

3121

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

DEC 05 1988

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

NATIONAL REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Monkton Borough Baptist Church
other names/site number Florona Grange No. 540 Hall

2. Location

street & number Town Highway 1
city, town Monkton
state Vermont code VT county Addison code 001 zip code 05469

3. Classification

Table with 3 columns: Ownership of Property, Category of Property, and Number of Resources within Property. Includes checkboxes for private/public ownership and building/site/structure/object categories.

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. See continuation sheet.
Signature of certifying official: [Signature]
Date: November 30, 1988
State or Federal agency and bureau: Vermont

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of commenting or other official:
Date:
State or Federal agency and bureau:

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:
[ ] entered in the National Register.
[ ] determined eligible for the National Register.
[ ] determined not eligible for the National Register.
[ ] removed from the National Register.
[ ] other, (explain):

Signature of the Keeper: [Signature] Date of Action: 1/5/89

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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**6. Function or Use**

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Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Religion/religious structure

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Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Social/meeting hall

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**7. Description**

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Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Federal

---

Greek Revival

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---

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

---

walls Weatherboard

---

roof Metal

---

other 

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**Describe present and historic physical appearance.**

The Monkton Borough Baptist Church is a large, well-preserved, two story, wood frame building, built in 1811 in the Federal style with alterations made in the Greek Revival style in 1854. Five bays wide across the gable front and five bays deep, it is distinctive for its slightly projecting front pediment supported by four monumental Doric columns that frame three round-arched, paneled doors, a cornice enriched with triglyphs and drilled hole mutule blocks, and intertwining fretwork under the roofline of the Greek Revival style belfry. The interior has been substantially remodeled over the years, although it does retain some original features. The church stands well back from the road on a slight rise on its original lot on the west side of Town Highway 1 in the village of Monkton Borough (a historic district listed in the Vermont State Register of Historic Places).

The church, a rectangular, clapboard-sided structure of post and beam construction, is five bays wide across the pedimented gable front, five bays deep, and two stories tall with a gradually pitched gable roof that is covered with sheet metal. A one tier wooden belfry projects slightly from the front roof peak. The foundation wall is fieldstone, which remains exposed on the rear but is covered on the front and sides by a battered cement skirting. Within the main front pediment is a smaller pediment that projects slightly and is carried by four monumental, solid wood, freestanding Doric columns framing the three center bays and their round-arched doors. All windows have double-hung sashes and sills with rounded edges. Inside are a full width entry hall and one large room on the first floor, and a large meeting room on the second floor.

The church has a wealth of exterior architectural detailing. Cornerboards have beaded edges. The eavesline entablature that runs along the north and south sides of the building and across the front under the pediments is enriched by closely spaced triglyphs. There is one triglyph under each of the two cornice returns at the back (west) of the church. Drilled hole mutule blocks are located immediately above the triglyphs and in the soffits of the two front pediments. Intricately carved, curved fretwork and small, closely spaced, curved modillion blocks run under the slightly projecting eaves of the base of the belfry.

 See continuation sheet

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The present belfry, added in 1854, has paneled corner pilasters, which visually support an entablature with a dentilcourse under the belfry roof. Late 19th century photographs show a balustrade around the top of the belfry. It does not appear in an 1946 photograph, and it is not known when it was removed.

The main entrance to the building is through the three, round-arched front doors in the east facade, which have two half semi-circular panels under the arch and four rectangular panels below. The doors are framed by paneled pilasters and a molded round arch surround with a molded wooden keystone. The center mold of each keystone is a carved rope molding. Each door has a Suffolk latch and long strap hinges at the top and bottom that extend nearly the width of the door. The center door swings inward, as originally built, while the two outer doors were changed (probably sometime in the early 20th century) to swing outward. To change the strap hinges to the exterior of these doors, the inner molding and capital of the outside paneled entry pilaster had to be removed.

Fronting the three center bays is a wooden platform with lattice screening underneath, a simple wooden railing, and a set of wooden steps centered in front of the middle door that was built in 1975 to replace a similar porch from earlier in the century, which had deteriorated. A photograph in the collection of the Monkton Historical Society probably dating from the 1890s shows a porch reached by a set of steps to each side. A somewhat later photograph (included in this nomination) shows that this porch was replaced by one that is similar to the present porch.

The north and south side walls have five evenly spaced bays. On the north wall there is no window in the rightmost bay of the first floor. The rear (west) wall has a four-paneled door to the right of center on the first floor (probably added in 1854). Originally there were two windows on either side of the door. These have been filled in with clapboards, although their surrounds remain intact. Attached to the leftmost part of the wall is a shed-roofed privy, which is reached from inside the building. On the second floor there are traces in the clapboards of two windows matching the length of the extant second floor

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windows on the other walls. They were probably removed and the openings covered with clapboards when the church was remodeled in 1854. In the middle of the wall are marks of a much larger opening. This likely was a Palladian window (or another type of tri-partite window), commonly found in Vermont Federal style churches of the period. It too was probably removed during the 1854 remodeling because its base extended below the level of the second floor, which was added to create an upstairs sanctuary.

Two brick chimneys project from near the rear of the roof on either side of the ridge. The roof is covered with sheet metal, which was applied in 1985 through a matching grant from the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation.

All windows in the building have double-hung sash, which probably date from the latter half of the 19th century. The first floor etched glass windows, shorter than those on the second, have in each sash one large pane surrounded on the outside edges of the window by smaller rectangular panes. The etched glass comes in a variety of patterns. Each sash in the second floor has one large pane of purple stained glass that is surrounded by square stained glass panes in a variety of colors.

The interior of the church has on the first floor a large room and a front hallway extending across the width of the building, and on the second floor a large meeting room. This plan dates from the 1854 remodeling. From physical evidence remaining (and described below) it is evident that the building, as was common with other period Federal style churches in Vermont, originally had an open, two story meeting room with a gallery around the sides and back of the second floor.

The structural system of the building is partially revealed inside by the four evenly spaced posts that project from the north and south side walls, and by the two projecting posts in the east and west end walls. Stretching across the middle of the first floor back (west) wall between the posts is a heavy girt with beaded edges. On the first floor all posts have beaded edges, while on the second floor they are encased on the sides by boards with a small rounded mold at the end.

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The first floor has its original, wide floorboards. The outside walls are plastered above a high wainscot, which consists of several wide, horizontal, beaded edge boards. The sills of the windows are formed by the horizontal board topping the wainscot. The window surrounds have a projecting molding on the outside edge and are beaded on the inside edge.

The hallway is partitioned off from the original downstairs meeting room by a wall of vertical, beaded edge boards, to which is fastened a row of metal coathooks (of an undetermined but likely 19th century date). This wall has two equally spaced doorways (framed by simple board surrounds and filled with four panel Federal period doors) that probably were cut through in the mid 20th century by the Grange after they acquired the property in 1944. The three original, evenly spaced doorways in the wall have been filled with beaded edge vertical planks. At each end of the hallway are stairs leading to the second floor. The slightly oval-shaped stair rails end at simple square posts at the bottom. Under each set of stairs is a closet, the left (south) one of which still retains its original vertical plank door (the original latch has been removed). The wainscoting forming the outside walls of the closets has never been painted. On the back of a stair riser in the right (north) closet is written "J. Smiths Boards 330 1/2." On the matching riser in the other closet is a prominent signature using the same type of writing material, unfortunately illegible, which perhaps might be that of the builder or other leading figure in the construction of the church.

The large first floor room is distinguished by two rows of paneled posts dividing the room in thirds lengthwise. They are trimmed with molding that suggests a pedestal at the bottom and capital at the top. A built-in wooden bench runs around the room from the outside edges of where the original left and right doors from the hall were located to the equivalent position on the back (west) wall. A platform raised about six inches from the main floor runs underneath the benches along the side (north and south) walls. Along the edge of the platform are evenly spaced, square marks in the floor that are evidence of a railing. Further marks in

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the main floor indicate that there were two rows of pews, with a center aisle and side aisles reached by the three original doors from the hall.

Stretching across the back of the room is a partition ending about two feet below the ceiling that likely was installed in the 1940s to enclose the kitchen. There is a cast-iron sink on the south wall. This area was originally raised up from the main floor. A simple four-paneled door at the northern end of the rear wall leads to a two-hole privy, whose walls are paneled with narrow, horizontal, beaded-edged boards.

The room is heated by two wood-burning, cast-iron stoves, one located in the southeast corner and the other in the northwest corner just in front of the kitchen wall. Likely dating from the late 19th century, they both stand about six feet high. The inscription on the southeast stove reads "Germania No. 25 Wolfe Stove M'F'G Co. Syracuse, N.Y." and that on the other stove is "Palace Oak, E. Bement's Sons, Lansing, Mich." Long stove pipes run below the ceiling to the two brick chimneys standing in front of the two projecting posts in the back (west) wall.

The second floor, one large room created during the 1854 remodeling, was substantially altered by the Grange after they took over the building in 1944. The walls, from the baseboard to the bottom of the window, project outward slightly. This projection is topped by a board that also forms the window sills. It is trimmed underneath by a beaded edge apron. Other original features remaining in the room include the side window surrounds, which match those downstairs, a simply molded wooden cornice under the ceiling, and near the back (east) end of the room two of the original gallery columns. Made of wood with Doric capitals, they have square pedestals. The two chimney stacks at the front (west) end of the room are trimmed with wooden molding for a pedestal effect on the bottom.

The wooden pews installed in 1854 by the Baptists and all but two of the original gallery columns were removed by the Grange, who installed new wallboard on all the walls, a new hardwood floor, a suspended tile ceiling, and across the back of the room a platform to act as a stage. Under the

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platform, the horizontal boards forming the wall below the chair rail and the flooring from the 1854 remodeling are visible.

The attic is reached through a trap door above the stage. At the west end of the attic in the middle of the gable is the remains of a brick chimney, which sits on a shelf and has been broken off near the top under the roof peak. Leading up to the belfry is the original built-in wooden ladder. The belfry floor is slightly hipped and still covered with wooden shingles. The eight eight-sided posts of the original open belfry remain inside the 1854 belfry and are joined together at the top by a sturdy framework that holds the bell. Inscribed on the bell, which was hauled up using a large, wooden roller still in place atop the frame, are the words "From Jones & Hitchcock Troy, New York 1853."

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally  statewide  locally

Applicable National Register Criteria  A  B  C  D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)  
Architecture

Period of Significance  
1811  
1854

Significant Dates  
1811  
1854

Cultural Affiliation  
N/A

Significant Person  
N/A

Architect/Builder  
unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Monkton Borough Baptist Church, built in 1811 with Greek Revival style alterations to the belfry in 1854, was the first church to be built in the town of Monkton. It is the second oldest church in Addison County that largely retains its original exterior appearance and derives its primary significance as an excellent example of a Federal style church in Vermont. Noteworthy architectural features include the slightly projecting front pediment supported by four freestanding, monumental Doric columns, the three round arched, paneled doors with molded surrounds, the cornice enriched by closely spaced triglyphs, the drilled hole mutules under the rooflines, the intertwining fretwork and small, curved modillions under the roofline of the first belfry stage, on the Greek Revival style belfry the paneled corner pilasters and denticulated cornice, and inside it the eight octagonal posts of the original, open belfry.

The design of this church is based upon Massachusetts master builder Asher Benjamin's plan for a meeting house in his influential book, The Country Builder's Assistant, first published in 1797. It was used by master builders as the basis for the design of a number of the first churches built in Vermont. Only a handful of churches based on this plan, with its distinctive slightly projecting front pavilion and belfry, three front doorways, and Federal style detailing, still stand in Vermont. Among the most notable examples are the Windsor Old South Meetinghouse of 1797 (part of the Windsor Village Historic District, entered on the National Register of Historic Places on April 23, 1975) designed by Asher Benjamin himself; the First Congregational Church of Bennington (1804-06), the work of Lavius Fillmore (entered on the National Register on April 24, 1973); the East Poultney Baptist Church (1805) of Elisha Scott (part of the East Poultney Historic District, entered on the National Register on January 31, 1978); Fillmore's Middlebury Congregational Church (1806-09, part of the Middlebury Village Historic District, entered on the National Register on November 13, 1976); and the 1807 Sudbury Congregational Church, built by Charles Stewart (entered on the National Register on October 28, 1975).

See continuation sheet



**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Agan, Doris. "Florona Grange Bell Cleaned Up for the Bicentennial." Green Mountain Granger. v. 2, no. 8 (August 1975): 1.

Child, Hamilton, ed. Gazetteer and Business Directory of Addison County, Vermont. Syracuse, N.Y.: Journal Office, 1881.

Crocker, Henry. History of the Baptists in Vermont. Bellows Falls, Vt.: P. H. Gobie Press, 1913.

Minutes, Twenty-First Anniversary of the Addison County Baptist Association. Burlington, Vt.: Stacy & Jameson, 1855.

Monkton Historical Society Papers. On file at Monkton Town Clerk's Office, Monkton, Vermont.

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property 1 + acre

UTM References

A 18 1648785 4899100  
 Zone Easting Northing

C         

B           
 Zone Easting Northing

D         

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The property is a rectangular lot of land, 1 acre and 2 1/2 rods in size, that lies on the west side of Monkton Town Highway 1. It is 19 rods (313 1/2 feet) deep and 8 1/2 rods (140 1/4 feet) wide.

Volume 24 of Deeds, p. 120 (October 19, 1944), Monkton Town Records.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the entire lot that has historically been associated with the church since its construction in 1811.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Elsa Gilbertson Historic Preservation Consultant  
 organization N/A date June 30, 1987  
 street & number RD #2, Box 3550 telephone (802) 453-2079  
 city or town Bristol state Vermont zip code 05443

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Benjamin's meeting house plan was also used for a number of other and more vernacular Federal period churches that were built, in general, in the 1810s and 1820s throughout the state. It is likely that these later churches had less stylish details, which were more costly to execute, because of the general economic depression after the close of the War of 1812. The 1811 Monkton Borough Baptist Church, although not as detailed as the churches cited above, does have many skillfully crafted Federal style features--rare for such a building in a sparsely populated, remote rural area of Vermont. It is the only example of its kind in Addison County outside of the 1806-09 Middlebury Congregational Church (which was built in the county seat, a town well on its way to also becoming the business center for the county) and is one of the only examples remaining of its type in northwestern Vermont. Its high architectural quality stands as a testament to the faith the early settlers of Monkton had in the future of both their congregation and their town.

In 1854, after nearly a decade of decline in the congregation, the Baptists expressed their new religious vigor in the remodeling of the interior of the building (putting in a second floor and moving the sanctuary upstairs) and enclosing the open belfry with a square Greek Revival style belfry, which housed a new bell cast in Troy, New York.

Settlement in the northern Addison County town of Monkton, chartered on June 24, 1762, was begun in 1774, disrupted by the Revolutionary War, and resumed in 1784. By the time of the first Federal census in 1791, Monkton had 449 residents. The first church in town was organized on July 24, 1794, by twelve Calvinistic Baptists under the leadership of Elder Joseph Call of the Baptist Church in Cambridge, Vermont. Within a few years Monkton had three more churches--the Society of Friends, allowed by the Danby Monthly Meeting in 1795; the Methodist Episcopal, founded in 1797; and the Congregationalists, organized about 1804, disbanded in 1807 to unite with Vergennes, and another organized in 1824.

The first regular preacher of the Monkton Calvinistic

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Baptist Church was one of the original members, Isaac Sawyer, who was licensed to preach in 1797, ordained in 1798, and was the first ordained minister in town. In 1804 the church joined the Vermont Baptist Association. The congregation, which was the earliest Baptist church in the area of northeastern Addison County and southeastern Chittenden County, gradually grew in size over the years, with services begin held in barns and houses in the center and northeastern parts of Monkton. In 1807 nineteen members formed a new congregation in Charlotte and in 1810 eighteen more members left to form another Baptist church in Hinesburg (both towns neighboring to the north).

On January 14, 1811, the Monkton Baptist Church and Society decided to build a meeting house in what is called Monkton Borough and that day drew up a constitution for its use. Members of the Baptist Society who were not also members of the church were to be allowed use of the church "to introduce. . .preachers of other denominations. . ." on days other than the Sabbath or when the building was not needed by the Baptist congregation, and on the Sabbath for funeral services by preachers of other denominations.

The church and society bought a plot of land on January 28, 1811, that was nineteen rods deep and eight and a half rods wide from Hezekiah Smith at a cost of one hundred dollars. Construction likely began shortly thereafter. No records have yet been found that reveal the name of the builder in charge of the project. The building, which was built at a cost of \$1,250, was probably completed by October 1812, when the Vermont Baptist State Convention met there. At that time the congregation had 54 members.

The church had a number of preachers in the next few decades, some engaged for only one third or one half of the time. On November 13, 1833, the Monkton church joined with ten others, mainly in Addison County (for a total membership of 741 people), in withdrawing from the Vermont Baptist Association to form the Addison County Baptist Association. This change, according to Vermont Baptist historian Henry Crocker, was to enable its members to more strongly voice their opposition to free-masonry, the Anti-Masonic movement being very strong in Vermont at that time. In part because of this Anti-Masonic fervor, membership in Baptist

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congregations throughout the association declined over the next few decades. In Monkton the church had only occasional meetings from 1843 to 1846 and no minister or meetings from 1846 to 1852.

In 1852 Monkton Baptist Church members, with the encouragement of the Vermont Baptist State Convention, acquired the services of Zenas Jones for six months at half time, and in February 1853 the full time services of Elder L. Smith. Under his leadership the membership doubled in two and a half years. In 1854 the revitalized congregation undertook the "repair" of their meeting house. On March 4, 1854, pews were sold to members for as high as \$54 to raise money for the project. Interior work included removing the galleries (but leaving the columns), removing or covering over the rear wall second floor windows, building a floor between the first and second floors, and moving the meeting room upstairs. It is possible that the first floor pews were also removed at this time. On the exterior the original open belfry was enclosed by a four-sided belfry in the Greek Revival style with paneled corner pilasters, dentils under its roofline, and a crowning balustrade. In it was hung a bell that was cast by Jones and Hitchcock of Troy, New York in 1853.

The twenty-first anniversary meeting of the Addison County Baptist Association was held on September 27 and 28, 1855, in the newly renovated church and a brief history of the congregation was published in the meeting minutes. Elder Smith continued as pastor of the church until 1867 when he was succeeded by Elder I. P. Kellogg, who served for ten years. The church then was pastorless until 1885 when Kellogg returned for fifteen years. On January 11, 1893, the church was rededicated in with a special service that was attended by many area Baptists.

Membership declined over the next years and on September 12, 1903, the Monkton Baptist Church voted to transfer its land to the Vermont Baptist State Convention, thus practically dissolving their church. The Convention in turn deeded the property to the Methodist Society of Monkton on December 2, 1904, for the sum of \$435. The next summer a new platform and altar rail were installed upstairs. In 1944 the Methodists and the Society of Friends voted to

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share a Methodist minister from neighboring Hinesburg on a part time basis, and began worshipping together eleven months of the year in the Monkton Ridge Quaker meeting house, built in 1878 and still standing. The Methodists then sold the old Baptist church to the Florona Grange No. 540 for \$100 plus legal costs on October 19, 1944. Stipulations made in the deed require that if the Grange disbands the Troy (Methodist) Conference is to have the first right to buy the property; that the building is to be available for church services (not to conflict with Grange meetings); and that the building not be used for a barn or saloon.

Florona Grange No. 540 was organized in Monkton on July 17, 1940 by ninety-six charter members. On June 30, 1946, they held a ceremony to dedicate their new hall. A photograph from the time shows the building painted white with dark trim. The Grange made some changes in the building to suit their needs. Upstairs the pews and all but two of the original gallery columns were removed, a platform was built across the back (east end) of the room, and new ceiling and floor were installed.

In 1975, in preparation for the celebration of the United States bicentennial, Grange members cleaned the church bell, repaired the belfry, and rebuilt the front steps. In 1985 the Grange was awarded a matching grant by the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation to replace the leaking metal roof with a new one.

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Monkton Town Directory. Monkton, Vt.: Monkton Bicentennial  
Committee, 1977.

Smith, H. P., ed. History of Addison County, Vermont.  
Syracuse, N.Y.: D. Mason & Co., 1886.

The Watchman. 19 January 1893.

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Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Photographs Page 1

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This information is the same for photographs 1 through 4.

Monkton Borough Baptist Church  
Monkton, Vermont  
Credit: Elsa Gilbertson  
Date: November 1986  
Negative filed at the Vermont Division  
for Historic Preservation

Photograph 1  
Description: East (front) facade of church

Photograph 2  
Description: East (front) and south (side) facades of church

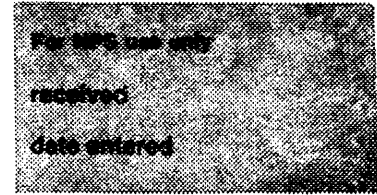
Photograph 3  
Description: West (rear) and north (side) facades of church

Photograph 4  
Description: Detail of belfry and front (east) pediment of  
church

Photograph 5  
Date: c.1890  
Description: Historic view of front (east) and side (north)  
facades of church

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**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet Property Owner

Item number n/a

Page 1

Owner of property:

Florona Grange No. 540  
c/o Mr. Robert Cousino, Master  
Monkton, Vermont 05469



MONKTON QUADRANGLE  
VERMONT - ADDISON CO.

7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

NW/4 MIDDLEBURY 15' QUADRANGLE

HINESBURG 3 MI. 73°07'30" W  
44°15' N

646 10' 647 330 000 FEET. 648

4901

4900

4899

630 000 FEET

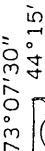
4898

(HINESBURG)  
69721 SE

Monkton Borough  
Baptist Church  
Monkton, Vermont

UTM Reference:

18 648795 4899100



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Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Photographs Page 1

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Monkton Borough Baptist Church  
Monkton, Vermont  
Credit: Elsa Gilbertson  
Date: November 1986  
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for Historic Preservation

Photograph 1

Description: East (front) facade of church

Photograph 2

Description: East (front) and south (side) facades of church

Photograph 3

Description: West (rear) and north (side) facades of church

Photograph 4

Description: Detail of belfry and front (east) pediment of  
church

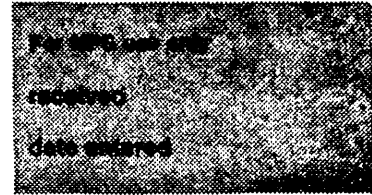
Photograph 5

Date: c.1890

Description: Historic view of front (east) and side (north)  
facades of church

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Continuation sheet Property Owner

Item number n/a

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Owner of property:

Florona Grange No. 540  
c/o Mr. Robert Cousino, Master  
Monkton, Vermont 05469