weatherboards.

The most significant feature of the structure is the log-and-stick chimney, executed with fine craftsmanship and remarkably well-preserved. It is located at the east gable end. The base--rising to the beginning of the gable--is constructed of squared logs joined at the corners in a full dovetail joint. The logs are tapered at the end toward the wall of the building into a notch that runs between the logs of the wall into the interior of the building and there secured with a peg in mortise-and-tenon fashion. At the gable level, the stack begins; it is of stick lathing daubed with mud. The chimney is complete daubed within, and much of the interior is lined with daubed stone.

The interior was not accessible in the September, 1974, survey. A 1968 inventory recorded that the interior had wide pine flooring and a batten door (possibly original), off its hinges. In 1971 it was recorded that the floor boards and ceiling were gone but that floor joists survived and the batten door, with beaded battens, was still present. The fire opening is crudely segmental-arched and filled with rubble; the daubed stone lining of the chimney is visible.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century | |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Ebenezer Log Church is a small single-room log building, probably constructed in the early nineteenth century. Its chief significance derives from its wooden chimney, a rare and archaic feature derived from medieval building techniques; the chimney's beautifully dovetailed log base, neatly mortised into the building, is extremely rare, and surprisingly well preserved.

The log structure standing today in the New Hope section of Chatham County once housed the congregation of the Ebenezer Church, one of the earliest Methodist Episcopal churches to be organized in that county. Exactly when and where the log building was constructed is uncertain, and it is not known exactly when the structure began to be used as a meeting-house.

The noted Methodist minister Brantley York mentions Ebenezer Church in his Autobiography, noting that he attended a camp meeting there in August, 1823, where he first decided to become a member of the M.E. Church. Unfortunately Reverend York provides no information regarding the congregation's meetinghouse.

At about the time of York's initial visit to the Ebenezer Church, the property upon which the log building now stands belonged to Edward Farrar, who had purchased it from David Sauls in August, 1818. After Edward Farrar's death, his daughter Mary Farrar Mims in November, 1829, sold a 350-acre tract of land "in the Fork of Newhope and Beaver Creek" to her brother George Farrar, for \$60.

George Farrar retained ownership of the property for the next forty-five years, conveying to Stephen Henley a three-fifths interest in the tract in January, 1874. During this time, Farrar served as a trustee of the Ebenezer Church. In 1881 Henley mortgaged his interest in the tract to Needham Beckwith and apparently defaulted; in 1895 the Chatham County Superior Court directed that the tract be sold on behalf of the Beckwith estate by a commissioner at public auction. Successful bidder was Ruffin Farrar (George Farrar's son), who paid \$252 for the three-fifths interest. (In the meantime, Ruffin Farrar had acquired the remaining interest in the "George Farrar land" from other relatives.)

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Ruffin Farrar died early in 1937, devising his homeplace and one-fifth of all his lands to his son Roy Bland Farrar. In 1961 R. B. Rarrar and his wife conveyed a 185-acre tract to their son Thomas M. Farrar, who ten years later sold it to the United States Government for the Army Corps of Engineer's New Hope Dam project.

Despite the lack of documentation for the early history of the log building, it is fairly definite that the Ebenezer congregation vacated its log quarters sometime between 1859 (when Needham Beckwith sold to the church's trustees a one and one-half-acre tract) and 1866 (when the trustees were authorized by their governing body "to sell the old church to liquidate a debt on the new church").

The Ebenezer Church congregation, now occupying its third building, is today located approximately one mile north of the site of the log building it occupied one hundred and fifty years ago. The log structure has been unused for over a century, but its preservation by the Army Corps of Engineers is anticipated.

Although its history as a church is of interest, the chief significance of the building is architectural: the wooden chimney, beautifully constructed of dovetailed squared logs, is a rare and archaic feature. As pointed out by H. C. Forman in The Architecture of the Old South: The Medieval Style, 1585-1850, the use of wooden chimneys was a late medieval feature, outlawed as a fire hazard in London in 1419, but continuing in rural areas. Like other medieval building techniques, the use of wooden chimneys was carried into the English colonies, and they were widely built in seventeenth century Virginia. As fire hazards, however, they became less and less popular, and their construction was discontinued in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; this, plus a naturally high rate of destruction, makes the wood chimney a rare survival. Forman cites one on a kitchen in New Kent County, Virginia. Two or three others are known to exist in North Carolina, but these are of a stick-and-mud construction; the dovetailed log base construction is extremely rare.

The log church with its fine chimney is one of an unusually large number of log structures that existed until the late 1960s in the New Hope section of Chatham County, where log dwellings, outbuildings, and tobacco barns abounded. These range from evidently eighteenth century structures constructed of very large squared logs handsomely notched or dovetailed to crudely constructed structures made of unfinished poles. The reasons for the remarkable prevalence and/or survival of log building in this area of Chatham County are not known. In this context, Ebenezer Church is both representative and outstanding; it is the finest of the remaining intact log structures in the area owned by the Army Corps of Engineers.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Research by Robert Topkins, survey specialist and Catherine W. Cockshutt, survey supervisor; architectural description by Catherine W. Cockshutt. Chatham County Records, Chatham County Courthouse, Pittsboro, North Carolina (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills).
 Chatham County Records, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills).
 Forman, Henry Chandlee. The Architecture of the Old South: The Medieval Style 1585-1850. New York: Russell and Russell, reissued 1967.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	0 ' "	0 ' "		35° 42 ' 20 "	79° 01 ' 22 "	
NE	0 ' "	0 ' "				
SE	0 ' "	0 ' "				
SW	0 ' "	0 ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 5 acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Survey and Planning Unit

ORGANIZATION: Division of Archives and History DATE: 22 October 1974

STREET AND NUMBER: 109 East Jones Street

CITY OR TOWN: Raleigh STATE: North Carolina CODE: 37

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name Robert E. Stipe

Title State Historic Preservation Officer

Date 22 October 1974

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

 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

ATTEST:

 Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

