

Theme 5b

Form 10-300  
(Rev. 6-72)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:	Connecticut
COUNTY:	Hartford
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY DATE	5

1. NAME

COMMON:  
The First Church of Christ, Congregational

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:  
75 Main Street

CITY OR TOWN: Farmington

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: First

STATE: Connecticut

CODE: 09

COUNTY: Hartford

CODE: 003

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"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input 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 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 checked="" 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:  
The First Church of Christ, Congregational, 1652

STREET AND NUMBER:  
75 Main Street

CITY OR TOWN: Farmington

STATE: Connecticut

CODE: 09

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:  
Farmington Town Hall

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Farmington

STATE: Connecticut

CODE: 09

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
Connecticut Historic Structures and Landmarks Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: 1966

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
Connecticut Historic Structures and Landmarks Survey

STREET AND NUMBER:  
54 Pratt Street

CITY OR TOWN: Hartford

STATE: Connecticut

CODE: 09

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Connecticut

COUNTY: Hartford

ENTRY NUMBER

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DATE

7. DESCRIPTION

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

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

The information on this page was taken primarily from information compiled by Mr. Richard D. Butterfield, Chairman of the Farmington Historic District Commission, and his staff. We are grateful to them for its use here.

The First Church of Christ Congregational, built in 1771 and known as the Meeting House, was the third church erected by the Farmington congregation. It was designed and built by Judah Woodruff, builder of many of the houses in the town. The earlier meeting houses were built in 1672 and 1708. The present structure, built from timber purchased in Boston, retains the early form of entry and pulpit on the long aisles, rather than at the ends. It was Charles Bulfinch who broke the tradition of the pulpit set lengthwise at the side, and began the practice of the long nave. The Farmington Church is the only original Congregational church in Connecticut with its entry at the side. The centered entry has three windows on each side and represents later work, for it is in Greek Revival style, with large columns supporting a heavy entablature. Decoration elsewhere is sparse as would be expected. At the north end is a bell tower built on the ground and extending above the roof line. Near the top is a clock, and above it an open balustrade, in the center of which is the bell stage. The arch of the bell section is repeated just above, though this is closed. Topping the whole tower is an unusually slender and graceful steeple, probably raised to its position by pulleys, which can be seen for miles and is famous throughout New England. This church is an excellent example of its architectural style and period.

The First Church of Christ Congregational since its founding in 1771 has always been a center of civic and social affairs in Farmington. It is the place where the Amistad captives attended religious services, as well as social and civic affairs, during their nine months stay in the town.

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) **1839-1841**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political           | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> Science                        | <u>Afro-American History</u>                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture                      | _____   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input checked="" 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

In June 1839 a Portuguese slaveship, the Tecora, imported a shipload of Africans from Mendi, Africa into Cuba. Forty-nine of them were sold to Jose Ruiz and Pedro Montez who herded their purchase aboard the slaveship Amistad with the intention of transporting the captives to a port on the opposite side of the island. On their fourth day at sea, the Africans, led by two of their comrades, Cinque and Grabeau, led a successful mutiny, murdering the ship's captain and cook. Montez and Ruiz were retained as prisoners in order to help navigate the ship back to Africa.

During the day the two Spaniards adhered to the Africans' directions and sailed the ship eastward. But at night they changed course and sailed the ship north, hoping they would reach a southern slave state and thus safety. After weeks of erratic sailing around the ocean, the Amistad finally dropped anchor at Culloden Point in the Long Island Sound where it was seized by the American brig Washington, commanded by Lieutenant Commander Gedney and Lieutenant Meade. A preliminary inquiry held aboard the Washington in New London harbor, led American officials to believe that the entire incident was a case of mutiny, piracy, and murder and thus proper legal action was needed. The Africans were taken across the Sound to New Haven, Connecticut where they were temporarily jailed and on September 14, 1839, they were transferred to Hartford, Connecticut for trial.

Abolitionists, such as the wealthy brothers Lewis and Arthur Tappan, seized the opportunity created by the Amistad Affair to protect the unfortunate captives and, in so doing, to promote the general cause of abolitionism. Lewis Tappan, the pastor of a New York church, made speeches and organized fund-raising events on behalf of the captives and for the abolitionist movement. Arthur Tappan, a merchant and lawyer, was a major financial supporter of abolitionist causes and had served as president of the American Anti-Slavery Society. The Tappans, along with other abolitionists, arranged for both the temporal and spiritual care of the captives. Divinity students from Yale were enlisted to teach the Africans Christianity. Reverend Thomas Gallaudet, creator of a sign language for the deaf and mute and the person after whom the famous liberal arts college in Washington, D. C. is named, devised a sign language for communicating with the captives while a search for an interpreter was in progress. (James Covey, an African slave from Mendi working as a cabin boy aboard a British ship docked in a New York port, was found to act as interpreter.) In a short time the Africans

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**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Baldwin, Simeon E. "The Captives of the Amistad." Papers of the New Haven Colony Historical Society, v. IV.

Barber, John W. A History of the Amistad Captives. New Haven: E. L. and J. W. Barber, 1840.

Brown, Julia S. "Amistad Captives." Farmington Magazine, February, 1901.

Hurlburt, Mabel S. Farmington Town Clerks and Their Times (1645-1940). Hartford, Connecticut: Finlay Brothers, 1943.

**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
NW	°	'	"	°	'	"	°	'	"
NE	°	'	"	°	'	"	°	'	"
SE	°	'	"	°	'	"	°	'	"
SW	°	'	"	°	'	"	°	'	"

UTM: 18.680530.46 20840

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: *Less than one acre*

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
**Marcia M. Greenlee, Historical Projects Director**

ORGANIZATION: **Afro-American Bicentennial Corporation** DATE: **9-27-74**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**1420 N Street, Northwest**

CITY OR TOWN: **Washington** STATE: **D. C.** CODE: **11**

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

<p>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:</p> <p>National <input type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Name _____</p> <p>Title _____</p> <p>Date _____</p>	<p>I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.</p> <p>_____  <i>Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation</i></p> <p>Date _____</p> <p>ATTEST:</p> <p>_____  <i>Keeper of The National Register</i></p> <p>Date _____</p>
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75.

STATE	
Connecticut	
COUNTY	
Hartford	
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became national curiosities.

The opening trial of the Africans was scheduled for September 17, 1839 in the State House in Hartford and Theodore Sedgwick of New York and Roger Baldwin of New Haven were enlisted as their counsel. W. S. Holabird was the prosecutor. The presiding judge was Andrew T. Judson, former prosecuting attorney in the Prudence Crandall case of 1833. (Miss Crandall, over the objections of the New England community, had tried to admit a black girl to her all-white school.)

It was the official position of the Spanish government that the captives should be turned over to Spanish officials for return and trial in Cuba, pursuant to the 1795 treaty between the United States and Spain. One of the articles of this treaty provided for the return of all property of Spanish citizens to Spanish authorities in cases of piracy, shipwreck, or other troubles. President Van Buren was inclined to follow this solution to the affair because he believed it had the potential for being politically explosive and could develop into a highly controversial election campaign issue on which he would be forced to take a stand. Rather than risk the alienation of any segment of the American electorate as a result of a judicial decision in the case, Van Buren tried to surreptitiously use the Executive branch of the government in order to have the affair solved as quickly as possible and in the manner the Spanish advocated. The President's involvement in the case went so far as to order the American brig Grampus to await the transport of the Africans back to Cuba.

The case of the Amistad captives involved jurisdictional questions for which there were no precedents in American law. Following the initial inquiry into the case aboard the Washington, it had been learned that Spain and Great Britain had renewed a treaty in June 1835 that abolished the slave trade in all parts of the Spanish empire. This revelation created another highly important factor that had to be taken into consideration in the deliberations. Baldwin's able arguments calling for the withdrawal of the charges of piracy and murder were accepted by Judge Judson on the grounds that the court lacked jurisdiction over crimes committed against foreigners on the high seas. The question of the Cubans' claim for their "property" remained unsettled, but since the American legal system recognized slaves as property, there was jurisdiction for a determination of that claim.

Meanwhile, after the Africans' side of the mutiny had been disclosed, Lewis Tappan took out warrants of false imprisonment and cruelty against Ruiz and Montez. They were arrested and jailed in New York. Montez was soon released for insufficiency of evidence while Ruiz, who remained in prison until February 1840, was finally released on bail. Both men eventually returned to Cuba, leaving the Amistad affair in the hands of the Spanish and American authorities.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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STATE Connecticut	
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When the trial resumed in the District Court in New Haven, Connecticut in January 1840 after its Christmas recess several additional facts were brought to light. The court heard the Africans' side of the incident and the testimony of Dr. Richard R. Madden, British Commissioner of the Anglo-Spanish Board in Havana whose duty it was to oversee the suppression of the slave trade. Through Dr. Madden's testimony and affidavits, it was discovered that under the 1835 Spanish-Anglo treaty it was illegal to bring bozales, recently imported Africans such as those on trial, into Cuba. Their passports for transportation were discovered to be fraudulent. On the basis of this new information, Judge Judson ordered the captives transported home by the U. S. government. President Van Buren, up for re-election and uncertain about his support in the South, was furious at Judge Judson's decision. He ordered Prosecutor Holabird to appeal the case to the Supreme Court. The court agreed to hear the case in January, 1841. In the interim months, however, Van Buren was defeated in his second bid for presidency, and one of the major contributing factors to his defeat was the Amistad Affair. His involvement in the matter -- the use of the Executive branch to interfere in a judiciary matter, and particularly his calling up the Grampus -- gave added reason for alarm for those who believed he was becoming too arrogant with his use of Presidential power. In retrospect, it can be seen that the 1840 Presidential campaign was the first one in American history in which the issue of slavery was made a part of the political platform of a major American political party, evidence of the country's growing concern over the problem. Southern Democrats that year had a plank placed in the Democratic Party platform, pledging the Party to opposition of Congressional interference on matters that dealt with the slavery issue.

The Amistad case was taken up by the Supreme Court on February 20, 1841 after several postponements. Former President John Quincy Adams was asked to serve as counsel for the Africans along with Roger Baldwin. While the latter was believed to be the more effective lawyer, Adams' presence added a great deal of respectability and prestige to the abolitionist cause. While Baldwin impressively dealt with the legal arguments involved and wrote the brief, Adams concerned himself in making an eloquent summation that appealed to the court's high sense of justice and nature's higher law of the equality of men. Adams, who was Secretary of State when the 1795 Spanish-American treaty was renewed in 1819, told the court that he could speak from personal experience in saying it was not in the letter and spirit of those negotiations to apply the term "merchandise" to human beings and that no article of that treaty applied to the particular case at hand. In March the Supreme Court upheld Judge Judson's decision on sending the Africans back to their homeland and went a step further in declaring them to be free. The Africans were then transported to Farmington, Connecticut to await passage home. While there, the Africans became an active part of the community, living in their own residences, attending church and community affairs at the First Congregational Church, taking Christian religious instructions in a nearby building, and becoming active members of the Farmington community.

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

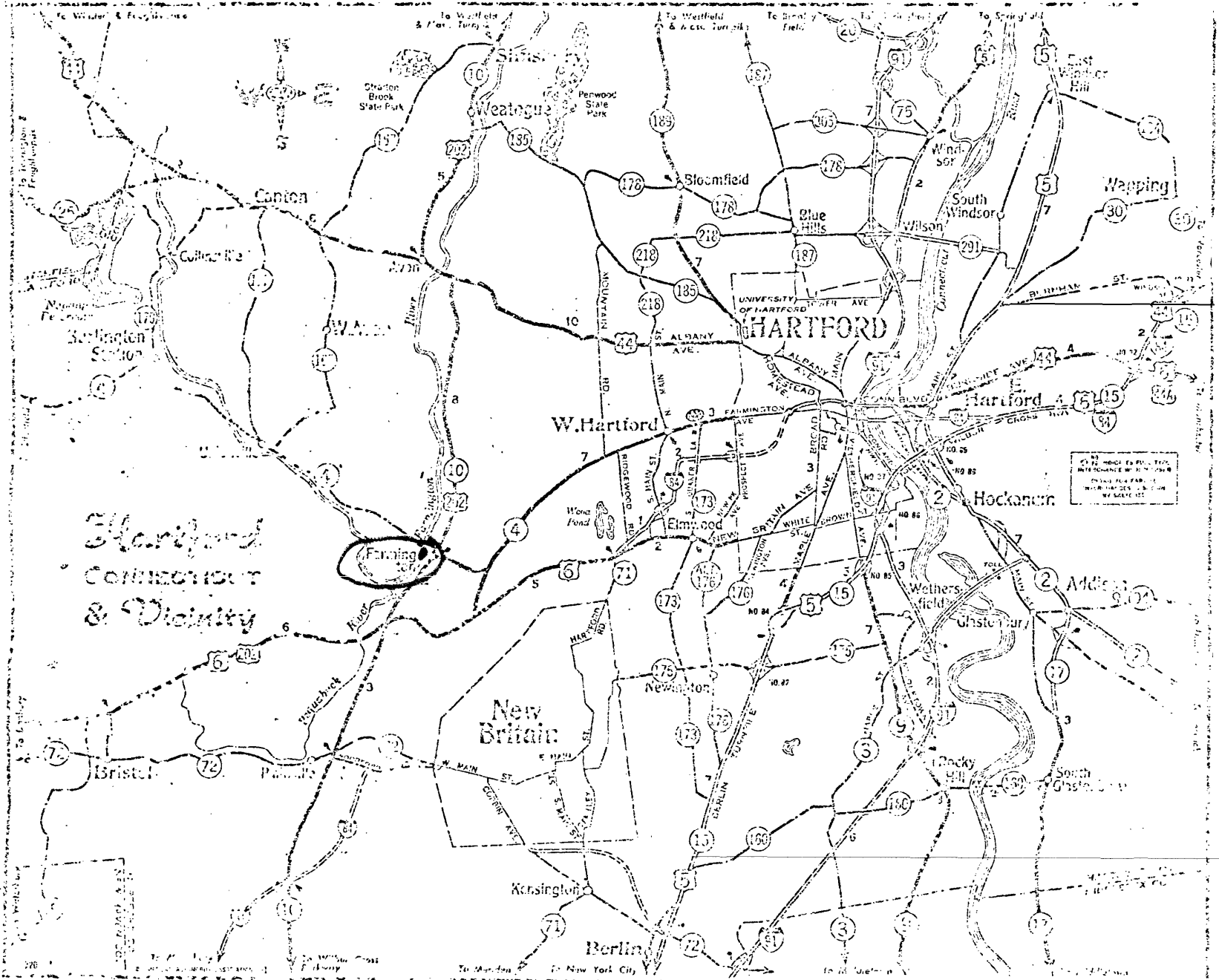
*(Continuation Sheet)*

STATE <b>Connecticut</b>	
COUNTY <b>Hartford</b>	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

*(Number all entries)*

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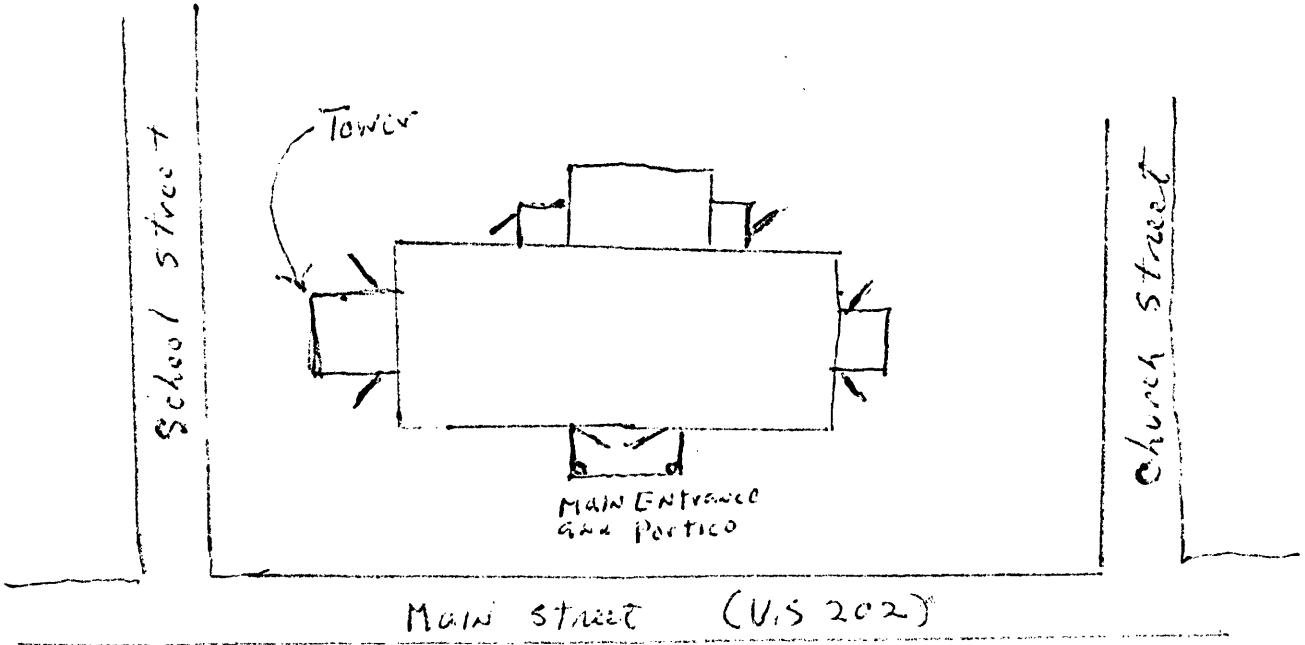
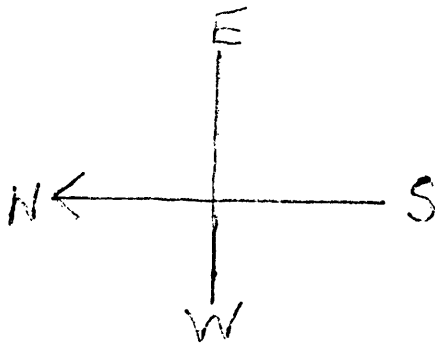
The Amistad Affair is of national historical significance because it was the foremost case in American history involving the foreign slave trade and it is an excellent example of a slave revolt that took place before Africans were landed on American soil. The Amistad Affair was also a cause celebre for the abolitionists and gave impetus and cohesiveness to their movement. As a legal matter, it established the fact that Africans, under specific circumstances, were "free native Africans" as opposed to slaves and therefore they could have the status of kidnapped free men with the same rights as other kidnapped persons. Finally, the Amistad Affair had implications for international jurisprudence relating to piracy and murder on the high seas.



*Hartford  
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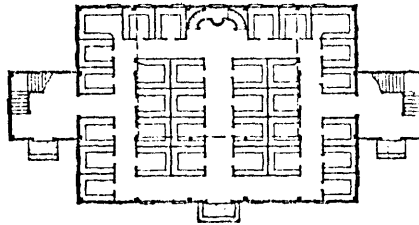
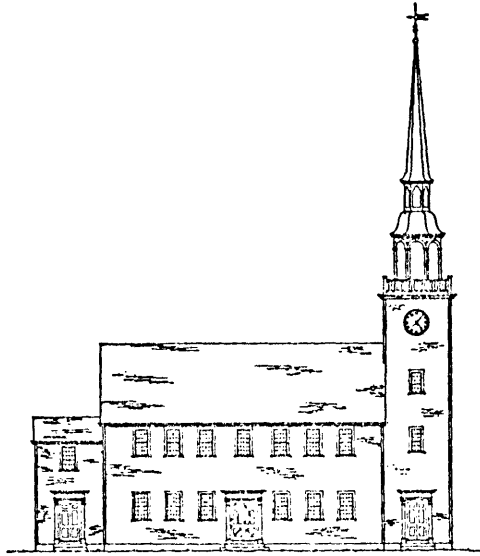
ONE-WAY STREETS  
INTERCHANGE WITH I-84  
CHANGING LANE  
NO PARKING  
NO STOPPING  
NO U-TURN  
NO LEFT TURN





Sketch Plan of  
First Church of Christ Congregational  
Farmington, Conn

C. W. Swell 10/30/67



*Third Type*