

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICENATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

APR 9 1979

RECEIVED

APR 26 1979

DATE ENTERED

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC Springfield Presbyterian Church

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

South of Sharpsburg on Springfield Road

— NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Sharpsburg

—  VICINITY OF

7

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Kentucky

021

Bath

011

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Springfield Church Board of Trustees

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Springfield Road

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Sharpsburg

—  VICINITY OF

Kentucky

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Bath County Courthouse

STREET &amp; NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Owingsville

Kentucky

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Survey of Historic Sites in Kentucky

DATE

1971

— FEDERAL  STATE — COUNTY — LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Kentucky Heritage Commission

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Frankfort

Kentucky

# 7 DESCRIPTION

## CONDITION

## CHECK ONE

## CHECK ONE

EXCELLENT  
 GOOD  
 FAIR

DETERIORATED  
 RUINS  
 UNEXPOSED

UNALTERED  
 ALTERED

ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED      DATE \_\_\_\_\_

---

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Springfield Presbyterian Church, located on Springfield Road in Bath County, is a one-story brick building constructed on a fieldstone foundation. It is a rectangular block, thirty-one feet wide by fifty-one feet long. Although built c. 1821, the church was Greek Revivalized apparently in the 1830s or '40s.

The church features a two-bay gabled facade with return box cornice. The two main entrances have double doors, eight feet in height, with four pane transoms above. The north and south walls have a corbelled cornice and are five bays wide. The openings are treated with jack arches above.

After 1940 the building was abandoned, but was restored in 1954 by concerned citizens of the community. The floor joists, window sills, and door sills, which had suffered termite damage, were replaced and metal trusses were substituted for the deteriorated center posts. The wood floor was replaced by asphalt tile on a concrete slab paved over four feet of rock. The exterior was also painted at that time.

The nominated acreage includes the church site, and the cemetery which encircles the church.

# 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 checked="" 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 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 type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

## SPECIFIC DATES

1821

## BUILDER/ARCHITECT

Thomas Graves

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Springfield Presbyterian Church, situated in the rolling farmland of rural Bath County on the fringe of the Bluegrass, is the oldest church building in the county. The congregation was the first established in Bath County, and was one of twenty Presbyterian congregations in existence by 1794 in Kentucky. Organized seventeen years before the formation of Bath County in 1811, Springfield was the only church in the county until the 1820s. Rev. Joseph P. Howe, who organized the congregation, was an active participant in the Great Revival movement in the early 19th century. During this period he held several revivals at the Springfield Church, the largest being a gathering of 3,000 people in the summer of 1801.

Bath County, the fifty-sixth county formed in Kentucky was first settled in the 1780s. The first settlements were along Slate Creek, and in this area Springfield Church was founded in 1793. The first permanent settlement was founded in 1783 when Hugh Sidewell, Thomas Clark and a Mr. Ballard settled on Slate Creek.<sup>1</sup>

The church was formally organized in 1794 by Reverend Joseph Price Howe, who had come to Kentucky from North Carolina the same year. According to the minutes of Transylvania Presbytery, dated June 12, 1793, the Springfield congregation had petitioned the Presbytery for permission to build a church, and leave had been granted. The same year a small square structure of hewn logs, covered with clapboards, was built on three acres of land given by William Robinson, one of the founding members. The church took its name from a spring located nearby.<sup>2</sup>

After construction of the first church, Springfield was served by two supply ministers, Robert Finley and James Blythe, for the first year. In 1798 when Kentucky Academy merged with Transylvania Seminary to form Transylvania University, the first college established west of the Alleghenies, Reverend Blythe was appointed as one of the first three professors of the school. A few years later he made acting president of the university, and served in this capacity for 12 years.<sup>3</sup>

In 1794 Reverend Howe was appointed as full-time minister of Springfield, and served in this capacity until 1825. During his ministry two churches were constructed to house the growing congregation.<sup>4</sup>

In 1804 a second church, a large double log structure, 64 ft. by 32 ft., was built by Andrew and James Richart. In 1821 the third and present church was built by Thomas Graves.<sup>5</sup> All three churches were situated on the original three acres of land given by Robinson. In 1816 the land was formally deeded to the Trustees of Springfield Church by John and Caty Jones, who had acquired the Robinson farm.<sup>6</sup>

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Atlas of Bath and Fleming Counties, Kentucky.  
Philadelphia: D. J. Lake, 1884.

Bath County Deed Book B, p. 1

Bishop, Robert H. An Outline History of the Presbyterian Church in Kentucky.  
Lexington: Thomas T. Skillman, 1824.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Longitude - 83° 54' 13"

Latitude - 38° 08' 56"

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 3 acres

QUADRANGLE NAME Sharpsburg Quadrangle

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A 

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

Beginning at point A proceeding 410 ft. southeast along the west side of the State Highway 1927 to point B; thence 400 ft. west to point C; thence 300 ft. northwest to point D; thence 395 ft. northeast to point A.

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

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

William G. Johnson, Senior Historian

September 1978

ORGANIZATION

Kentucky Heritage Commission

DATE

(502) 564-3741

STREET & NUMBER

104 Bridge Street

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Frankfort

STATE

Kentucky

# 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

*Edward W. Gustin*

TITLE

DATE 3/30/79

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 9.26.79

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 4/24/79

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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Springfield Presbyterian Church

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

Under the leadership of Reverend Howe, Springfield grew to be the largest and most influential church in Eastern Kentucky.<sup>7</sup> As the only church in the county until 1814, Springfield played an important role in the early religious history of the region. The church served the residents of Owingsville, first town established in the county in 1811, and Sharpsburg, the second town founded in 1814.<sup>8</sup> Among the early members of the church were Richard and Polly Menefee of Owingsville, parents of Richard H. Menefee, Bath County's most distinguished citizen. They had been married by Reverend Howe in 1802. The younger Menefee was an important and influential figure in the state political scene from 1836 to 1841, and was elected to the United States House of Representatives at the age of twenty-seven. He died at the early age of thirty-one thus cutting short a brilliant career. Menefee County, formed in 1869 from part of Bath County, was named in honor of Richard Menefee.<sup>10</sup>

During the period of the Great Revival in America, Reverend Howe held several campmeetings at Springfield Church, the largest taking place in August 1801, a few weeks after the famous meeting at Cane Ridge in Bourbon County. Three thousand attended this revival led by Rev. Barton W. Stone, the organizer of the Cane Ridge Meeting and founder of the Christian Church.<sup>11</sup>

In addition to his participation in the Great Revival, Reverend Howe played an important role in the early history of the Presbyterian Church in Kentucky. He was a member of the first Presbyterian Synod of Kentucky which met in Danville in October, 1802.<sup>12</sup> Three years later Reverend Howe was again a member of the Synod of Kentucky which met in Danville on October 15, 1802, and was appointed to a commission to investigate allegations and complaints brought forth by the traditionalist ministers of the Cumberland Presbytery.<sup>13</sup>

The commission met on December 3, 1805 at Gasper River Meeting House in Logan County, the site of the second revival held in Kentucky in July, 1800, and which has been referred to as the catalyst of the Great Revival movement in America. Reverend Howe was chosen as moderator of the commission. The purpose of the commission was to investigate the cases of Reverend James Howe, a Methodist minister who had been accepted to the Presbyterian ministry, and twenty-four new ministers who had been accepted by the revivalist ministers of the Cumberland Presbytery without requiring them to submit to the usual examinations of faith and allowing them to swear allegiance to a loose interpretation of the Presbyterian Confession of Faith.<sup>14</sup>

The commission ruled that the former Methodist minister and the twenty-four new ministers could not exhort, preach or administer the Presbyterian faith regardless of their acceptance by the revivalist ministers, who constituted a majority of the Cumberland Presbytery. Their decision widened the schism between the Cumberland Presbytery and the Synod of Kentucky, and resulted in the break between the two factions and the organization of the independent Cumberland Presbyterian Church on February 4, 1810. Reverend Robert Davidson, an early historian of the

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 3

Presbyterian Church in Kentucky, emphasized the importance of this meeting as being "one of the most interesting and important convocations ever known in the American Church; without precedent, and, thus far, without imitation."<sup>15</sup>

As more people settled in Bath County, Springfield was an important factor in the growth of the Presbyterian Church in the county, and has been referred to as the mother church. In 1839 Gilead Presbyterian Church was organized by members of Springfield. Nine years later forty-five members of Springfield organized the Sharpsburg Presbyterian Church in 1848. In 1876 the Owingsville Presbyterian Church was constituted by members of Springfield.<sup>16</sup>

Over the years several meetings of various Presbyteries have been held at the present church, Presbyteries being regional councils of Presbyterians ministers. Ebenezer Presbytery, of which Springfield was member, met at the church in 1824, 1828 and 1836. The latter resulted in heated discussions and debates concerning the evils of slavery. West Lexington Presbytery which included Springfield met at the present church in 1885, 1870 and 1894.<sup>17</sup>

Springfield has been an active church since its organization in 1793. During the 1940s the church became inactive, and the old brick building was abandoned for a few years. In 1954 Springfield Church was reorganized and continues as an active church today.

The building, with its double doors and rectangular box-like design, is illustrative of traditional church construction. The return box cornice and the Greek Revival doorframes lend a certain sophistication and dignity to the structure.

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Springfield Presbyterian Church

CONTINUATION SHEET Footnotes ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 4

- 1 Lewis Collins, A History of Kentucky, Vol.II., pp. 46-47;  
John A. Richards, A History of Bath County, Kentucky, pp.41-43;  
Robert Sanders, An Historical Sketch of Springfield Presbyterian Church, pp.15-16;  
V.B. Young, An Outline History of Bath County, p. 8.
- 2 Sanders, pp. 15-17.
- 3 Collins, Vol. I. p. 463.
- 4 Richards, p. 395; Sanders, p. 16-17.
- 5 Sanders, p. 17.
- 6 Bath County Deed Book B, p. 1.
- 7 Richards, p. 395; Sanders, p. 17.
- 8 Richards, pp. 395-414.
- 9 Sanders, p. 105.
- 10 Collins, Vol. II. pp. 601-602.
- 11 Reverend Robert Davidson, History Of The Presbyterian Church In The State of Kentucky, p. 120; Sanders, p. 28.
- 12 Robert H. Bishop, An Outline History Of The Presbyterian Church in Kentucky, pp. 250-251.
- 13 Bishop, pp. 120-125; Davidson, pp. 229-232.
- 14 Bishop, pp. 120-125; Davidson, pp. 233-241.
- 15 Collins, Vol. I. pp. 433-434, 459; Davidson, pp. 239-254.
- 16 Sanders, p. 29.
- 17 Ibid:, p. 26-27.

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ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 2

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Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1972.

Collins, Richard H. History of Kentucky, Vol. I & II.  
Covington: by the author, 1877.

Davidson, Rev. Robert. History Of The Presbyterian Church In The State Of Kentucky.  
New York: Robert Carter, Publisher, 1847.

Richards, John A. A History Of Bath County, Kentucky.  
Yuma, Arizona: Southwest Printers, 1961.

Sanders, Rev. Robert S. An Historical Sketch of Springfield Presbyterian Church.  
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Young, V. B. An Outline History of Bath County, Kentucky.  
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TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC Springfield Presbyterian Church

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

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— NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Sharpsburg

—  VICINITY OF

7

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<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Springfield Church Board of Trustees

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Springfield Road

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Sharpsburg

—  VICINITY OF

Kentucky

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Bath County Courthouse

STREET &amp; NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Owingsville

Kentucky

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DATE

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SURVEY RECORDS

Kentucky Heritage Commission

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Frankfort

Kentucky

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## CONDITION

## CHECK ONE

## CHECK ONE

EXCELLENT  
 GOOD  
 FAIR

DETERIORATED  
 RUINS  
 UNEXPOSED

UNALTERED  
 ALTERED

ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED      DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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# 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 checked="" 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
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<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
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<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

## SPECIFIC DATES

1821

## BUILDER/ARCHITECT

Thomas Graves

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Springfield Presbyterian Church, situated in the rolling farmland of rural Bath County on the fringe of the Bluegrass, is the oldest church building in the county. The congregation was the first established in Bath County, and was one of twenty Presbyterian congregations in existence by 1794 in Kentucky. Organized seventeen years before the formation of Bath County in 1811, Springfield was the only church in the county until the 1820s. Rev. Joseph P. Howe, who organized the congregation, was an active participant in the Great Revival movement in the early 19th century. During this period he held several revivals at the Springfield Church, the largest being a gathering of 3,000 people in the summer of 1801.

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**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

Longitude - 83° 54' 13"

Latitude - 38° 08' 56"

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 3 acres

QUADRANGLE NAME Sharpsburg Quadrangle

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A									
ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING							
C									
E									
G									

B									
ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING							
D									
F									
H									

**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

Beginning at point A proceeding 410 ft. southeast along the west side of the State Highway 1927 to point B; thence 400 ft. west to point C; thence 300 ft. northwest to point D; thence 395 ft. northeast to point A.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

William G. Johnson, Senior Historian

September 1978

ORGANIZATION

Kentucky Heritage Commission

DATE

(502) 564-3741

STREET & NUMBER

104 Bridge Street

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Frankfort

STATE

Kentucky

**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

*Edward W. Gustin*

TITLE

DATE

3/30/79

**FOR NPS USE ONLY**

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST: *[Signature]*  
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

*[Signature]*  
CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE

9.26.79

DATE

4/24/79

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Under the leadership of Reverend Howe, Springfield grew to be the largest and most influential church in Eastern Kentucky.<sup>7</sup> As the only church in the county until 1814, Springfield played an important role in the early religious history of the region. The church served the residents of Owingsville, first town established in the county in 1811, and Sharpsburg, the second town founded in 1814.<sup>8</sup> Among the early members of the church were Richard and Polly Menefee of Owingsville, parents of Richard H. Menefee, Bath County's most distinguished citizen. They had been married by Reverend Howe in 1802. The younger Menefee was an important and influential figure in the state political scene from 1836 to 1841, and was elected to the United States House of Representatives at the age of twenty-seven. He died at the early age of thirty-one thus cutting short a brilliant career. Menefee County, formed in 1869 from part of Bath County, was named in honor of Richard Menefee.<sup>10</sup>

During the period of the Great Revival in America, Reverend Howe held several campmeetings at Springfield Church, the largest taking place in August 1801, a few weeks after the famous meeting at Cane Ridge in Bourbon County. Three thousand attended this revival led by Rev. Barton W. Stone, the organizer of the Cane Ridge Meeting and founder of the Christian Church.<sup>11</sup>

In addition to his participation in the Great Revival, Reverend Howe played an important role in the early history of the Presbyterian Church in Kentucky. He was a member of the first Presbyterian Synod of Kentucky which met in Danville in October, 1802.<sup>12</sup> Three years later Reverend Howe was again a member of the Synod of Kentucky which met in Danville on October 15, 1802, and was appointed to a commission to investigate allegations and complaints brought forth by the traditionalist ministers of the Cumberland Presbytery.<sup>13</sup>

The commission met on December 3, 1805 at Gasper River Meeting House in Logan County, the site of the second revival held in Kentucky in July, 1800, and which has been referred to as the catalyst of the Great Revival movement in America. Reverend Howe was chosen as moderator of the commission. The purpose of the commission was to investigate the cases of Reverend James Howe, a Methodist minister who had been accepted to the Presbyterian ministry, and twenty-four new ministers who had been accepted by the revivalist ministers of the Cumberland Presbytery without requiring them to submit to the usual examinations of faith and allowing them to swear allegiance to a loose interpretation of the Presbyterian Confession of Faith.<sup>14</sup>

The commission ruled that the former Methodist minister and the twenty-four new ministers could not exhort, preach or administer the Presbyterian faith regardless of their acceptance by the revivalist ministers, who constituted a majority of the Cumberland Presbytery. Their decision widened the schism between the Cumberland Presbytery and the Synod of Kentucky, and resulted in the break between the two factions and the organization of the independent Cumberland Presbyterian Church on February 4, 1810. Reverend Robert Davidson, an early historian of the

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Presbyterian Church in Kentucky, emphasized the importance of this meeting as being "one of the most interesting and important convocations ever known in the American Church; without precedent, and, thus far, without imitation."<sup>15</sup>

As more people settled in Bath County, Springfield was an important factor in the growth of the Presbyterian Church in the county, and has been referred to as the mother church. In 1839 Gilead Presbyterian Church was organized by members of Springfield. Nine years later forty-five members of Springfield organized the Sharpsburg Presbyterian Church in 1848. In 1876 the Owingsville Presbyterian Church was constituted by members of Springfield.<sup>16</sup>

Over the years several meetings of various Presbyteries have been held at the present church, Presbyteries being regional councils of Presbyterians ministers. Ebenezer Presbytery, of which Springfield was member, met at the church in 1824, 1828 and 1836. The latter resulted in heated discussions and debates concerning the evils of slavery. West Lexington Presbytery which included Springfield met at the present church in 1885, 1870 and 1894.<sup>17</sup>

Springfield has been an active church since its organization in 1793. During the 1940s the church became inactive, and the old brick building was abandoned for a few years. In 1954 Springfield Church was reorganized and continues as an active church today.

The building, with its double doors and rectangular box-like design, is illustrative of traditional church construction. The return box cornice and the Greek Revival doorframes lend a certain sophistication and dignity to the structure.

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- 1        Lewis Collins, A History of Kentucky, Vol.II., pp. 46-47;  
John A. Richards, A History of Bath County, Kentucky, pp.41-43;  
Robert Sanders, An Historical Sketch of Springfield Presbyterian Church, pp.15-16;  
V.B. Young, An Outline History of Bath County, p. 8.
- 2        Sanders, pp. 15-17.
- 3        Collins, Vol. I. p. 463.
- 4        Richards, p. 395; Sanders, p. 16-17.
- 5        Sanders, p. 17.
- 6        Bath County Deed Book B, p. 1.
- 7        Richards, p. 395; Sanders, p. 17.
- 8        Richards, pp. 395-414.
- 9        Sanders, p. 105.
- 10       Collins, Vol. II. pp. 601-602.
- 11       Reverend Robert Davidson, History Of The Presbyterian Church In The State  
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- 12       Robert H. Bishop, An Outline History Of The Presbyterian Church in Kentucky,  
pp. 250-251.
- 13       Bishop, pp. 120-125; Davidson, pp. 229-232.
- 14       Bishop, pp. 120-125; Davidson, pp. 233-241.
- 15       Collins, Vol. I. pp. 433-434, 459; Davidson, pp. 239-254.
- 16       Sanders, p. 29.
- 17       Ibid:, p. 26-27.

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