

# ALABAMA REGISTER OF LANDMARKS AND HERITAGE NOMINATION FORM

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY - DATE ADDED: \_\_\_\_\_

## 1. NAME

Historic: Maplesville Railroad Historic District  
and/or Common: N/A

## 2. LOCATION

Street & Number: Railroad Street (north/south to Parnell); NE along Hwy. 22 to Mobile Street  
City, Town: Maplesville ---Vicinity of: N/A  
State: AL County: Chilton Zip: -

## 3. CLASSIFICATION

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> District	<input type="checkbox"/> Public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum
<input type="checkbox"/> Building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Park
<input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Both	<input type="checkbox"/> Work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input checked="" 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	<input type="checkbox"/> In process	<input checked="" 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"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: senior

## 4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: ( ) - \_\_\_\_\_  
Street & Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
City or Town: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: - \_\_\_\_\_

## 5. FLOOR PLAN & SITE PLAN

(Use space below to sketch floor plan and site plan or attach additional sheet.)



## 6. DESCRIPTION

(See attached instructions for specific guidelines on completing the description.)

### CONDITION

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good      | <input type="checkbox"/> Ruins                   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fair      | <input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed               |

### CHECK ONE

- |   |
|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered   |

### CHECK ONE

- |   |
|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Moved    Date Moved      |

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE.

The Maplesville Railroad Historic District includes thirteen primary buildings along or near the old Southern Railroad line. Dating from the mid-19th to the early 20th centuries, the buildings include the old depot (AR, 11/23/76), eight contributing houses, three contributing commercial buildings, and the Maplesville Methodist Church (AR, 12/04/92). The boundaries extend from the south on Parnell Avenue (at Foshee Avenue) to include the Parnell House; east along Brown Lane to include a late 19th/early 20th century residence; north along Railroad Street to the intersection of Main Street; and then northeast along Highway 22 to the crossing of Mobile Street to include another late 19th/early 20th century residence. Spatially situated close to the street, the buildings represent a range of vernacular forms common to 19th- and early 20th- century Alabama communities. Some of the buildings are embellished with stylistic elements that also contribute to their architectural significance.

#### Site #1: Dr. Parnell House - C

Southwest corner of Parnell and Foshee Avenues (28 Parnell Avenue)

The C. N. Parnell House is situated at the southeast end of the district. According to information from Ellen Howell in the Parnell Family Genealogy Forum, the house was built in 1908 by Robert Clinton Lenoir of Maplesville. (1) A projecting tower distinguishes this building along with its irregular roofline, pedimented gable entryway supported by Ionic columns, wraparound porch (once screened-in), leaded glass, original weatherboard siding and red/brown slate roof. (An early photo reveals that cresting was once located along the ridge of the gable and entrance porches). The tower and gable ends (which also have return cornices) are embellished with small ornamental pebbles, a unique decorative feature that adds both color and texture to the exterior surface. Much of the fenestration is intact. The basic configuration of the interior has also survived although a staircase was added that now leads to a converted attic. An early photo reveals that a picket fence once surrounded the property; today, a modern, yet compatible, fence partially encloses the front and sides lawns. Although the house is situated near the street, the property contains between 1-1/2 and 2 acres of open land that may have been used as a pasture or for light agriculture. The following outbuildings are still extant on the property:

- 1A concrete shelter (1932) – a plaque states that this was constructed by the original owner, Dr. C.N. Parnell, after a major tornado struck the community - C
- 1B outbuilding (early 20th century?): wood structure with two shed-roof extensions - C
- 1C outbuilding (early 20th century?): board and batten structure with gable roof and enclosed workshed - C
- 1D outbuilding – (early 20th century?): frame open structure with low-pitched roof and open shed addition. An early pump resting on a concrete stands in front of this structure - C

#### Site #2: House (vacant) - C

Brown Lane

The late 19th/early 20th century one-story double pen house with weatherboard siding has a porch with shed roof extending the length of the front façade. There are two single front doors leading to the front pens. Paired, 6/6 windows flank the front doors. The house is crowned with a side gable roof. The house is situated on a wooded lot near the road. A 1925 map indicates that "Mrs. Claughton" owned the house (2)



Site #3: Commerical Building – C

Northwest corner of Railroad Street and ??

The c. 1911 two-story painted brick commercial building has arched lintels and dentils along the cornice line. Decorative "stars" are located beneath the dentils and also flank the upper level openings. A two-story porch is crowned with a new asphalt roof. The building was constructed by Hilliard Foshee for his mercantile business (3) J & M Laundramat was an early occupant; currently "Suds R Us".

Site #4: Commerical Building – NC

Railroad Street

Constructed after 1911, one-story brick building now faced with modern wood siding. The door and windows maybe original although the façade has been refaced with wood siding. Formally Bill's Dollar, currently used a consignment store and hair salon ("Glamour Time")

Site #5: Commercial Building – C

NE Corner Railroad Street

The c. 1911-20 two-story painted brick building displays its original first floor but has an altered front façade 2nd floor. The double door (original?) front entrance is flanked by two large 2/2 sash windows; another single door (also original?) crowned with a transom leaded to the upper level. The north/side face is relatively intact. A shed roof one-porch extends the length of the front façade. Formally the K.C. Cobern Store; later the Pinney Pincher; currently Maplesville Ceramic. The second floor is a Masonic Hall. (4)

Site #6: Cal Foshee House (now vacant) – C

Hwy. 22

The late 19th/early 20th century center hall plan house has fine paneled wainscoting both on the exterior front façade as well as the interior center hall. Three chimneys project from the low-pitched pyramidal roof that crowns the central portion of the house. A screened in porch extending the length of the front façade has a c. 1940 metal awning. The c. 1885 rear addition is crowned with a hip roof and displays overhanging eaves supported by decorative brackets, a late Italianate feature.

Continuously owned by the Foshee family including patriarch, Cal, son Cal Jr, and daughter Louise F. Apperson. (5) Also on the property are the following structures:

8A Smokehouse (date?) - C

8B Well (date?) - C

8C Outbuilding – NC

8D Barbeque Pit (ruins) - C

Site #7: "Coffin House" (now vacant) - C

(located rear of Crumpton building & Foshee house) off Hwy. 22

Originally built as a "Coffin House", it was the only place in the area where coffins or caskets could be bought according to Louise Foshee Apperson, daughter of owner, Cal Foshee. (6) The building was later used as a residence. The building is covered in asbestos siding. The date of the house is unknown, but further research may later reveal that it began as an earlier structure and then was remodeled at a later date. According to Martha Cowan, great-niece of Cal Foshee, the house was there long before her birth in 1930 (7)

Site #8: T. U. Crumpton Co. Mercantile Building (now vacant) C

Hwy. 22

Constructed in 1907 and facing north, the one story, three-part, brick commercial building displays brick corbeling along the cornice. The porch with shed roof (metal) is supported by plain square columns. The original painted sign, "T U CRUMPTON CO" is still visible beneath the corbelling. The building, with "three brick thick walls" originally contained two rooms but a third room was added later.



Cal Foshee constructed the building but it was known as the T.U. Crumpton mercantile company. Foshee had entered a partnership with T.U. Crumpton, an established merchant in Maplesville whose own commercial building had burnt. (8)

Site #9: House – C  
Mobile Street

Facing west, the c. 1900 frame house has a steeply pitched metal pyramidal roof with projecting front and side gables, and a front porch supported by slender columns. The front gable has a return cornice and display fish-scale shingles. At first glance, the house appears to date from the late 19th/early 20th centuries, but further research may later reveal that the house began as an earlier structure and then was expanded and remodeled at a later date.

Site #10: Old Foshee House - C  
Hwy. 22

Facing south, the c. 1850-80 one-story dogtrot, now enclosed, has an intact Federal period porch extending the length of the front façade, a side gable roof, original siding and interior wainscoting. The double front door with transom and sidelights also dates from the mid-19th century. Fenestration includes 9/9 sash windows. The house is situated on a wooded lot (a large tree has grown in front of the entranceway) close to the street. The Foshee family occupied the house during the 19th century but it is unknown at this point if they actually built it.

Site #11: Southern Railway Depot (AR, 11/23/76) – C  
Railroad Street

Constructed in 1912, this building replaced the c.1867 depot that burnt in 1911 and was originally located where site #3 is today. The building has been restored and now serves as a senior citizens center.

Site #12: House – C  
Railroad Street (across from depot)

Facing east, the one-story frame house center hall plan house has a porch and hip roof. Fenestration includes 4/4 sash rectangular windows. Some changes have been made to the building such as the front entranceway and porch but its basic form is intact.

Site #13: Maplesville Methodist Church (AR, 12/04/92) – C  
Railroad Street

A fine example of vernacular Gothic Revival ecclesiastical architecture. According to "Maplesville, The Town and the People (1820-1989)", the building was first located where the cemetery is now located - "bounded on the west by highway 22, south by Church Street, east by the Glasscock property, north by the crest of a hill to the road." (9). Later the c. 1850's building was dismantled and then rebuilt in 1887 using some of the original building material.

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1

Parnell Family Genealogy Forum. Posted Ellen Howell, January 12, 2003. Also, date given in Maplesville, The Town and The People (1820-1989), Time Printing Company, Montevallo, Alabama, npd (c. 1989), page 98.

2

1925 map.

3

Martha Alice Cowan. phone interview. August 1. 2003. Ms. Cowan is the great-granddaughter of Noah

Foshee and the great-niece of Cal Foshee.

4

1925 map.

5

Maplesville, page 29.

6

Ibid.; also Martha Cowan.

7

Martha Cowan.

8

Maplesville, page 29.

9

Maplesville, page 110.



## 7. SIGNIFICANCE

(See attached instructions for specific guidelines on completing the significance.)

### PERIOD

- ☐ Prehistoric
- ☐ 1400-1499
- ☐ 1500-1599
- ☐ 1600-1699
- ☐ 1700-1799
- ☒ 1800-1899
- ☒ 1900-

### AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE-CHECK AND EXPLAIN BELOW

- ☐ archeology-prehistoric
- ☐ archeology-historic
- ☐ agriculture
- ☒ architecture
- ☐ art
- ☐ commerce
- ☐ communications

- ☒ community planning
- ☐ conservation
- ☐ education
- ☐ engineering
- ☐ exploration/settlement
- ☐ funerary art
- ☐ humanitarian

- ☐ industry
- ☐ landscape architecture
- ☐ law
- ☐ literature
- ☐ military
- ☐ music
- ☐ politics/government

- ☐ religion
- ☐ scientific
- ☐ sculpture
- ☐ social history
- ☐ theater
- ☒ other transport.

SPECIFIC DATES: c. 1850-c. 1920

BUILDER/ARCHITECT:

### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

#### CRITERION A:

Significant in the areas of community planning and transportation, the Maplesville Railroad Historic District reflects the impact of the railroad on the development of a small Alabama community during the 19th and early 20th centuries. Although only a few trains now pass through Maplesville, the railroad was at one time the heart of this rural agricultural community. Much of the development occurred as a result of the railroad's coming in the mid-19th century and continued until the later part of the 20th century when Maplesville, like many other small rural Alabama towns, began losing population and business to larger communities and urban areas. The Maplesville Historic District contains commercial buildings (sites #3, #5), residences (sites #1, #2, #6, #12) a depot (AR, site #11), and a church (AR, site #13) that face the old railroad line. The district also includes a section of the cross street that serves as the main thoroughfare (Hwy. 22) through Maplesville. This section includes a commercial building (site #8), the "coffin house" (site #7), and three residences (sites #6, #9, #10). Another early business section of Maplesville located west of the main thoroughfare was not included in the district due to alterations that were made to many of the buildings.

#### CRITERION C:

Significant in the area of architecture, the Maplesville Railroad Historic District reflect typical vernacular forms of the 19th and early 20th centuries – the main period of Maplesville's growth. With the old depot (AR, 11/23/76) located at the geographic center of the district, the commercial and residential buildings along or near the railroad tracts have remained remarkably intact over the years. Some of the buildings display stylistic elements that further contribute to their architectural significance.

- The oldest residence in the district is the mid-19th century house (site #10) located across from the old Crumpton store (site #8) along Highway 22. This enclosed dogtrot is distinguished by its fine



Federal-period porch, original siding, 9/9 sash windows, its early Greek Revival entranceway with transom and sidelights, and surviving interior wainscoting. The Maplesville Methodist Church (AR, site #13), is also among the oldest surviving buildings in Maplesville. A fine and intact example of Gothic Revival architecture, the church was constructed around 1850 but was moved to its current location in 1887.

- Situated at the southeast end of the district is the Dr. C. N. Parnell House (site #1), constructed in 1908. The house is one of the finest early 20th century residences in Maplesville with its irregular roofline, projecting tower, wraparound porch, leaded glass, original clapboard siding and a red/brown slate roof. The tower and gable ends are embellished with small ornamental pebbles, a unique decorative feature that adds both color and texture to the exterior surface. According to information from Ellen Howell on the Parnell Family Genealogy Forum, the Parnell house was built by Robert Clinton Lenoir or Maplesville.

- Across from the Parnell House is another common architectural form used during the late 19th/early 20th centuries. This double pen house (site #2), once owned by the Cloughton family, retains many of its early features including its siding and basic configuration. The Foshee House (site #6) on Highway 22 is typical of another common form used throughout the 19th and early 20th century, the center hall plan. Fine exterior and interior wainscoting further distinguish this building. Another center hall plan residence (site #12) is located across from the depot (site #11). Although some changes have been made to the building, the basic form has been retained. Finally, the house on Mobile Street (site #8) has a steeply pitched pyramidal roof with protecting gables. The front gable displays return cornices and decorative fish-scale shingles. At first glance, the house appears to date from the late 19th/early 20th centuries, but further research may later reveal that the house began as an earlier structure and then was expanded and remodeled at a later date.

- The brick commercial buildings (sites #3, #5, #8) in the district are representative of the commercial architecture that was common during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Displaying arched lintels (site #3), brick corbelling (site #8) and original storefronts (sites #3, #5, #8), these buildings still retain much of their original fabric.

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## HISTORICAL SUMMARY:

Daniel Williams was the first recorded white settler in the area that would later become the town of Maplesville. (1) Sometime before 1820, Williams and his family built a dam across Mulberry Creek to furnish power for his mills, which he built and operated there. Also around this time, Stephen W. Maples, a merchant from Connecticut, opened a store about a half of a mile west of Daniel William's mills. Maples married Williams's daughter, Sara, on June 28, 1823 thus uniting the earliest pioneer families. (2) A survey drawn in 1829 by William H. Wilson delineates the first town of Maplesville, named after the pioneer merchant. It was located about three miles east of the present location and included the communities of Maplesville, Isabella, and Mulberry. Some of the earliest settlers came from Georgia and the Carolinas as well as from the northern states.(3)

From the onset, Maplesville was a town that developed along transportation routes. The old town was situated at the intersection of two important state roads, the Fort Jackson Road, which ran east and west, and the Elyton Road, which ran north and south, from Birmingham to Selma. (4) The Fort Jackson Road was especially well-traveled when it functioned as the stage route from Montgomery to Tuscaloosa, then the state capitol of Alabama (1826-1846). In 1853, the Alabama and Tennessee River Railroad (later consolidated with the Southern Railroad in 1894) had completed a line from Montevallo to Selma with a stop at the "Maplesville Depot" in the community of Cuba. (5)

During this period of development, the old Foshee House (site #10), was constructed c. 1850 along the main thoroughfare that crosses the railroad line. The house, with its fine porch rails and interior wainscoting, began a dogtrot but was later enclosed. Another building constructed during this period



was the Maplesville Methodist Church (AR, site #13), erected around 1850 but moved to its current location across from the depot in 1887.

When the railroad came through, a survey was done to establish a new community that would be situated directly on that railroad line. The 1853 description of William H. Wilson's plat reads, in part: "...I have surveyed and laid a town in said county (Bibb) on the Railroad in Section 21, Township 21, and Range 12 East and called the name of said town Cuba at the place called Maplesville Depot on the West half of the North East quarter of Section 21, Township 21, and Range 12 East it being on the South end of said half quarter and on the road leading to Selma and where it crosses the Railroad..." (6)

The town of Cuba was changed to Maplesville around the time that the post office was established in 1856. Although two Maplesvilles existed for some time, the "old town" began to die as rail transportation began to replace travel by stage coach. The new Maplesville community, on the other hand, began to prosper, especially after 1898 when a second railroad line, the Mobile and Ohio (later merged into the Illinois Central Gulf in 1972), was constructed. (7) Today, only a few trains pass through the community but the 1912 Southern Railroad Depot (AR, site #11) survives as a visual reminder that the railroad was responsible for much of the early development of Maplesville. In addition, there are other extant buildings from the late 19th/early 20th century "boom period" of Maplesville that are included within the historic district:

- The Crumpton store (site #8) along Hwy. 22 dates from 1907. The history of the store actually begins in 1860 when Noah Foshee bought the mercantile business of Reding Hicks, an early pioneer of Maplesville (8) Foshee's oldest son, Wheeler, took charge of the business after his father's death. In 1907, Wheeler and his brother Calhoun (Cal) began construction of a new building for the family business. However, before it could be completed, Wheeler died. After Wheeler's death, Cal then went into business with T.U. Crumpton, whose own store had just burned. (9) Although known as the T.U. Crumpton mercantile business, the store was primarily owned and operated by Cal Foshee. (10) After Mr. Crumpton's death, his daughter, Blossom, helped to operate the business with Foshee. In December 1988, the building was used as the home office of Reynolds Wood Products. (11).

- Also during this period, Calvin Foshee constructed a home (site #6) next to mercantile business. This house displays fine paneled wainscoting both on the exterior front as well as interior center hall. Another building (site #7) located behind the store and next to the house was used to make and store coffins, another one of Calvin Foshee's business ventures. Known as the "coffin house", the building was later remodeled and used as a residence.

- The commercial buildings along Railroad Street were constructed around 1911 (and later) after a fire broke out destroying the frame buildings along the block. (12) These buildings include the old Foshee store (site #3), now a laundrymat, and the K C Coburn store (now a ceramics store) and masonic lodge (site #5). Clint Coburn (1878-1953) started his business in Maplesville in 1920. His son, Kermit, continued operation of the business for many years after his retirement. (13)

- The Parnell House (site #1) was the home of Charles Nicholas Parnell, born September 3, 1866 in or near Stanton, Alabama (14) He came to Maplesville in 1906 where he set up a medical practice that lasted almost forty-five years. He graduated from Marion Military Institute, taught school, then entered the Mobile Medical College in 1889. Upon graduation on March 27, 1891, Dr. Parnell began his practice in Mulberry before moving to Ensely. During the mid-1890, he married Frances Kay Foshee whose family was among the earliest settlers in Maplesville. (15) The Parnells had four children although only one son survived. Upon arriving in Maplesville, they began construction of a fine home across from the Southern Railroad and near his medical office along Railroad Street. Tragically, Frances Parnell died on September 1, 1908 before the house was completed. Charles



Parnell later remarried Lucie LeNoir and raised four children. (16) In addition to an active medical practice, Dr. Parnell also ran a drugstore and developed a series of medicines that were later distributed by the Messengil Pharmaceutical Company of Chattonooga, Tennessee. (17)

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1

Maplesville, The Town and The People (1820-1989), Time Printing Company, Montevallo, Alabama, npd (c. 1989), page 2.

2

Ibid.

3

Maplesville, page 3.

4

Maplesville, page 3.

5

Maplesville, page 10, 97

6

Ibid.

7

Maplesville, page 94

8

A History of Chilton County, "A History of Maplesville" 1927 (unpublished manuscript, reference room, Alabama Department of Archives and History), page 23. Also, Martha Alice Cowan, phone interview, August 1, 2003.

9

Mapelsville, page 29.

10

Ibid.

11

Maplesville, page 34.

12

Maplesville, page 98.

13

Obituary, Birmingham News, February 27, 1953, for Clint C. Cobern, "retired Maplesville merchant". Cobern started his mercantile business in 1920 (Maplesville, page 22)

14

Maplesville, page 90.

15

Phone interview with Martha Alice Cowan, the great-granddaughter of Noah Foshee and the great-niece of Cal Foshee, August 1, 2003. Ms. Cowan states that Frances ("Franny") Foshee was the



daughter of pioneer merchant, Noah W. Foshee (b. 1847, Georgia). She was born in 1872 and died 1908. Her mother was Addie Foshee (b. 1847, Alabama) and her brothers included Thomas (b. 1870, died in New Orleans), Hilliard (b. 1875), Wheeler (b. 1879), and Calvin (b. 1882). Information also from the United State Census Household Record, 1880. "Noah W. Foshee". Census Place: Maplesville, Chilton, Alabama, Family History Library Film, NA Film Number T9-0006, Page 83D

16

Maplesville, page 91

17

Ibid.

## **8. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Birmingham News. Obituary for Clint C. Cobern, retired Maplesville merchant, Feb. 27. 1953.



A History of Maplesville" from A History of Chilton County, 1927 (unpublished manuscript, reference room, Alabama Department of Archives and History)

Maplesville, The Town and The People (1820-1989), Time Printing Company, Montevallo, Alabama, npd (c.1989).

Parnell Family Genealogy Forum. Posted Ellen Howell, January 12, 2003.

Phone interview with Martha Alice Cowan, August 1, 2003. Ms. Cowan is the great-granddaughter of Noah Foshee and the great-niece of Cal Foshee.

Plat map of Maplesville, 1925.

United State Census Household Record, 1880. "Noah W. Foshee". Census Place: Maplesville, Chilton, Alabama, Family History Library Film, NA Film Number T9-0006, Page 83D

## **9. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

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Acreage of nominated property: \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle name: \_\_\_\_\_

Enclose map showing location of property. (city or county map, state highway department map, or USGS map)

## **10. FORM PREPARED BY**

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Name/title: Melanie Betz, Architectural Historian

Organization: Alabama Historical Commission

Street & Number: 468 S. Perry Street

City or Town: Montgomery

Date: August 4, 2003

Telephone: (334) 242-3184

State: AL Zip: 36130-

## **11. PLEASE SUBMIT COLOR SLIDES OF THE PROPERTY WITH THIS**



Residential Area

Baptist Church

Storefronts

Main St.

Storefronts

Maplesville City Hall

N ↑

Maplesville Railroad Historic District  
Maplesville, Alabama

