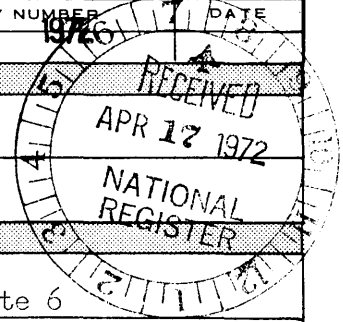


PH0010871

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Connecticut
COUNTY: Windham
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY NUMBER NOV 9 1976
DATE APR 17 1972



1. NAME

COMMON:
Unitarian Meeting House

AND/OR HISTORIC:
Second Congregational Church of Pomfret

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
Southwest corner of the junction of Route 169 and Route 6

CITY OR TOWN:
Brooklyn

STATE Connecticut	CODE 09	COUNTY: Windham	CODE 015
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3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <input type="checkbox"/> Comments

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Unitarian Universalist Association

STREET AND NUMBER:
25 Beacon Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Boston

STATE: Massachusetts	CODE 20
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5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:
[Blank]

CITY OR TOWN:
Brooklyn

STATE: Connecticut	CODE 09
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6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Connecticut Historic Structures and Landmarks Survey

DATE OF SURVEY:
1967

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Connecticut Historical Commission

STREET AND NUMBER:
54 Pratt Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Hartford

STATE: Connecticut	CODE 09
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SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Connecticut
COUNTY: Windham
ENTRY NUMBER: NOV 9 1976
DATE: APR 17 1972
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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Brooklyn Unitarian Meeting House is an architecturally significant church because it is one of the few remaining pre-Revolutionary churches in Connecticut and because it reflects a transition from one period to another in the form of Congregational churches. Probably designed and built by local men, for there is no record of anyone else, the church retains the side entry with the pulpit at the opposite wall, but the high bell tower at the east end shows the trend toward the long aisle, with the pulpit ultimately placed at the other end. There are few churches of this type still standing; Wethersfield and Farmington both have Congregational churches of the same period and form, though Brooklyn's has the most characteristic exterior.¹

This exterior is of white shingles with sparse decoration. Over the entryways and windows are triangular pediments. Those of the entryways are supported by a frieze of moulding and by plain pilasters. The double-leaf doors are paneled. At the west end in the attic is a small round light and high up in the tower are small windows. Elsewhere window sash is sixteen over sixteen. The belfry is octagonal, supported on eight columns which define arched openings with keystones and support an upper stage with smaller corresponding openings closed by louvers. Above this is an eight-sided tapered spire terminating in a large pennant. The exterior represents the original color; in 1771 the church was voted to "be colored white". The interior is being restored to its original state, with pulpit, sounding board, and box pews, work being based on old records. According to Frederic Palmer, late restoration architect, this is the only meeting house in Connecticut for which there is full data available for a complete restoration. It is an important building for the town and for the area.

¹Anthony T.B. Carvan, p. 114.
²T.S.M. Crofut, p. 835.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



8. SIGNIFICANCE

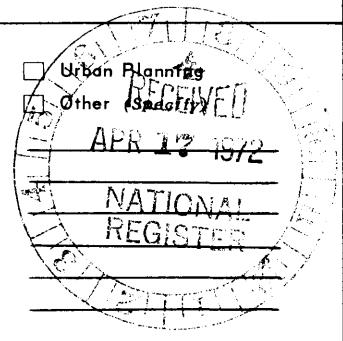
PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian | 16th Century | 18th Century | 20th Century
 15th Century | 17th Century | 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1771-74

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | |



STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

Part of the area now called Brooklyn was originally granted to Captain John Blackwell, Jr., in 1637. Blackwell was a former treasurer in Oliver Cromwell's army, and named the area Mortlake, after Mortlake in Surrey, England, a favorite resort of Cromwell's followers. The area was not actually settled until 1703, for religious liberty in England had been restored to the Dissenters and Blackwell returned home. Until 1757, when Mortlake was annexed to Pomfret, town government and church taxes were divided between Pomfret and Canterbury, to the north and south respectively. Mortlake was included in the district named Brooklyn, (Brook-line, on the banks of the Quinebaug River), in 1752, which then was made up of parts of both Pomfret and Canterbury. Thus, when the Ecclesiastical Society was established there in 1731 it was called Mortlake Society. Brooklyn was not incorporated until 1786; therefore, when its first meeting house was built in 1734 it was called the Second Church of Pomfret.

The next church was built in 1771. Its erection was somewhat hindered by the opposition from Godfrey Halbone, one of the town's largest landholders, hence taxpayers, and a staunch Anglican, who indicated that he "would be something unpleasant" if he paid taxes to build a Puritan church. For many years his opposition was successful--from 1762, when a new church was first considered. By 1770 the majority of the town voted favorably for a new building, and Halbone and some local followers built their own church, Trinity Episcopal Church, (entered on the National Register October 15, 1970). One of the leading proponents of the new Congregational meeting-house was General Isreal Putnam.

It was decided to build the meetinghouse. Daniel Tyler was the supervising architect. It was to be sixty feet long, forty-six feet wide and twenty-six feet high from the top of the sill to the top of the plate, with the front-foreside facing to the south. On September 2, 1771, it was voted that the exterior should be white and that "an electric rod" might be set up "provided it be done without cost to the society".² The work of construction went well into the year 1774, as indicated by the June 10 entry of the Society's proceedings for that year. A committee was established to examine the work of Mr. James Cleaveland on the steeple and porch.

¹W.S.M. Crofut, p. 835.

²notes from the Restoration Committee of the Brooklyn Meetinghouse.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Crofut, F.S.M. Guide to the History and the Historical Sites of Connecticut.
 Yale University Press, New Haven, 1937.

Garvan, Anthony N.P. Architecture and Town Planning in Colonial Connecticut.
 Yale University Press, New Haven, 1951.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		41° 47' 15"	72° 57' 02"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 2 acres

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
 Susan Babbitt, Administrative Trainee

ORGANIZATION: Connecticut Historical Commission DATE: March 29, 1972

STREET AND NUMBER:
 54 Pratt Street

CITY OR TOWN: Hartford STATE: Connecticut CODE: 09

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name: [Signature]

Title: State Liaison Officer

Date: April 3, 1972

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

[Signature]
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 11/9/72

ATTEST:

[Signature]
 Keeper of The National Register

Date: Nov 7, 1972

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
Connecticut	
COUNTY	
Windham	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	NOV 9 1972

(Number all entries)

#8 Significance

The committee reported that "the Banisters are not thick enough by one-half (inch)" and "that two pair of the stairs in the steeple are not well brac'd or sufficiently fastened and that the first and third floors in the steeple are not well laid and that the floor in the porch is not well laid."³ Mr. Cleaveland had to redo the work to the satisfaction of the committee before the Society would "accept the same as done according to the bargain made with him."⁴

The building was in use, however, from at least as early as January, 1772, while still only partially complete. When finished, the interior of the meetinghouse had a spacious balcony that ran around three sides, box pews, and a high canopied pulpit.

The spirit of independence which brought about the establishment of the Society asserted itself again when the junior minister, the Reverend Luther Willson was dismissed for seeking Unitarian affiliation. However, a strong party agreed with Mr. Willson's views and the church finally divided into two separate organizations. The Trinitarians were the weaker faction, and the Unitarians secured their first minister, the Reverend Samuel May of Boston, uncle of Louisa May Alcott.

In 1845 the interior was remodeled. The box pews were replaced and the high pulpit taken down and made more modern. A floor was built across the open space of the auditorium at the balcony level; the upper part was used for religious services, the lower for social functions. The hurricane of 1938 toppled the steeple and damaged the roof, allowing the elements to do some interior damage as well. The steeple was replaced and the exterior returned to its early appearance. In 1960 the restoration of the interior was begun. In 1964 the Restoration Committee was created. Many structural repairs had already been completed--detail remained to be done. Charles Strickland of Boston is the architect; the late Frederic Palmer was a consultant. Some of the work planned in the early stages included installation of the pulpit at the north wall and replacement of two rows of six square pews each on the main floor. The balcony frontal has been replaced and free standing box pews and the Deacon's pew were restored during 1968-9. Work remains to be done, and Committee is trying to raise the necessary money. The town is extremely proud of its association with Isreal Putnam, a native son, and view the church as a monument to him. He was one of the moving spirits behind its construction and on May 9, 1770 he was buried from the church.

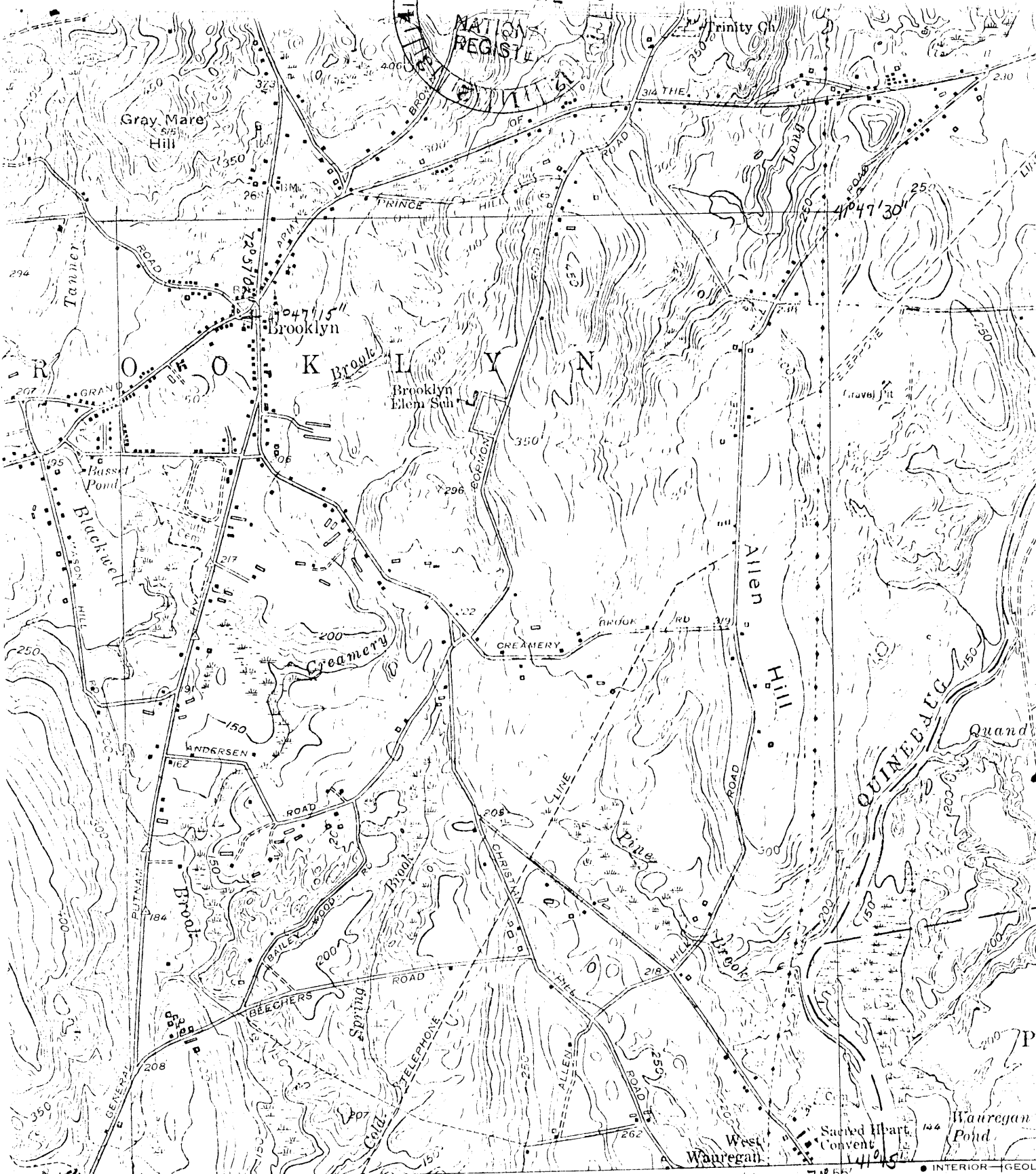
³notes from the Restoration Committee.

⁴notes from the Restoration Committee.



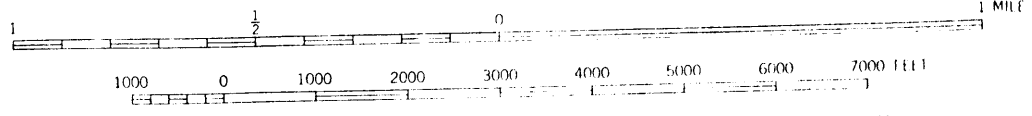
Danielson Quadrangle

RECEIVED
APR 17 1972
NATIONAL
REGISTRY



(PLAINFIELD) 256
6667 III NW

SCALE 1:24000



1 KILOMETER