

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

For NPS use only

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

received **NOV 7 1988**

date entered

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

**1. Name**

historic Stark Union Church

and/or common Stark Church

**2. Location**

street & number Stark Village NH 110 N/A not for publication

city, town Stark N/A vicinity of

state New Hampshire code 33 county Coos code 007

**3. Classification**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>	
<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	N/A in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	N/A being considered	<input 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 Pew Owners' Association of Stark Union Church

street & number Stark Village

city, town Stark N/A vicinity of state New Hampshire 03582

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Coos County Registry Of Deeds, Coos County Court House

street & number 148 Main Street

city, town Lancaster state New Hampshire

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title None has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date N/A  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records

city, town state

## 7. Description

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

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

Built in 1853, the Stark Union Church is a one story clapboarded building resting on split granite slabs. Situated near the Ammonoosuc River, it is oriented so that its long elevation nearly borders Route 110. The main body of the structure measures 36' wide and 46' deep with an apse projecting about nine additional feet. On the gable (south) end, a central double hung window with 12 over 12 lights and louvered shutters is flanked by two doorways. Both windows and doorways feature low pitch pediment-shaped lintels. The side elevations are three bays wide, each bay contains a window identical to that of the front facade. Panelled pilaster cornerboards articulate the corners of the building and reflect the Greek Revival style as do the simple lintels. Above the entrance is a two stage square tower housing a belfry with arched openings and pilaster strips. Inspired by the Gothic Revival, crenellation runs between the pointed pinnacles which mark the corners of both stages. Behind the tower is a partial chimney.

The interior of the church is plastered and displays brass lamps. The forty eight pews were originally painted red and filled the church leaving no room to cross from one aisle to the other. Pew owners entered the building either through the right or left door depending on the location of their pew. The pews have since been rearranged with two moved to the entrance hall, two placed at right angles at the back and four placed similarly in front. Alterations over the years include the addition of the apse to house the choir and a reed organ. A fire in 1902 burned a corner of the church. The damage was repaired. A wooden platform which at one time rested in front of the entrance has been removed.

As constructed in 1853 the Union Church was, and is, nondenominational, housing the Sunday services of numerous faiths which previously met in homes or schools. With a population of about 400 in 1853 no single denomination in Stark could support the construction of a church of its own. Solomon Cole, Andrew Cole and Benjamin Thompson served as members of the building committee. To raise funds for the church, which was erected at the cost of \$1,050. pews were numbered and appraised. The pews and church became property of the buyers, their heirs and assigns. The original list of owners, which survives, bear the names of many old settlers of Stark. The continuity of the pews ownership has been maintained since 1853 and is administered today by the Pew Owners' Association, formed in the 1950's to maintain the building for future generations as a part of their heritage. Today, this is the only church in the town of Stark and houses services, graduations, weddings and funerals.

# 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 type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

**Specific dates** 1853 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

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

The Stark Union Church is a fine example of a rural interpretation of the architectural styles which existed in the 1850's. Reflecting the evolution from the Greek Revival to romantic styles such as the Gothic Revival, the church was probably a product of a local designer and builder. Embellishment is limited to the church exterior; the simple, utilitarian interior was designed to house the demands and tastes of the various denominations which would use the building. The church has undergone few alterations and remains today an excellent index to the taste and skills of a rural New Hampshire town. (With the adjacent covered bridge the Stark Union Church is one of the most photographed spots in New England.)

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

History of Coos County, New Hampshire. Syracuse: W.A. Fergusson and Co., 1888. Pages 562-580  
 Stark Bicentennial Committ. History of Stark New Hampshire. New Hampshire: Currier Printing Co., Inc., 1974. Pages 151-156

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property One acre more or less

Quadrangle name Percy, New Hampshire

Quadrangle scale 1:62500

UTM References

A 

1	9	3	0	8	8	7	5	4	9	4	1	2	5	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C 

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D 

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H 

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Verbal boundary description and justification

The nominated property is refered to as Tax Map E - Lot 30 in the tax records of the town of Stark. Boundaries are noted on the attached sketch map.

~~The nominated property includes the entire parcel associated with Stark Union Church.~~

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

state	code	county	code
<u>N/A</u>			
state	code	county	code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Mrs. Pearl T. Emery, Trustee

organization Pew Owners Association date July 13, 1983

street & number Lost Nation Road telephone 1-603-636-1539

city or town Groveton, state New Hampshire 03582

# 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 [Signature]  
 Commissioner, Dept. of Resources & Economic Development  
 title NH State Historic Preservation Officer date OCT 28 1983

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

[Signature] Entered in the National Register date 12/8/83  
 Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

Chief of Registration

date

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Continuation sheet

Item number

Page

July 13, 1983

I hereby certify that the Stark Union Church has not  
changed in appearance since the photographs were taken..

*Pearl J. Emery*

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

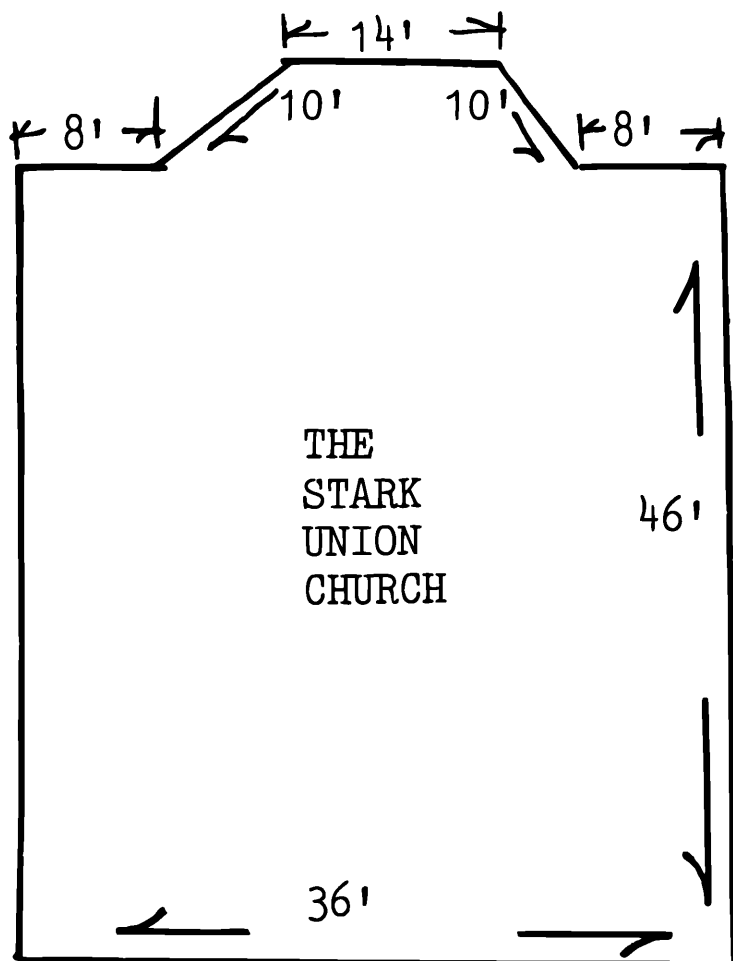
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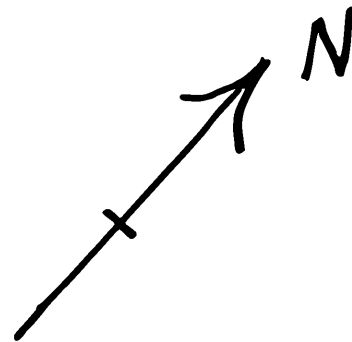
Continuation sheet SKETCH MAP

Item number N/A

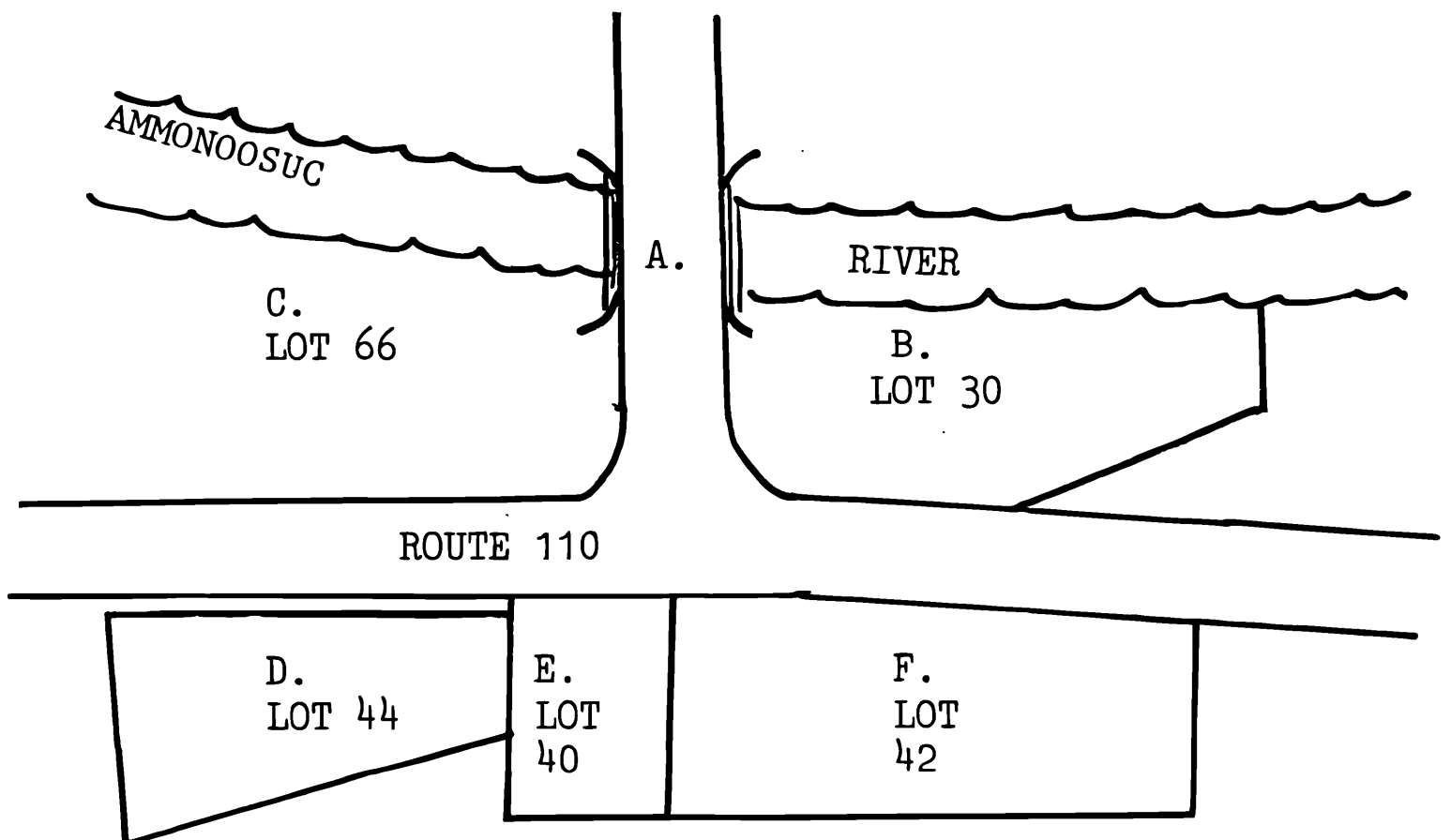
Page 1



STARK UNION CHURCH FLOOR PLAN  
AVERAGE FLOOR AREA 1826 SQ. FT.  
PERIMETER 178 FT.



- KEY
- A.) STARK COVERED BRIDGE
  - B.) STARK UNION CHURCH
  - C.) STARK VILLAGE SCHOOL
  - D.) LIBRARY
  - E.) STARK TOWN HALL
  - F.) CEMETERY



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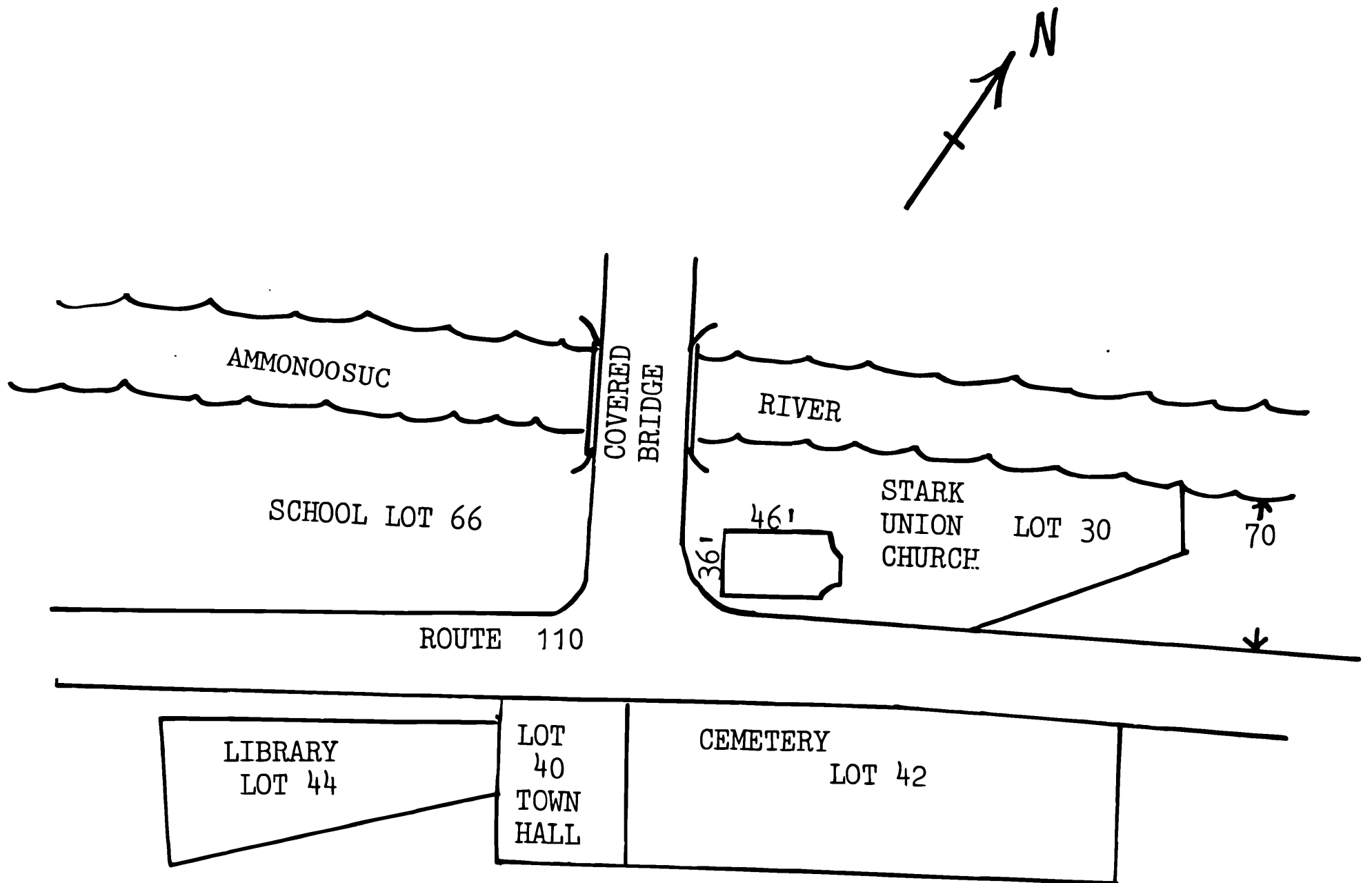
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Continuation sheet SKETCH MAP

Item number N/A

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SKETCH MAP  
OF  
STARK UNION CHURCH



SCALE: 1 INCH = 100 FEET