

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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 by entering the information requested. If any 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 First Presbyterian Society Meeting House

other names/site number First Presbyterian Church, Second Congregational Church, Millbury Federated Church

2. Location

street & number 20 Main Street ☐ not for publication

city or town Millbury ☐ vicinity

state Massachusetts code MA county Worcester code 027 zip code 01527

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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.)

Brona Simon July 14, 2010
Signature of certifying official/Title Brona Simon, State Historic Preservation Officer Date
Massachusetts Historical Commission

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 this 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): _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Edson H. Ball 9.9.10

First Presbyterian Society Meeting House
Name of Property

Worcester, MA
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

(Check only one box)

☒ private

☐ public-local

☐ public-State

☐ public-Federal

☒ building(s)

☐ district

☐ site

☐ structure

☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing

Noncontributing

1 1 buildings

0 0 sites

1 0 structures

3 0 objects

5 1 Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

Name of related multiple property listing

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

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION: religious facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

EARLY REPUBLIC: Federal

MID 19TH CENTURY: Greek Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE: Granite

walls WOOD

roof ASPHALT

other GLASS

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 number 7 Page 1

**First Presbyterian Society Meeting House
Millbury, Worcester County, Massachusetts**

Summary Paragraph

The First Presbyterian Society Meeting House is a 1½-story, wood-frame building dating from 1828. It is a previously undocumented design by architect/builder Elias Carter. In form the building is Greek Revival; the temple-front western facade has a triangular pediment supported by a full-width open portico. Some of the decorative elements, however, are clearly Federal, including the attenuated Tuscan columns and the fanlights over the doors and each of the windows on the three principal elevations. On the exterior, these elevations remain largely unchanged from their original 1828 form, including narrow clapboard siding and Tuscan pilasters. The interior of the church retains many elements of its original 1828 form, as altered in 1862 by a renovation that reversed the orientation of the main auditorium from west to east. Located in Millbury Centre, Massachusetts, the church was built facing the town's (new) common, on the main road leading from Armory Village on the Blackstone River to the regional trading center in Worcester. A twenty-foot extension was made to the eastern end of the building in stages in the late 19th century, followed by a further parish house addition there in 1965. The current pyramidal steeple top is a temporary replacement for the original, which was leaning and had to be removed in 2006. Owned by its congregation, which is now known as the Millbury Federated Church, the First Presbyterian Society Meeting House is in good condition and is only slightly altered since its period of significance (1828-1960).

Location and Setting

Millbury Center is the largest of the villages that make up the town of Millbury. It began as Armory Village, a plateau on the northern edge of a wide crescent sweep of the Blackstone River through the uplands of central Massachusetts. The water power generated by the hundred-foot fall of the Blackstone River in Millbury led to the establishment of an armory here in 1808 and the rapid development of a successful mill village. Located directly between the cities of Worcester and Providence, Millbury Center boomed with each of the subsequent waves of transportation: the Blackstone Canal, the railroad, and, to a lesser extent, the highway. The result of this settlement pattern is a heterogeneous cluster of mixed residential, commercial, and institutional buildings dating from the initial settlement of 1810 to the 1830s, a rebuilding campaign in the 1870s and 1880s, and numerous mid 20th-century replacements. The First Presbyterian Society Meeting House anchors the first block of Main Street north of Elm Street, across from a small common at the village center. Between its business blocks, this stretch of Elm Street contains numerous institutional buildings, including the post office, fire station, public library, former high school, town offices, and the grand Asa Waters House (1826-32), designed by Asher Benjamin and listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Main Street south of Elm, along the Blackstone River, was the center of the manufacturing village. Main Street north of Elm, the immediate setting of the First Presbyterian Society Meeting House, includes the Italianate-style brick Millbury Baptist Church (1864) directly across Main Street, and a group of Greek-Revival style houses across Church Street. The mouth of the rear alley on the other side of Church Street (directly north of the church portico) bears a sign designating it Russell G. Mason Square, in honor of a local soldier killed at Anzio Beach in 1944.

The National Register boundary for this property corresponds to the legal boundary of two lots, known as Lots 128 & 129 on the Town of Millbury Assessor's Map 53. This combined parcel contains the Millbury Federated Church (originally the First Presbyterian Society Meeting House). The church's rectangular lot is long and narrow, fronting on Main Street and bordered by Church Street to the north and the public right-of-way alley to the south. The frontage along Main Street is 96 feet, according to the assessor's map; no modern survey of either lot exists. The parcel extends back 296 feet

(continued)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

**First Presbyterian Society Meeting House
Millbury, Worcester County, Massachusetts**

eastward along Church Street to a rear driveway. The eastern boundary of this parcel is irregular, cutting diagonally across the rear parking lot. The southern boundary appears to include most of the wide right-of-way alley, which includes an informal parking lane next to the church foundation and two narrow travel lanes. The assessor's card states that 10% of the lot is right-of-way.

The highest point on the lot is at the facade (western end) of the church; Church Street and the lot both slope down gradually to the east. Between the front of the church and Main Street, the front lawn also gradually slopes down towards the west. This rectangular front lawn is held in place by a **Granite Retaining Wall** structure, a three-sided box that aligns with the sides of the church and connects directly to its granite foundation (**Photograph 1**). At its deepest point, near the southwest corner of the church, the retaining wall reaches five or six feet in height, while it is less than a foot high along the Main Street sidewalk. The blocks in this retaining wall are squared and dressed, and decorated with a rough-hammered surface. A broad macadam sidewalk bisects the front lawn and connects to the wide granite front steps of the church. A contemporary metal handrail is attached to both sides of these steps. A narrower macadam sidewalk runs in front of these steps south toward the alley, where it descends to the alley roadway by a series of five granite steps. Presumably this granite retaining wall was built in 1877, when the church took up a subscription for "repairs on church and curbing in front of church;" the wall shows up on the earliest Sanborn fire insurance map (1888). Because the area on the other three sides of the church was defined on the Sanborn map as a public right-of-way, the retaining wall would have had the practical application of keeping horses and carts off the front lawn. For the purposes of this nomination, the granite retaining wall and its associated walks and steps on the western end of the church count as a single contributing structure.

Exterior: Church

The First Presbyterian Society Meeting House is a 1½-story, clapboarded, wood-frame, Greek Revival church with earlier Federal stylistic elements (**Photograph 2**). The church measures approximately 48 feet wide by 84 feet long (not counting the parish house rear extension, which will be described below). The temple-front western facade has a triangular pediment supported by a full-width open portico. The foundation of the building is a combination of brick and granite block, laid atop rubble stone in some places. The ridgeline of the gable roof runs east to west, and the roof (originally slate) is currently covered in asphalt shingles. The current steeple top is a temporary replacement for the original, which was leaning and had to be removed.

The western façade is a symmetrical three-bay composition, with an oversized central doorway. Large Doric pilaster cornerboards (five inches wide on each elevation) define the western corners of the building. The open front portico has a combined brick-and-granite base. Massive smooth-surfaced granite blocks are used as facing on the base of the portico, as pavement for its floor, and as plinths for the free-standing Tuscan columns (**Photograph 3**). These four large, hollow, wooden columns are each 90" in diameter. Complete with base and capital, they each support the projecting temple-front roof (**Photograph 4**). The ceiling of the portico itself is flush-boarded, like much of the portico, to maintain the illusion of stone. The building entablature has a prominent divided trim band supporting the cornice: a wide frieze with a narrow architrave below. The raking cornice of the triangular pediment is unadorned, and the flush-boarded tympanum is undecorated except for applied triangle-shaped trim. The square roof saddle of the steeple is the only original steeple element remaining; it has been topped with a square sleeve and a pyramidal cap. The saddle has clapboarded sides with block-like cornerboards, which may have been textured like stone quoins originally.

(continued)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

**First Presbyterian Society Meeting House
Millbury, Worcester County, Massachusetts**

The church windows have a single T-shaped central mullion, with a large stained glass fan above the T-bar and stained glass sashes on both sides of the central bar below (**Photograph 5**). The central vertical mullion is inset slightly, and connected to its sill and the top crossbar mullion with a wooden scroll bracket. The bottom and top of these side-window stained glass panels are mounted on side pivots to provide ventilation to the main floor and gallery. The stained glass windows have been fitted with protective plastic covers set in four-part sash on each side of the central mullion. Only one top and one bottom sash per window are uncovered and free to pivot. The huge wooden front double doors each have four stacked, recessed, wood panels. Above these doors the effect is continued by double-fixed wooden panels similar to the moveable doors below (but decorated with only three panels instead of four). The blind fanlight above them is filled with louver slats arranged in a fan. Neither these upper door panels nor the fanlight is expressed on the interior. To hold the doors open when necessary, foot-long hooks, attached to the sides of the doorframe, fit into eye anchors in the center of each of the main doors. The trim around the doors and windows is incised with longitudinal grooves.

The north and south side elevations of the building are also symmetrical three-bay compositions. Almost mirror images of each other, each has the three identical tall window pairs, the three-part entablature, and the pilasters/cornerboards on the ends. Both sides feature ground-floor (basement) level windows that gradually increase in size towards the east as the hill falls away and more of the foundation is exposed. The southern elevation, along the alley, features 6/6 double-hung sash on this level and a diminutive emergency-exit half door toward the western end, possibly the original location of the coal door (**Photograph 6**). A single small window, high in the eastern wall of the original church building between the roofline and the rear extension, lights the main attic.

East of the main church block (past the rear cornerboards) is a 20-foot rear extension with a lean-to-like hip roof that attaches to the side of the gabled-roof main block. This extension appears in the 1888 Sanborn map, and presumably was added—at least in part—during the 1862 reorientation of the church. On the south side, this rear extension has a double-hung six-over-six window lighting a staircase, and a door that leads into the ground floor (basement) of the church. The door has an elaborate hood with a lean-to roof, suspended from the side wall and supported by an elaborate Stick-Style framework of beveled struts and corbelled brackets (**Photograph 7**). The six-paneled door appears to be original. The northern elevation differs from the southern in two ways. Two downspouts drain the north side of the roof (**Photograph 8**). More significant is the 20-by-16 foot parlor extension northward from the north side at the rear of the church. According to the Sanborn maps and church histories, it was constructed between 1899 and 1902. This diminutive, gable-roofed wing extension stands at right angles to the main body of the church, and has two Stick Style (or more generally Queen Anne) characteristics: a blind steep-pitched roof gable on the western side and applied openwork basket arches over the paired western and northern windows (**Photograph 9**). A much smaller single window lights the attic of the parlor. The paired southern windows of this extension have a simple square surround that extends from the bottom of the wall to the architrave at the top of the wall (**Photograph 10**). All these ground-floor windows contain double-hung, 4/4 sash.

Exterior: Parish House

The clapboarded parish house connects directly to the church extension. Built on a poured concrete foundation, this two-story rectangular structure (with full basement) measures approximately 42' wide by 68' long. The southern wall of the parish house maintains the same plane as the southern wall of the church, presenting an unbroken 152' building wall along the right-of-way alley. The flat-roofed parish house shares a cornice line with the church extension, and has a parapet wall above (**Photograph 11**). A single vertical trim board marks the division between the church and parish house

(continued)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 4

**First Presbyterian Society Meeting House
Millbury, Worcester County, Massachusetts**

volume. The seven-bay southern elevation of the parish house is composed of evenly spaced 6/6 windows with simple sills. The only variation is a door on the ground-floor level at the western end. A concrete ramp with a pipe railing makes this doorway handicapped accessible. The door has nine lights in its upper half, and the hall beyond is further lit by a row of six fixed lights above the door. The eastern end of the parish house is three bays wide, with the center bay taken up by double doors (each with six lights in its upper half). These double doors are topped by a band of seven lights, which light the hall beyond (**Photograph 12**). A large concrete staircase of nine treads descends to the rear parking lot, with six-bar railings on each side and squares of plywood protecting the landing. The southeast corner has another wide staircase which produces the only outside access to the full basement of the parish house. A small, end-gabled, wooden shed covers these basement doors, and wooden wing walls with pipe railings protect the stairway. The six-bay northern wall has five evenly spaced windows on both floors, and then a sixth bay at the western end where the wall juts out to provide an entryway (**Photograph 10**). This entry door is similar to the entry on the opposite side of the parish house, with the addition of an applied entablature and slight hood.

Site Elements

Several site elements need special mention here. North of the eastern end of the parish house is a small 8' x 10' gable-roofed, wood-frame **Shed (Photograph 13)**. The church was issued a permit to erect the shed in 1991 and it was recorded as inspected in 1992. Because it was added after the period of significance, it is a noncontributing building. A church **signboard** is placed near the northwest corner of the front lawn (**Photograph 4**). This lighted signboard appears similar to a signboard once attached to the front wall of the church, depicted in a photograph from middle of the 20th century. This heavy metal sign box is Greek Revival in style: it has a pediment top and is attached to its posts with Greek-key brackets. A diamond-shaped metal insert in the tympanum of the sign holds a cut-out of a cross, while the bar beneath holds a cut-out MILLBURY FEDERATED CHURCH. The cutouts are backed by white glass and lit at night. The center of the sign box opens so that the message can be changed on a weekly basis. The signboard is a contributing object. On the north side of the church, two **granite posts** are widely spaced in the side yard, roughly on either side of the central window bay (**Photograph 9**). Three equally spaced holes drilled in each of the posts show that they may have been used for holding a sign, or as a traffic barrier. Although their original use is unclear, these two granite posts count as a single contributing object. The side yard to the north of the parish house is grassed and surrounded by a chain-link fence of recent date. It contains some movable playground equipment for the daycare center. Finally, a utility corridor of closely spaced wooden poles lines the edge of the church lot along Church Street.

Interior: First Presbyterian Society Meeting House

The largest, most important, and best-preserved space inside the First Presbyterian Society Meeting House is the sanctuary with its horseshoe-shaped gallery (**Photograph 14**). This 1828 space was reworked in 1862, when the worship focus was reversed to face east rather than west. The walls and ceiling in the sanctuary are all plastered. A chair-rail circles the auditorium at the same level as the sills of the windows (**Photograph 15**). Recessed radiators are evenly spaced around the main floor of the auditorium. Their boxy metal covers protrude slightly from the walls below the chair-rail. Brushed aluminum wall sconces of recent vintage provide lighting under the gallery.

The floor of the auditorium is narrow boarded, with red carpeting over the aisles and across the front and back. The pews are grouped into two sections on either side of the center aisle, with narrower side aisles. These long box-like slip pews

(continued)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 5

**First Presbyterian Society Meeting House
Millbury, Worcester County, Massachusetts**

have a center divider and are connected in continuous sections of four pews each, three sections per side, yielding 48 pews on the main level. Each pew has an iron center trestle support, visible from the rear but covered in the front with a sculpted board foot. The pews have a cut-down end with a curved, dark-wood armrest, that curls in a tendril design. Each of the pews has a series of three bookracks on its back; the outside two of the three bookracks have thimble-size openings to hold individual communion cups. The pews are fitted with long red-plush cushions.

The focal point of the auditorium is the wide, raised, carpeted platform at the eastern end, with central entry steps. Ranged across the rear of the platform, reaching upwards almost two stories, somewhat like a reredos, are the pipes of the organ. They are raised above the stage level on highly carved and polished reddish cabinetwork, presumably dating from 1884. **(Photograph 16)**. The front apron of the stage is paneled in reddish wood in a Stick/Eastlake style of beveled woodwork. A curving balustrade to the north of the stage marks off an area of the floor; two red upholstered chairs are placed behind the balustrade. The current organ console, on the southern side of the platform, dates to 1951, a memorial gift by Harold B. Proctor. The largest piece of movable stage furniture, also of reddish-hued wood, is a large octagonal lectern with an oversized base and top, decorated with quatrefoils and ball designs. It can be seen in a 19th-century stereoview of the interior. One door on each side of the central range of pipes leads from this platform to rooms behind the platform area. A third ground-floor door in the southeast corner of the hall, under the southern gallery, is the main connection between the auditorium and the rest of the building. Each of these three doorways has a similar Stickwork/Eastlake-style doorframe. The architrave has longitudinally grooved and beveled boards, and pentagonal-arched corner blocks incised with bullseyes.

Many elements in the church are memorials and have small brass plaques—often no bigger than a return address label on the choir chairs and railing, organ, and baptismal font. The most prominent memorials are the church windows. Rather than an ambitious pictorial program, each of the stained glass windows contains a cartoon of a key religious symbol above and memorializes a prominent person below in words (often depicted on a scroll) in its glass design. For example, the window in the northwest corner of the church reads “Samuel G. Buckingham D.D. Pastor of this Church 1837-1847” and “Leverett Griggs D.D. Pastor of this Church 1847-1856.” Above the writing the window features the Greek letters alpha and omega. The next (middle) window on the north side depicts a cross and Holy Bible and reads “In Memory of Aaron Trask & Betsy Goodell Trask.” The other windows list either ministers or members of prominent families: Dunton, Forbes, Gale, Goddard, Proctor, Rice, and Witherby.

The horseshoe-shaped gallery has an applied Greek-key pattern along the base of its face, with an applied triglyph pattern in the space above—at regular intervals or marking the break from straight sections to curved sections—and a molded cornice along its top. Each side gallery is further supported by three evenly spaced support rods that descend from the roof trusses through the front of the gallery. Each side gallery has two banks of box pews (without doors) with a rear walkway. The floor of the gallery is wide boarded, with wainscoting applied to the back of the pews. These side galleries appear to be the least altered elements of the 1828 interior. Later additions here are single-pipe radiators placed along the walkway and wooden grills protecting the bottom of each stained-glass window. Doors in the eastern wall of the side galleries lead to exit staircases. The pews in the rear gallery are a more refined—and presumably later—design than those in the side gallery. Rather than wainscoted box pews, these are slip pews with molded arms, variations on the slip pews in the worship space below. This wide rear gallery is built atop the front vestibule, to which it connects via L-shaped open staircases in the corners.

(continued)

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 6

**First Presbyterian Society Meeting House
Millbury, Worcester County, Massachusetts**

On the first floor at the west end is the front vestibule, which dates from the 1862 reorientation (with some later elements). Its eastern wall supports the rear gallery, the wall beginning just to the west of the first pair of windows in the sanctuary and curving in a shallow arc toward the west. Three contemporary, wooden, exit doors lead from the main worship space into the front vestibule. Each is fitted with clear striker plates and a small window: the center door has a cross-shaped window-opening in the door. The vestibule provides access to the rear gallery as well, through two matching open L-shaped staircases in the southwest and northwest corners of the main hall. Going up, the steps have six rectangular treads, two winders, and nine rectangular treads. The area under the northwest stairs is an unfinished closet. Under the southwest stairs is a stairway to the basement.

A large plaster medallion is centered on the ceiling of the auditorium. The connection between the ceiling and the upper wall is coved. A cornice trim circles the entire auditorium at a level about three feet below the ceiling. Corbelled out over the auditorium, this applied trim has successive rows of dentils, egg-and-dart, and bead-and-astragal patterns, and dates to one of the later renovations. Three brushed aluminum chandeliers of recent vintage hang in the middle of the worship space, as well as ceiling fans. A metal wall ladder leads from the middle of the western (rear) gallery to the attic.

Accessible through a trap door in the ceiling above the gallery, the attic shows an interesting variation on the basic king-post truss roof support, possibly due to the great width of the hall. The trusses are the topmost part of the building's mortise-and-tenon frame, held in place by wooden pins. As in a regular king-post truss, the center post of each truss spades out slightly at the top and bottom. The top is both tenoned into and clasped by the principal rafters, and the tie beam is strapped to the bottom of the king post. But the architect has introduced a secondary set of posts into each truss, something almost like a queen post in nature. The support posts tenoned into the bottom of the king post rise not to the principal rafter, but to the neck of secondary posts—on either side—tenoned into the principal rafter and strapped to the tie beam below. A smaller support beam rises from the tie beam on the far side to the neck of the secondary support posts. This roof truss has a second similarity to the queen post: there are two principal purlins on each side of the roof. A ridgeboard has been introduced between the trusses, possibly during a later repair campaign, to more efficiently join the tops of the secondary rafters. Collars were nailed in place sometime after the original construction to further stabilize the secondary rafters. The window frame at the eastern end of the attic, and the wall boarding around it, are recent replacements.

Half of the rear (eastern) extension of the church building is occupied by the ranges of organ pipes in the center, with a raised access passage between the pipes and the rear (eastern) wall. To the south of the organ pipes is a storage room and, along the exterior wall, a stairway leads up to the gallery and down to the basement. Another stairway leads down to the parish house side entrance. To the north of the organ pipes is a circulation passage/storage area with a door to the parish house, a staircase up to the gallery, and, extending northwards from the side wall, an attic room (above the parlor), currently used for storage.

The basement under the church contains the "vestry," a large central assembly space with a raised stage on its western end, and a kitchen on its eastern end, the latter connected to the main hall by a serving bay with a pull-down wooden panel. The stage has a proscenium arch and draw curtains. Small storage rooms open off the back of the stage, under the front portico. The northwest corner of the basement contains restrooms. Two offices are situated along the north side of the vestry, with glass doors and windows in their upper wall section. Currently they provide space for youth groups and the town's WIC (Women, Infants, and Children) assistance program. At the far northeast corner of the basement, in the building extension, is the well-lit women's parlor, which also connects directly with the kitchen.

(continued)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 7

**First Presbyterian Society Meeting House
Millbury, Worcester County, Massachusetts**

Interior: Proctor Parish House

The ground floor of the parish house is at almost the same level as the basement of the church. The western end of the parish house contains a wide cross hallway, which runs from the north wall to the south wall, and a staircase up to the next level (the upper floor of the parish house and the main floor of the church). Otherwise, the ground and upper floors of the parish house are nearly identical, each consisting of a wide east-west central hallway with doorways to rooms along each side. Most of these rooms are multipurpose, used by the church for Sunday School and by a daycare center during the week. On the ground floor, these rooms include the main church office, pastor's study, and restrooms. The basement of the parish house contains the building's boiler and storage areas in the western end, and a large tile-floored recreation room in the other two-thirds of the wing. Basement access is by an interior staircase in the northeastern corner of the parish house, by exterior stairs in its southeastern corner.

One interior element of the parish house deserves particular mention: the **Proctor Memorial Plaques**. Located in the north-south hallway on the ground floor, near the entrance, these large bronze plaques honor the patron of the parish house. The top plaque reads "THIS TABLET IS ERECTED IN MEMORY OF HAROLD BUCK PROCTOR WHO BEQUEATHED TO HIS CHURCH A SUBSTANTIAL SUM OF MONEY, TOGETHER WITH HIS HOME, JANUARY 18, 1952." Above the inscription is a raised circular medallion depicting Proctor in a head-and-shoulders view. Neither the artist nor the exact location where the plaque was first installed date is known. The second plaque, directly below the first, reads "THE MILLBURY FEDERATED CHURCH DEDICATES THIS PROCTOR MEMORIAL PARISH HOUSE SEPTEMBER 26, 1965 IN GRATEFUL APPRECIATION." These two plaques together count as a single contributing object (even though the Parish House itself dates slightly after the period of significance, the upper plaque was relocated here in 1952, and the lower plaque is only 45 years old). Both plaques are exceptionally large and ornate for church memorials. The upper plaque is especially finely modeled. Apart from the sanctuary windows, these plaques are the largest and most significant memorial element in the complex and should be preserved as a pair through any renovation of the building.

Changes Since Construction

While many changes have occurred to this building since its construction, the First Presbyterian Society Meeting House retains much of its original character. In sequence, changes to the church building began with the reversal in orientation of the worship space in 1862, so that the pews faced east rather than west. The current box-like slip pews may date from this renovation, as well as the platform and, most likely, the wall which separates the vestibule from the body of the church. The eastern gallery was removed at this time, and possibly the western "singers" gallery was enlarged. The recess in the eastern wall behind the new platform also dates from this period, as does some or all of the twenty-foot eastern building extension. Certainly the extension footprint was completed by January 1888, according to the first Sanborn map. The 1894 Sanborn map shows the roofline of the central section of the extension has been raised one floor, presumably to accommodate the new organ pipes installed during 1888. Changes dating between 1891 and 1902 (most likely during the 1893 renovation) include the replacement of the original windows with stained-glass memorial windows, and the installation of the church's fourth bell (previous new bells having been installed in 1828, 1839, and 1845). The original form and subsequent changes to the church basement are less clear. Apparently the space was not used until 1851, when the first conference room was added there. This basement space was enlarged in 1884, when the first kitchen and ladies parlor were built. The subsequent northern women's parlor extension dates between 1899 and 1902, according to the Sanborn map footprint and church histories.

(continued)

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 8

**First Presbyterian Society Meeting House
Millbury, Worcester County, Massachusetts**

The next round of changes began after the Second Congregational and Methodist churches joined to become the Millbury Federated Church in 1919. According to the Sanborn maps, a small one-story porch was added to the southeastern corner of the eastern extension between 1913 and 1924 (and presumably demolished in 1965). Repairs in 1923 included a new furnace and new hardwood floors and lighting in the sanctuary. The church also repaired the slate roof at this time; when they replaced the slate with asphalt is unclear. In 1929 they extended the front platform southward by three feet, and in 1935 added a communion rail—salvaged from the 1840 Methodist church—to the northern end of the platform. In 1947, the church hired an architectural firm to redesign the vestry, stage, and kitchen space under the church, and replaced the boiler. This new vestry was dedicated in 1948.

Apart from the addition of the Proctor Parish House, changes to the church since the period of significance appear not to have greatly affected the historic fabric. Because the Parish House contained a boiler large enough to heat the whole building, the church boiler was removed and the church basement—especially the kitchen—reconfigured once again in 1965. The eastern gallery exit doors and stairs date from 1965, although the door surrounds appear to have been reused or replicated from earlier doors. The stained glass windows were fitted with Lexan covers in 1977. The electric light fixtures currently in the worship hall appear to be contemporary. The current bell and belltower were removed (along with the steeple) and stored in 2006 after an engineer's report deemed them unsafe.

Condition

Generally, the First Presbyterian Society Meeting House is in excellent condition. The main auditorium is especially well taken care of and appears to have been consistently maintained and updated, though much of the historic fabric has been preserved. The level of continuing maintenance for the building is good. The only current concern appears to be restoring the steeple.

Archaeological Description

While no ancient Native American sites are known on the Meeting House property, it is possible that sites are present. Five ancient sites are located in the general area (within one mile). Environmental characteristics of the property represent locational criteria (slope, soil drainage, proximity to wetlands) that are favorable for the presence of Native sites. The Meeting House is located on a well-drained, level to moderately sloping terrace, within 1,000 feet of the Blackstone River. In general, however, the potential for locating significant ancient Native American resources is low to moderate. Construction of the earlier Howard House (no longer extant), the church, Parish House, existing shed, and landscaping on the relatively small lot (approximately 0.55 acres) would have destroyed most ancient Native American resources that might have been present.

A moderate to high potential exists for locating significant historic archaeological resources on the Meeting House property. Additional documentary research, combined with archaeological survey and testing, may locate structural evidence of the Howard House, a two-story apartment house, built or moved to a site east of the church in ca. 1920. The Howard House is not present on the 1913 Sanborn map, but does appear on the 1924 Sanborn map. The house was sold and moved off the property to make room for construction of the new Parish House in 1965.

(continued)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places

Continuation Sheet

Section number 7

Page 9

First Presbyterian Society Meeting House
Millbury, Worcester County, Massachusetts

Similar research may also locate archaeological evidence of barns, stables, outbuildings, and occupational-related features (trash pits, privies, wells) associated with both the Howard House and the First Presbyterian Meeting House. A frame shed of recent construction is extant on the property. Earlier ancillary structures and occupational features should also be present.

(end)

First Presbyterian Society Meeting House

Name of Property

Worcester, MA

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 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 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.

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

(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 # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1828-1960

Significant Dates

1828 building dedicated

1862 reorientation of interior

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Carter, Elias (original architect/builder)

LaMotte & Son, Inc. (1947 renovation architect)

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

Millbury Federated Church Archives

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 1

**First Presbyterian Society Meeting House
Millbury, Worcester County, Massachusetts**

8. Architect/Builder (continued)

Frederick Gagnon (Proctor Parish House architect)

William E. Guertin & Sons, Co. (Proctor Parish House builder)

Summary Statement

The First Presbyterian Society Meeting House, a 1½-story, wood-frame, Greek Revival church with Federal details in Millbury, Massachusetts, meets National Register Criterion A at the local level for its importance to the history of religion—and of community planning and development—in Millbury. Its Armory Village neighborhood began in 1808 when the Waters family built a new armory at a bend in the Blackstone River; the subsequent building of First Presbyterian Society Meeting House nearby in 1828 (the beginning of the period of significance) helped the village displace the former town common as the civic center of Millbury. The founding of the First Presbyterian Society is a fascinating example of the complex effects of the early industrial revolution on a town in Massachusetts in a time of religious revival, economic strife, and political realignment. The building meets National Register Criterion C at the local level for its importance to the town's architecture. First Presbyterian Society Meeting House is a previously unknown commission by the important architect Elias Carter. It is an important example of transition between the Federal and Greek Revival styles, as used for an ecclesiastical structure. Owned by its congregation (now known as Millbury Federated Church), the First Presbyterian Society Meeting House is in generally good condition, only slightly altered since its period of significance (1828-1959), and has historic integrity in terms of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The building also meets Criteria Consideration A for its use as a religious facility.

The Setting: Millbury

Millbury Center (Armory Village) is the largest village in the town of Millbury, just south of Worcester (which is the county seat and second-largest city in Massachusetts). Bordered directly by Worcester to the north, Auburn to the west, Oxford to the southwest, Sutton to the south, and Grafton to the east, Millbury covers 16.3 square miles. The quintessential New England mill village in name and history, Millbury saw its first European settlers in 1716, when it was part of Sutton. Set apart by the General Court as the second precinct of Sutton in 1743, it incorporated as the independent town of Millbury in 1813. Topographically, Millbury is classified as part of Massachusetts' central upland (between the coast and the Connecticut Valley), with sandy and stony soils that drain primarily through the Blackstone River—and its tributaries the Singletary and Dorothy Brooks—southeastward to Narragansett Bay. The town slopes from 700 feet above sea level in the west to 400 feet in the Blackstone Valley, conditions that provided numerous locations for waterpower generation. By contrast, western Millbury's soil is loamier, better suited to farming, and drains westward to the French River through Ramshorn Brook. Heavily forested, the town has several substantial wetlands: Dorothy, Ramshorn, and Singletary Ponds.

Home to villages of the Nipmuck tribe, Millbury saw its first Europeans as farmers, tending grain, fruit, and livestock in the first decades of the 18th century. The early political center is now known as the Old Common. Other Millbury villages grew out of farms subdivided among the sons of large families (Grass Hill and West Millbury), while the largest villages grew up around waterpower sites on the Singletary, Ramshorn, and Blackstone. Small water-powered mills (saw, grist, fulling, and forge) gave rise to iron refining and a paper mill by 1770. John Singletary started a mill on Singletary Brook in 1735, and about 1753 built the S&D Spinning Mill, one of the oldest continuously operating mills in the country (and

(continued)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8Page 2First Presbyterian Society Meeting House
Millbury, Worcester County, Massachusetts

pictured on the town seal). During the American Revolution, mills turned out guns and gunpowder for the Continental Army. The Waters family developed several of these later mills and became successful in building their armory on the Blackstone River, which secured many government contracts in the first half of the 19th century. Opened in 1828 (four days after the dedication of the Meeting House), the Blackstone Canal brought direct water transportation between Worcester and Providence, an engineering feat that included nine locks and dams in Millbury alone. When Millbury incorporated in 1813, its population numbered almost 500, but it expanded to 926 in 1820 and 1611 in 1830 as the town grew rapidly. Although the canal was quickly outmoded by the railroad for transportation in the 1840s, Millbury continued to produce a wide variety of mill products: guns, leather, metal products, paper, shoes, and textiles. Today the most important transportation links for Millbury are the east-west Massachusetts Turnpike (Interstate 90) which crosses the town's northeast corner, and the north-south Worcester-Providence Turnpike (State Highway 146), which bisects the town. The town is part of the John H. Chaffee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor. Millbury remains mostly rural, but has a heavily settled core and an industrial and commercial strip on its border with Worcester. In the 2000 census, Millbury recorded 12,784 residents, or approximately 777 persons per square mile.¹ The Shoppes at Blackstone Valley, a commercial megaplex, opened just north of Millbury Centre in 2004.

Criterion A: Religion and Community Planning & Development

The First Presbyterian Society Meeting House is significant for its association with two interwoven elements of Millbury history—religion, and community planning & development—as they evolved in the 19th and early 20th centuries. The establishment of the Millbury Presbyterian Society and its construction of a meetinghouse symbolized a new religious, political, and social order that would shift the town center and transform Millbury.

The Establishment of Millbury and the First Congregational Church

By 1765, on the eve of the American Revolution, Millbury and its parent town of Sutton had a population of 2,138, making it the third most densely settled town in Worcester County, and one of the county's three regional centers.² After several years of petitions, in 1743 the northern part of Sutton was set apart as its Second Parish, by a boundary line the court drew parallel to, and three miles south of, Sutton's northern border. A lot within the middle of this rough rectangle was set aside for a meetinghouse, which was erected in May of 1745. This site, known today as the Old Common, was soon bordered by the home of its minister, other houses, and small shops. The Church of the North Parish of Sutton (which became Millbury) did not officially organize until 1747, the same year it successfully called its first minister, the Rev. Mr. Wellman. He served fourteen years before leaving in the midst of an unspecified controversy, the first of several periodic upheavals to shake the parish.³ The second minister, the Rev. Chaplin, served 28 years before the congregation

(continued)

¹ Claire W. Dempsey with Peter Stott, "Millbury: Revised Town Report," MHC Reconnaissance Survey Report, 1989; John C. Crane, "Chapter CXL: Millbury," *History of Worcester County, Massachusetts, with Biographical Sketches of Many of Its Prominent Men*, Comp. D. Hamilton Hurd (Philadelphia: J.W. Lewis & Co., 1889), II: 1092-1128; Ellery Bicknell Crane, ed., *History of Worcester County Massachusetts* (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing, 1924); "About the Town of Millbury," (http://www.millbury-ma.org/Public_Documents/MillburyMA_WebDocs/about), Town of Millbury; "Millbury, Massachusetts" Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) Massachusetts Community Profile (<http://www.mass.gov/Ehed/docs/dhcd/profiles/186.doc>); "A History of Millbury," Millbury Public Schools, (<http://www.millbury.k12.ma.us/hs/history/>); "Millbury, Massachusetts," Wikipedia (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Millbury,_Massachusetts).

² Claire W. Dempsey with Peter Stott, "Millbury: Revised Town Report."

³ The Rev. George A. Putnam, "The Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary of the First Congregational Church in Millbury, Massachusetts, 1747-1897: A Historical Sermon," pg. 11; pamphlet in the Millbury Federated Church Archives.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 3

First Presbyterian Society Meeting House Millbury, Worcester County, Massachusetts

dismissed him in 1792. Chaplin's young successor, the Rev. Joseph Goffe (1766-1846), began as a supply minister and was officially called to the pulpit in 1794, staying for 36 years. A decade into his tenure in 1804, the old meeting house was moved to a neighboring lot to become a public house (later razed), and a new larger meeting house built on the original lot. This second meeting house (also razed) was built by General Caleb Burbank of the parish; Burbank even produced, in his mill, the paper on which the Rev. Goffe wrote the dedication sermon.⁴ The church continued to grow gradually, or sometimes quickly, during years when revivals swept through: 1800, 1810, 1820, 1822, and 1827. The Rev. Goffe was memorialized by one of his successors as, "Endowed with a strong mind, great reasoning powers, an unwavering faith, a praise-worthy industry, and as he said of himself, with an 'iron constitution and brazen lungs,' he wrought here not only to build up this Church, but to forward the growth and welfare of the whole town, in the affairs of which he had an almost controlling influence."⁵ But Goffe could not control the flow of business, which split his church and gave rise to the Millbury Presbyterian Society in Armory Village in 1827. Goffe was finally dismissed in 1830, as the remaining members of the First Congregational Church of Millbury began debating moving to a neighboring Millbury mill village, Bramanville, on nearby Singletary Creek. They finally abandoned their pastoral setting at Old Common, disassembling their church building in 1835 and rebuilding it in Bramanville in 1836. The remaining businesses along the Old Common soon left, and the neighborhood withered and dried up. "The people whose homes were still there had to make what they could out of passed [sic] glory. The canal and the railroad, and the water power, took business down into the valley, and the people followed the business."⁶ Of those villages down in the valley, Armory Village became the new business and civic center.

The Waters Family and The Founding of Armory Village

The Waters family had long operated mills in the northern precinct of Sutton (which would become Millbury), before founding Armory Village in 1808. Descended from gunsmiths of London and Salem, Nathaniel Waters bought 3,000 acres in Northern Sutton in 1715, and his sons Nathaniel Jr. and Jonathan moved there several years later. Nathaniel Jr.'s oldest son Asa Waters (1742-1813) was born in Sutton and raised his own family there, intermarrying with other important Millbury families: the Burbanks, Goodells, Torreys, and Trasks.⁷ With his brother Andrus, Asa began a trip hammer mill on Singletary Brook, and became one of the main suppliers of guns and gunpowder to the Continental Army in the Revolutionary War. Asa served as Deacon of the North Parish of Sutton in 1778, sitting in the appointed chair on the raised platform just beneath the pulpit.⁸ Asa's sons Asa the Second (1769-1841) and Elijah bought the land on the Blackstone River in 1797 and built an armory there in 1808, winning their first government contract that same year.⁹ Elijah died in 1814, but Asa Waters the Second continued producing muskets, bayonets, and pistols for the federal government until his death, when the business was known as Asa Waters and Son. Asa Waters the Second served as a state Representative (1823), and in Armory Village he founded the Millbury Bank (1825), built an elaborate mansion designed by Asher Benjamin (1826-1932), helped build the First Presbyterian Society Meeting House (1828), and donated the land to build the Millbury Academy (1832).¹⁰ His son Asa (Holman) Waters (1808-1887), a Phi Beta Kappa graduate

(continued)

⁴ Ibid. "The Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary," 17-18. Putnam also records that Burbank first suggested the town name "Millbury."

⁵ Ibid. "The Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary," 19.

⁶ Ibid. "The Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary," 23.

⁷ *Centennial History of the Town of Millbury Massachusetts Including Vital Statistics, 1850-1899* (Millbury: Town of Millbury, 1915), 601-02.

⁸ The Rev. George A. Putnam, "The Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary," 15.

⁹ *Centennial History of the Town of Millbury*, 465.

¹⁰ Ibid. 466-469.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 4

First Presbyterian Society Meeting House Millbury, Worcester County, Massachusetts

of Yale and a Harvard Law School-trained lawyer, took over the business during his father's final illness. After the end of federal munitions contracts in 1847, he retooled the mills for other products, although he resumed munitions production during the Civil War. Active as an abolitionist, he retired from business early and wrote local histories.¹¹ Besides building up Armory Village, the Waters family might best be remembered for its many innovations in industrial design and production, and its generosity in sharing some of the patents with other government contractors.

The Founding of the First Presbyterian Society

The founding of the First Presbyterian Society is a fascinating example of the complex effects of the industrial revolution on small towns in Massachusetts in a time of religious revival, economic strife, and political realignment. In 1827 forty members of the First Congregational Church in Millbury broke away and began worshipping in the schoolhouse in Armory Village, prior to building the First Presbyterian Society Meeting House in 1828. What caused the split in the congregation? The First Congregational Church history sees the change as quite benign: "The multiplying numbers called for larger privileges. . . . There was no disaffection either toward the pastor or among the Church members. It was a movement founded purely on the judgment of the people that it was needed."¹² Each of the twain bodies wrote good things about the other in their official documents, and continued to assemble together periodically. An institutional history of the Presbyterian church agreed:

The year 1827 brings at once to our minds those days of religious controversy and even bitter strife which resulted in the separation between the unitarian and trinitarian wings of the Congregational churches. But this church was not of the number of those which thus parted company with their lifelong friends. The cause of our organization was, shall I say, more creditable. The increasing population seemed to demand a separate church in the east, or so called Armory village. The distinction of this church is that it was one of the first in New England formed chiefly because of the increase in manufacturing industries.¹³

Certainly the later movement of the First Congregational Church to Bramanville would seem to confirm this conjecture. But the split in the congregation may be more complicated than these community institutional histories, written decades later, would admit.

Millbury is one of the towns studied in detail by historian John L. Brooke in his important book *The Heart of the Commonwealth: Society and Political Culture in Worcester County, Massachusetts, 1713-1861*. According to Brooke, one of the deciding factors in the division of the Millbury church, surprisingly, may have been the Antimason movement. Although the Workingmen attempted to organize in Millbury, the real power in political radicalism in Millbury were the Antimasons. The Reverend Joseph Goffe, minister of the (First) Congregational Church on the Old Common in Millbury, was one of the leaders of a county-wide Antimason convention in Worcester in 1829.¹⁴ In September of 1929, Goffe wrote to his son that Millbury's local economy was in upheaval: "The numerous failures in the town last spring seem to have set everything afloat & confidence in the solvency of each other is much diminished among the people & such is the

(continued)

¹¹ Ibid. 471-474.

¹² The Rev. George A. Putnam, "The Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary," 20.

¹³ George P. Eastman, *Address by the Rev. Geo. P. Eastman at the Seventy-fifth Anniversary of the Second Congregational Church, Millbury, Mass., 1902*: 3; pamphlet in the Millbury Federated Church Archives.

¹⁴ John L. Brooke, *The Heart of the Commonwealth: Society and Political Culture in Worcester County, Massachusetts, 1713-1861* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1989), 319-21.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 5

**First Presbyterian Society Meeting House
Millbury, Worcester County, Massachusetts**

continued hard pressure of the times that it is feared there will be more failures among us yet.”¹⁵ According to Brooke, “Antimasons were often men who were on the edge of economic failure in the early 1830s, and often had every right to complain that they were losing ground to privileged interests in a highly competitive economy.”¹⁶ Those losing out in this changing society might resent those advancing, such as the Waters family and Armory Village.

These kinds of social pressures often opened rifts in Millbury’s society, including rifts between Rev. Goffe and his parishioners and relatives (Goffe’s wife was a Waters and a close cousin of the Asa Waters family). Some Antimasons were small proprietors bypassed by the new industrial society, who saw Masonry as another of the new rising institutions threatening their livelihood, men like Goffe’s neighbors, the failed storekeepers of the Old Common, or the less successful manufacturers on Singletary stream. Some of the rifts were political, because of the importance of their ties with the Federal government, the Waters family members “were strong Democrats,” at a time when Jacksonian Democrats were highly antagonistic to other political parties.¹⁷ Some of the rifts were personal. Brooke notes that in 1829 the Rev. Goffe had complained to his children of the cost of Asa Waters the Second’s house, which he termed, with some justification, a “palace.”¹⁸ In May of 1830 Goffe wrote to his son “that the Presbyterians in Armory Village were a society with ‘domineering purposes.’”¹⁹ Some of the rifts combined all of these elements, and had begun appearing before Goffe’s congregation split in 1827. For example, Brooke cites the board membership of the Millbury Bank, established primarily by Asa Waters the Second, who also became its first president. Six of the Millbury men who became Antimasons were listed as incorporators or clerk of the Millbury Bank at its forming in 1825, but they did not reappear on the director list subsequently.²⁰ In 1830 the Rev. Goffe protested a rechartering of the Millbury Bank, seeking to withdraw his funds because of the control exercised by his cousins in the Waters family over the bank.

Brooke specifically uses the case of Millbury and the formation of the First Presbyterian Society to define how former friends and neighbors took opposing sides in the Antimason movement:

But if Millbury Antimasons were not involved in the town’s dominant industries, they were not poor; they ranked higher than the Whig petitioners on the 1831 valuation, and the persistent Antimasons who signed the 1835 petition ranked higher than the Masons. Most importantly, they were distinguished in having a very high ratio of real to personal property, as recorded on the 1831 valuation; again, this was particularly the case among the 1835 petitioners. In combination with a weak occupational profile, the evidence from the [Millbury] valuation strongly suggests that Antimasons were often older men who were heads of farm households. And Antimasons were distinguished from both Masons and Whig petitioners by their allegiance to the old Congregational church, as against the new Presbyterian society located in the Armory Village, a church established by the all-powerful Waters family. The Millbury Antimasons, thus, stood rooted in an older, increasingly outmoded economy and in the remnants of the corporate institutional order, whereas Masons and consistent Nationals were firmly in control of powerful new institutions and economic structures.²¹

(continued)

¹⁵ Joseph Goffe quoted in John L. Brooke, *The Heart of the Commonwealth*, 329-30. Goffe’s letters to his children are collected in the Rev. Joseph Goffe Papers at the American Antiquarian Society in Worcester.

¹⁶ Ibid. *The Heart of the Commonwealth*, 332.

¹⁷ Ibid. *The Heart of the Commonwealth*, 315.

¹⁸ Joseph Goffe quoted in John L. Brooke, *The Heart of the Commonwealth*, 343.

¹⁹ Ibid. *The Heart of the Commonwealth*, 321.

²⁰ Ibid. *The Heart of the Commonwealth*, 341n.

²¹ Ibid. *The Heart of the Commonwealth*, 340-41.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 6

First Presbyterian Society Meeting House Millbury, Worcester County, Massachusetts

Most tellingly, argues Brooke, in 1831 Rev. Goffe “urged that Antimasons withdraw from church fellowship with Masons. In making this crusade, he must have had in mind the Armory Village Presbyterian, which included Freemasons in its membership and whose pastor Goffe derided as a ‘[mason, or] cable-towed man of high & obstinate standing.’”²² But the Armory Village Presbyterians resisted Goffe’s crusade.

The First Presbyterian Society charter, dated February 10, 1827, was as shrewdly drawn as any business document, and made in consultation with a lawyer. Not until four months later, after this charter was finalized, did the forty members of the new society petition for dismissal, on June 30, 1827. This dismissal petition was granted on July 16. In a special meeting of the Presbytery of Newport—in Millbury on August 23, 1827—the new group formed as the Presbyterian Society of Millbury. The Centennial History characterizes the unusual nature of the charter:

The founders exercised a scrupulous care to avoid possible dangers besetting them in the formation of the new enterprise and upon legal advice in the charter of the new society there was inserted a clause, the first of its kind, we are told, admitting to membership only those who received a majority affirmative vote of the members. This gave to the body a security in the management of its affairs not possessed by others in which the voting qualifications were lax. Since every one in those days was taxed for the support of the church in some one of the different communions, the methods pursued by the charter members of the new ecclesiastical society protected them against all who might seek a vote in its affairs, only to divert the work from the purpose of its founders. . . . The society thus chartered sought and secured the organization of a Presbyterian church, because they calculated on opposition which, happily, was not forthcoming.²³

By controlling the means to membership, the new society could maintain its autonomy and control its direction, as with any corporate board. By forming as a Presbyterian rather than Congregational society, it insulated itself from legal challenges by the existing Congregational Church, while continuing to enjoy the tax support of its prosperous members from the Barker, Forbes, Goddard, Goodell, Torrey, Trask, Waters, and Woodward families. Tax reports still in the Millbury Federated Church Archives detail clearly the many possessions owned by the members of the new parish, especially Asa and Asa H. Waters. Half a decade later, after Massachusetts disestablished the Congregational Church in 1833, the Armory Village group returned to its mother denomination. On January 26, 1835, the Presbyterian society re-formed as Congregational, “in name and reality as it had all along been in spirit.”²⁴

The Construction of the First Presbyterian Society Meeting House in Armory Village

After meeting in a school building on School Street for its first year, the First Presbyterian Society dedicated its new building on October 2, 1828—four days before the opening of the Blackstone Canal. In April of 1828, the Presbyterian Society had secured a prominent building site on the east side of the road leading from Armory Village to Worcester—two adjoining parcels of land formerly owned by Lydia Waters and Lydia Goodell.²⁵ Both Lydia Waters, widow of Elijah

(continued)

²² Ibid. *The Heart of the Commonwealth*, 343.

²³ *Centennial History of the Town of Millbury*, 313-314.

²⁴ Ibid., 315.

²⁵ Lydia Waters to First Presbyterian Society, 30 April 1828, (Worcester Registry of Deeds Book 263, Page 472), and Lydia Goodell to First Presbyterian Society, 30 April 1828, (Worcester Registry of Deeds Book 263, Page 473). A typed transcription of a “Copy of paper held by Miss Sophia Harrington” in the Millbury Federated Church Archives records that the First Presbyterian Society paid Lydia Goodell \$112 for her lot.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 7First Presbyterian Society Meeting House
Millbury, Worcester County, Massachusetts

Waters (brother of Asa Waters the Second), and Lydia Goodell, widow of Orra Goodell, were founders of First Presbyterian Society. The proprietors built the church and then turned it over to the Society.²⁶ While the building is often called a "church" in these early records, the historical name used in this nomination comes from the pew deed, which designates it as "The First Presbyterian Society's Meeting House in the Town of Millbury."²⁷

Because churches of the time were often built by separate committees or groups of proprietors, the official church records provide minimal insight into the construction process. But in the case of the First Presbyterian Society Meeting House, two sets of contemporary documents provide more details. The first is a set of miscellaneous bills in the church archives, including a handwritten page that itemizes the building expenses:

Elias Carter bill for building Meeting House -	5000.00
Do for extra work on Meeting House - - - - -	214.24
Capt. Ihtis bill for raising Meeting house - - - - -	37.50
Do -- Do for Expenses at dedication - - - - -	15.96
David B. Harrington Extra bill for work on Meeting house	41.50
Samuel C. Marsh Extra bill for painting on Meeting house	31.10
George H. Holbrook bill for bell - - - - -	372.05
John Park extra bill for carting bell - - - - -	7.00
Elias Forbes bill for Shares at raising - - - - -	4.25
Farnsworth & Mills Acct for paying Dimant for blinds and other Charges - - - - -	132.25
Farnsworth & Mills bill for Spirits for raising Meeting house - - - - -	28.89
Joel Wilson for following poles - - - -	<u>paid 2.00</u>
	\$5886.82 ²⁸

This piece of paper is the only connection found so far linking Elias Carter to the design and construction of the First Presbyterian Society Meeting House, but his involvement seems clear. A handwritten bill for the bell, still preserved in the church archives, is signed by George Holbrook and confirms the subtotal indicated on this report. Holbrook further promised to replace the bell free of charge if it should break within the first year, provided that the church deliver it to his foundry in Medway, Massachusetts.

The second contemporary account of the building is by none other than the aggrieved Rev. Joseph Goffe of the First Congregational Church:

(continued)

²⁶ George P. Eastman, *Address by the Rev. Geo. P. Eastman*, 4-5. The Rev. Eastman further writes that he examined that Worcester newspapers and the *Massachusetts Spy* for that period but was unable to find a contemporary newspaper account of the formation of the society or the building of the church.

²⁷ "Pew No. 11, A. Andrews, Rec'd. and Recorded in the Societys Book of Records page 35 Feby 28 1829 Stephen Blanchard Town Clerk," Millbury Federated Church Archives. The deed is actually a printed form letter with Asa Andrews name and the pew number written in pen in the appropriate blanks, then signed by the proprietors and justice of the peace. The date printed on the form letter is November 24, 1828, crossed out and written over.

²⁸ Untitled list, Millbury Federated Church Archives. Some of the names are difficult to read and approximated here, although "Elias Carter" is clearly indicated. Several early bills and reports from the construction process have been saved by a later church historian and affixed to pieces of cardstock in the church archives.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 8

**First Presbyterian Society Meeting House
Millbury, Worcester County, Massachusetts**

On Monday this week, the Presbyterians at the East [village] raised their own meeting house. I was present a part of the time. It is a good looking frame 64 by 48 [ft.] with a tower and well underpinned with hewn stone two feet deep & when well finished will doubtless make a good appearance. It stands between the Widow Waters' & Master Grants. . . . One thing respecting the raising was very commendable & I hope will have a happy influence on similar occasions. There was no spirituous liquor carried out to be drank [sic] at the frame while raising, consequently all was still at the raising,--no unnecessary clattering of tongues—it was finished the same day and no one was hurt. [Afterwards] those who wanted spirits went to Farnsworth's Store where, by order of the building Committee, liquor was dealt out to them as often and as much as they pleased, and how large Farnsworth's bill, on this score, is I know not.²⁹

From the First Presbyterian Society records (above), we can supply the total of Farnsworth's bill: \$28.89.

Later that same year, the Rev. Goffe attended and took part in the dedicatory service for the church of his former parishioners. He wrote a somewhat critical account of their new building:

The Presbyterians have finished their meeting house, & on the first instant it was dedicated to the worship of God. Mr. Searle of Grafton preached the sermon from Ps. 48:12,13. It was mostly in praise of Presbyterianism. . . . The house is quite a handsome one—green blinds to all the windows and the alleys are carpeted. But the pulpit is placed between the two doors at the entrance in front of the singers but much lower, a most uncomfortable & awkward situation—the pulpit is made of rich mahogany & the slips are all raved [i.e., applied railings] with mahogany of a poorer quality. . . . The steeple is a spire of 100 ft high and surmounted with a vane & furnished with a very good bell of 987 lbs. weight. It is on the whole a handsome house. They appear to be very well pleased at present, but they have not yet found a man tall enough to be their minister.³⁰

Goffe may have felt satisfaction in that last comment, but Goffe's reference to the bell shows that the former parish, as well, was feeling a bit of jealousy towards the new meeting house. The members of First Parish thought that the new Presbyterian bell sounded better than theirs, and voted to sell their old bell and get a new one. Goffe wrote that his church's new bell "will outring the Pres. bell if not shake it from its gudgeons. [However] I do not know but there is a little pride & ambition in this matter."³¹

The first minister of the new First Presbyterian Society, George Washington Campbell, fell victim to the continuing Antimason sentiment in 1834, according to the town history. "He came at a time of anti-masonic feeling and, as he was a mason of high standing, he courteously withdrew after a successful pastorate of four years during which there was the largest single addition to the church, thirty-six in all, in its history."³² Brooke observed that these antagonisms still continued to fester: "Millbury would be a strong center of Antimasonry through 1835."³³

(continued)

²⁹ The Rev. Joseph Goffe, letter dated 30 May 1828 (Handwritten transcription of passages from the letters, Millbury Federated Church Archives. The original letters from Goffe to his children in the South are at the American Antiquarian Society in Worcester.).

³⁰ The Rev. Joseph Goffe, letter dated 7 October 1828. Underlined emphasis in original.

³¹ Ibid. letter dated 7 October 1828.

³² *Centennial History of the Town of Millbury*, 315.

³³ John L. Brooke, *The Heart of the Commonwealth*, 330.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 9

**First Presbyterian Society Meeting House
Millbury, Worcester County, Massachusetts**

From First Presbyterian Society Meeting House to Second Congregational Church

On January 20, 1835, the First Presbyterian Society became the Second Congregational Society.³⁴ The new church at first had no organ, but it valued its music program, run for many years by Nathaniel Goddard. Musicians in Millbury were a transient class; although the church boasted a clarinet, violin, and violincello at one time, it was "reduced in musical instruments to one flute, played by Col. Asa H. Waters, during the winter of 1843-44. [In response] Charles Sibley purchased an organ which had been taken from the Union Church in Worcester, secretly transported to Millbury on Friday night and installed during Saturday, so that it stood with a bold front facing a surprised congregation on Sunday morning. There was opposition to the innovation, but it remained in its place to the enrichment of the service of worship."³⁵ After a revival in 1851 added 73 members to the church, the church raised \$1,200 and built its first conference room, in the basement under the church. Prior to that time Sunday school classes and prayer meetings had been held in that same school building on School Street where the congregation first worshipped.

Since 1828 when the first bell (manufactured by George Holbrook) was installed in the church steeple, it has been replaced at least three times: in 1839, 1845, and the 1890s. According to the Rev. Eastman, writing in 1902, the second bell was sabotaged by a church member: "For the sake of the future historian I should allude to a story recently come to light, of the destruction and replacing of one of our bells. The story is told sixty years after it happened by the chief participant himself. We need not indorse the ethics of the deed. As soon as the bell in question was in place it became evident that its harsh tone was universally distasteful to the delicate ears of musical Millbury. Two audacious young men took it upon themselves to remedy the matter. They removed the tongue for a short time, when the bell was not in use, and had ten pounds of iron welded on. The desired result, a cracked bell within a few weeks, can readily be anticipated. The innocent manufacturers willingly replaced the bell at their own expense."³⁶ Although he does not specify which bell he is speaking about, he must have meant the 1839 bell, as the second and third bells were both manufactured by Henry N. Hooper.

The most significant renovation of the church occurred in 1862, when the church members finally addressed the issue of the pulpit, which had disturbed the Rev. Goffe in 1828. The Rev. George Eastman—apparently relying on the memories of his older parishioners forty years later—described the church as it looked in 1862:

At that time the gallery extended around the four sides of the room, the pews faced toward the church front, and the high pulpit, reaching well up to the gallery, stood between the entrance doors. It is said that more than once hymn books slipped from the choir rail and fell perilously near the preacher's head. Was it always accidental? I have heard a vague rumor that the bald head of one preacher was the target for something smaller than a hymn book tossed from the hand of a mischievous youth.³⁷

Several members had long advocated for a change. "For twenty five years many had urged that the pews be reversed so as to face in the usual direction. Indeed when the building was erected, there had been opposition to the plan adopted. 'A most uncomfortable and awkward situation' was one comment at the time. But for many years the required consent of the

(continued)

³⁴ 150th Anniversary Celebration of the Second Congregational Church (1834) and the Millbury United Methodist Church (1835), 1986. Millbury Federated Church Archives.

³⁵ Centennial History of the Town of Millbury, 316.

³⁶ George P. Eastman, Address by the Rev. Geo. P. Eastman, 20.

³⁷ Ibid. Address by the Rev. Geo. P. Eastman, 16.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8

Page 10

**First Presbyterian Society Meeting House
Millbury, Worcester County, Massachusetts**

pew owners could not be attained. . . . At this time the east gallery was removed, a recess a few feet deep was built in the rear of the church, and the platform placed where it is now."³⁸ Whether all of the twenty-foot rear extension was built at this time is unknown.

Not all of the members of the congregation supported the change, so Asa H. Waters chaired a committee charged with justifying the changes in the worship space. In a letter that remains in the church archives, he argued that change was necessary and natural:

From an examination of our Records it appears that this Church was dedicated to Almighty God in the year 1828. From that time to the present it has been in regular and constant Service without a partial alteration or even necessary repairs—a period of thirty four years during which a whole generation has passed off the stage and of all the persons recited in the Act of Incorporation only two remain. It is said by the inspired penman that "the fashions of this world passeth away" & to this inevitable fate of all things earthly, Churches certainly form no exception. The form and fashion of a Church which is entirely satisfactory to one generation is wholly unsatisfactory to the next and if we w[oul]d encourage the rising generation in the habit of attending Church some regard must be paid to their tastes and feelings so as to make it an inviting—rather than a constrained duty.³⁹

Apart from arguing that change and evolution was necessary to keep a new generation involved in the church, Waters detailed the specific problems with the west-facing pews:

The first general complaint against the House is that the Pews are arranged facing the entrances so that persons entering are compelled to face the whole congregation, which to strangers & Ladies especially is very embarrassing besides producing disturbance, if services have commenced. This fashion with nothing to even to recommend it has in the opinion of ye Committee passed wholly away, long since—never to return. Indeed so far as they can learn all the Churches built upon that plan contemporaneous with this Church have long since been remodeled & the seats reversed. Your Committee therefore unanimously conclude that this is a well grounded complaint which ought to be removed.⁴⁰

To further drive his point home, Waters argued a more general need for renovation, touching upon the very souls of his fellow churchmen:

The next complaint made & considered is that the Church from long use and general neglect has become unclean—untidy—uncomfortable—and altogether unfit for the pure worship of God—If to worship Him in the beauty of holiness requires clean hands & a pure heart, how is it possible to render Him acceptable service in a Sanctuary defiled with dirt & filled with oppressive odors!⁴¹

(continued)

³⁸ Ibid. *Address by the Rev. Geo. P. Eastman*, 17-18.

³⁹ A.H. Waters, "Report," Millbury March 3rd 1862, handwritten note in the Millbury Federated Church Archives.

⁴⁰ Ibid., "Report."

⁴¹ Ibid., "Report."

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8

Page 11

**First Presbyterian Society Meeting House
Millbury, Worcester County, Massachusetts**

Before construction could begin, the church had to purchase the individual pews back from their holders. With the reorientation, the church switched to "renting the slips" instead of pew sales. On April 6, the last meeting before construction, pew holders were "requested to remove all their Pew furniture such as Carpets, Cushions, Hymn-books &c as the committee will decline all responsibility for the same."⁴² The changes were made, and the newly "cleansed" church rededicated on October 19, 1862.

The following decades brought successive waves of lesser renovations: in 1877 (repairs and the front curbing), a second "thorough renovation" in 1884, and "extensive repairs" in 1893.⁴³ In the 1884 campaign, the 1844 organ was removed and replaced with an organ by George S. Hutchings of Boston. It remains the church's organ, although the console was replaced in 1951.⁴⁴ The 1884 "renovation and enlargement of the church" also included the "provision . . . for a ladies parlor and kitchen."⁴⁵ The Second Congregational Society re-incorporated as the Second Congregational Church in 1891. During the Rev. George Eastman's tenure (1891-1903), the church saw the "establishment of free pews and the pledge system of raising money, the installing of a new bell, the fourth in the history of the church, the purchasing of the beautiful memorial windows, which now constitute much of the adornment of our auditorium, and the recent building of the addition for the use of the ladies in providing for the material welfare of our social gatherings."⁴⁶

One interesting chapter in the history of the Second Congregational Church is its connection with William Howard Taft (1857-1930), 27th President of the United States (1909-1913). Taft also served as the U.S. Solicitor General, Secretary of War, Provisional Governor of Cuba and of the Philippines, and after his single term as president, as 10th Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court. Although born in—and usually associated with—Ohio, Taft had a lineage that led back to New England, and specifically to Millbury, for his mother Louisa Torrey. His maternal grandparents were Samuel Davenport Torrey and Susan Holman Waters (the oldest child of Asa Waters the Second), active members of the Second Congregational Church. Taft spent a significant part of his boyhood with the Torrey family in Millbury, even attending school there for a period. After her husband's death in 1891, Louisa Torrey Taft returned from Ohio to Millbury, where she lived with her older sister Miss Delia C. Torrey.⁴⁷ William Taft visited his mother in Millbury on a regular basis until her death there in 1907, and he returned twice while he was President to visit his aunt, attending church with her at the Second Congregational Church (as this building was then known).

A picture of his April 3, 1910, visit, showing President Taft escorting his aunt down the front church steps, hangs in the vestibule of the Millbury Federated Church. As part of this 1910 visit to Millbury, President Taft attended a meeting of the Olive Branch Masonic Lodge and was made an honorary Mason.⁴⁸ Fittingly, given the symbolic meaning of the olive branch, peace had descended upon the grandchildren of both the Masons and the Antimasons in Millbury.

(continued)

⁴² *Records of Presbyterian Church and Second Congregational Church from 1827 to 1862*, ledger in the Millbury Federated Church Archives.

⁴³ *Centennial History of the Town of Millbury*, 317-18.

⁴⁴ *Centennial History of the Town of Millbury*, 317. This organ was last refurbished ca. 2003.

⁴⁵ George P. Eastman, *Address by the Rev. Geo. P. Eastman*, 19; 150th Anniversary Celebration of the Second Congregational Church (1834) and the Millbury United Methodist Church (1835), 1986. Millbury Federated Church Archives.

⁴⁶ George P. Eastman, *Address by the Rev. Geo. P. Eastman*, 19-20.

⁴⁷ *Centennial History of the Town of Millbury*, 398.

⁴⁸ "Passing of William Howard Taft: Millbury Mourns with Nation—Former President's Early Life Here Recalled—Guest of Town at Centennial Celebration," undated, unsourced clipping in the Millbury Federated Church Archives.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 12

**First Presbyterian Society Meeting House
Millbury, Worcester County, Massachusetts**

From the Second Congregational Church to the Millbury Federated Church

In 1918 the Second Congregational Church and the Millbury Methodist Episcopal Church, both suffering from declining numbers, began talks to federate. One minister had left and the other was ready to retire. Committees representing each church met in February 1919, and after a discussion, voted unanimously to proceed. On March 5, the congregations hosted a joint meeting with the Rev. Howard F. Legg, "an authority on Federation, having organized Federated Churches in Wilbraham, Holliston, Sandwich, Hyannis, and Ashland."⁴⁹ Voting separately on March 12, each congregation approved the federation. The Articles of Federation, still followed by the church today, gave each congregation autonomy within the federation, each maintaining its own membership rolls and electing three members to the six-member Board of Management. The federation kept its two best buildings—the Congregational Church and the Methodist parsonage (1901)—and eventually sold the others. The Second Congregational Church had built its parsonage in 1866; it was not contiguous to this site and is not part of this nomination. The churches officially federated on April 1, 1919, and held their first joint service on April 6, 1919.

The Millbury Methodists had held their first class in about 1822 and incorporated as church in 1835, meeting in a school, and later the lower hall of a tavern, in the Goodell Village section of Millbury. They built a church on Elm Street in the summer of 1840, and dedicated it on November 17 of that year. The small congregation sustained it with pew rent or pew sales until 1888, when they switched to freewill offerings. After seeing 43 pastors come and go—no pastor serving more than three years due to the rotation policies of the Methodist conference—they began worshiping with their neighbors at the Second Congregational Church. Eventually, they sold the old church building. According to the combined church history, their former church building was partially dismantled and reused as a movie theater.⁵⁰

Working together, the new combined congregation refurbished the First Presbyterian Society Meeting House in 1923, adding a new furnace and repairing the slate roof. In addition, they installed a new hardwood floor and lighting in the sanctuary. In 1929, they extended the front platform forward by three feet.⁵¹ In 1930, they painted the church and attempted to "strengthen the timbers to the tower to prevent further settling."⁵² The Millbury Federated Church celebrated the centennials of each of the congregations, in 1927 and 1935. As part of the latter celebration, they installed part of the 1840 communion rail from the old Methodist Church in their new sanctuary.⁵³ In 1947, the church hired the architectural firm of Lamotte & Son to redesign the vestry space under the church, replacing the boiler and adding a kitchen.⁵⁴

In the years after the Second World War, the Millbury Federated Church, like many other churches, experienced crowding due to the influx of young families. Accordingly, they added facilities for Sunday School and other church purposes. Luckily for the congregation, when member Harold Buck Proctor died he left his home and a monetary legacy, which the

(continued)

⁴⁹ Gertrude Chase, "History of the Millbury Federated Church," 1969.

⁵⁰ 150th Anniversary Celebration of the Second Congregational Church (1834) and the Millbury United Methodist Church (1835), 1986. The Methodist section appears to be largely recopied from another typescript compilation, "One Hundredth Anniversary of the Methodist Church in Millbury" Millbury Federated Church Archives.

⁵¹ "Will Enlarge Platform," ca. 1929 clipping presumably from the *Millbury Journal*, Millbury Federated Church Archives.

⁵² "The Painting Fund," *The Bulletin*, Millbury Federated Church 10 May 1930.

⁵³ Gertrude Chase, "History of the Millbury Federated Church," 1969. See also "Federated Church to Make Extensive Repairs," *Millbury Journal*, undated article pasted in the *Millbury Federated Church* ledger, pg. 31.

⁵⁴ Plans for this renovation are in the Department of Public Service files at the Massachusetts State Archives. No other information on this firm is available in MACRIS or any of the other standard sources.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8

Page 13

**First Presbyterian Society Meeting House
Millbury, Worcester County, Massachusetts**

Second Congregational Church received in 1951. This bequest allowed the parish several growth options. The church made the Proctor house the new parsonage, selling the former Methodist Church parsonage in 1963. In 1955, the church purchased the Howard house, a two-story frame house (ca. 1920) directly east of the church, to use for Sunday School classrooms.

Since the Period of Significance

Planning for further expansion began in 1958, and in 1961 the church used \$50,000 of the Proctor legacy to begin a building fund, hiring local architect Frederick Gagnon.⁵⁵ Constrained by public rights-of-way on both sides, they determined to sell and move the Howard house, which stood to the east, and build a parish house extension on that lot. In 1958, the church bought the nearby Harrington house on Elm Street (razed), the grounds of which provide parking for the church. The building committee hired builder William E. Guertin & Sons, and broke ground for the new parish house on September 25, 1963. They dedicated the completed building two years later, on September 26, 1965. As built, the Parish House included "a church office, a pastor's study and counseling center, twelve classrooms, a large hall, four rest rooms, five storage closets, and a new boiler room."⁵⁶ The \$130,000 spent for the Proctor Parish House included several changes to the church -- the addition of the two eastern gallery exits and renovations to the basement vestry and kitchen. In 1977, after vandalism to the stained glass, the church installed Lexan covers over the windows.

In 2006, the congregation hired a contractor to repair and paint the steeple. The engineering firm that the contractor consulted told him the steeple could not be stabilized, and recommended closing the church immediately and removing the steeple. The contractor removed and stored the bell and bell tower, and capped the yoke with a temporary steeple. Today the Millbury Federated Church remains an active church, with two Sunday services, a nursery school, food pantry, and a wide range of community service and outreach programs.

Criterion C: Architecture

The First Presbyterian Society Meeting House is significant for its architecture, both as the design of an important architect, Elias Carter, and as an excellent example of the transition between Federal and Greek Revival architecture in an ecclesiastical building. Despite the loss of its steeple, it retains sufficient integrity to convey its significance under Criterion C.

Elias Carter, Architect and Builder

Long recognized as a significant architect, Elias Carter has not previously been credited as the architect of the First Presbyterian Society Meeting House, or, for that matter, any other building in Millbury. The knowledge that the design is Carter's comes from a single reference—the building committee report found in the Millbury Federated Church Archives and transcribed above. However, the date and place fit quite well with what we know of the rest of Carter's career. The First Presbyterian Society Meeting House represents a church design from the most creative and successful point in Carter's career.

(continued)

⁵⁵ Gertrude Chase, "History of the Millbury Federated Church," 1969.

⁵⁶ "History of the Proctor Memorial Parish House," *Dedication of Proctor Memorial Parish House, the Millbury Federated Church, Millbury, Massachusetts, September 26, 1965*, Millbury Federated Church Archives.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 14

**First Presbyterian Society Meeting House
Millbury, Worcester County, Massachusetts**

Elias Carter was the architect and builder of the meetinghouse, for which the First Presbyterian Society paid him an initial \$5,000 and \$214.24 more for extras.⁵⁷ The earliest, and still most complete, biographical article on Carter is by Harriette Merrifield Forbes. Forbes judged Carter's influence on the neighboring city of Worcester as transformative:

Previous to 1828 there were few handsome houses in Worcester, Massachusetts. . . . About 1828, a man came to town who immediately supplanted most of the earlier designers of buildings. In ten years or less he had changed the aspect of the town and erected more beautiful houses than it had had in all its previous existence.⁵⁸

According to Forbes, Carter first appeared in the Worcester tax rolls in 1829, living in a house on Nobility Hill and maintaining a shop on Thomas Street with a younger builder, Zenas Studley. Later Carter partnered with another successful builder, Marchant Tobey, working in Worcester for a decade before leaving Worcester for Chicopee Falls. Was it the work on the meetinghouse in Millbury that brought Carter to back to south-central Massachusetts, to nearby Worcester, where he launched the most successful chapter in his career?

Elias Carter (1781-1864) was born in nearby Ward (now Auburn), Massachusetts to Timothy and Sarah (Walker) Carter.⁵⁹ Timothy and his brother Benjamin were building contractors known as Carter and Carter, working throughout central Massachusetts. When Elias was three, Timothy fell to his death while building the meetinghouse in Leicester. Benjamin Carter moved to Vermont and Sarah Carter took her six children to Greenwich, Massachusetts, eventually marrying a farmer in Hardwick. Without citing her sources, Forbes maintains, "The boy Elias had the inheritance and probably the plans of his father. He certainly had the book which had been his fathers guide, Battey Langleys "Treasury of Designs."⁶⁰ After spending time working somewhere in the South, Carter returned to central Massachusetts. Forbes speculates, "He undoubtedly commenced his career as a master builder, later leaving the easier work to others and becoming himself the architect and wood-carver of the firm."⁶¹ The earliest recorded work by Elias Carter is the 1805 meetinghouse (razed) in Brimfield, Massachusetts. The town history gives a humorous account of the raising of the frame:

The raising of the ponderous frames was successfully accomplished. One whole side was raised at a time, the west side first; Mr. Carter going up with it, standing on the gallery girth. Only one man, Ezra Hitchcock, fell, or was injured in any way. He petitioned the town for relief or compensation, but the common opinion seems to have been that if he had not been elevated, more than sober people usually are, he would not have fallen.⁶²

According to Forbes, besides the meetinghouse, Carter designed a hotel, at least four houses, and a four-story factory (razed) in Brimfield. Carter was also an investor in the latter venture; when it went bankrupt he moved south into Connecticut. There Carter built churches in Thompson (1816, from plans by Ithiel Town) and Killingly (1818), before returning to Massachusetts and building churches in Mendon and Milford (1820). Elias Carter's wife later told a granddaughter that they had lived in at least forty different places while Carter pursued building.

(continued)

⁵⁷ Untitled list, Millbury Federated Church Archives. Some of the names are difficult to read and approximated here, although "Elias Carter" is clearly indicated.

⁵⁸ Harriette M. Forbes, "Elias Carter, Architect, of Worcester, Mass.," *Old-Time New England* 11.2 (Oct 1920): 58-71, pg. 58.

⁵⁹ "The Carter Family," *Historical Celebration of the Town of Brimfield, Hampden County, Mass.* (Springfield: Clark W. Bryan Company, 1879), 388-389. Full text available online at Google Books.

⁶⁰ Harriette M. Forbes, "Elias Carter," 59.

⁶¹ Ibid. "Elias Carter," 59.

⁶² *Historical Celebration of the Town of Brimfield, Hampden County, Mass.* (Springfield: Clark W. Bryan Company, 1879), 122. Full text available online at Google Books.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 15

**First Presbyterian Society Meeting House
Millbury, Worcester County, Massachusetts**

According to the records of the Unitarian Church in Mendon (1820), that church was the eleventh or twelfth built by Carter, the best known (and earliest surviving) being the church in Templeton, Massachusetts (1811). Carter's work in Worcester included several churches, a store for Daniel Waldo, the Insane Hospital (1832), and at least eight grand houses. Other later commissions in Massachusetts include houses in Taunton and Monson and the Leicester Academy (1832), which Elias Carter built next door to the church where his father had perished. According to the MACRIS state listing of extant resources that have been surveyed, Carter churches remain in Granby, Mendon, North Brookfield, and Templeton, as well as the Hitchcock Academy (1855) in Brimfield and Ward E at the Westborough State Hospital (1847). Carter houses, meanwhile, survive in Barre (4), Brimfield (5), Leominster, Monson, Princeton, Sturbridge, and Worcester (4).⁶³ Forbes notes that the Clough R. Miles house (1835) in Millbury bore resemblance to other Carter houses. Some of the other Millbury houses of this era should be investigated for a Carter connection.

In northern New England, Elias Carter's design for his Templeton, MA, church of 1811 proved to be influential. Seven New Hampshire churches copied the design between 1812 and 1823.⁶⁴ Elias Carter also designed an insane asylum for Concord, NH (1842).⁶⁵

The influential architectural historian Talbot F. Hamlin wrote a biographical entry on Carter for the *Dictionary of American Biography*. While relying heavily on Forbes, Hamlin clarifies the significance of Carter's work. Carter's time in the South is "apparent in the high porticos he loved," Hamlin notes, but more importantly,

His importance as an architect is due to the fact that he was brought up and did his earliest work under strong "late Colonial" influences, which colored his later Greek Revival work, and gave it a restraint and a harmony with its American use all too lacking in other work of the time. He was somewhat influenced by Asher Benjamin, but his work is usually more restrained, as he restricts himself, with few exceptions, to the Ionic and Doric orders. His churches were the typical white steepled churches of New England."⁶⁶

While Hamlin judges Carter's Worcester houses as his most innovative and successful works, Carter's churches seem to be his most enduring works. The Templeton and New Hampshire churches are cited in numerous books on church architecture as emblematic of early 19th century American church building.⁶⁷

(continued)

⁶³ MACRIS (Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System), Massachusetts Historical Commission, <http://mhc-macrisc.net/index.htm>.

⁶⁴ Peter Benes, "The Templeton 'Run' and the Pomfret 'Cluster': Patterns of Diffusion in Rural New England Meetinghouse Architecture, 1647-1822" *Old-Time New England* 68: 3-4 (Winter-Spring 1978): 1-21. For more on the possible attribution of some of these churches to Carter, see Bryant F. Tolles, Jr., with Carolyn K. Tolles, *New Hampshire Architecture: An Illustrated Guide* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1979).

⁶⁵ "New Hampshire Asylum for the Insane," *Farmer's Cabinet* (Amherst NH) 17 Nov. 1843.

⁶⁶ Talbot F. Hamlin, "Carter, Elias," *Dictionary of American Biography*, 1946: III: 533. Other brief biographical notes include "Carter, Elias," Henry F. Withey and Elsie Rathburn Withey, *Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased)* (Los Angeles: New Age, 1970); and "Carter, Elias," *Who Was Who in America 1607-1896*.

⁶⁷ The following books all feature multiple references to Carter and his churches: Marilyn J. Chiat, *America's Religious Architecture: Sacred Places for Every Community* (New York: John Wiley, 1997); Roger Kennedy, *American Churches* (New York: Stewart, Tabori & Chang, 1982); Peter T. Mallary, *New England Churches & Meetinghouses, 1680-1830* (Seacaucus, NJ: Chartwell, 1985); George Francis Marlowe, *Churches of Old New England: Their Architecture and their Architects, their Pastors and their People* (New York: Macmillan, 1947); G.E. Kidder Smith, *The Beacon Guide to New England Houses of Worship: An Architectural Companion* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1989).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8

Page 16

**First Presbyterian Society Meeting House
Millbury, Worcester County, Massachusetts**

The First Presbyterian Society Meeting House and the Transition to Greek Revival Architecture

Besides its architect Elias Carter, the First Presbyterian Society Meeting House is also significant as an excellent example of the transition from Federal to Greek Revival styles of architecture in an ecclesiastical building. The Greek Revival characteristics of the building are most prominent on the symmetrical temple-front western facade: its triangular pediment supported by four Tuscan columns in a full-width open portico. Some of the decorative elements, however, are clearly Federal, including the attenuated nature of the Tuscan columns and the bold fanlights over the doors and each of the windows on the three principal elevations. Perhaps no other building by Elias Carter more clearly illustrates Talbot Hamlin's characterization of Carter's later work as Greek Revival colored by "strong 'late Colonial' influences."

Meetinghouses evolved significantly over the two centuries after they were first erected in Massachusetts, and the switch from Federal to Greek Revival was much more gradual and incremental than it might seem in retrospect. No longer were meeting houses the house-like foursquare buildings of the 17th century, or the 18th century's rectangular buildings with door and pulpit on the long sides.⁶⁸ Beginning early in the 18th century, the post-fire London churches of Christopher Wren began to influence the Anglican churches built in coastal New England cities, such as Christ Church (Old North; 1723) in Boston, with its gable roof, tower, and spire. As the 18th century progressed, prominent Puritan meetinghouses such as Old South (1729) in Boston adopted the tower and spire, if not yet the tower main entry. After 1750, James Gibbs' design of St. Martin in the Fields in London further influenced many of the larger city churches.⁶⁹ After the Revolution, the Federal-style church—developed by Charles Bulfinch and popularized by Asher Benjamin in his subsequent designs and pattern books—solidified this idea of a prominent end entry, through a porch or portico, with a belfry tower and spire atop. The pulpit gradually moved to the narrow end (although usually the end opposite the door!), even in more conservative rural areas. As the 19th century progressed, these places of worship adopted the Greek Revival style. According to Peter Williams,

The Greek Revival [was] a much simpler mode than its Federal predecessor, [and] featured a portico of imposing and largely unornamented Doric columns with a similarly plain pediment above. Its inspiration was nothing from Christian history but rather derived from the 'pagan' temples of Hellenic antiquity, of which it was a modern-day appropriation. Many, if not most, of these meetinghouses were capped with a steeple, which rests on the body of the church itself rather than extending partly over the portico in the Federal mode.⁷⁰

Williams here points out another way in which the Millbury meetinghouse was more Federal than Greek Revival: its steeple still extends partly over the portico.

(continued)

The Greek Revival in America may be said to have begun in 1818 in Philadelphia, with both the construction of the Second Bank of the United States (designed by William Strickland) and the publication of John Haviland's *The Builder's*

⁶⁸ Philip D. Zimmerman, "Congregational Churches," *The Encyclopedia of New England: The Culture and History of an American Region*, ed. Burt Feintuch and David H. Watters (New Haven: Yale UP, 2005), 98-99.

⁶⁹ For a sustained discussion of the evolution of the meeting house form in New England, see William H. Pierson, Jr., *American Buildings and their Architects: Volume I, the Colonial and Neoclassical Styles* (New York: Oxford UP, 1970) and Peter W. Williams, *Houses of God: Region, Religion, and Architecture in the United States* (Urbana: U of IL Press, 1997).

⁷⁰ Peter W. Williams, *Houses of God: Region, Religion, and Architecture in the United States* (Urbana: U of IL Press, 1997), 12.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 17

**First Presbyterian Society Meeting House
Millbury, Worcester County, Massachusetts**

Assistant, "the first American book to give the Greek orders."⁷¹ The first Greek Revival church in New England was St. Paul's Episcopal Church (1819-20) in Boston, designed by Alexander Parris. The Greek Revival was "an architectural revolution against which the rock of Boston conservatism would avail nothing. . . . Like the germ of influenza, it swept on across the [Atlantic] ocean, through the East and South, and into the rawest settlements, even beyond the Mississippi."⁷² Greek Revival architecture was popular across the United States from 1820 to 1860, and represented a gradual departure from British influence for American architects.⁷³ In the second quarter of the 19th century, Americans embraced the Greek Revival as a national style: not only architects but also builders, patrons, and consumers of architecture. Architectural historian William Pierson summarized its importance:

The Greek Revival was the first pervasive and self-conscious nationalistic movement in American architecture. Although its initial impetus came at the professional level, where it was used for government buildings all over the land, the total national character came at the folk level, where it achieved the same fulfillment of aspiration toward architectural independence as Jefferson's idealistic adaptation of Roman architecture did more than a quarter of a century earlier.⁷⁴

Although no documented link exists, Carter is sometimes thought to have apprenticed with Asher Benjamin, as other architect/builders of his day did. Certainly he could learn the principles of Greek Revival through his travels and through the architectural guidebooks published by Benjamin and John Haviland. The heart of Millbury is distinctive in having, in close proximity, the Asa Waters House and the First Presbyterian Society Meeting House, distinguished works by Asher Benjamin and Elias Carter, two of the finest architects then working in New England.

Archaeological Significance

Since patterns of ancient Native American settlement in Millbury are poorly understood, any surviving sites could be significant. Ancient sites in this area may contribute important information related to the location, function, and variability of site types within the Blackstone River drainage, particularly in the transitional zone between the coastal lowlands and Worcester Plateau uplands. Potential sites on the Meeting House property may contain valuable information related to the importance of sites located along the main drainage of the Blackstone River watershed. Native American settlement in this area may focus on larger sites along the Blackstone River, possibly at the confluence of tributary streams/rivers, or at fall lines. Ancient sites in the vicinity of the church may be related to larger sites and/or core areas along lower portions of the Blackstone River towards Narragansett Bay to the south or towards the lower reaches of the Charles and Neponset Rivers to the northeast. Ancient sites in this area may contain information that indicates the local and regional socio/political impact of Native social groups in these drainages and how these relationships changed through time. This data could test commonly held beliefs pertaining to riverine drainage settlement hypotheses.

(continued)

⁷¹ Marcus Whiffen, *American Architecture Volume 1: 1607-1860* (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1981), 161.

⁷² Walter H. Kilham, *Boston after Bulfinch: An Account of Its Architecture 1800-1900* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1946), 19.

⁷³ Leopold Arnaud, "Foreword," in Talbot Hamlin, *Greek Revival Architecture in America*, 1944 (rpt. New York: Dover), xv.

⁷⁴ William H. Pierson, Jr., *American Buildings and their Architects: Volume I*, 432.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8

Page 18

**First Presbyterian Society Meeting House
Millbury, Worcester County, Massachusetts**

Historic archaeological resources described above may contribute important information related to the evolution of Millbury Center (Armory Village) as the religious and community center for the town of Millbury during the 19th and early 20th centuries. Additional historical research, combined with archaeological survey and testing, may contribute important information related to the evolution of the North Parish of Sutton and its later incorporation as the Town of Millbury. Structural evidence of renovations and changes to the meetinghouse building, barns, stables, and outbuildings may contribute additional evidence of the architectural evolution of the meetinghouse structure and the facilities that evolved with the church. Archaeological evidence of occupational-related features (trash pits, privies, wells) may also contribute evidence of the structure's evolution, and the social, cultural, and economic characteristics of the church parishioners and greater Millbury community.

Structural evidence of the Howard House, associated barns, outbuildings, and evidence of occupational-related features may contribute important information related to earlier land use on the church property and 19th/early 20th century life in Millbury. Additional historical research and archaeological testing may determine whether the Howard House was built on Lot 128 in ca. 1920, or constructed earlier at another location and moved to its current address. Structural evidence from the house may contribute information related to the architectural characteristics of 19th/early 20th century apartment houses in Millbury. Detailed analysis of occupational-related features may contribute social, cultural, and economic information related to the occupants of the house.

(end)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 1

First Presbyterian Society Meeting House
Millbury, Worcester County, Massachusetts

9. Selected Bibliography

- "About the Town of Millbury." http://www.millbury-ma.org/Public_Documents/MillburyMA_WebDocs/about. Town of Millbury.
- "Annual Leaflet. Second Congregational Church, Millbury, Mass." March 1894.
- Benedict, William Allison, comp. *History of the Town of Sutton, Massachusetts, from 1704 to 1876: Including Grafton until 1735; Millbury until 1813; and parts of Northbridge, Upton and Auburn*. Worcester: Sanford & Co., 1878.
- Benes, Peter. "The Templeton 'Run' and the Pomfret 'Cluster': Patterns of Diffusion in Rural New England Meetinghouse Architecture, 1647-1822." *Old-Time New England* 68: 3-4 (Winter-Spring 1978): 1-21.
- Brooke, John L. *The Heart of the Commonwealth: Society and Political Culture in Worcester County, Massachusetts, 1713-1861*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1989.
- "Carter, Elias," *Who Was Who in America 1607-1896*.
- Centennial History of the Town of Millbury Massachusetts Including Vital Statistics, 1850-1899*. Millbury: Town of Millbury, 1915.
- Chase, Gertrude. "History of the Millbury Federated Church." 1969.
- Chiat, Marilyn J. *America's Religious Architecture: Sacred Places for Every Community*. New York: John Wiley, 1997.
- The Church Record of the Millbury Methodist Episcopal Church, 1878-1922*. Ledger. Millbury Federated Church Office.
- Crane, Ellery Bicknell, ed. *History of Worcester County Massachusetts*. New York: Lewis Historical Publishing, 1924.
- Crane, John C. "Chapter CXL: Millbury." *History of Worcester County, Massachusetts, with Biographical Sketches of Many of Its Prominent Men*. Comp. D. Hamilton Hurd. Philadelphia: J.W. Lewis & Co., 1889. II: 1092-1128.
- Dempsey, Claire. "Main and Elm Streets: Area H," Form A--Area: Millbury. MHC. 1988.
- Dempsey, Claire. "Presbyterian Church," Form B--Building: Millbury Form No. 187. MHC. 1988.
- Dempsey, Claire, and Peter Stott. "Summary Report: Comprehensive Inventory Project, Town of Millbury." MHC, n.d.
- Dempsey, Claire W., with Peter Stott. "Millbury: Revised Town Report." MHC Reconnaissance Survey Report, 1989.
- Eastman, George P. *Address by the Rev. Geo. P. Eastman at the Seventy-fifth Anniversary of the Second Congregational Church, Millbury, Mass.* 1902. Pamphlet in the Millbury Federated Church Archives.
- Elander, William A. Letter to Millbury Federated Church, January 16, 1959. 8 pp. Millbury Federated Church Archives.
- Forbes, Harriette M. "Elias Carter, Architect, of Worcester, Mass." *Old-Time New England* 11.2 (Oct 1920): 58-71.
- Goffe, Joseph. Handwritten transcription of passages from the letters. Millbury Federated Church Archives. Originals at the American Antiquarian Society, Worcester.
- Hamlin, Talbot. "Carter, Elias." *Dictionary of American Biography*, 1946: III: 533.
- Hamlin, Talbot. *Greek Revival Architecture in America*. 1944. Rpt. New York: Dover.
- Historical Celebration of the Town of Brimfield, Hampden County, Mass.* Springfield: Clark W. Bryan Company, 1879.
- Full text available online at Google Books.
- "A History of Millbury." Millbury Public Schools. (<http://www.millbury.k12.ma.us/hs/history/>).
- "History of the Proctor Memorial Parish House." *Dedication of Proctor Memorial Parish House, the Millbury Federated Church, Millbury, Massachusetts, September 26, 1965*. Millbury Federated Church Archives.
- Kennedy, Roger. *American Churches*. New York: Stewart, Tabori & Chang, 1982.
- Kilham, Walter H. *Boston after Bulfinch: An Account of Its Architecture 1800-1900*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1946.
- MACRIS (Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System). Massachusetts Historical Commission. <http://mhc-macris.net/index.htm>.

(continued)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 2

**First Presbyterian Society Meeting House
Millbury, Worcester County, Massachusetts**

- Mallary, Peter T. *New England Churches & Meetinghouses, 1680-1830*. Seacaucus, NJ: Chartwell, 1985.
- Marlowe, George Francis. *Churches of Old New England: Their Architecture and their Architects, their Pastors and their People*. New York: Macmillan, 1947.
- "Millbury Federated Church." http://www.mfch.org/millbury_federated_church.htm.
- "Millbury, Massachusetts." Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). Massachusetts Community Profile. (<http://www.mass.gov/Ehed/docs/dhcd/profiles/186.doc>).
- 150th Anniversary Celebration of the Second Congregational Church (1834) and the Millbury United Methodist Church (1835), 1986.
- "One Hundredth Anniversary of the Methodist Church in Millbury" Millbury Federated Church Archives.
- "The Painting Fund," *The Bulletin*, Millbury Federated Church 10 May 1930.
- "Passing of William Howard Taft: Millbury Mourns with Nation—Former President's Early Life Here Recalled—Guest of Town at Centennial Celebration." Undated, unsourced clipping in the Millbury Federated Church Archives.
- Pierson, Jr., William H. *American Buildings and their Architects: Volume I, the Colonial and Neoclassical Styles*. New York: Oxford UP, 1970.
- Putnam, George A. "The Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary of the First Congregational Church in Millbury, Massachusetts, 1747-1897: A Historical Sermon." Pamphlet in the Millbury Federated Church Archives.
- Records of the First Presbyterian Church and the Second Congregational Church, 1827-1862*. Ledger. Millbury Federated Church Archives.
- Records of the First Presbyterian Society and the Second Congregational Society, 1827-1851*. Ledger. Millbury Federated Church Archives.
- Records of the Second Congregational Society, 1854 to 1891*. Ledger. Millbury Federated Church Archives.
- Smith, G.E. Kidder. *The Beacon Guide to New England Houses of Worship: An Architectural Companion*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1989.
- Tolles, Jr., Bryant F., with Carolyn K. Tolles. *New Hampshire Architecture: An Illustrated Guide*. Hanover: University Press of New England, 1979.
- Waters, A[sa] H[olman]. "Report," Millbury March 3rd 1862. Handwritten note in the Millbury Federated Church Archives.
- Whiffen, Marcus. *American Architecture Volume 1: 1607-1860*. Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1981.
- "Will Enlarge Platform," ca. 1929 clipping presumably from the *Millbury Journal*. Millbury Federated Church Archives.
- Williams, Peter W. *Houses of God: Region, Religion, and Architecture in the United States*. Urbana: U of IL Press, 1997.
- Withey, Henry F., and Elsie Rathburn Withey. *Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased)*. Los Angeles: New Age, 1970.
- Zimmerman, Philip D. "Congregational Churches." *The Encyclopedia of New England: The Culture and History of an American Region*. Ed. Burt Feintuch and David H. Watters. New Haven: Yale UP, 2005.

(continued)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 3

First Presbyterian Society Meeting House
Millbury, Worcester County, Massachusetts

Deeds (listed chronologically)

Lydia Waters to First Presbyterian Society, 30 April 1828. Worcester Registry of Deeds Book 263, Page 472.

Lydia Goodell to First Presbyterian Society, 30 April 1828. Worcester Registry of Deeds Book 263, Page 473.

"Pew No. 11, A. Andrews, Rec'd. and Recorded in the Societys Book of Records page 35 Feby 28 1829 Stephen Blanchard Town Clerk." Deed in the Millbury Federated Church Archives.

Second Congregational Society to Second Congregational Church, 29 January 1891. Worcester Registry of Deeds Book 1343, Page 295.

Second Congregational Church to Peter Lynch, 2 October 1950. Worcester Registry of Deeds Book 3290, Page 237.

Amos C. Howard et ux to Second Congregational Church, 30 April 1955 (Worcester Registry of Deeds Book 3676, Page 151.

Napoleon Lynch to Millbury Federated Church, 2 June 1958. Worcester Registry of Deeds Book 3943, Page 79.

According to its Assessors' card, the current deed was recorded in Worcester Registry of Deeds Book 4988, Page 315.

Maps and Plans (listed chronologically)

A Plan of the Town of Millbury, January 1831, Massachusetts State Archives. Detail showing the Old Common and Armory Village, republished in Brooke, pg. 350.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps: 1888, 1894, 1899, 1904, 1913, 1924, 1943.

"Plan of Land Owned by the 2nd Cong. Church of Millbury, Mass., Feb. 2, 1927," by William I. Thompson.

"Plan to Show Division of Property in Millbury Mass. Owned by Peter Lynch, Sept. 20, 1950" by Kenneth Shaw.

(end)

First Presbyterian Society Meeting House
Name of Property

Worcester, MA
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than 1 acre

UTM References See continuation sheet.

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1. 19 272083 4674796
Zone Easting Northing

3. Zone Easting Northing

2. Zone Easting Northing

4. Zone Easting Northing

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Timothy T. Orwig, with Betsy Friedberg, NR Director, MHC

organization Massachusetts Historical Commission date July 2010

street & number 220 Morrissey Boulevard telephone 617-727-8470

city or town Boston state MA zip code 02125

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Millbury Federated Church

street & number 20 Main Street telephone 508-865-6274

city or town Millbury state MA zip code 01527

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 1

**First Presbyterian Society Meeting House
Millbury, Worcester County, Massachusetts**

10. Boundary Description

The National Register boundary for this property corresponds to the legal boundary of two lots, known as Lots 128 & 129, on the Town of Millbury's Assessor's Map 53. This .55-acre combined parcel contains the Millbury Federated Church (First Presbyterian Society Meeting House) and Proctor Parish House. These lots together are addressed as 20 Main Street. Lot 129 has been the location of the church since its construction in 1828. Lot 128, directly east of the original lot, was acquired by the Millbury Federated Church in 1955. The 1965 parish house addition to the church occupies part of Lot 129 and this contiguous lot. This generally rectangular parcel of the two lots measures 96 ft along Main Street, 296.45 feet along Church Street, and includes along its southern border an unnamed alley treated as a public street.

Boundary Justification

The nominated property includes the entire parcel associated with the Millbury Federated Church building since 1955—within the period of significance.

Due to its early establishment and non-taxed status, the church lot has a somewhat complicated history and no recorded modern survey. Its history is most clearly summarized in a legal opinion from Worcester lawyer William A. Elander in 1959.¹ The First Presbyterian Society of Millbury secured two adjoining parcels of land from Lydia Waters and Lydia Goodell in 1828, each reserving "to her heirs and assigns forever an undisturbed right of way to pass and repass with teams or otherwise and through said premises and all parts of the same which shall not be occupied and covered by the Church of said Society or their meetinghouse."² This right-of-way appears to be the alley directly adjacent and south of the church, although part of Church Street may have come from the lot as well, as that boundary appears never to have been surveyed. Sanborn fire insurance maps for the property (1888-1943), for example, show the building and its raised front lawn as an island surrounded by rights-of-way on all four sides. Known today as Millbury Assessor's Map 53: Lot 129, this parcel was never legally transferred from the First Presbyterian Society to the Second Congregational Society, but the title was settled in 1891 when it officially became the property of the Second Congregational Church.³

The rear lot, known today as Millbury Assessor's Map 53: Lot 128, has an equally interesting history. A two-story apartment house was built or moved there ca. 1920. (Not present on the 1913 Sanborn map, this apartment house first appears on the 1924 Sanborn map.) In 1950 this lot was set apart from a larger lot owned by Peter Lynch.⁴ As part of that survey, it was discovered that the apartment house behind the church was built partially on the church lot. Lynch secured

(continued)

¹ William A. Elander to Millbury Federated Church, January 16, 1959, 8 pp., Millbury Federated Church Archives. The church requested the opinion to clarify the status of the right-of-way directly south of the church and how it might limit expansion of the building. The letter was accompanied by a color-coded map, now apparently lost.

² Lydia Waters to First Presbyterian Society, 30 April 1828, (Worcester Registry of Deeds Book 263, Page 472), and Lydia Goodell to First Presbyterian Society, 30 April 1828, (Worcester Registry of Deeds Book 263, Page 473).

³ Second Congregational Society to Second Congregational Church, 29 January 1891 (Worcester Registry of Deeds Book 1343, Page 295).

⁴ "Plan to Show Division of Property in Millbury Mass owned by Peter Lynch," Survey and Plan by Kenneth Shaw [of] Sutton Mass, Sept. 20, 1950 (Millbury Federated Church Archives). This survey does not appear to have been recorded.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 2

**First Presbyterian Society Meeting House
Millbury, Worcester County, Massachusetts**

a triangular sliver of land from the church, extending from Church Street to the southern alley, to place the house fully on his property.⁵ Five years later, Amos C. Howard and his wife sold the house and land to the Second Congregational Church.⁶ Thus the current two lots were assembled by 1955, within the period of significance. Because the Millbury Federated Church and its Proctor Parish House extension occupy both lots, for the purposes of this nomination they form the property.

It should be noted that two lots contiguous to these church lots are also owned by Millbury Federated Church, but were acquired later on and are not considered part of this property for purposes of this nomination. Lot 136 is a half-acre lot that stretches from Elm Street to Church Street, and was acquired in 1958.⁷ Currently the lot functions as parking, and the only building remaining on this lot (after demolition of the Harrington house and its barn) is a two-car hip-roofed garage. Lot 135 is a very small lot within the center of the block, .11 acres, which is addressed as 18 Main Street. The lot was acquired some time after the period of significance.⁸ It contains a two-story hip-roofed house, built before 1888, which the church rents to tenants.

(end)

⁵ Second Congregational Church to Peter Lynch, 2 October 1950 (Worcester Registry of Deeds Book 3290, Page 237).

⁶ Amos C. Howard et ux to Second Congregational Church, 30 April 1955 (Worcester Registry of Deeds Book 3676, Page 151).

⁷ Napoleon Lynch to Millbury Federated Church, 2 June 1958 (Worcester Registry of Deeds Book 3943, Page 79).

⁸ According to its Assessors' card, the deed was recorded in Worcester Registry of Deeds Book 4988, Page 315.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Additional Documentation Page 1

**First Presbyterian Society Meeting House
Millbury, Worcester County, Massachusetts**

Additional Documentation—Photographs

Timothy Orwig was the photographer for all the photographs, which were taken on 10 January 2008, and the negatives are in his possession. All of the photographs show the Millbury Federated Church (First Presbyterian Society Meeting House), Millbury, Worcester County, Massachusetts.

1. Looking southeast, showing the north elevation, west façade and Signboard.
2. Looking northeast, showing the south elevation, west façade and right-of-way alley.
3. Looking southeast, detail showing the base of the northern column, brick and granite foundation elements, and front lawn Granite Retaining Wall.
4. Looking east, showing the west façade and Signboard.
5. Looking northeast, showing the west façade.
6. Looking north, showing south elevation of church.
7. Detail: looking northeast, showing south elevation doorway hood.
8. Looking south, showing northern elevation of church.
9. Looking southeast, showing northern elevation of church and the ladies parlor extension. Note also the granite posts in the right foreground.
10. Looking southwest, showing northeastern corner of church and the eastern elevation of the ladies parlor extension.
11. Looking northeast, showing the south elevation of the Proctor Parish House extension.
12. Looking west, showing the east and north elevations of the Proctor Parish House extension.
13. Looking northwest, showing the east and south elevations of the 1991 Frame Shed.
14. Interior, Church: Front of the sanctuary, showing the platform and box-like slip pews. Taken from the northwest corner of the gallery, looking southeast.
15. Interior, Church: Rear of the sanctuary, showing the gallery and box-like slip pews. Taken from the northeast corner of the sanctuary, looking southwest. Notice that the tall window openings light both the sanctuary and the gallery.
16. Interior, Church, detail: Front of the sanctuary, showing the woodwork of the platform supporting the organ pipes.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Additional Documentation Page 2

**First Presbyterian Society Meeting House
Millbury, Worcester County, Massachusetts**

Additional Documentation—Historic Images (arranged chronologically)

Stereoview slide image of the interior, ca. 1884, Second Congregational Church, no publication information, from the Millbury Federated Church Archives.

Second Congregational Church, image drawn by Wesson & Merritt, from *Second Congregational Church . . . Annual Leaflet, 1894*, Printed by L.P. Goddard, Worcester, from the Millbury Federated Church Archives.

“Millbury Center, Millbury, Mass.,” colored postcard image ca. 1903, from the Millbury Federated Church Archives.

President William H. Taft and his aunt Delia C. Torrey descending the front steps of Millbury Federated Church, 3 April 1910, from the Millbury Federated Church Archives.

Frederick H. Gagnon, “Preliminary Church Street Elevation, Proposed Addition to Millbury Federated Church, Millbury, Massachusetts,” from the Millbury Federated Church Archives.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

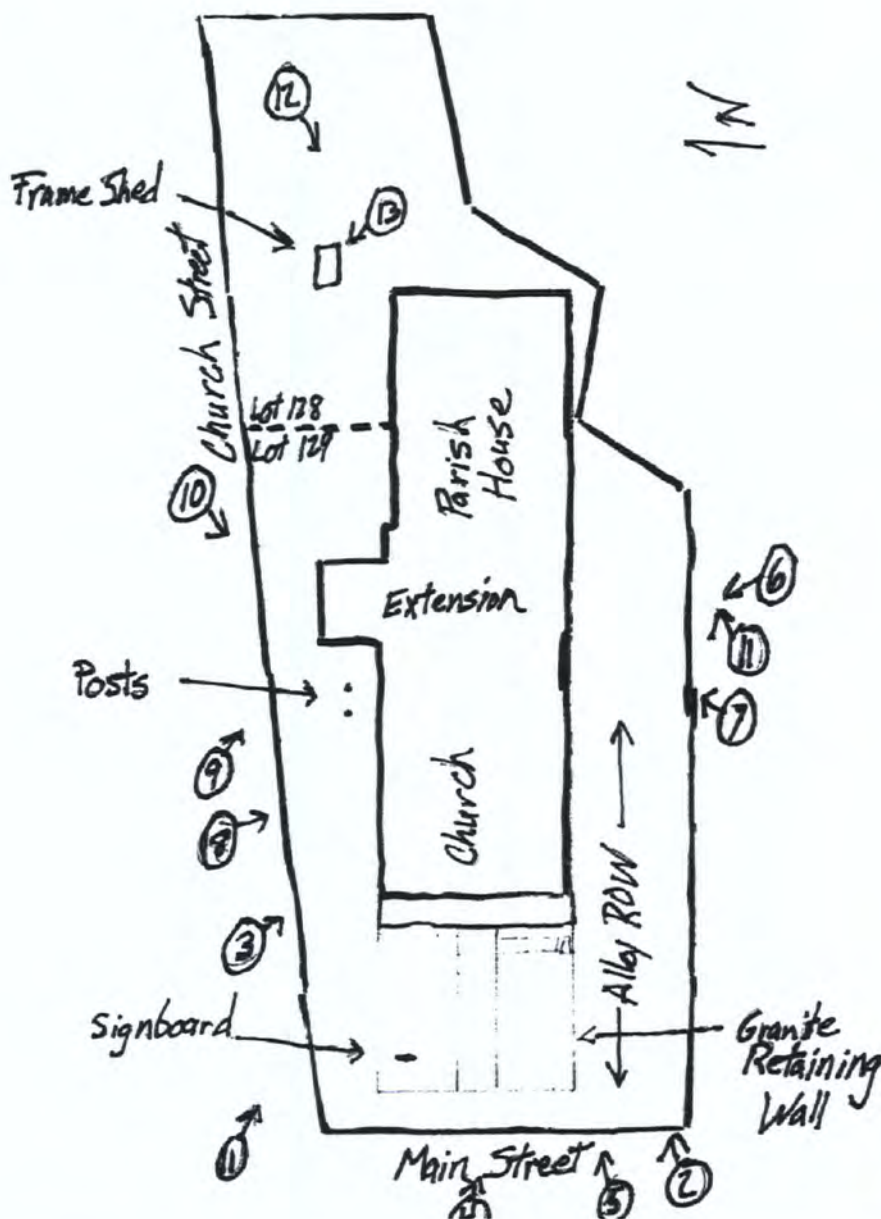
National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Additional Documentation Page 3

First Presbyterian Society Meeting House
Millbury, Worcester County, Massachusetts

Site Sketch Map

Map drawn by Timothy Orwig, based on "Plan of Land Owned by the 2nd Cong. Church of Millbury, Mass., Feb. 2, 1927," by William I. Thompson, and "Plan to Show Division of Property in Millbury Mass. Owned by Peter Lynch, Sept. 20, 1950" by Kenneth Shaw. Circled numbers with arrows indicate the position of photographer and direction of view in the supporting photographs. This detail map is not to scale.



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

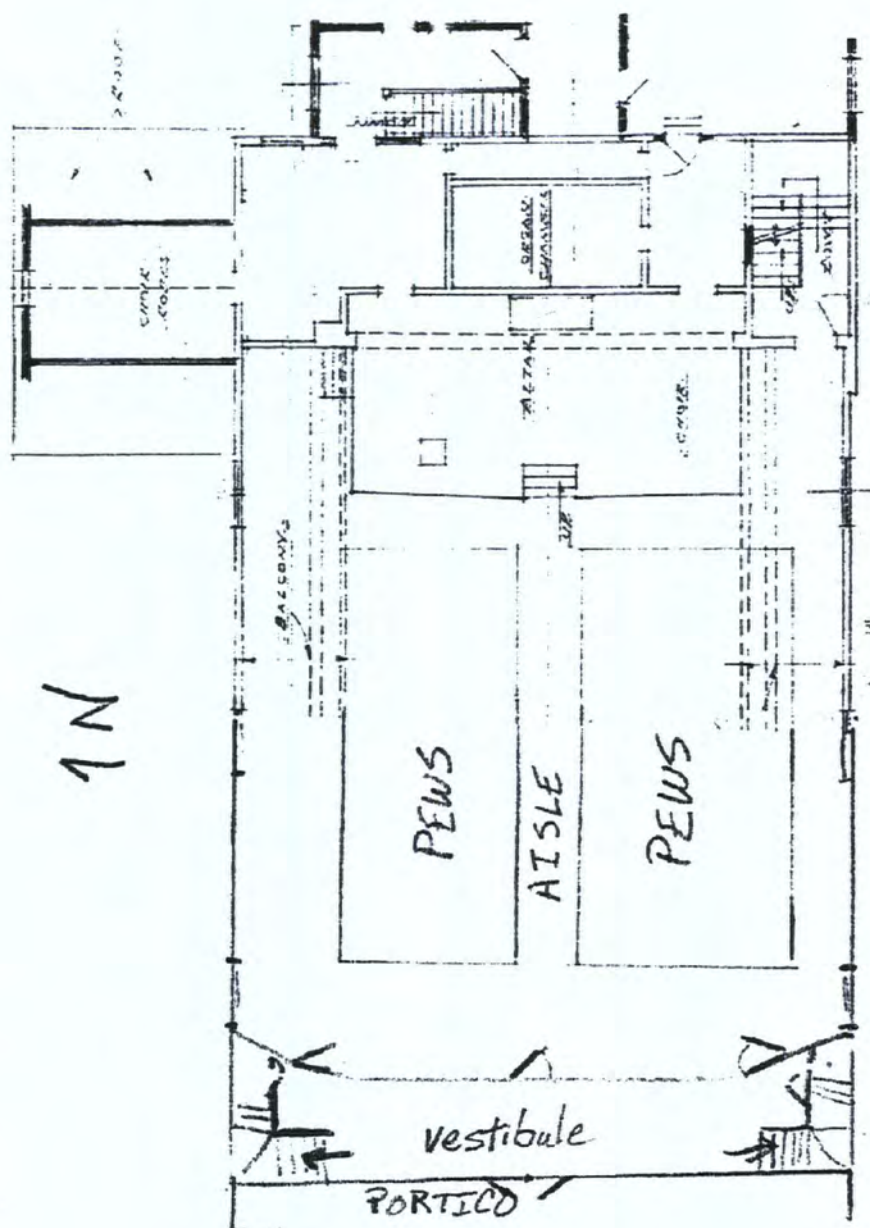
National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Additional Documentation Page 4

First Presbyterian Society Meeting House
Millbury, Worcester County, Massachusetts

Floor Plan: Millbury Federated Church Main Floor & Proctor Parish House (partial)

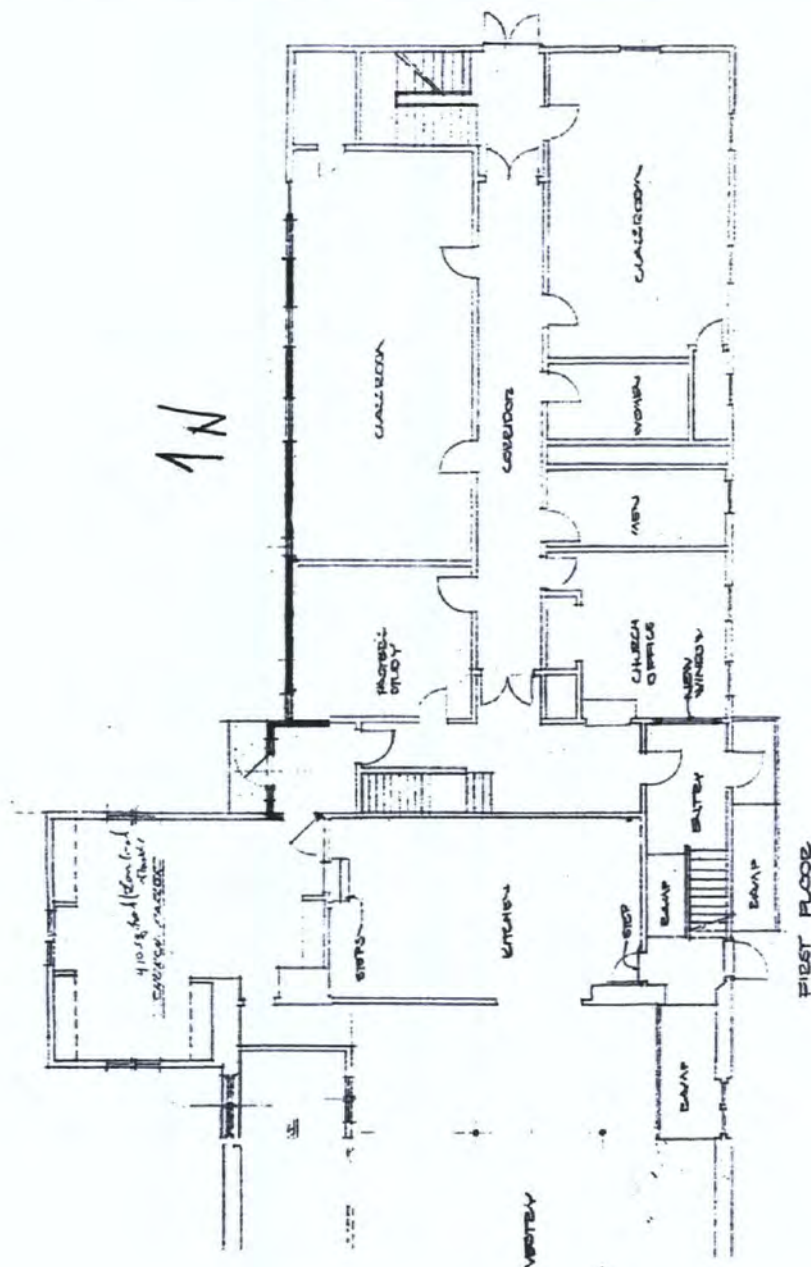
Floor plan assembled by Timothy Orwig, partially based on "Proposed Addition to Federated Church, Millbury, Massachusetts" by Frederick Gagnon, ca. 1965. This floor plan is not to scale.



National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

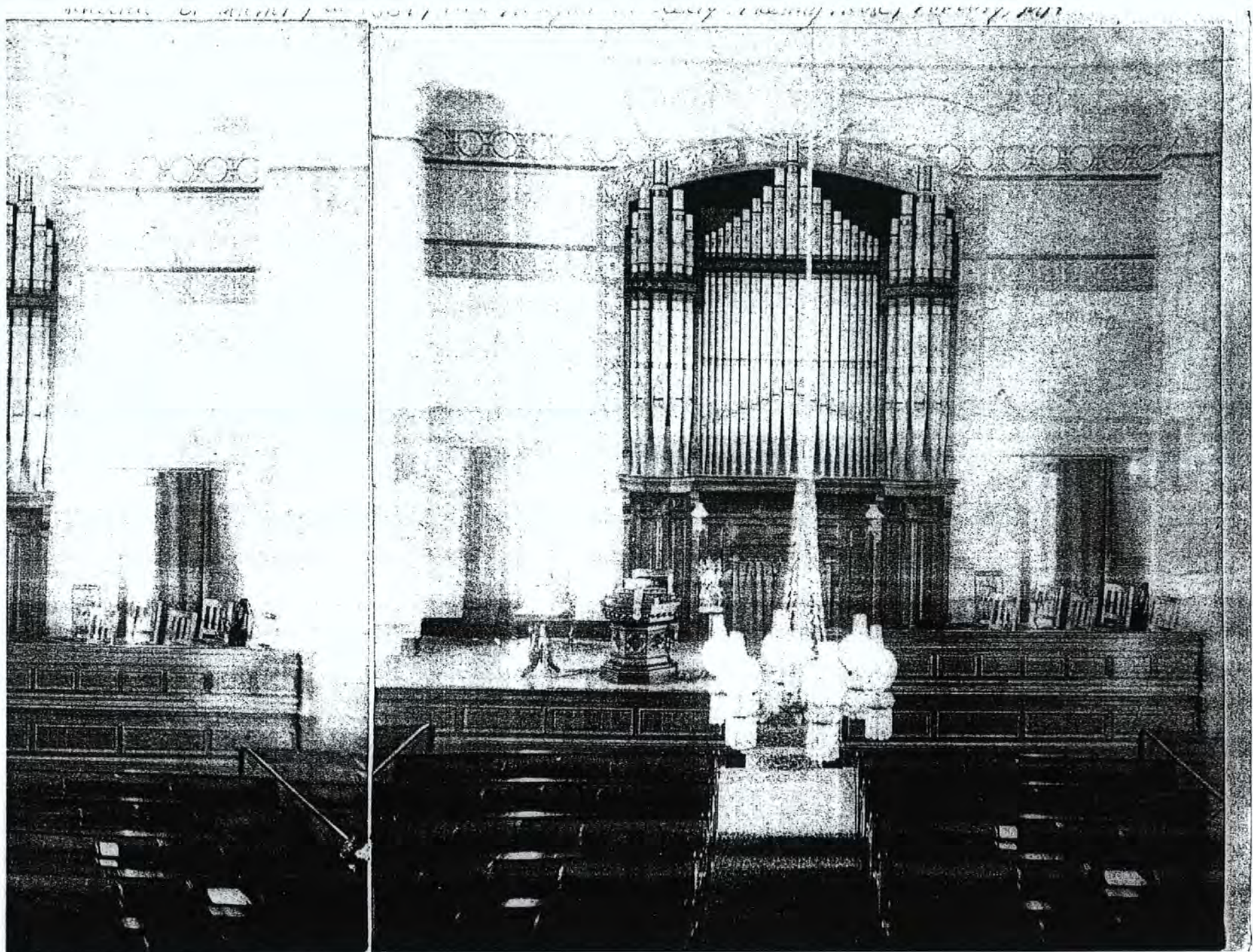
**First Presbyterian Society Meeting House
Millbury, Worcester County, Massachusetts**

Floor plan assembled by Timothy Orwig, based on "Proposed Addition to Federated Church, Millbury, Massachusetts" by Frederick Gagnon, ca. 1965. This floor plan is not to scale.

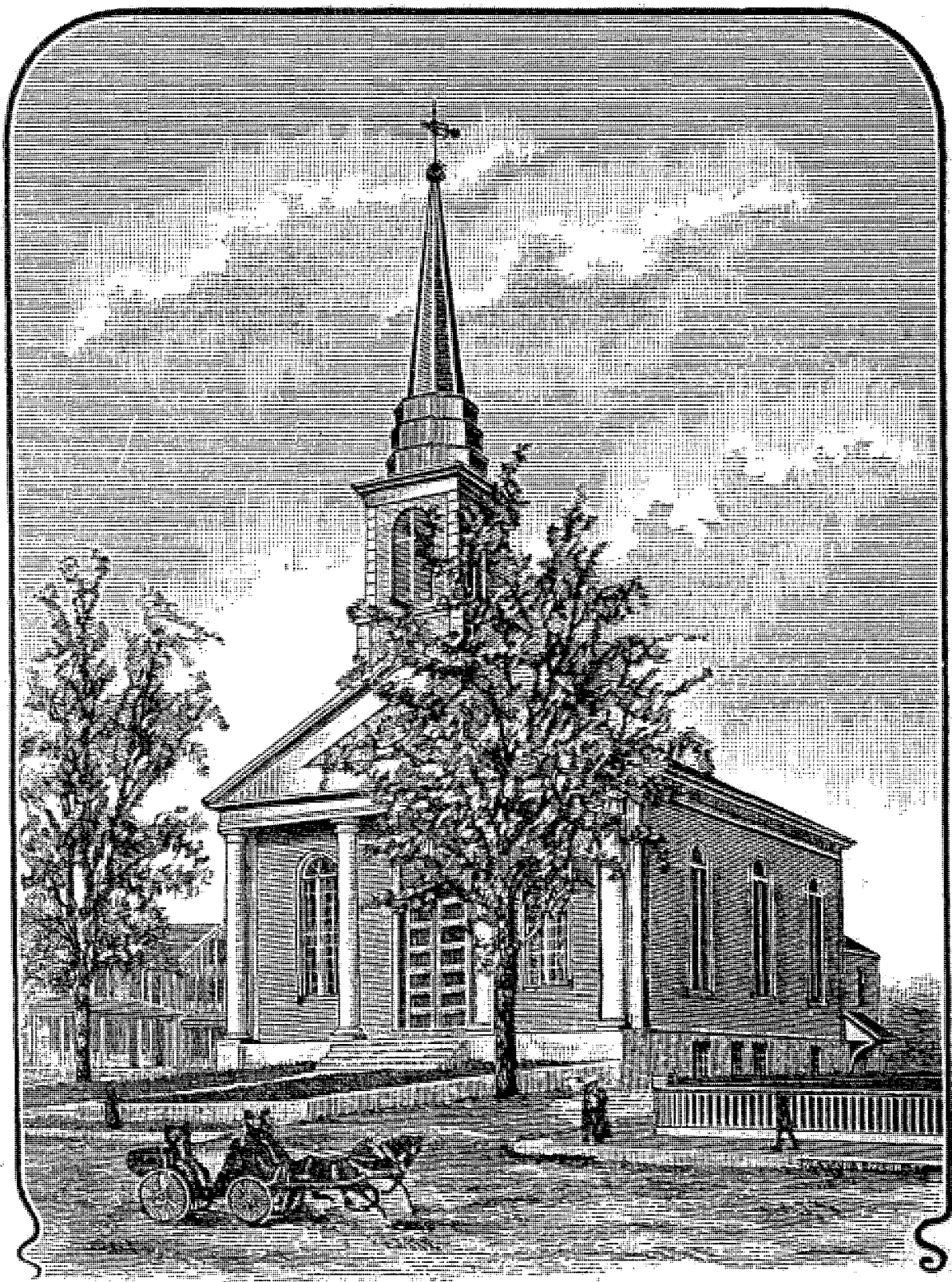


Site Data Sheet
First Presbyterian Society Meeting House, Millbury, Worcester County, Massachusetts

Structure/Landscape/Feature	Date of Construction	Type of Resource	Contributing or Not (NC)	Direction from the First Pres. Society Meeting House	Architect or Designer (if known)
First Presbyterian Society Meeting House	1828	Building	Contributing		Elias Carter
Granite Retaining Wall	ca. 1877	Structure	Contributing	W	
Posts	ca. 1877?	Object	Contributing	N	
Signboard	ca. 1940	Object	Contributing	W	
Proctor Memorial Plaques	1952, 1965	Object	Contributing		
Frame Shed	1991	Building	NC	NE	
Total: 6 1 contributing building, 1 non-contributing building, 1 contributing structure, and 3 contributing objects.					

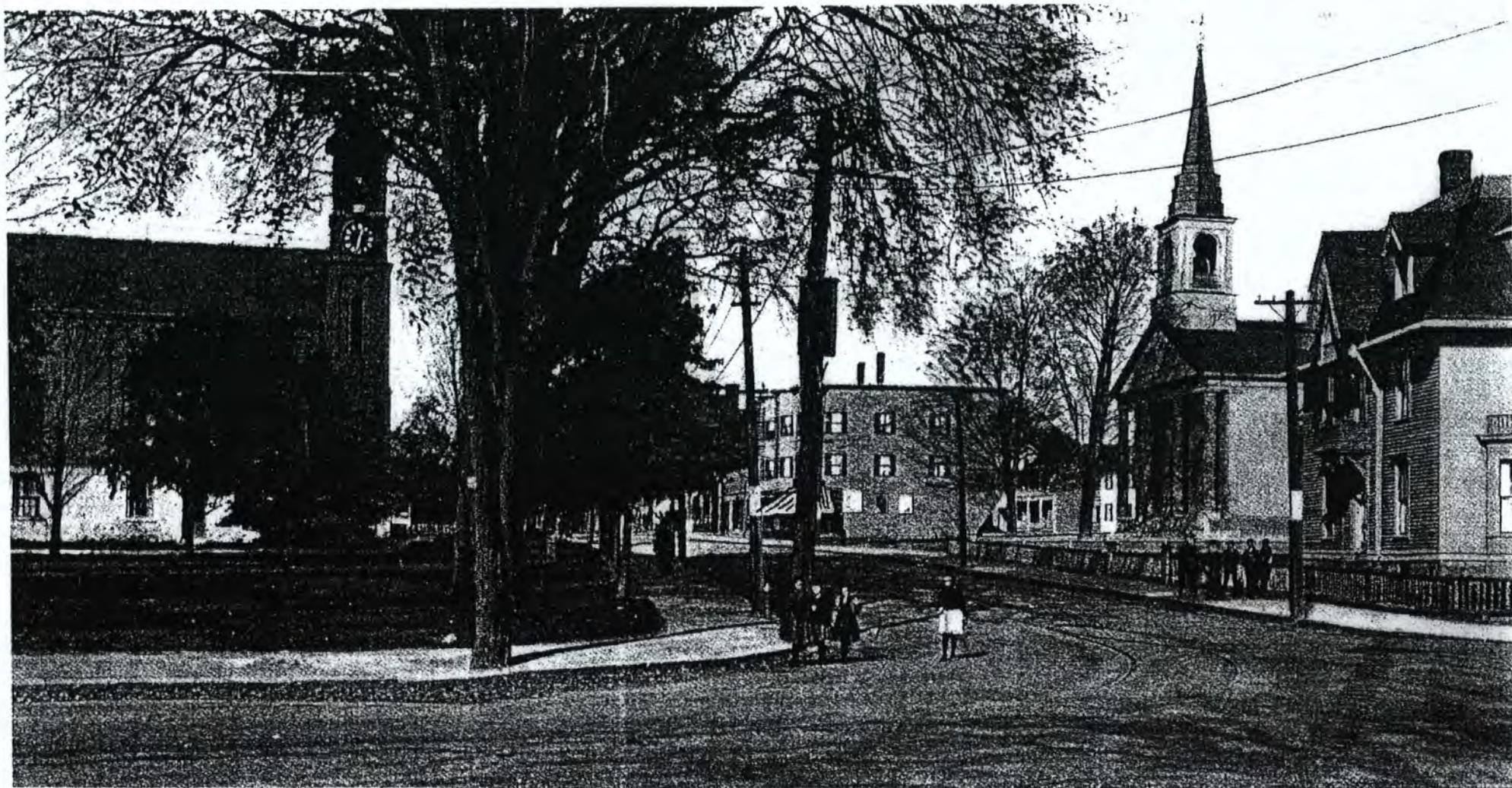


Stereoview slide image of the interior, ca. 1884, Second Congregational Church, no publication information, from the Millbury Federated Church Archives.



L. P. Goddard, Pr., Worcester

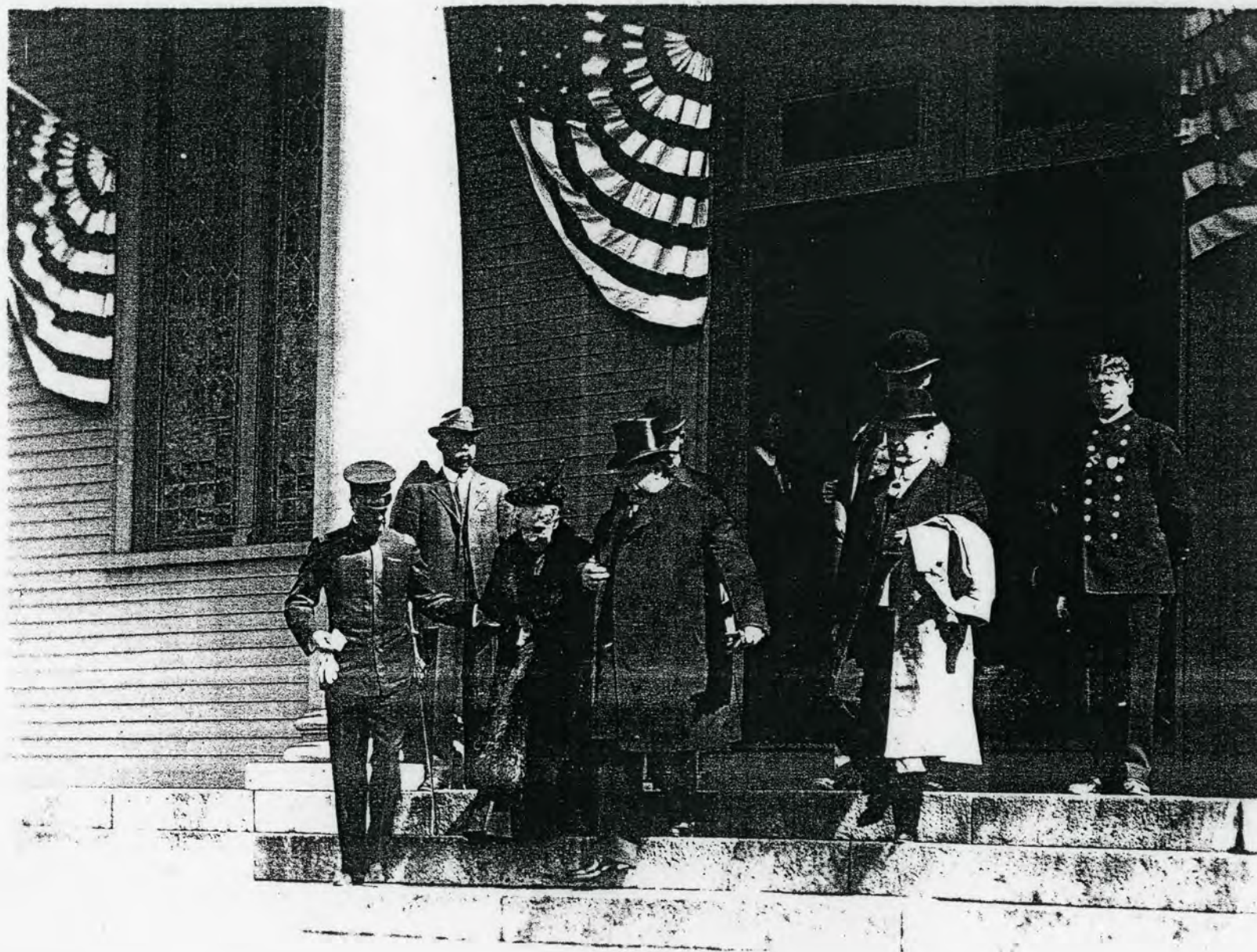
Second Congregational Church, image drawn by Wesson & Merritt,
from Second Congregational Church . . . Annual Leaflet, 1894, Printed by L.P. Goddard, Worcester,
from the Millbury Federated Church Archives



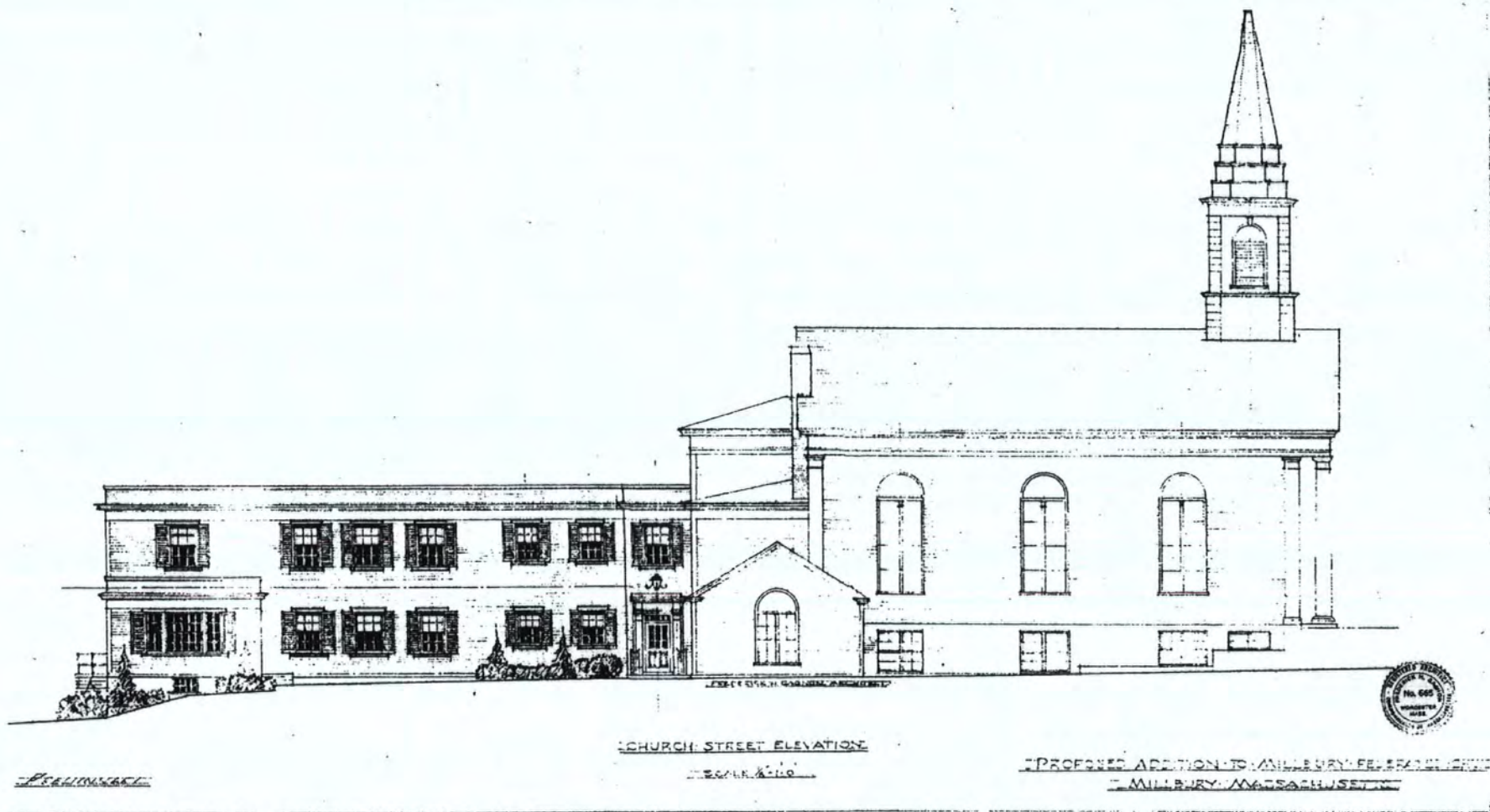
MILLBURY CENTER, MILLBURY, MASS.

"Millbury Center, Millbury, Mass.," colored postcard image ca. 1903,
from the Millbury Federated Church Archives.

↑
First Presbyterian Society
Meeting House



President William H. Taft and his aunt Delia C. Torrey descending the front steps of Millbury Federated Church, 3 April 1910, from the Millbury Federated Church Archives.



Frederick H. Gagnon, "Preliminary Church Street Elevation, Proposed Addition to Millbury Federated Church, Millbury, Massachusetts," from the Millbury Federated Church Archives.

This is a detailed plat map of a residential neighborhood in St. Louis, Missouri. The map shows a grid of streets and lots. The Mississippi River is on the left, and the railroad is on the right. The streets shown include Summer Street, Linden Street, Walnut Street, Cherry Street, Main Street, Church Street, Elm Street, Grove Street, School Street, and Maple Street. The map is numbered with lot numbers and street names. The map is a black and white line drawing.



ASSESSORS MAP

Legen

-  Assessor Map Sheet Grid
-  Property Parcels
-  Easements
-  River/Stream
-  Water Bodies
-  Wet Areas

THIS MAP IS FOR ASSIGNMENT PURPOSES ONLY. IT IS NOT A VALID DOCUMENT FOR LEGAL DESCRIPTION OR CONVEYANCE.

THE HORIZONTAL DISTANCE THE
MASSING TRIDETS
STATE PLANE COORDINATE SYSTEM, 1983
ASSUMED DATA REVISED THREE AS CT JAN 1 2000
MAP PRINTED: MAR 14 2000

PROCEEDINGS OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE
NATIONAL PLASTIC SURGEONS ASSOCIATION
200 NORTH JEFFERSON AVENUE, LONDON, HEATHROW
HOTEL, 10-12 JULY 1988



Age Group	Total	Male	Female	Male	Female
18-24	100	100	100	100	100
25-34	100	100	100	100	100
35-44	100	100	100	100	100
45-54	100	100	100	100	100
55-64	100	100	100	100	100
65+	100	100	100	100	100



MAP SHEET 53

CMRPC

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY First Presbyterian Society Meeting House
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Worcester

DATE RECEIVED: 7/26/10 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 8/23/10
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 9/07/10 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 9/09/10
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 10000722

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 9.9.10 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in
The National Register
of
Historic Places

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



1. Millbury Presbyterian Church (First Presbyterian Society Meeting House)
Worcester Co., MA



2. Millbury Presbyterian Church
Worcester Co., MA



3. Millbury Presbyterian Church
Worcester Co., MA



4. Millbury Presbyterian Church
Worcester Co., MA



S. Milbury Presbyterian Church
Worcester Co., MA



6. Millbury Presbyterian Church
Worcester Co., MA



7. Millbury Presbyterian Church
Worcester Co., MA



8. Millbury Presbyterian Church
Worcester Co., MA



9. Millbury Presbyterian Church
Worcester Co., MA



10. Millbury Presbyterian Church
Worcester Co., MA



11. Millbury Presbyterian Church
Worcester Co., MA



12. Millbury Presbyterian Church
Worcester Co., MA



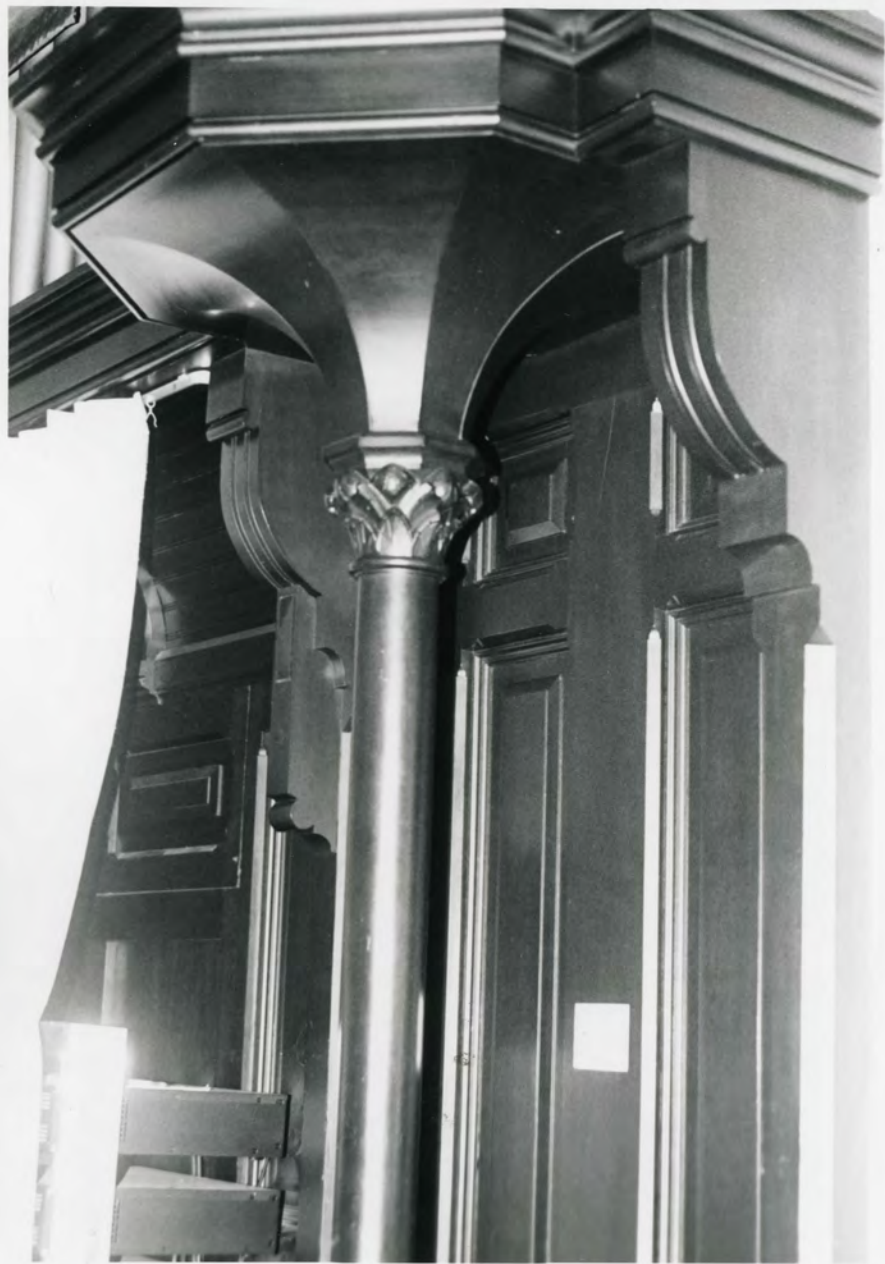
13. Millbury Presbyterian Church
Worcester Co., MA



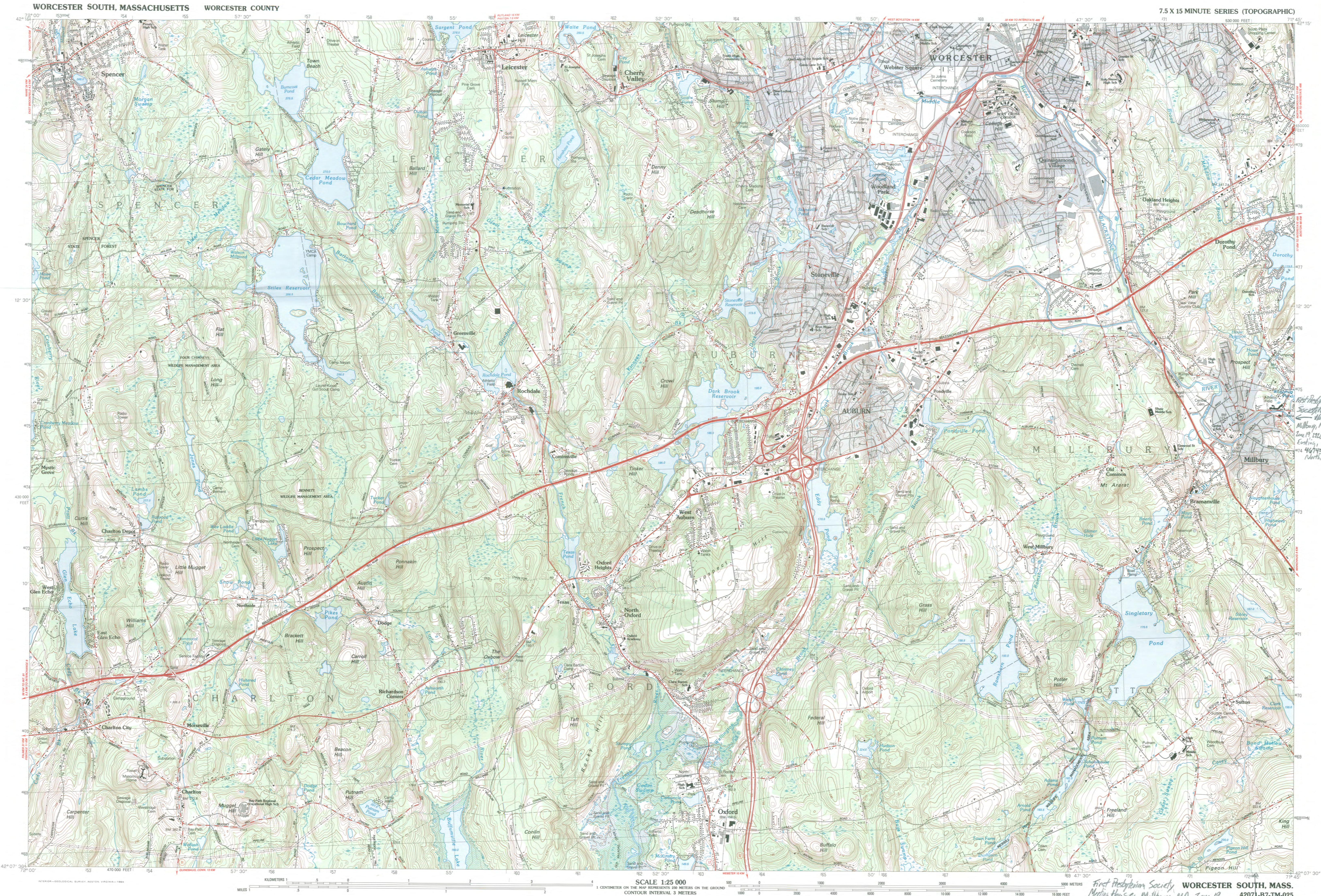
14. Millbury Presbyterian Church
Worcester Co., MA



15. Millbury Presbyterian Church
Worcester Co., MA



16. Millbury Presbyterian Church
Worcester Co., MA



Worcester South
MASSACHUSETTS
1:25 000-scale metric
topographic map

7.5 X 15 MINUTE QUADRANGLE
SHOWING

- Contours and elevations in meters
- Highways, roads and other manmade structures
- Water features
- Woodland areas
- Geographic names

1983

Produced by the United States Geological Survey
in cooperation with Massachusetts Department
of Public Works

Control by USGS, NOS/NOAA, and Massachusetts Geodetic Survey

Compiled by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs
taken 1980. Field checked 1982. Map edited 1983

Supersedes Leicester and Worcester South 1:25,000-scale
maps dated 1969 and 1973

Projection and 1000-meter grid, zone 19: Universal
Transverse Mercator

10,000-foot grid ticks based on Massachusetts coordinate
system, mainland zone, 1927 North American Datum

To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983
move the projection lines 6 meters south and 40 meters
west as shown by dashed corner ticks

There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of
the National or State reservations shown on this map

CONTOUR INTERVAL 3 METERS
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929
CONTROL ELEVATIONS SHOWN TO THE NEAREST 0.1 METER
OTHER ELEVATIONS SHOWN TO THE NEAREST 0.5 METER

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS

FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
P.O. BOX 25286, DENVER, COLORADO 80225

CONVERSION TABLE		DECLINATION DIAGRAM	ADJOINING MAPS		
Meters	Feet		1	2	3
2	6.5617		4	5	
4	13.1234	267 MILES 1° 56' 34" MILES	6	7	8
6	19.6851				
8	26.2468	UTM grid convergence (82N) at center of map declination (M) Diagram is approximate	1	North Brookfield	
10	32.8084		2	Worcester North	
To convert meters to feet multiply by 3.2808			3	Marlborough	
To convert feet to meters multiply by 0.3048			4	Millbury	
			5	Southwick	
			6	Worcester	
			7	Worcester	
			8	Uxbridge	

Topographic Map Symbols	
Primary highway, hard surface	
Secondary highway, hard surface	
Light-duty road, hard or improved surface	
Unimproved road, trail	
Route marker: Interstate, U.S. State	
Railroad: standard gage; narrow gage	
Bridge: drawbridge	
Footbridge; overpass; underpass	
Build-up area: only selected landmark buildings shown	
House; barn; church; school; large structure	
Boundary:	
National, with monument	
State	
County, parish	
Civil township, precinct, district	
Incorporated city, village, town	
National or State reservation, land park	
Land grant with monument; found section corner	
U.S. public lands survey: range, township, section	
Range, township; section line: location approximate	
Force or field line	
Power transmission line, located tower	
Dam; dam with lock	
Cemetery; grave	
Campground; picnic area; U.S. location monument	
Windmill; water well; spring	
Mine shaft; prospect; adit or cave	
Control: horizontal station; vertical station; spot elevation	
Contours: index; intermediate; supplementary; depression	
Distorted surface: strip mine, line, and	
Bathymetric contours: index; intermediate	
Perennial lake and stream; intermittent lake and stream	
Rapids, large and small; falls, large and small	
Submerged marsh; marsh, swamp	
Land subject to controlled inundation; woodland	
Scrub; mangrove	
Orchard; vineyard	

A pamphlet describing topographic maps is available on request

First Presbyterian Society
Meeting House, Millbury, MA Zone 19,
222040 Easting, 4674582 Northing

WORCESTER SOUTH, MASS.
42071-B7-TM-025
1983



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
William Francis Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth
Massachusetts Historical Commission

July 14, 2010

Mr. J. Paul Loether, Chief
National Register of Historic Places
Department of the Interior
National Park Service
1201 Eye Street, NW 8th floor
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Mr. Loether:

Enclosed please find the following nomination form:

First Presbyterian Society Meeting House, 20 Main Street, Millbury (Worcester), MA

The nomination has been voted eligible by the State Review Board and has been signed by the State Historic Preservation Officer. The owners of the property were notified of pending State Review Board consideration 30 to 45 days before the meeting and were afforded the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Betsy Friedberg
National Register Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission

Enclosure

cc: Millbury Federated Church
E. Bernard Plante, Chair, Millbury Board of Selectmen
Cynthia Burr, Millbury Historical Commission
Timothy Orwig, Consultant
Richard Gosselin, Millbury Planning Board