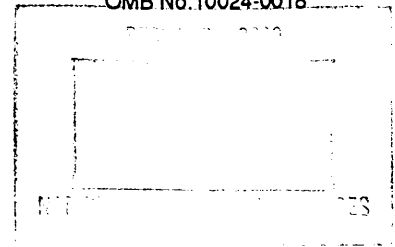


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

218



National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name St. George's Catholic Church

other names/site number South Academy

2. Location

street & number Town Highway 25 A not for publication
city or town Bakersfield A vicinity
state Vermont code VT county Franklin code 011 zip code 05441

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Elva Mulheisen NR Specialist 1/24/2001
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Vermont State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register See continuation sheet
- determined eligible for the National Register See continuation sheet
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other, (explain:)

Edson H. Beall Signature of the Keeper 3/2/01 Date of Action

St. George's Catholic Church

Franklin County, Vermont

Name of Property

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

Religious Buildings, Sites, and _____

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter Categories from instructions)

Current Functions
(Enter Categories from instructions)

EDUCATION: school

WORK IN PROGRESS

RELIGION: religious facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter Categories from instructions)

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

Greek Revival

foundation Stone

Gothic Revival

walls Brick

roofMetal

other Wood

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 1

St. George's Catholic Church
Bakersfield, Franklin County, Vermont

St. George's Catholic Church, formerly known as South Academy, faces north on Town Highway 25 in the village of Bakersfield, Vermont. It is a rectangular, 3 x 5 bay, gable front, common bond brick building, 2 ½ stories tall, and has a 1-story addition off the rear façade of the building. Constructed c. 1840, it was originally a typical example of a symmetrical Greek Revival style institutional structure. Outlines of the original 12/12 windows are visible along the eave sides of the building. Extensive renovations occurred circa 1905, when the double rows of 12/12 windows were replaced with single rows of tall, narrow pointed-arch, stained-glass windows which were typical of Gothic Revival architecture, and 1-story addition was added to the rear to enlarge the sanctuary space. The property retains its integrity of location, setting, materials, feeling and association.

The rectangular building faces north on its small lot, which sits on Town Highway 25 in the village of Bakersfield. Three buildings to the west of St. George's Catholic Church separate it from an intersection of Town Highway 25 and Vermont Route 108. Across the road from St. George's Church lies a cemetery, and to the west of the cemetery is a village green, separating it from Route 108. To the east of the building is roughly four acres of open land, owned by the town. To the southwest of the building is a small, wooded area. Town Highway 25 continues downhill to the east of St. George's Church. Small dirt parking lots flank the building and are adjacent to the road.

The 3 x 5 bay rectangular, gable-front, common bond brick building is 2 ½ stories tall, was built in 1840 as a Greek Revival structure, and was remodeled c.1905 with Gothic Revival features. The building has a stone foundation and is covered with a standing seam metal roof, which has a wooden cornice return and a wooden belfry. A 1 ½ story addition (c.1905) that extends from the rear façade has a hipped roof with a central hexagonal dormer facing south. The brick veneer and fieldstone foundation of the entire building has been painted red.

The central entrance has two concrete steps leading to the recessed rectangular opening with a double door. Each paneled wood door contains three tall, thin lights in the upper half of the door and one panel in the bottom half of the door. Above the double doors is a six-light transom that fills the remainder of the recessed entry, with two diagonal braces in the upper corners.

Fenestration consists of tall, narrow pointed-arch, colored stained-glass windows in the Gothic Revival style. These windows extend through the two stories on the eave sides. Uneven bricks give evidence of masonry repair that must have occurred during the change from two stories of

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 2

St. George's Catholic Church
Bakersfield, Franklin County, Vermont

12/12 Greek Revival windows to a single row of tall, narrow Gothic-style windows that span two stories. On the gable-front is a quatrefoil stained-glass window in the gable peak, and there are three pointed-arch, stained-glass windows, similar to but shorter than those on the eave sides, in the second story. There are no windows in the first story of the north façade. The south façade of the main portion of the building has one 12/12 window that is positioned off center and above the rear addition. A small, pointed-arch, stained-glass window is visible near the top of the hexagonal dormer of the addition, which is sheathed with wood shingles.

The clapboarded belfry is slightly recessed and has two stages. The first stage is separated from the second stage by molded wooden trim. The second stage has tall, rectangular, louvered openings on each side. This stage is separated from the belfry's metal bellcast roof by molded wooden trim, and the entire belfry is topped by a cross. A small brick chimney is located on the west side of the roof, in the middle and toward the eave. In the middle of the west façade is a four-foot high brick bulkhead that provides access to an excavated basement. The bulkhead has a metal roof and a wood plank door.

The floor plan of St. George's Catholic Church is rectangular, with a smaller, 15' x 40' rectangular addition on the rear side. The entrance hall is a small, carpeted room with plaster walls and ceilings that are painted white. Wood-paneled doors, with two simple, recessed panels, lead to small, similar-sized rooms on either side of the entrance hall. These rooms have wood flooring, white plaster walls and ceilings, and the bottom portions of one of the pointed-arch, stained-glass windows visible on the exterior. The room to the right of the entrance hall appears to have been used as a coat room, as indicated by a row of hooks around the room. This room also contains a wooden staircase along the west wall that leads to the second floor. The south side of the entrance hall contains a set of double wood-paneled doors leading to the sanctuary.

The sanctuary space is two stories tall, after the removal of most of the second story during remodeling in 1905. The entire space is carpeted with multi-colored commercial carpeting (after 1976), which continues from the entrance hall. Molded wooden baseboards surround the bottom of all walls, and above this, walls and ceiling are continuously covered in pressed metal that has been painted white. What appears to be braces in the timber frame structure at the top of this space are evident, but are also covered in pressed metal. The pointed-arch windows have a tall, rectangular section with 12 panes of multi-colored, stained glass, two wide and six high, and are

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 3

St. George's Catholic Church
Bakersfield, Franklin County, Vermont

topped by an arch with two smaller arches inside. These panes of opaque glass, which are varying shades of green and orange, are separated by wooden muntins and surrounded by wood sash and frames. Only four of these are visible in the sanctuary, on each eaveside. The sanctuary space is void of furniture. Discolored areas on the carpet indicate the locations of pews that have been removed. Small furnace returns are located along the eaveside walls, and one large furnace return is in the center of the floor. Four lighting fixtures hang from the pressed-metal ceiling over the areas where the pews were formerly located. These light fixtures consist of a single, white glass bulb suspended from the ceiling by a link chain. On the north side of the room and to the left of the entrance, three small confessionals are built into the wall.

A pointed-arch opening on the rear side of this space reveals a recessed altar area. This is the interior of the addition, visible on the exterior of the building. Three steps lead up to this recessed space from the sanctuary, and the space is carpeted like the sanctuary. Walls are plastered, and a small pointed-arch, stained-glass window is at the top of the south wall. Two small rooms flank this recessed space, and are accessed through wood paneled doors on either side. The rooms have wood floors, and plaster walls and ceilings.

The only remaining portion of the second story of the original Greek Revival structure is a balcony located along the north side of the building (above the entrance). This balcony is accessed by a wooden staircase located along the west wall of the small room to the west of the entrance. The wooden steps of the staircase are painted gray. Five steps ascend in a southerly direction to a landing. After the landing, eight steps ascend in an easterly direction to the balcony. The stair rail and balusters are turned wood that has been stained a dark brown color. The balcony has a wood floor that has been painted gray; a section of the floor approximately two feet deep is raised roughly one foot along the north wall.

What appears to have been the original stairway to the attic floor has been boarded up and covered with tin, except for a small square access space. The attic has a small room on the north side with access to the belfry. A two-paneled wood door provides entrance to the remainder of the attic space. This space of this room is defined by the roof timbers that produce diagonal sections on the ceiling, giving the room a triangular shape. The room was originally plastered. Portions of this plaster remain on the walls except for the rear gable end, which is an exposed brick wall with a 12/12 window. Most of the plaster has deteriorated, and the wooden lath is visible underneath. The timber framing of the roof is visible through large spaces along the eave sides.

St. George's Catholic Church
Name of Property

Franklin County, Vermont
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark " x " in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for the National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark " x " in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Education _____

Religion _____

Architecture _____

Period of Significance

1840-1948 _____

Significant Dates

1840 _____

1885 _____

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A _____

Cultural Affiliation

N/A _____

Architect/Builder

unknown _____

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

University of Vt., Special Collections _____

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 1

St. George's Catholic Church
Bakersfield, Franklin County, Vermont

St. George's Catholic Church maintains a distinctive association with important patterns of history in the town of Bakersfield as well as the state of Vermont. Originally built as a private academy, the building, also known as South Academy, reflected the desire of the local community to provide higher education for its children and to attract students from surrounding areas. South Academy was built in 1840 and fared well until competition grew from other schools in the area. An influx of French Canadians and Irish immigrants to the area in the 19th century created a demand for a Catholic Church in the area. In 1867, the Catholic Diocese purchased the first floor of South Academy, and in 1885, the entire building was purchased and renamed St. George's Catholic Church. Extensive renovations to the interior, including the removal of the second floor to create a large sanctuary space, adjusted the physical space to accommodate the changing activities in the building. These changes reflected a pattern of activity in Vermont at this time, when an increased demand for Catholic churches spurred the renovation of different town buildings to suit their new use. St. George's renovations around the turn of the century also reflect the common use of the Gothic Revival style by the Vermont Catholic Diocese at the turn of the century. The building has been used as a Catholic Church continuously from that time until 1996, when the building was donated to the Bakersfield Historical Society. St. George's Catholic Church exemplifies many of the characteristics of vernacular Vermont churches described in the Multiple Property Documentation Form entitled "Religious Buildings, Sites and Structures in Vermont," including rectangular massing with a steeple or belfry, and a large, open interior space with a balcony.

Bakersfield is located in Franklin County, which is in the northwest portion of Vermont, in close proximity to the Canadian border. The village of Bakersfield lies along Vermont Route 108 on a north-south axis. The long, narrow distribution of the village has created several disputes throughout the town's history. Early town records indicate disagreement over the location of a town hall. A group of townspeople wanted the town hall to be located in the northern portion of the village while others wished it to be located in the south. A location near the geographical center of the town was settled upon. Similar disputes over the location of a town school resulted in the formation of several school districts within the town. Despite this internal conflict, Bakersfield prospered as a rural community in the early part of the nineteenth century, and the town grew from a population of 36 to 200 between 1800 and 1830.

Bakersfield was settled in the 1790s by families from Massachusetts and Connecticut, and it is clear that these families maintained a high interest in the education of their children. In the 1830s, the citizens of Bakersfield sought to create an institution of higher education for their community. In 1839, thirty-one citizens pledged money toward the construction of an academy

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 2

St. George's Catholic Church
Bakersfield, Franklin County, Vermont

building. It was at this time that the Bakersfield Association for the Promotion of Education was formed with the intention of creating a private academy in Bakersfield. The town entered a familiar regional dispute regarding the proposed location of the new academy. A southern site was ultimately decided upon as the location of the new academy.

Construction on the Greek Revival brick building that was to house the academy started in 1840. The building was nearly completed when Jacob Spaulding, a graduate of Dartmouth, was employed as the Academy's principal. Spaulding's wife acted as preceptress, and Mr. E.D. Shattuck was employed as an assistant. For the school year of 1842, these three staff members were in charge of 122 pupils, 54 of which listed Bakersfield as their residence. The Academy was called the Bakersfield Academical Institution, however, the townspeople of Bakersfield later adopted the name of South Academy for the building.

The Methodist church occupied the first floor of South Academy from its construction until 1854 when a separate Methodist Church was constructed in Bakersfield. The Bakersfield Academical Institution occupied the second floor throughout this period. The third (attic) floor was completed in 1845 and was used as classroom space for the Academy.

The Bakersfield Academical Institution fared well during the first decade of its existence. The staff increased from the original three persons to 13 in 1846. The number of students also increased and reached a high of 361 in 1850. The entire population of Bakersfield for that year was 1,543. Clearly, the students of the Academy affected the size and character of Bakersfield.

Despite its initial success, Bakersfield Academical Institution began to decline due to several factors. Although the southern faction of the town initially prevailed when deciding the location of the Bakersfield Academical Institution, Bakersfield Academy (soon after called Bakersfield North Academy) was constructed in 1844 in the northern section of Bakersfield to meet the demands of the northern faction. These schools competed with each other for students, and each attracted students from all over the northeast, including Canada, New England and New York. Although North Academy had obtained financial support from the Troy Conference of Methodists, and South Academy did not receive outside support, the latter consistently attracted a greater number of students. In 1852, Jacob Spaulding left the South Academy to direct another academy in Barre, Vermont. Competition with increasing numbers of public schools harmed both private academies of Bakersfield. The start of the Civil War in 1861 certainly must have affected enrollment in these academies, as many young men left home to fight in the war. The population of many small towns in Vermont decreased throughout the mid-nineteenth century

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 3

St. George's Catholic Church
Bakersfield, Franklin County, Vermont

and this trend was reflected in Bakersfield.

In response to the decline of the Bakersfield Academical Institution, the third floor of South Academy was leased to Eagle Lodge No. 67 of Bakersfield in 1864. In 1867, the first floor and belfry were purchased by the Roman Catholic Diocese. South Academy was being used as a school only intermittently at this point.

Despite the decline of both the North and South Academies in Bakersfield, the town continued to hold private education in high regard. In 1879, Brigham Academy was built from an endowment left to Bakersfield by Peter Bent Brigham. Brigham was born in Bakersfield and left for Boston, where he became a wealthy businessman. When he died in 1877, he left money to his hometown to be used for a private academy, thus prolonging the tradition of private education in Bakersfield.

In 1885, the Roman Catholic Diocese purchased the remainder of the South Academy building, which was renamed St. George's Catholic Church. This transfer of ownership is indicative of the increase in Catholic worshippers in the area. The Catholic Church has been present in Vermont since Samuel de Champlain explored the region in 1609. Fort Saint Anne was built, along with a Catholic chapel, on Isle la Motte by the French in 1666. French Catholics traveled back and forth between lower New England and Canada, and even settled in parts of northern Vermont from time to time. Many Catholic Canadians took refuge in Vermont during Canada's Papineau Rebellion in 1837. Irish immigrants from the Potato Famine in the late 1840s were also entering Vermont to build the railroads, and to work on farms, mills and factories. In 1847, an "early and enterprising colony of Irish immigrants" had built a church in Fairfield, a town in close proximity to Bakersfield. In 1871, 60 Catholic families were said to reside in Bakersfield. Of these 60 families, 28 were Irish and 32 were French.

Informal Catholic masses were held in Bakersfield at private homes by area priests in the mid-nineteenth century. In 1886 Reverend Pierre Savoie became the first resident pastor of St. George's Catholic Church in Bakersfield.

Other Catholic congregations throughout Vermont were acquiring and adapting buildings for use in Catholic worship. Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church in East Charlotte, Vermont, was a Quaker Meeting House in Starksboro that was purchased and moved by the area's Catholic congregation in 1858 and remodeled for use as a Catholic church. In the late 1850s in South Hero, the Catholics of the area were said to have purchased a house for use as a church. The

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 4

St. George's Catholic Church
Bakersfield, Franklin County, Vermont

Catholic worshippers in Danby, Vermont purchased a "former bank building" in 1871 for use as a church. The Catholic Diocese's use of part of South Academy after 1867, the entire purchase in 1885, and the extensive renovations circa 1905, correspond with a sudden occurrence of Catholic church building and acquisition from the second half of the nineteenth century through the early years of the twentieth century.

Gothic Revival architecture was extremely popular within the Catholic Church in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Not surprisingly, St. George's Church underwent extensive renovations circa 1905, when the Catholic Church sought to give the building a Gothic appearance. The double rows of 12/12 Greek Revival windows were changed to single rows of tall, narrow, pointed-arch, stained glass windows along the eave sides of the building. A one-story addition was added to the rear of the building to provide room for a recessed altar, which was framed on the interior by an arched opening. The framing of the second floor of the building was removed on the interior to create a large sanctuary space, which was subsequently covered entirely with pressed metal. These extensive changes severely altered the character of the building, but reflected clearly the evolution of its uses. Other changes were made throughout the twentieth century, including the installation of a standing seam metal roof in 1916, carpeting inside the building at some point after 1976, and a furnace system that was added in the 1970s.

The demand for a Catholic Church remained in the Bakersfield community until 1924, when the church was closed for four years; the church reopened in 1928. Catholics worshipped here until October 1996, when St. George's Catholic Church held its last service. Throughout the twentieth century, the population of Bakersfield has steadily decreased, and perhaps this factor played a pivotal role in the abandonment of this Catholic church. The remaining Catholic worshippers were now required to travel to nearby towns to attend mass. St. George's Catholic Church is now owned by the Bakersfield Historical Society, and pending restoration it will be used by the people of Bakersfield for community events.

The building now known as St. George's Catholic Church began its existence as a typical Greek Revival building, proving useful to the community as a place for higher education. Extensive change in the community of Bakersfield throughout the nineteenth century was reflected in the changing uses of this building. As an increased population of Catholic worshippers migrated to the area, St. George's Catholic Church was born out of the old academy building, and held its position in the community until 1996. The history of St. George's Catholic Church parallels much of the history of the Catholic Church in Vermont during the nineteenth century, with its

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 5

St. George's Catholic Church
Bakersfield, Franklin County, Vermont

gradual increase in popularity due to social changes in the state. The architectural changes of the building reflect a trend that was prevalent in Vermont in ecclesiastical buildings. St. George's Catholic Church portrays much of the local history of Bakersfield and much of the state of Vermont's history as well.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 9 Page 1

St. George's Catholic Church
Bakersfield, Franklin County, Vermont

Bibliography

Catalogue of the Officers of the Bakersfield Academical Institution. Burlington, Vt.: Chauncy Goodrich, 1842,1846,1850.

Catholic Diocese of Burlington, VT. One Hundred Years of Achievement by the Catholic Church. Lowell, Mass.: Sullivan Bros. Printing, 1953.

Hemenway, Abby Maria, ed. Vermont Historical Gazetteer. Vol.2. Burlington, Vt.: 1871.

Horan, James E. "Saint George's Mission, Bakersfield." Vermont Edition of Our Sunday Visitor. February 29, 1948.

Hunt, Nancy. Personal interview on March 27, 1998. Bakersfield, Vt.

Noble, John W. "Jacob S. Spaulding and the Barre Academy." Vermont History. Vol. 29, No3. July 1961.

Wells, Elsie C. Bakersfield, Vermont: the way it was, the way it is. Canaan, N.H.: Phoenix Publishing, 1976.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 10 Page 1

St. George's Catholic Church
Bakersfield, Franklin County, Vermont

Verbal Boundary Description

The property begins 20 rods east of Vermont Route 108, on the southern side of Town Highway 25 along the right of way. The border runs southerly 51 feet, then easterly 41 feet, then northerly 51 feet, and then westerly 41 feet, to the point of beginning. The property also includes land to which the border runs 24 feet to the west of the beginning point of the previous parcel, then southerly 117 feet, then westerly 48 feet, then southerly 69 feet, then easterly 75 feet, then northerly 187 feet to the point of beginning. These parcels are described in the Land Records of the Town of Bakersfield in Book 17, page 223, dated August 22, 1908, and in Book 16, page 365, dated August 31, 1908.

Boundary Justification

This is the lot historically associated with the property and is sufficient to convey the historic significance of the property.