

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received MAR 6 1986  
date entered 4-15-86

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Tygarts Valley Church

and/or common Tygarts Valley Presbyterian Church

2. Location

street & number Route 219 not for publication

city, town Huttonsville vicinity of

state WV code 054 county Randolph code 083

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	N/A <input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Presbytery of Greenbrier

street & number 1270 Greenbrier Street

city, town Charleston vicinity of state WV 25311

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Randolph County Courthouse

street & number P.O. Box 368

city, town Elkins, WV state 26241

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N/A has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records

city, town state

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## 7. Description

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<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

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**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

Situated on a bluff overlooking the pastoral Tygarts Valley is one of West Virginia's most outstanding examples of wooden Victorian-Gothic architecture. The Tygarts Valley Presbyterian Church is a gem of 19th century ecclesiastic architecture combining simplistic design and elaborate features.

Resting on a solid sandstone foundation the whitewashed church is 61 by 31 feet with a 105 foot spire. The vertical massing and steeply pitched gable roof give the structure a Gothic appearance. The circular open timber gable trim that adorns the upper portion of the gable on the front or southeast elevation is another noticeable Gothic feature. Below the trim is a large stained glass Gothic window with tracery. The window is approximately fifteen feet high and ten feet wide. The glass is rolled cathedral glass imported from Europe and features the seal of the church of Scotland, a candle, and the seal of the Waldensian Church, a burning bush. (see Statement of Significance) Three smaller stained glass arched windows are found on the first level of the church also on the front elevation.

The tower and spire present the most striking feature of the church. The tower base has two stained glass lancet windows, one on the southeast elevation, the other on the rear or northwest elevation. The entrance to the church is on the southwest elevation of the tower base. Higher on the tower base are three wheel windows, one at each visible elevation. There is both horizontal and vertical siding on the tower base that adds a pleasing effect. Engaged buttresses go up each corner of the tower and form triangular pennicals. An octagonal belfry with louvered openings supports the magnificent shingled spire. A weathervane finial caps the top of the spire.

The sides of the church each have four stained glass lancet windows and engaged buttresses. The rear shows an aspect that extends slightly away from the regular massing.

The land encompassing the church is well landscaped and slopes gently to the road and offers a pleasing visual landmark.

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
				Work of a Master

**Specific dates** Built 1883 **Builder/Architect** Issac Purcell  
Lemuel Chenoweth

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

The importance of the Tygarts Valley Presbyterian Church lies in its being one of the best examples of Victorian-Gothic architecture in West Virginia, and as being constructed under the direction of a master builder.

The Tygarts Valley Presbyterian Church, constructed in 1883 offers one of the best, if not the best examples of Victorian-Gothic architecture in the state of West Virginia. The use of vertical massing and a steeply gabled roof give the structure its initial Gothic appearance. The open timber gable trim, with its circular and semi-circular design is a pleasing feature. The large Gothic tracery window on the front elevation is a striking part of the church. The most notable feature is the 105 foot steeple. The use of lancet windows and wheel windows and the use of multiple textured verticle and horizontal siding give the tower an air of uniqueness. The octagonal belfry and high shingled steeple further add to the Gothic appearance of the church.

The church was designed by Issac Purcell, a noted Philadelphia architect and was constructed under the direction of one of West Virginias most noted craftsmen. Lemuel Chenoweth (1811-1887) achieved notoriety in the region for his having designed and built many bridges along the Staunton-Parkersburg Turnpike in the mid-19th century. Two of his covered bridges are still standing and in use and are part of a National Register Thematic Nomination. The Barrackville Covered Bridge was built by Chenoweth in 1853 and listed on the National Register March 30, 1973 and the Philippi Bridge was built in 1852 and listed September 14, 1972. The Philippi Bridge is considered by many a master-piece in design and construction.

### History of the Tygarts Valley Church and Congregation

Although the Tygarts Valley Church was not officially brought under the authority of the Greenbrier Presbytery until 1820, Tygarts Valley Presbyterians were practicing their form of workshop as a group as early as 1772. This makes the congregation one of the oldest organized religious groups west of the Allegheny Mountains. The original church was completed in 1831 and was built of brick. This church was destroyed by Union troops during the Civil War who used the bricks for building ovens and chimneys for their winter encampment at Fort Melroy on Cheat Mountain. The current church was completed in 1883 and was the first edifice in Randolph County erected upon architects drawings. Of particular note is the large Gothic window on the front elevation. Of the various symbols and emblems on the window, two deserve particular attention. One is of the church of Scotland (a candle) commemorating the origin of the Presbyterian Church and the Scotch-Irish settlers who built the congregation. The other symbol, a burning bush, is of the Waldensian Church which was an Italian Protestant order. The men who actually built the church were Italian laborers contracted from railroad construction and were members of the Waldensian order.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

# 10. Geographical Data

Acree of nominated property Approximately 1 acre

Quadrangle name Mill Creek

Quadrangle scale 1:24:000

UTM References

A 

1	7	5	8	8	8	4	0	4	2	8	5	7	0	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

B 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

C 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

D 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

E 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

F 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

G 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

H 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

Verbal boundary description and justification

See Continuation Sheet

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state code county code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title William T. Wright, Historian

organization West Virginia Dept. of Culture & History date January 14, 1986

street & number Capitol Complex telephone (304) 348-0240

city or town Charleston state WV

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date 2-21-86

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Patrick Andrews  
Keeper of the National Register

date 4/15/86

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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Continuation sheet Major Bibliographical Ref. Item number 9 Page 2

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1. Dorsey D. Ellis, Th.D., Look Unto the Rock (McClain Printing Co., 1982)
2. A.S. Bosworth, History of Randolph County (McClain Printing Co., Reprint 1975).
3. Forinash, Lena, and Forinash, Donna E.; A History of Tygarts Valley Presbyterian Church (Unpublished 1983)
4. Interview Rev. J.S. Franklin Tygarts Valley Presbyterian Church April 12, 1985
5. West Virginia Heritage Encyclopedia, 1st Edition Vol. 5. Jim Comstock ed. Richwood, WV 1976
6. Report on the Condition of the Covered Bridges of West Virginia for the West Virginia Department of Culture and History. Michael Gioulis, September, 1985.

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Continuation sheet Tygarts Valley Church Item number 10

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Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning at point at corner of paved driveway and Route 219 and proceeding North along Route 219, 200 feet to point, thence travelling Northwest 200 feet to point, thence Southwest 200 feet to driveway, thence following driveway southwest 200 feet to point of beginning.