

56-1656



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

**1. Name of Property**

Historic name: Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District  
Other names/site number: Advent Christian Church and Conference Center  
Name of related multiple property listing:  
N/A  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

**2. Location**

Street & number: 150 Advent Lane  
City or town: Hartford State: VT County:  
Windsor  
Not For Publication:  n/a Vicinity:  n/a

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,  
I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

\_\_\_ national      X statewide      \_\_\_ local  
Applicable National Register Criteria:  
X A      \_\_\_ B      X C      \_\_\_ D

[Signature] 8/3/17  
Signature of certifying official/Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Date  
Vermont Division for Historic Preservation  
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official:

Date

Title :

State or Federal agency/bureau  
or Tribal Government

#### 4. 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:)

*for Edson H. Beall*

Signature of the Keeper

9.21.17  
Date of Action

#### 5. Classification

##### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private:

Public - Local

Public - State

Public - Federal

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**Category of Property**

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s)

District

Site

Structure

Object

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>22</u>	<u>12</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>24</u>	<u>12</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION: religious facility

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION: religious facility

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

No Style

**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Wood, Stone, metal, concrete, vinyl

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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#### Summary Paragraph

The Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District is a religiously oriented summer community in White River Junction, a village in Hartford, Vermont. It is located on a 7-½ acre terrace between the Connecticut River to the east and Mount Olivet Cemetery to the west. Camp meetings were religious gatherings in a natural setting, characterized by large audiences attending religious services with on-site camping and lodging for an extended period of time.<sup>1</sup> The Advent Camp Meeting Grounds consist of thirty-three buildings, one structure and one object. Established in 1887, the Advent Camp remains in active use and still hosts religious gatherings and services each summer. The buildings that make up the camp are of simple design and construction, and reflect national architectural trends in late 19<sup>th</sup>/early 20<sup>th</sup> century camp meeting grounds. These buildings consist of small residential cottages and service buildings including classrooms, dormitories, dining hall, kitchen and tabernacle. While minor changes in layout and limited new construction has occurred since its founding in 1887, overall the Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

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#### Narrative Description

The Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District consists of three separate buildings for group lodging, two separate classroom buildings, a kitchen building, baptistery, tabernacle, residential cottages and a single gravestone. Established in 1887, the Advent Camp Meeting Grounds host evangelical events attended by people of multiple denominations for extended

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<sup>1</sup> Lampl, Elizabeth Jo with Clare Lise Kelly, "Historic Context Report "A Harvest in the Open for Saving Souls -The Camp Meetings of Montgomery County," Montgomery County Planning Department Historic Preservation Section, Maryland Historical Trust, July 2004.

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periods of time. The meeting grounds are located in the Taft's Flats neighborhood of White River Junction, named after Orren A. Taft, a farmer who owned all of the land in the present day neighborhood. The 7-½ acre site is located between the Connecticut River to the east and Mount Olivet Cemetery to the west.

With the rapid growth of evangelical camp meetings throughout America in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, the Reverend B.W. Gorham's 1854 *Camp Meeting Manual* influenced many northeastern camp meeting grounds' design and layout. Gorham, a Methodist minister, felt the camp meeting grounds should be kept "as simple as possible, with modest cloth tents ... [as] he felt it was important to have society tents so that member churches could hold more private prayer meetings."<sup>2</sup> Gorham felt that meeting grounds required a circular layout "for the worship area, with the preaching stand at the north end so the audience would not face the sun. Buildings were generally unheated, as they were intended for summer use."<sup>3</sup> The layout of the Advent Camp Meeting Grounds originally reflected Gorham's circular design, but an 1895 fire resulted in a layout change to more of a horseshoe pattern, with the tabernacle located at the northern end of the site and the baptistery in the center. The cottages, originally densely clustered together, were also spaced farther apart in order to avoid another disaster caused by flames spreading from building to building. To accomplish this task, "...several of the cottages were lifted onto logs and moved, by horsepower, to their current location in the center green."<sup>4</sup>

The religious camp meetings of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century "were largely open-air affairs, with rows of seats facing a preaching stand."<sup>5</sup> This description of a camp meeting is accurate of the White River Junction camp. The large grassy area in the middle of the circle/horseshoe "was mostly occupied by a series of benches, which would allow two preachers to stand at either end of the green to deliver simultaneous sermons to the large number of congregants."<sup>6</sup> Historian Jan Cunningham points out that the intimate setting, small size, and openness of the campground form "a highly organized, non-hierarchical setting that embodied the democratic sensibilities of the community."<sup>7</sup>

The cottages and classrooms are rectangular in plan with a gable front. The typical cottage is a symmetrical, 1½ -story structure with a steeply pitched gable roof. The main entry is centered on the gable facade and flanked by a double hung window on each side. The balloon-framed buildings have a simple interior, with a 12' x 24' open space on each floor. The first floor served as a living room, parlor and kitchen. Stairs in the back corner of the room lead to the second floor sleeping quarters. Although initially intended for use during the warmer summer months and thus built without a heat source, today many of the cottages have wood-burning stoves connected to external cinderblock chimneys. A good example of an intact cottage is Building #2,

<sup>2</sup> Beard, Christine, Asbury Grove National Register Nomination, Hamilton, Massachusetts. National Park Service, 2009.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Hongoltz-Hetling, Matt, "Hartford Christian Camp Eyed for Historic Designation:." Valley News, April 24, 2016.

<sup>5</sup> Guion Griffis Johnson, *Ante-Bellum North Carolina: A Social History*. Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 1937.

<sup>6</sup> Hongoltz-Hetling, Matt, "Hartford Christian Camp Eyed for Historic Designation:." Valley News, April 24, 2016.

<sup>7</sup> Connecticut Preservation News, Volume XXXI, No. 2, March/April 2008

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presently used as a dormitory. It retains much of its original material and it has not been updated with insulation, interior walls or new flooring.

According to interviews with present day cottage owners, most of the buildings were designed by local builders and are modest in their detailing. It is believed that a carpenter in Morrisville, Vermont, built many of the original cottages. Costing \$18.75 a piece, the carpenter transported the lumber to White River Junction on his horse cart.<sup>8</sup> There is no archival evidence to support this information. A secondary anecdote relays the story of the grandfather of present day cottage owner Susan Butterfield riding on the lumber when it arrived in the camp.<sup>9</sup> Because attendees of religious ceremonies at the Advent Camp Meeting Grounds awaited the second coming of Jesus Christ, they did not initially intend to remain at the site for a long period of time. This explains the lightly built structures with no foundations or vertical support posts. All of the buildings were built on cinderblock piers.

The following inventory of resources in the Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District is numbered sequentially starting at the entrance to the camp. Where applicable, common names such as "Cottage #2" or "Building B" are included in parentheses.

### **1. Cottage (Building #2), c. 1974, non-contributing due to age**

This is a 1-story, L-plan building with intersecting gables, 1/1 windows and shallow pitched metal gable roof. It is situated parallel to the road. There is an offset entry door on the west gable end and the windows are covered with plywood. There is a rear addition with plywood covered window openings and a modern door. A detached shed is located to the southeast of the building.

Shawn Martel owned this building in 2016.

### **2. Classroom/Cottage (Building #29), c. 1890, contributing**

This is a 1½ story, rectangular plan building with a steeply pitched gable roof. Orientated east-west, the building is situated diagonal to the road. The main entry is centered on the gable facade and flanked by a double hung window on each side. There is a 2/2 window centered in the gable peak. The cottage has vertical board siding, replacement windows, and sits on cinder block piers.

When the site was originally laid out, the cottages were closely grouped together. Following a disastrous fire in 1895, the cottages were spread out. By 1971, many cottages were moved to other sites on the meeting grounds. This cottage was moved from its unspecified secondary location in 1971.

### **3. VBS Classroom (Building #28), c. 1980, non-contributing due to age**

This is a 1½ story, rectangular plan building with a steeply pitched gable roof. The first story has an offset entry door and a 1/1 window, and there is second story window centered in the gable peak. The south eaves side has a secondary entrance and two 1/1 windows. The north eaves side

<sup>8</sup> Interview with Joseph G. Trottier Caretaker, April 10, 2016.

<sup>9</sup> Interview with Susan Butterfield, August 12, 2016.

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has three 1/1 modern windows. The building has T-111 wood siding and sits on cinder block piers.

**4. Cottage (Building #27), c. 1980, non-contributing due to age**

This 1½ story, rectangular plan building has a shallow pitched gable roof and sits on cinder blocks. The building has a large setback from the road, located behind Building #7. Clad with vinyl siding and a metal roof, a shed roofed wood porch spans the south side. There is an offset entry and a 1/1 window on the south eaves side and a center entry flanked by 6/6 windows on the north eaves side. There are two 1/1 windows on the east gable end and two 1/1 windows on the second story of the north eaves side.

Lawrence and Cinda Wilson owned this building in 2016.

**5. Cottage (Building #26), c. 1980, non-contributing due to age**

This is a 1½ story, eaves front, saltbox form structure has a wraparound porch and a small addition on the north side. The building has a large setback from the road, located behind Building #7. The porch has square posts, turned balustrade and latticework. Windows throughout the building are primarily modern 1/1 units. The building has a metal roof, vinyl siding and sits on cinder block piers.

Mark Wormwood owned this building in 2016.

**6. Bathrooms, c. 1980, non-contributing due to age**

This is a one-story concrete block structure with a shallow pitched roof. It sits on a concrete slab.

**7. Kitchen and Dining Hall (Building #24), c. 1910, contributing**

This is a 2-story building with vinyl siding and a metal gable roof. The long, narrow building is oriented north-south, with the east elevation parallel to the road. The south gable end has a center entrance on the first story, flanked by 6/6 double hung wood windows. A wood exterior staircase accesses an entrance on the second story, flanked by 2/2 double hung wood windows. The first story of the east elevation has three 1/1 modern replacement windows, two modern doors and three smaller casement windows. There are five modern 1/1 windows on the second floor of the east elevation. The first story of the west elevation has three 1/1 modern replacement windows, and kitchen HVAC equipment. There are three modern 1/1 windows on the second floor of the west elevation. Clad in vinyl siding, a 2-story addition extends from the north gable end. The north end of the addition has a 2/2 window. The addition is slightly shorter than the main block, creating a slight difference in the two gable roof lines. There is a kitchen and storage space on the first floor, and the second floor is used for overflow lodging.

**8. Lodging Hall (Building #24), c. 1925, contributing**

This is a 2½ story gable roof building with vinyl siding and a metal roof. The long, narrow building is oriented north-south, with the west elevation parallel to the road. Sitting on concrete blocks, the first floor entry is centered on the south gable end, flanked by a 2/2 window on each side. A wooden exterior staircase accesses a second story wood door, flanked by 2/2 windows.

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The west eaves side has four 2/2 windows on the first floor and three 2/2 windows on the second floor. The east eaves side has four 2/2 windows on the first floor and three 2/2 windows on the second floor. The north gable end has an offset entry and 2/2 window on the first floor, two 2/2 windows with shutters on the second floor. A 2/2 window covered with shutters is centered on the third floor of both gable ends.

**9. Camp Office (Building B), c. 1995, non-contributing due to age**

This is a 1-story rectangular plan building with a steeply pitched gable roof and is situated perpendicular to the road. Clad with vinyl siding and a metal roof, it rests on cinder blocks. It has an offset entry, a 1/1 window and a gable vent on the south gable end. There is an offset entry and wooden steps on the north gable end. There are two 1/1 windows on the east eaves side.

**10. Snack bar (Building #23), c. 1930, contributing**

This is a 1-story rectangular plan structure with vertical siding and a steeply pitched metal roof. It has a moderate setback and is situated perpendicular to the road. Sitting on concrete cinder blocks, the west eaves side is recessed to provide a sheltered concession space. A section of the clapboard siding swings upwards to create the opening. There is an offset entry and square opening on the east eaves side and a square opening on the north end.

This building originally served as the meeting grounds library. It was originally located near the preacher's stand (no longer standing). It was moved to its present location between 1900 and 1940.

**11. Cottage (Building #22), c. 1890, contributing**

This is 1½ story, rectangular plan building has a steeply pitched gable roof and vinyl siding. Situated perpendicular to the road and sitting on concrete cinder blocks, the main entry is centered on the north gable end, flanked by modern 1/1 windows on each side. A 1/1 window is centered on the second story of both gable peaks. The east eaves side has a single fixed glass window. Covered by a shallow pitched metal roof, there is a one story addition on the north side. Sitting on concrete cinder blocks, the addition has an offset entry and a modern 6/6 window on the north side. A shed roofed addition with vertical siding extends from the south end of the main block.

When the site was originally laid out, the cottages were closely grouped together. Following a disastrous fire in 1895, the cottages were spread out. By 1971, many cottages were moved to other sites on the meeting grounds. This cottage was moved from its unspecified secondary location in 1971. This cottage belonged to Clifton and Margaret Wormwood, who first came to the White River Camp in 1961. Three more generations of the Wormwood family utilized the camp meeting. Charlene Wormwood owned this building in 2016.

**12. Cottage (Building #18), c. 1890, contributing**

This is a 1½ story building with clapboard siding and a steeply pitched gable roof. It has rectangular plan and is situated parallel to the road. A wood door with two etched glass panes is centered on the north gable end, flanked by a 2/2 window on each side. A 2/2 wood window is



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centered in both gable peaks. The window openings are closed with wood shutters. A 1-story shed roofed addition with vinyl siding extends from the south gable end. There is an off center entry and window on the south end of the addition.

Bryan and Rebecca Gantt owned this building in 2016.

**13. Evangelist's Cottage (Building #19), c. 1890, contributing**

This is a 1½ story building with a steeply pitched gable roof. The rectangular plan building is situated perpendicular to the road. Sitting on cinder blocks, the modern six panel entry door is centered on the front (north) gable end, flanked by a 2/2 wood window on each side. A 2/2 wood window is centered in both gable peaks. The windows have simple trim and hoods and are closed with wood shutters. There is a concrete block chimney on the west eaves side and fixed pane window on the east eaves side.

**14. Cottage (Building #20), c. 1890, contributing**

This is a 1½ story building with steeply pitched gable roof. The rectangular plan footprint is situated perpendicular to the road. Sitting on concrete cinder blocks, the main entry is centered on the north gable end, flanked by a 2/2 wood window on each side. There is a 2/2 window centered in both gable peaks. There is an offset entry door on the west side and a window on the south side. Both of these openings are covered with vertical siding.

Nathan and Ashley Wilson owned this building in 2016.

**15. Cottage (Building #21), c. 1890, contributing**

This is a 1½ story, building with vertical siding and steeply pitched gable metal roof. The rectangular plan footprint is situated perpendicular to the road. Sitting on concrete cinder blocks, the entry door is centered on the north gable end. The door is flanked by a 2/2 window with simple trim on each side. A 2/2 double hung wood window is centered on the second floor of both gable peaks. The window openings are closed with wood shutters. The south gable end has an off-center 2 pane sliding window covered by a wood. There is a metal chimney on the east eaves side and a casement window on the west eaves side.

Dawn Lee Dumond owned this building in 2016.

**16. Cottage (Building #3), c. 1890, 1995, non-contributing due to alterations**

This is a 2-story building with vinyl siding and a steeply pitched asphalt shingle roof. The rectangular plan building is situated parallel to the road. Sitting on concrete cinder blocks, the south gable end has an off center entry door protected by a gable roof. The south end has a sliding window on the first floor and an off center 1/1 modern vinyl window on the second floor. The north side has a small octagonal window and 1/1 modern vinyl window on the first floor and a 1/1 modern vinyl on the second floor. The west eaves side has a 6/6 modern vinyl window on the first floor.

When the site was originally laid out, the cottages were closely grouped together. Following a

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disastrous fire in 1895, the cottages were spread out. This cottage was moved from its unspecified secondary location in 1971. It underwent significant alterations in the 1990s. Justin Dobbins owned this building in 2016.

**17. Cottage (Building #4), c. 1974, non-contributing due to age**

This is 1-story, rectangular plan building has vertical siding and a shallow pitched metal roof. Sitting on concrete cinder blocks, the building is situated perpendicular to the road. An entry door is centered on the east and west gable ends, flanked by a 1/1 window on each side. There is a concrete block chimney on the north eaves side.

Michael Gantt owned this building in 2016.

**18. Cottage (Building #5), c. 1974, 2014, non-contributing due to age**

This is a 1-story rectangular plan building with vinyl siding and a shallow pitched gable roof. Sitting on concrete cinder blocks, the building is situated parallel to the road. A 1½ story addition abuts the east end of the main block. The main entry is centered on the west gable end, flanked by a 2/2 window and 2 pane sliding window. There are two modern windows on the north side of the main block. Clad in vinyl siding and a metal seam roof, the east side of the addition has an off-center entry and casement window on the first floor and a 1/1 window centered in the gable peak. The addition has a casement window on the south side and a 1/1 window and casement window on the north side

Kevin Wright owned this building in 2016.

**19. Cottage (“Maranatha Cottage” Building #6), c. 1974, non-contributing due to age**

This is a 1-story building with a shallow pitched metal gable roof. It has rectangular plan and is situated perpendicular to the road. Clad with T-111 siding, the building rests on round concrete posts. Protected by a shallow pitched gable roof, the main entry is centered on the gable end, flanked by a casement window with horizontal muntins and a two casement/two fixed pane window unit. Latticework covers the front foundation posts and a wood staircase accesses the entry. There is a concrete block chimney on the south eaves side and a horizontal sliding window on the north eaves side. There is decorative trim between the gable and the walls. A metal sided, gable roofed shed sitting on concrete cinder blocks is located to the southeast of the building.

Paula Fox owned this building in 2016.

**20. Bible Teacher Cottage (Building #7), c. 1974, non-contributing due to age**

This is a 1-story building with vinyl siding and a shallow pitched metal gable roof. The rectangular plan footprint is situated perpendicular to the road. Sitting on concrete cinder blocks, the west elevation has an offset entry and a pair of stacked awning windows. There is a single 1/1 window on the north eaves side. A fiber board, shed roofed tool shed is located behind the building.

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### **21. Garage (Building #8), c. 1985, non-contributing due to age**

This is a 1-story building with a shallow pitched metal roof and diagonal wood siding. Sitting on concrete cinder blocks, the rectangular plan footprint is situated perpendicular to the road. The west facing garage bay has twelve-glass pane door. There is a modern door on the west end of the north eaves side. Clad with vertical wood siding, the west gable projects slightly over the main building. An addition projects from the east end providing an open bay space.

The garage site and Bible Teacher's cottage were the former location of the evangelist platform, which faced towards the west. During the camp meetings, there were long rows of benches and pews arranged facing the platform. The hillside to the west of the stand "could be used to contain the sound in the manner of a natural amphitheater in days when no amplification was used".<sup>10</sup> In time, the association converted the platform to a cottage. The cottage collapsed due to heavy snow loads c. 1970.<sup>11</sup>

### **22. Cottage (Building #8a), c. 1890, contributing**

This is a 1½ story building with vertical siding and a steeply pitched metal gable roof. The rectangular plan building is situated perpendicular to the road. Sitting on concrete blocks, the entry door is centered on the gable end, flanked by a 2/2 window with simple trim and hood. There is a 2/2 window centered in both gable peaks. There is a sliding window on the north eaves side and a shed roof addition on the south eaves side. The window openings on the addition are covered with plywood. There is one covered opening on the west side and four covered openings on the south side.

Mark Dexter owned this building in 2016.

### **23. Dormitory, c. 1930, contributing**

This is a long rectangular 1-story building with a shallow pitched metal roof and vertical wood siding. Sitting on round concrete posts, the building has a large setback from the road. An entry is centered on the south end, accessed by a wood staircase and flanked by a modern 1/1 window on each side. The west eaves side has two entry doors accessed by wood staircases and eight horizontal casement windows. The southern portion of the east eaves side has five fixed pane windows and the northern portion has four 1/1 modern windows.

### **24. Caretaker's Cottage (Building #9), c. 1900, contributing**

The main block of the structure is a 1½ story building with a steeply pitched gable roof and interior brick chimney. The rectangular plan building is situated perpendicular to the road. Clad in vinyl siding and an asphalt shingle roof, the building sits on concrete cinder blocks. There is a 1/1 replacement window centered in both gable peaks. The main entry is centered on the gable end and is enclosed by a closed-in porch. The porch has a ribbon of three modern 1/1 window units on the south side and a modern 1/1 window and entry door on the east side. The east side of the main block has two 1/1 windows and an exterior concrete block chimney. Covered by a

<sup>10</sup> Hartford Historical Society, Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Research File.

<sup>11</sup> Interview with Joseph G. Trottier Caretaker, April 10, 2016.

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metal roof, a single story c. 1960 addition wraps around the south and west sides. The addition has an entry door and modern 6/1 window on the south side, and a horizontal casement windows, a horizontal sliding window on the west side and a horizontal sliding window on the east side. There is a modern 3-panel/1-glass pane door on the north side of the addition

Joseph G. Trottier is the present caretaker. Previous caretakers include Mr. Eastman and Al Currier.

### **25. Youth Leader Cottage (Building #10), c. 1890, contributing**

This is a 1½ -story building with a steeply pitched gable roof and wood clapboard siding. The rectangular plan building is situated perpendicular to the road. Sitting on concrete cinder blocks, the main entry is centered on the south gable end. The wood plank door is flanked by two 2/2 double hung wood windows with simple trim and hoods. There is a 2/2 double hung wood window centered in both vertical sided gable peaks. An outdoor shower stall abuts the north side of the building.

Wayne and Robin Stires owned this building in 2016.

When the site was originally laid out, the cottages were closely grouped together. Following a disastrous fire in 1895, the cottages were spread out. By 1971, many cottages were moved to other sites on the meeting grounds. The remaining cottages, such as this one, were then moved slightly to create a cohesive grouping.

### **26. Cottage (Building #11), c. 1890, contributing**

This is a 1½ story building with a steeply pitched gable roof and vertical wood siding. The rectangular plan building is situated perpendicular to the road. Sitting on concrete cinder blocks, the main entry is centered on the south gable end, flanked by a 2/2 wood window on each side. There is a 2/2 window centered in both gable peaks. The north side has an offset wood plank door and a horizontal opening covered with plywood.

When the site was originally laid out, the cottages were closely grouped together. Following a disastrous fire in 1895, the cottages were spread out. By 1971, many cottages were moved to other sites on the meeting grounds. The remaining cottages, such as this one, were then moved slightly to create a cohesive grouping. Barton Freeman owned this building in 2016.

### **27. Cottage (Building #12), c. 1890, contributing**

This is a 1½ story, rectangular plan building with a steeply pitched gable metal roof and vinyl siding. The rectangular footprint is situated perpendicular to the road. Sitting on concrete cinder blocks, the main entry is centered on the south gable end, flanked by a 2/2 wood window on each side. A 2/2 double hung wood window is centered in both gable peaks. There is an entry door and fixed window on the north end.

When the site was originally laid out, the cottages were closely grouped together. Following a disastrous fire in 1895, the cottages were spread out. By 1971, many cottages were moved to

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other sites on the meeting grounds. The remaining cottages, such as this one, were then moved slightly to create a cohesive grouping. Gregory Cushman owned this building in 2016.

### **28. Cottage (Building #14), c. 1890, contributing**

This is a 1½ story building with a steeply pitched gable roof and vertical siding. The rectangular plan building is situated perpendicular to the road. The main entry is centered on the gable end, flanked by a 2/2 wood window on each side. The south gable end has an off center entry door and a second story 2/2 double hung wood window.

This cottage once belonged to George and Doris Stone. George Stone was president of the association from 1945 to 1980. Ben Butterfield, long time President, then owned this cottage. Susan Lamb owned this building in 2016.

When the site was originally laid out, the cottages were closely grouped together. Following a disastrous fire in 1895, the cottages were spread out. By 1971, many cottages were moved to other sites on the meeting grounds. The remaining cottages, such as this one, were then moved slightly to create a cohesive grouping.

### **29. Cottage (Building #13), c. 1890, contributing**

The main block of the structure is a 1½ story rectangular plan building with steeply pitched gable roof and vinyl siding. The building has a large setback from the road and is situated perpendicular to the road. Resting on concrete cinder blocks, the main entry is centered on the east gable end, flanked by a 2/2 double hung wood window and a casement window. There is a single 2/2 double hung wood window centered in both vertical sided gable peaks. A modern wood deck with a metal roof and concrete cinder block posts extends from the east side. A small shed roof addition joins the north side. This addition has a metal roof, and a combination of wood clapboard and board and batten siding. This addition has a horizontal sliding window on the east side and entry door on the west side. A detached exterior shower stall abuts the north side of this addition. A second shed roof addition extends from the south side of the main block. Clad with vinyl siding and metal roof, the addition has two 1/1 modern windows on the east side and two casement windows on the south side.

When the site was originally laid out, the cottages were closely grouped together. Following a disastrous fire in 1895, the cottages were spread out. By 1971, many cottages were moved to other sites on the meeting grounds. This building was moved from its unspecified secondary 1971 location. Ronald Gates owned this building in 2016.

## **30. Outhouses**

### **30a. Boy's Outhouse, c. 1930, contributing**

This shed-roofed structure has rolled asphalt siding with an embossed brick pattern. The entry door made of vertical planks and there is a small rectangular window next to the door. The building sits on cement blocks.

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**30b. Girl's Outhouse, c. 2014, non-contributing due to age**

This shed-roofed structure has board and batten siding and sits on cement blocks.

**31. Cottage (Building #15), c. 1890, contributing**

This is a 1½ story building with steeply pitched gable metal roof. The rectangular plan building has a large setback and is situated diagonally to the road. The north and south eaves sides have shingle siding and the gable ends have staggered asphalt shingle siding embossed with a wood grain pattern. The main entry is centered on the south gable end, flanked by a 2/2 wood window on each side. A wood deck sitting resting on wood posts spans the front gable end. There is a single 1/1 replacement window in both gable peaks. The north eaves side has a single vent. There is a door on the first floor of the west gable end.

When the site was originally laid out, the cottages were closely grouped together. Following a disastrous fire in 1895, the cottages were spread out. By 1971, many cottages were moved to other sites on the meeting grounds. This building was moved from its unspecified secondary 1971 location. Charles Barton owned the cottage until 2008. Robert Hamel owned this building in 2016.

**32. Cottage ("Corner Cozy Cottage", Building #16), c. 1890, contributing**

This is a 1½ story, rectangular plan building with a steeply pitched gable metal roof with simple wood fascia. The building has a large setback and is situated diagonally to the road. Resting on cinder blocks, the cottage has an elevated wood deck resting on round concrete posts. Clad in clapboard siding with wood corner boards, the main entry is centered on the east gable end, flanked by a 1/1 replacement window on each side. A door is centered on the rear (north) gable elevation. A single 1/1 replacement window is centered in both gable peaks. There is a single casement window on south eaves sides. A shed roof addition extends from the north side.

James Losee bought this cottage from Harold Turner in 1946 for \$75. James Losee owned the building through 2003. Thomas and Tammy Losee owned this building in 2016.

**33. Tabernacle (Building #17), c. 1920, contributing**

This is a large one story building with brick-patterned asphalt shingle exterior siding on the lower level, wood siding on the upper level and a shallow pitched metal gable roof. The rectangular plan building has minimal setback from the road and is situated perpendicular to the road. The tabernacle is oriented with its eaves sides on the north and south. The siding is laid over a combination of vertical and horizontal boards, exposed on the interior. There is a large cross and a bell attached to the exterior of the east gable. The south eaves side has two entry doors and large openings and the north eaves side has a single entry and three openings. During meetings, the attendees create the openings by removing sections of the exterior siding. The interior has a platform and theater seating, with the congregation facing towards the east. The tabernacle originally had cloth sides, akin to tent flaps. There is c. 2015 gravel patio on the south side to accommodate overflow seating. The sides of the south elevation of the tabernacle are removable so that attendees seated outside can view the services.

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The tabernacle is often called the arbor at the campground, harking back to the days when they met at a "brush arbor". Camp meetings were also known as the "Feast of the Tabernacle" or the "Festival of Booths", with the booths being tents. The tabernacle in the center of the camp, surrounded by the cottages in close proximity to each other, is typical of spiritualist camps widespread over the eastern United States at the turn of the century. This camp has maintained the scale and general character of these camps that once flourished in America.

**34. Baptistery, c. 1920, contributing**

This wood-frame, octagonal structure rests on a low concrete block platform. It has vertical board siding and a shallow pitched octagonal asphalt shingle roof with deep overhanging eaves. It has simple narrow chamfered posts spanned by segmental arches. . Originally, wood spindles on a wood base supported the chamfered posts. They were replaced c. 1950. There is a cement baptismal pool in the center of the structure.

**35. Gravestone, contributing**

This small stone reads Azra Wyman 1833-1912. The stone is engraved with a branch with leaves and a single flower. The bottom of the stone states "Co. G. 5th Vt. Vol." Wyman was born in Stockbridge, Vermont. He then lived in Claremont, New Hampshire, and Sherburne, Vermont. Wyman enlisted August 1861 in Company G, 5th Infantry Regiment, Vermont, and mustered out on 1 October 1864. Wyman was the caretaker of the camp for many years. A recent attendee spoke about Wyman: "White River came to define Ozzie in life, and he asked not to leave the place in death. His grave is marked by small stone out back."<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Rowe, Marjorie, *The Advent Christian Witness* [serial] (4 of 11)

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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years



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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Religion

Community Planning

Architecture

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1887-1930

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1887

1895

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District is significant under National Register Criteria A & C as a largely intact and unified Vermont camp meeting grounds. The Period of Significance is 1887-1930, reflecting the establishment of the White River Junction Adventist Camp Meeting Association and its development in the following decades. It is eligible under Criterion A, as the district reflects broad religious trends in New England's history as well as the social change in rural Vermont. The site reflects American religious and social traditions beginning the late 19<sup>th</sup> tradition and continuing through the present day. It is eligible under Criterion C, as the structures in the district represent the simple building traditions of late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century religious camps. The property meets Criteria Consideration A, because it is a religious property that derives its primary significance from architectural and historical importance. The district is an important group of structures demonstrating a seasonal religious campground associated with a long religious tradition. It is of statewide significance because the traditional camp meetings drew (and continue to draw) audiences from around the state. It is also one of three remaining examples of this type of religious campground left in the state.

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

### **Criterion A: Religion**

The Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District is significant under Criterion A for its representation of broad religious trends in New England's history. The grounds have a historic connection with the great religious "camp meeting" movement of the early 19th century. The camp meeting was a place where area residents gathered during the summer for social interaction and religious fellowship. The camp meeting was an attraction for regional families to gather annually for the fellowship and spirituality of the camp meeting. The Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District is representative of the new generation of splinter religious orders that formed throughout Vermont and New England during the mid-19th century. This period was "a time of upheaval —economic dislocations after the War of 1812, a spotted fever epidemic, the year 1816 with a killing frost every month of the growing season, flooding, insect blight and the start of westward migration."<sup>13</sup>

### **Criterion C: Community Planning and Development**

The Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District is significant under Criterion C, as the district reflects the design and layout of a seasonal religious community. The district provides an important context for the development of rural cultural life in late 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The site exhibits a tight knit plan typical of the camp meeting landscape, and is based upon the recommendations of Reverend B.W. Gorham's 1854 *Camp Meeting Manual*, which

<sup>13</sup> Beard, Christine, Asbury Grove National Register Nomination, National Park Service, 2009.

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influenced many northeastern camp meeting grounds' design and layout. The general scale and character of the camp remains intact and is representative of religious camp layouts. The central open green of the meeting grounds has retained its original size and character with minimal modern development.

### **Criterion C: Architecture**

The Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District is significant under Criterion C, as the structures in the district represent the simple building traditions of late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century religious camps. The majority of the cottages that existed during the period of significance remain, albeit often with minor additions or alterations. In most cases where alterations have occurred, they have been minimal in nature and do not compromise the integrity of the district as a whole. Although many of the structures have been covered in vinyl siding or have replacement windows, the massing of the buildings, their layout, and the general feeling of the camp remain very much intact. A small number of new houses/cottages have been constructed, but they do not detract from, the larger collection of historic resources and continue the tradition of small, simple building forms and materials.

Out of the multitude of camp meeting sites that once proliferated in the Vermont landscape, the White River site is one of a few Vermont camp meetings that remain in operation. During the late 19<sup>th</sup>-early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, Adventist meetings were held in Vermont communities such as Northfield, Randolph, Lyndonville, St. Johnsbury, South Londonderry, West Randolph, St. Albans, Essex Junction, and Hardwick. There is no evidence of camp meetings in these communities today. The White River Junction site has remained in continuous operation since 1887. Other associations, such as the Central Vermont Camp-Meeting Association and the Vermont Conference of the Methodist Church, hosted an annual camp meeting in Northfield. There was a multid denominational meeting in Northfield until 1999 but it is no longer running.

One of the White River Junction's sister sites, located in Bethel, Vermont, continues to operate as a non-denominational spiritual gathering site. The Nazarene-based Ithiel Falls Camp Meeting, which formed in 1899, is still active in Johnson, Vermont. The Johnson and Bethel site both retain a tabernacle and a collection of cabins. While there are only a handful of camp meetings sites still in operation, these camps are consistent in their spiritual mission. Further analysis is required to ascertain the integrity of the buildings and structures on the sites. The White River Junction site is representative of this small collection.

## **Historic Context**

### **Early Camp Meetings**

The American tradition of the camp meeting arose from the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, "when the devout began gathering in the woods for a week at a time in observation of the biblical "Feast of Booths" celebrated by the Hebrews as they wandered through the wilderness of Sinai."<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> "Our History" White River Christian Camp Website

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Followers were instructed to “dwell in booths,” typically interpreted as a reference to temporary structures in the woods, “for seven days.”<sup>15</sup> At the time, these gatherings were not referred to as “camp meetings,” but rather “spiritual feasts,” and God called the first camp meetings “feasts” or “festivals.”<sup>16</sup>

The religiously-themed camp meetings were open-air revivals lasting several days. Unique to American culture, the first camp meetings were believed to be weeklong events held in the late 18th century in Georgia and the Carolinas. The first documented camp meeting was an interdenominational event held in 1799 in Kentucky. Although led by Presbyterian minister James McGready, Presbyterians, Baptists and Methodists also attended this meeting. This interdenominational tradition continues to the present day.

The religious camp meeting “spread very rapidly all over the western frontier and into the South and New England via the Methodist circuit riders.”<sup>17</sup> The meetings featured “fiery orators” who “held the attention of throng” Dedicated to the salvation of human souls, these itinerant Methodist preachers promoted the development and spread of camp meetings on a large scale with great success.”<sup>18</sup> The preachers used the camp meetings as an effective technique for gaining converts to Methodism and for reviving religious enthusiasm in existing church members.”<sup>19</sup> For one to two weeks, attendees concentrated on religion activities morning, noon, and night.<sup>20</sup> It is estimated that roughly 600 camp meetings were held in 1810 and as many as 1,000 in 1820. In 1811, approximately 1.2 million people attended camp meetings across the country, a number representing approximately one-tenth of the American population that year.<sup>21</sup>

Camp meetings were multi-denominational events as no single Diocesan Order dominated a camp meeting. Presbyterians, Baptists, and Methodists were the primary early attendees, but the Methodists embraced the camp meeting with religious fervor and “perpetuated and expanded the tradition after the others abandoned the practice.”<sup>22 23</sup> While Methodists took the reins of the camp meeting tradition, the events remained open affairs.

The early camp meetings “were held under temporary shelters made of boughs lashed together” but as they “became institutionalized annual affairs, camp meeting grounds were established.” As a result, “permanent tabernacles were erected, and regular members began to build structures to accommodate their families. The first camp meeting tents were rude temporary structures, as the name implies, but they soon were replaced by the permanent cabins.”<sup>24</sup> The meetings were often held on a temporarily leased lot with primitive living conditions for the attendees. The

15 Hongoltz-Hetling, Matt, “Hartford Christian Camp Eyed for Historic Designation.” Valley News, April 24, 2016.

16 Davidson, Richard M. “The Forgotten Festival”(or “If I Had Only One Sermon to Preach”), Wenatchee Seventh-day Adventist Church

17 Weiss, Ellen B. *Wesleyan Grove National Historic Landmark Nomination*, National Park Service, 2005.

18 Beard, Christine, *Asbury Grove National Register Nomination*, National Park Service, 2009.

19 Ibid.

20 Weiss, Ellen B. *Wesleyan Grove National Historic Landmark Nomination*, National Park Service, 2005.

21 Beard, Christine, *Asbury Grove National Register Nomination*, National Park Service, 2009.

22 Ibid.

23 Weiss, Ellen B. *Wesleyan Grove National Historic Landmark Nomination*, National Park Service, 2005.

24 Ibid.

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attendees “slept in society or church tents with straw spread on the ground or on board floors with a blanket placed over them. The food was prepared a week in advance. The people brought what they needed with them and took everything away when they left. The camp meeting lasted for about a week, usually from Monday to Saturday sometime during the month of August.”<sup>25</sup>

### Millerites

The White River Camp has its roots in the Second Adventist movement, led by William Miller. The name reflects the church’s belief in the imminent Advent of Christ. William Miller of Pittsfield, Massachusetts, was the first leader of the Adventists. A Baptist minister and War of 1812 veteran, Miller calculated that Jesus’ return to earth would occur between 1843 and 1844. Miller took to literal interpretation of the bible, especially the “Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed” (Daniel 8:14). With this interpretation, Miller eventually identified October 22, 1844 as the day of Jesus’ return.

In 1832, Miller wrote a collection of sixteen articles concerning the advent in the *Vermont Telegraph* of Brandon, Vermont. Through these writings and his public sermons, Miller gained a large following. These deeply affected converts gave away their personal property reflecting “the excitement created by the preaching of Miller that many of his followers became hopelessly insane...”<sup>26</sup> Known as Second Great Awakening, the northeast in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was a “hotbed of revival” that ignited movements such as the Shakers, early Mormons, and the followers of William Miller - Millerites. Neighboring upstate New York was dubbed the “burned-over district,” referring to the fact that evangelists had exhausted the region’s supply of unconverted people.”<sup>27</sup>

In 1842, Millerites gathered together and “stressed the soon-coming end” of October 22, 1844. These participants decided to hold the first northern Adventist camp meeting in East Kingston, New Hampshire. That summer, “numerous speakers, including Miller, lectured at the eight-day East Kingston camp meeting, which was attended by 7,000 to 15,000 Adventists of many denominations from New England and Canada.”<sup>28</sup>

Wherever Miller spoke, his “preaching effected spiritual revivals in all the churches.... Halls were filled with attentive listeners.”<sup>29</sup> Not only did Miller want to establish a new church but also his goal was to “simply to preach the near coming of Christ in the already established churches, hoping that people would listen and draw closer to God. Since his message was fundamentally evangelical, any church in the New England area could benefit from it. All churches believed,

<sup>25</sup> Beard, Christine, *Asbury Grove National Register Nomination*, National Park Service, 2009.

<sup>26</sup> Tucker, William Howard, *History of Hartford, Vermont, July 4, 1761-April 4, 1889: The First Town on the New Hampshire Grants Chartered After the Close of the French War*, Free Press Association, 1889.

<sup>27</sup> Lechleitner, Elizabeth “Seventh-Day Adventists Church Emerged From Religious Fervor of 19th Century. Adventist.Org, The Seventh Day Adventist World Church. Accessed April 2016.

<sup>28</sup> Nickels, Richard C. *The Adventist Movement: Its Relationship to the Seventh Day Church of God*, February 25, 1972 Revised, 1993.

<sup>29</sup> Fortin, Denis “The World Turned Upside Down,” Millerism in the Eastern Townships, 1835-1845, *Journal of Eastern Townships Studies*, Fall 1997

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more or less literally, in the imminent advent of Christ or the inauguration of the millennium of peace and, therefore, could profit from this message.”<sup>30</sup>

When the long awaited day of October 22, 1844, arrived, Millerites “gathered peacefully in their homes or halls to pray and wait. They had anticipated this day for a long time, but after they waited all day and all night, the signs of Christ’s second advent did not appear. October 22, 1844, was a day like any other day.”<sup>31</sup> Known as the Great Disappointment, many Millerites felt dejected. Hiram Edson, of Western New York, wrote, “Our fondest hopes and expectations were blasted and such a spirit of weeping came over us I never experienced before. It seemed that the loss of all earthly friends could have been no comparison. We wept, and wept, till the day dawn.”<sup>32</sup> In some parts of the northeast, “the spiritual condition ... was not unlike that of a prairie after it has been swept by fire. All was blackness and desolation and death.”<sup>33</sup> Following the disappointment of October 22, Millerites felt deceived and misguided. Many of the followers abandoned the movement and returned to their former churches. A great number of these believers turned their backs on the movement becoming “apostates and bitter adversaries of Christianity, and finally lapsed into spiritualism, or some other phase of infidelity.”<sup>34</sup> In this climate, the Millerites weathered the Great Disappointment, when the group expectantly, but futilely, waited for Christ’s return. With what Adventist historian George Knight calls the “mathematical certainty of their faith” dashed, many Millerites deserted the movement.”<sup>35</sup>

### Adventists

Following the Great Disappointment, Miller and his followers gathered together to form the Albany Conference in 1845. This group maintained the core tenets of their beliefs and became known as “Adventists”, or “Second Adventists.” This splinter group continued to believe in the Second Advent of Jesus Christ and gradually segmented into separate groups such as the Seventh Day Adventists, the Advent Christian Church and the Evangelical Adventists.

The Millerites’ belief in the Second Advent of Christ was pivotal, as their core tenets “anchor[ed] the early Advent movement amid a climate of religious turmoil.”<sup>36</sup> These groups of New Englanders were “convinced the date was right, but the event was wrong” and “they concluded is that instead of returning to Earth on October 22, Jesus had begun the last phase of his atoning ministry in the heavenly sanctuary.”<sup>37</sup>

Following in the footsteps of the Methodists, the Millerites and then the Adventists “found it easy to adapt the camp meeting to their new movement. Convinced of the need to warn the world

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30 Ibid.

31 Ibid.

32 Ibid.

33 Vedder, Henry C. *A History of the Baptists in the Middle States*. Philadelphia: 1898.

34 Tucker, William Howard, *History of Hartford, Vermont, July 4, 1761-April 4, 1889: The First Town on the New Hampshire Grants Chartered After the Close of the French War*, Free Press Association, 1889.

35 Lechleitner, Elizabeth “Seventh-Day Adventists Church Emerged From Religious Fervor of 19th Century. Adventist.Org, The Seventh Day Adventist World Church. Accessed April 2016.

36 Ibid.

37 Ibid.

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of the immediacy of Christ's second coming, Adventists added an evangelistic thrust to their camp meetings."<sup>38</sup> Groups of people, families and individuals throughout the region travelled to camp together and met for "worship and fellowship" and the camp meetings "developed into annual events..."<sup>39</sup> The camp meeting attendees ate and slept at the site after traveling great distances. This led to the birth of the camp atmosphere.

By the middle of the 19th century, the camp meetings were less spontaneous and more institutionalized, resulting in permanent campgrounds with permanent structures.<sup>40</sup> Following the American Civil War, there was revived interest in camp meetings due to the establishment of camp meeting associations, "formed for the purpose of establishing and developing permanent grounds." During this time, there was also an increased interest in middle class summer vacationing, and "therefore many camp grounds also became religious summer resorts."<sup>41</sup> By 1889, nearly 150 vacation camp grounds were operating in many sections of the country - coast to coast, and down to Texas - but the main concentration seems to have been in the area between Maryland and New England. Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and New York states held the largest number...<sup>42</sup>

The camp meetings following the Civil War were more "sedate and less ritualistic than in former years" as the "excesses and bodily exercises of the earlier days were gone, and the social aspects were much more in evidence..."<sup>43</sup> Despite becoming less formal in their religious exercises, there was still widespread interest in the camps following the Civil War. Advent Christian camp meetings were established in New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut. At the 1876 Boston-area Groveland camp meeting, "as many as twenty thousand people were present, and thousands more were unable to get transportation."<sup>44</sup>

As the earliest proponent of camp meetings, the Methodist Church was one of the first denominations to host camp meetings in the White River Junction area. There was a Methodist campground in Claremont, New Hampshire, in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. In 1862, the Claremont District New Hampshire Conference of the Methodist Church, led by the Reverend Elisha Adams, attempted to establish a camp across the Connecticut River in Vermont. The group leased widow Sweatland's lot of land approximately a mile west of Lebanon Center for the term of five years. The Sweatland property was "easy of access & well prepared for the meeting. Soon thereafter camp meeting adopted the name of "The White River Junction Camp-Meeting Association."<sup>45</sup>

38 Mitchell, Grant N. "Voices in the Wilderness, Seventh-Day Adventist Camp Meetings in California, 1877-1948." 1998.

39 "A Brief History of the Rock Spring Camp Meeting." Rock Spring Website.

40 Beard, Christine *Asbury Grove National Register Nomination*, National Park Service, 2009.

41 Parker, Charles A. "The Camp Meeting on the Frontier and the Methodist Religious Resort in the East." *Methodist History*, April, 1980.

42 Ibid.

43 Ibid.

44 Spalding, Arthur Whitefield. *Captains of the Host, First Volume of a History of Seventh-day Adventists Covering the years 1845-1900*. Review and Herald Publishing Association, Washington D.C., 1949

45 *The Granite State Monthly*, Volumes 50-51. Henry Harrison Metcalf, John Norris McClintock Granite Monthly Company, 1918.

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When the association met in 1866, a committee explored leasing the Sweatland farm for a ten-year term. The committee reported that Sweatland sold the land and the new owners “wished for a greater compensation.”<sup>46</sup> As a result, the association looked for a new location, “one being found within one mile of White River Junction, and a grove to be controlled by the Northern Railroad was considered.”<sup>47</sup> The Sweatland property, “it was found, could not be re-leased and its price— \$3,500—was evidently prohibitive. A committee was appointed to negotiate with the Northern Railroad in regard to a grove.”<sup>48</sup> While this is evidence of an early camp meeting site in the White River Junction area, there is no physical record of this site today.

### White River Junction Camp Meeting

In 1868, a camp meeting was held at Maple Grove at Bethel, Vermont. Two of the preachers, Brother James Cleveland and Elder John Couch “remained after the camp meeting and organized the Advent Christian Conference.”<sup>49</sup> In early days this conference was quite strong, but several of the membership churches were later taken over by the International and Hoosick Valley Conferences and the Holiness Association, “so that in later years it has been quite small, but still disposed to press on in its work with good courage. The conference has a camp meeting at White River Junction...”<sup>50</sup> In 1868, the Advent Christian Conference of Vermont held its camp meeting at White River Junction.<sup>51</sup>

The Adventists were “among the number of church or religious societies that have had a past existence in Hartford.”<sup>52</sup> The Advent Christian Church was also located on the corner of Norwich and Passumpsic Avenues in Wilder. While there was a church presence, the society itself had “no regular church home, except as their camp-meeting grounds may be so called.”<sup>53</sup>

There were several Advent Christian camp meetings in the greater White River Junction-Lebanon region between 1866 and 1886. A group similar to the Advent Christians, the Green Mountain Christian Union (later changed to Advent Christian Holiness Association) held its first camp meeting in Bethel, Vermont, in August 1886.<sup>54</sup> The following year, in June 1887 “a group of men met beside a hemlock log on a peaceful plateau above the Connecticut River” with “White River Junction ... less than a mile to the south” and “determined this to be the ideal site for an Advent Christian campground.”<sup>55</sup> In 1886, there was a split in the Adventists in the area, between those attending a camp in Bethel, Vermont, and this group seeking a White River location.

A local farmer and landowner, Orren (Orrin) A. Taft, sold the members six acres of land on a

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46 Ibid.

47 Ibid.

48 Ibid.

49 Johnson, Albert C. *Advent Christian history: a concise narrative. Advent Christian Publication Society, 1918.*

50 Ibid.

51 *The Granite State Monthly, Volumes 50-51. Henry Harrison Metcalf, John Norris McClintock Granite Monthly Company, 1918.*

52 Aldrich, Lewis Cass and Frank R Holmes. *The History of Windsor County Vermont, D. Mason & Company, 1891.*

53 Ibid.

54 Slater, Martha, “Bethel Camp’ Celebrates 125 Years.” *The Herald of Randolph*, July 15, 2010.

55 Rowe, Marjorie, *The Advent Christian Witness* [serial] (4 of 11).



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sparsely wooded plateau on August 16, 1887. Taft owned a large expanse of land, then known as Taft's Flats, and presently known as the Hartford Avenue corridor. The group was "successful in purchasing the desired parcel of land for under \$1,000" located "on the west side of Connecticut river about one mile above White River Junction, and closely adjacent to the Passumpsic railroad."<sup>56</sup> The six founding members each paid \$10 a share to join the new White River Junction Adventist Camp Meeting Association. The initial investment went towards the construction of several buildings and a cloth tent.<sup>57</sup>

The acquired land started at the centerline of the Connecticut River and Passumpsic Railroad. In addition to the acreage, Taft granted "exclusive use of a spring of water in a gully northerly of said land."<sup>58</sup> He also granted the right "to make a road to said spring and keep the same in repair or to lay pipe or pipes from said camping ground to said spring and to keep the same in repair across the said Taft's land." The transfer did not include water for animals in the pastures or the hemlock trees "more than 12 inches in diameter at the stumps to be removed in one year."<sup>59</sup>

Three months prior to the purchase of the grounds, in February 1887, a railroad tragedy occurred in West Hartford. The Boston-Montreal "Night Express" derailed off of the Central Vermont Railroad tracks on the West Hartford Bridge and plummeted forty-two feet onto the ice of the White River. The crash killed 37 people and injured 50 more, "but with the event's trauma to follow them the rest of their days. In all, 115 persons are counted in what was and is still today the worst railroad disaster in the history of Vermont railroading."<sup>60</sup> The huge personal loss "surely caused people of the town and region to face their mortality and consider spiritual matters."<sup>61</sup>

Within a few months of the land purchase, the association hosted the first camp meeting between August 8th and September 11th, 1887. The association built a railroad platform just down the bank from the site, so that the train stopped close to the site. The gathering "attracted a large attendance of people, who found the location pleasant, the preaching entertaining and instructive, and the exercises in general interesting."<sup>62</sup> The meeting maintained a sense of civility as "order, proper decorum and solemnity characterized the occasion. All who attended the services were favorably impressed by the candid, intelligent exposition of the tenets and belief of the Adventists made by their preachers. The earnestness, seriousness and whole deportment of the Adventists, during this meeting, proved that they were not nominal Christians, and that a Christian spirit influenced their worship. No room was left for unkindly comments or invidious criticism."<sup>63</sup> Several groups from the Enfield, New Hampshire, camp attended the first camp and

<sup>56</sup> Tucker, William Howard, *History of Hartford, Vermont, July 4, 1761-April 4, 1889: The First Town on the New Hampshire Grants Chartered After the Close of the French War*, Free Press Association, 1889.

<sup>57</sup> Rowe, Marjorie, *The Advent Christian Witness* [serial] (4 of 11)

<sup>58</sup> Town of Hartford Deeds. Hartford, Vermont. Accessed October 2015.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>60</sup> Ferguson, J.A. "The Wrong Rail in the Wrong Place at the Wrong Time: The 1887 West Hartford Bridge Disaster," *Vermont History*, January 1981

<sup>61</sup> Hartford Historical Society, Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Research File.

<sup>62</sup> Tucker, William Howard, *History of Hartford, Vermont, July 4, 1761-April 4, 1889: The First Town on the New Hampshire Grants Chartered After the Close of the French War*, Free Press Association, 1889.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*

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they returned, "very favorably impressed, and will, no doubt, profit by the privilege."<sup>64</sup>

After purchasing land near the Connecticut River, the Adventist erected cottages on the grounds. The cottages were originally situated in a tight-knit layout, but an 1895 fire destroyed many of the buildings, leading to the eventual spread-out layout. The surviving buildings were most likely moved by putting the buildings on logs and rolling them into new locations, farther apart from one another.

During the final week of the inaugural meeting, delegates formed the White River Junction Camp Meeting Association, "for the purpose of holding public worship and religious meetings by Advent Camp meetings."<sup>65</sup> John Couch, R. N. Stetson, William Guild, Luther E. Lord, P. G. Lord, Daniel Johnson, William C. Bugbee, Ezra Willey, David H. Bragg, Ballard B. Chedell, L. C. McKinstry, Myron H. Wilmot, and E. A. Stockman signed these articles of association. Royal N. Stetson was elected President and William Guild was Secretary. The ground purchased is to be known under the title of The White River Junction Advent Ground. Ezra Willey was from Strafford while Royal Stetson lived in Pomfret. Several of the signees were active participants in the Advent Church. The Rev. L. C. McKinstry ran services at the Adventist Church in Richford, Vermont. John Couch of New Hampshire was a preacher, and president of the New Hampshire Advent Christian Conference.<sup>66</sup> These organizations often "invested their revenues in further development of their facilities, and dedicated surpluses to charity. Chartered by state legislatures, these religious corporations divided their lands into lots which were leased for terms up to ninety-nine years.... special laws also entitled the managers to regulate public conduct and commerce, usually within a radius of one mile around their holdings, and they imposed strict regulation upon residents and visitors alike. Property rights could be transferred only if the members of the association approved of the new lease holder."<sup>67</sup>

Following the Civil War, the camp meeting "was modified by a number of religious and social trends, some of which enabled the institution to survive in to the twentieth century."<sup>68</sup> The evangelical camp meetings evolved into "the camp meeting as a religious resort." With the parallel improvement of public transportation and rise of the middle class," more people travelled for vacations and "camp meeting resorts were soon established as a religious alternative to such places as Newport, Rhode Island; Coney Island, New York; and Atlantic City, New Jersey."<sup>69</sup>

In addition, the renewed interest in camp meetings during the 1880s reflected a "tremendous popular interest in summer vacationing, which was felt in America ... when vacation resorts were established along the entire Atlantic coast, from Maine to Florida."<sup>70</sup> Prior to this period,

<sup>64</sup> *The Manifesto*, Volumes 17-19, United Societies, 1887.

<sup>65</sup> Town of Hartford Deeds. Hartford, Vermont. Accessed October 2015.

<sup>66</sup> Wellcome, Isaac Cummings. *History of the Second Advent Message and Mission, Doctrine and People*. Boston: Advent Christian Publication Society, 1874.

<sup>67</sup> Parker, Charles A. "The Camp Meeting on the Frontier and the Methodist Religious Resort in the East." *Methodist History*, April, 1980.

<sup>68</sup> Mohnvev, Kirk F. Bayside National Register District Nomination, Bayside, Waldo County, Maine. National Park Service National Register Nomination, 1996.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>70</sup> Parker, Charles A. "The Camp Meeting on the Frontier and the Methodist Religious Resort in the East." *Methodist History*, April, 1980.

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summer vacationing had been exclusive to the upper class “but the extension of the railroad and the steamship line, combined with the, availability of moderately priced facilities, brought great waves of visitors, to the newly established gathering places.”<sup>71</sup>

Camp meeting grounds and then religious resorts sprung up “often close by secular grounds, at the seashore, in the mountains, by the riverside, at the' lakeside, and at woodland groves. The camp meeting associations provided a Christian substitute for fashionable "watering places" such as those at Saratoga and Niagara, New York; Newport, Rhode Island; the White Mountains, New Hampshire; and Cape May and Long Branch, New Jersey. They also provided an alternative to Atlantic City, New Jersey, which had become popular as a middle class secular resort.”<sup>72</sup>

White River Junction was not Vermont’s only camp meeting site in the 1880s. Adventist meetings were held in Northfield, Randolph, Lyndonville, South Londonderry, West Randolph, St. Albans, Essex Junction, and Hardwick and across the Connecticut River in Claremont, New Hampshire. The White River Camp had sister camps at Bethel, Vermont; Alton Bay, New Hampshire; Mechanics Falls, Maine; and Beebe, Quebec. During a given summer, evangelicals made visits to several meetings over the course of a few months. For instance, in 1902, the Reverend Miriam McKinstry, a major Vermont Adventist advocate, first attended the sister camp meeting in Alton Bay, New Hampshire, and then the White River Junction camp meeting.<sup>73</sup> McKinstry was the wife of the Rev. L. C. McKinstry, one of the founding members of the White River Camp. Together, they ran services at the Adventist Church in Richford, Vermont.

In 1890, the third annual camp meeting of the Second Adventists at White River Junction commenced on August 31. By this time, the association had invested in the site as “the grounds have been improved and several new cottages built during the summer ... and things have been prepared for a large and successful meeting.”<sup>74</sup> Five years later, in May 1895, a fire destroyed “numerous trees, seats, and cottages.” The fire, apparently started when a passing train sparked and ignited a leaf pile, destroyed eleven out of the twenty-two cottages.<sup>75</sup> In 1899, a thunderstorm struck the boarding house at the campgrounds. John Harding an attendee from Copperfield was “prostrated by the shock and did not recover consciousness for several hours.”<sup>76</sup>

By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, camp meeting attendance dwindled “as society became less focused on religious pursuits, and vacationing habits changed as accessibility improved.”<sup>77</sup> With the accessibility and affordability of rail and automobile travel increasing, Americans sought a wider array of summer options. The automobile had a dual effect on the camps. While the automobile allowed for quicker travel times and wide array of summer options, it also contributed to crowded camp conditions. As a result, many conferences attempted holding

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<sup>71</sup>Ibid.

<sup>72</sup>Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> *Richford Gazette*, August 1902

<sup>74</sup> *The Vermont Tribune*, Ludlow, Friday, August 30, 1889

<sup>75</sup> Rowe, Marjorie, *The Advent Christian Witness* [serial] (4 of 11)

<sup>76</sup> *Vermont Phoenix*, Brattleboro, Vermont · September 8, 1899.

<sup>77</sup> Beard, Christine *Asbury Grove National Register Nomination*, National Park Service, 2009.

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“successive camp meetings on the same grounds” and in the case of White River, “several of the larger conferences permanent campgrounds have been founded, with substantial buildings for main auditorium and various services.”<sup>78</sup>

While there was a general decline in camp meetings, there was a constant flow of meetings in White River Junction. White River Junction was “one of the prettiest spots in the State of Vermont, or even all New England. ... Situated in a beautiful valley, bordering on the Connecticut River. The annual camp meeting is always interesting and well attended.”<sup>79</sup> Hartford and White River Junction always benefited from its central location as “... no town in eastern Vermont has better or greater railroad facilities than has Hartford.”<sup>80</sup> Railroads provided easy access from every direction in the state and beyond; the Central Vermont offered reduced convention rates. The 1904 White River Junction Camp Meeting, held between August 26 and September 4, 1904, featured “a first class program of speakers” and “a large and interesting meeting is anticipated.” The Boston & Maine Railroad offered reduced rates to White River Junction<sup>81</sup>

While most camp meetings followed the Methodist temperance tradition, there were apparently alcohol-related issues at Vermont meetings. The 1906 session of the Vermont Legislature passed several laws and regulations relating to “Disturbing Camp Meetings”. Any person who sold liquor or promoted gambling within two miles of a camp meeting had to pay a fine of forty dollars to the town. In addition, the camp meeting association “may act as special police at a camp meeting... Within two miles of the camp meeting grounds ... with the same power as is given to constables, to seize intoxicating liquors, to demand assistance, and to arrest disorderly persons and detain them in custody until proper trial can be had, and shall, before acting as such special police, be sworn, and, while on duty, wear a badge of office.”<sup>82</sup>

During the first quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, other evangelical groups held camp meetings in the White River Junction area. In 1911, there was an alternative camp meeting closer to downtown White River Junction. Seventh-Day Adventists, a group similar to the Adventists, “decided to hold our camp meeting at White River Junction, Vermont, or nearby at some central point, providing the grounds can be secured. Definite notice will appear as soon as the grounds are secured.”<sup>83</sup> The 1911 Seven Day Adventist site was located only two short blocks from the station to the foot of the path on an “elevated plateau just west of the village, and within a very few minutes walk from the station.”<sup>84</sup> Specific directions told attendees to pass the First National Bank, go up Gates Street to Courier Street, and “turn to the left around the corner of Millers' Automobile Barns ... and keep on Courier Street ... to a beautifully shaded hill to the camp-

78 Spalding, Arthur Whitefield. *Captains of the Host, First Volume of a History of Seventh-day Adventists Covering the years 1845-1900*. Review and Herald Publishing Association, Washington D.C., 1949.

79 *St. Johnsbury Caledonian*, August 24, 1904.

80 *Ibid.*

81 *Ibid.*

82 *The Public Statutes of Vermont, 1906: Including the Public Acts of 1906, with the Declaration of Independence, the Articles of Confederation, and the Constitutions of the United States and the State of Vermont*, Rumford Print Company, 1907

83 *Atlantic Union Gleaner*, South Lancaster, Massachusetts, June 1911.

84 *Ibid.*

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ground.”<sup>85</sup> The General, Union, and local Advent Conferences provided ministers and speakers for the 1911 meeting. The organizers yearned to “do all in our power to make this camp-meeting a success, and much pains will be taken to make the grounds perfectly sanitary and agreeable to all. We wish here to assure our people that they will find some decided improvements over former years along sanitary lines.”<sup>86</sup>

Just as they did in 1911, White River Junction hosted a Seventh-day Adventist camp meeting in 1915. The camp meeting was moved from Woodsville, New Hampshire, “owing to an epidemic of infantile paralysis.”<sup>87</sup> The Woodsville conference committee conducted “careful investigation” of the White River area and “a beautiful site was secured a short distance from the city, just one half mile from the station.”<sup>88</sup> The organizers felt that “the ground is high and dry, and overlooks the city. The water is good, and there are absolutely no mosquitoes.” Although located in White River Junction, it was not at the existing site: “It is not the location on which the camp-meeting was held a few years ago, but it is on the opposite side of the city on a high plateau.”<sup>89</sup> With the quick selection of a new 1915 site, there were few permanent structures and there was a need for tents. The organizers arranged for attendees to rent tents for 50 cents as “there will be little opportunity to secure rooms but the ground is high and dry, and floors will not be needed in the tents.”<sup>90</sup> The White River Junction site was suitable due to its central location as “it is forty miles farther for those from St. Johnsbury and the north, it will be nearer for those in New Hampshire and the southern part of Vermont; so let no one who planned to come from the north change their plans, but let those from the south increase their attendance.”<sup>91</sup> Attendees were greeted at the train station and for those who could not make the walk, the organizers offered automobile rides.<sup>92</sup>

The following year, the Seventh Day Adventists organized another meeting in White River Junction. The site came “as a pleasant surprise to our Vermont brethren and sisters” as “It will be of just as easy access to those living in New Hampshire.” Concord, New Hampshire, was the original host site but “the land which we had hoped to secure in Concord was found to be unsuitable, and it seemed impossible to secure land without going some distance out of the city. This, we felt, would be an injury to our tent effort instead of a help, as it would be could we locate in the city.”<sup>93</sup>

While there were periodic alternative Seventh Day Adventist meetings, the White River Junction Advent Camp Meeting Association hosted an encampment annually on Hartford Avenue until 1917. At this time, the Spanish-American influenza “reached epidemic proportions, and quarantine for polio was also in effect. Americans avoided public gathering places and the

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> *Atlantic Union Gleaner*, South Lancaster, Massachusetts, August 11, 1915

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> *Atlantic Union Gleaner*, South Lancaster, Massachusetts, 1916

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campground was silent.”<sup>94</sup>

The camp meeting resort of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century “was popular with four classes of persons: cottage owners, cottage and tent renters, hotel guests, and excursionists.”<sup>95</sup> Many of the cottage owners, “largely preachers, lawyers, and businessmen spent the entire summer on the grounds.”<sup>96</sup> They “regarded the well-regulated and strongly protected religious resort as an ideal place to leave their families during the summer, while they attended matters elsewhere, spending only weekends at the cottages. Some even commuted to and from the city daily.”<sup>97</sup>

Many of the remaining cottages were available to renters at an affordable price, “thus gaining the same benefits as those who owned cottages.”<sup>98</sup> The association built lodging houses and dormitories for overflow visitors while neighboring hotels and lodging houses benefited from the annual migration to the area. The visitors “crowded these places to capacity throughout the summer season. Large numbers of excursionists also were drawn to the grounds, especially during the camp meeting services. Most of them wandered around the grounds, partaking of the religious or recreational amenities, but having no specific headquarters.”<sup>99</sup>

Over the years, camp meetings “changed externally with the times.”<sup>100</sup> As the attendance increased, the associations improved and expanded the facilities. Amongst the facilities were permanent kitchens so that “the feeding of the multitudes became more scientifically organized.”<sup>101</sup> Despite the modernization, “still in essentials the camp meeting remained the same.”<sup>102</sup> During the first three decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the White River Camp built permanent structures such as dormitory, kitchen and a tabernacle.

The thirty-third annual White River Junction camp meeting occurred between August 14 and August 22, 1920. The Reverend F.W.S. Walden of Scotstown, Quebec, and the Reverend E. H. Timberlake of Auburn, Maine, were two of the featured preachers. The camp meeting featured music of Charles L. Rand and Mrs. Ethel Woodard. The Reverend L.E. Peabody was President, Reverend W.C. Boutwell was Vice President and Mrs. S.C. Wheeler was Treasurer. The camp meetings provided room and lodging with the rooms “equipped with good beds having springs and mattresses.”<sup>103</sup>

The summer meetings typically lasted seven to ten days. Approximately ten to fifteen services occurred throughout a typical camp meeting day. There were prayer meetings, experience

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94 Rowe, Marjorie, *The Advent Christian Witness* [serial] (4 of 11)

95 Parker, Charles A. “The Camp Meeting on the Frontier and the Methodist Religious Resort in the East.” *Methodist History*, April, 1980.

96 Parker, Charles A. “The Camp Meeting on the Frontier and the Methodist Religious Resort in the East.” *Methodist History*, April, 1980.

97 Ibid.

98 Ibid.

99 Ibid.

100 Spalding, Arthur Whitefield. *Captains of the Host, First Volume of a History of Seventh-day Adventists Covering the years 1845-1900*. Review and Herald Publishing Association, Washington D.C., 1949.

101 Ibid.

102 Ibid.

103 Camp Meeting Broadside, Home of Joseph G. Trottier, White River Junction, Vermont.

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meetings, young people's meetings, mothers' meetings, and communion services. A day typically included a morning Prayer Meeting, Love Feast, Morning Worship Service, Afternoon Worship Service, Tent and Cottage Prayer Meetings, and Evening Worship Service, followed by informal prayers and hymn singing in the cottages and tents.<sup>104</sup> The organizers invited guest speakers including "ministers, editors of religious publications, home missionaries, and representatives of church related institutions, such as schools of theology or Deaconess Homes and Hospitals. Topics were generally biblical, moral, or ethical in nature. Hymn singing, communion, and conversions were also popular."<sup>105</sup>

In 1962, the association held special services to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of the camp meeting. In 1974, there were approximately fifteen cottages on the property. This accounts for the core group of c. 1890 cottages. In the years following, the association added nine more cottages. The 1982 Articles of Association stated that the cooperation "shall exist for the purpose of maintaining facilities appropriate to the task of providing public worship, training for the work of the ministry, youth outreach programs and Biblical conferences..."<sup>106</sup> The Board of Directors must approve new cottages and campsites. Cottage owners are allowed to stay on the grounds any time of the year but they need written permission to rent the cottages to outside people. The Board of Directors must approve the sale of any cottage and owners must maintain cottage as a safe and habitable dwelling".<sup>107</sup>

Roberta Butterfield, wife of the association's longtime treasurer, Rutland's Ben Butterfield, spoke about the camp in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century: "There has always been the special feeling of being in a holy place which has called members and visitors back for another encampment." Another person who typified the spirit of the Advent Camp Meeting Grounds was President Emeritus George Stone. After serving as president of the association for over 35 years, "he was the camp ... He opened the camp alone many times. He did battle with the old sheet metal woodstove, decorated the tabernacle, cleaned toilets and baked pies."

Butterfield spoke about the special nature of the place: "It's not an especially beautiful place... The same cottages are standing now that were first erected 100 years ago... The original builders used no studs as they are just 3x4s held 10 together with vertical boarding ... No one expected them to last. Being Adventists, I guess we expected the Lord to come before they'd fall down!"<sup>108</sup>

The rise of the automobile, and then the Great Depression, led to the decline of camp meetings in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. In addition, the camp meeting declined as a resort getaway experience, as "vacationers no longer depended upon the railroad for transportation and could travel routes of

104 Jenkins, Candace, *Yarmouth Camp Ground Historic District National Register Nomination*, National Park Service, 1990.

105 Ibid.

106 Advent Christian Campground and Conference Center Articles of Association

107 Ibid.

108 Rowe, Marjorie, *The Advent Christian Witness* [serial] (4 of 11)

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their own choosing.”<sup>109</sup> During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, interest in camp meetings ebbed and flowed as the denomination’s membership declined. According to *The Advent Christian Manuals*, “the highest number of churches in the era was 326 in 1903 organized into 15 conferences. ...The Vermont Conference of six churches disappeared in 1937.”<sup>110</sup> During the 20<sup>th</sup> century century, there were summers “when all the accommodations at cottages and campsites at White River were full” but during a few summers, “interest seemed to have greatly waned.”<sup>111</sup> With the declining attendance, there was a parallel decline in the structure of the camp meeting during the 20<sup>th</sup> century as they “became less rigidly structured although the religious emphasis remained.”<sup>112</sup>

To the greater White River Junction population, the Advent Camp Meeting Grounds were a mystery. As the site is nestled between the plateau of Hartford Avenue and the railroad tracks, the topography isolates the meeting grounds from public thoroughfares. For those who knew about the site, the meeting grounds often were identified as “Monkey Town” – a playful yet naive term referring to the possibility of monks living on the site.<sup>113</sup>

In 2006, the Advent Christian Church membership in the United States was approximately 25,600 members belonging to 293 churches, similar to the 28,300 memberships in 1925 and “relatively stable membership during the intervening years.”<sup>114</sup> In recent years, “attendance at the camp ... has grown so much ... that the tabernacle can’t accommodate the 275 people who show up for the week-long main event in early August. Some of the campers have been sitting outside the building, struggling to hear the preacher’s words.”<sup>115</sup> The meeting still features daily worship services, bible study classes and special speakers. While these type of religious services remained a focus, the meetings offered extra events and activities such as organized sports, board game nights, woodland hikes, swimming trips and picnics. In recent years, the association rented the facility out for other religious groups. For instance, a White River Junction ministry, Revival Connections, held a meeting at the site in June-July, 2007-2009. In 2016, the organization operated under the name White River Advent Christian Church and Conference Center. Despite the name change, it continues to operate under the updated Constitution and By-laws first laid out in 1887 and updated in 1982. The by-laws lay out procedures for membership, finances, officers, meetings and guidelines for cottage owners. Today the Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District continues the tradition of religious camp meetings and is a good example of the property type.

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109 Lampl, Elizabeth Jo with Clare Lise Kelly, *Historic Context Report A Harvest in the Open for Saving Souls -The Camp Meetings of Montgomery County*, Montgomery County Planning Department Historic Preservation Section, Maryland Historical Trust, July 2004.

110 Taber, Clinton E. “The Eastern Regional Association of Advent Christian General Conference Past-Present.” *Henceforth Magazine*, Fall 2011.

111 Rowe, Marjorie, *The Advent Christian Witness* [serial] (4 of 11)

112 Beard, Christine, *Asbury Grove National Register Nomination*, National Park Service, 2009.

113 Interview with Thomas Losee, July 1, 2016.

114 National Council of Churches’ Historic Archive CD and Yearbook of American & Canadian Churches

115 Hongoltz-Hetling, Matt, “Hartford Christian Camp Eyed for Historic Designation.” *Valley News*, April 24, 2016.



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**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 # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
  - Other State agency
  - Federal agency
  - Local government
  - University
  - Other
- Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** \_\_\_\_\_

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## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** 7.5 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

### Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 43.66230° N

Longitude: 72.31137° W

### Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The nominated property is bounded by the legal description for parcel #240133000 as recorded on the Town of Hartford tax lot maps on file at the Town of Hartford, Vermont. The boundary of the Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District is a polygonal area and shown on the accompanying map titled "Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District, Hartford, VT." The district includes the buildings on the lot to the east of Mount Olivet Cemetery and to the west of the Boston and Maine Railroad. The boundary is based on the lot associated with the entire complex.

### Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary of the nominated property includes all buildings and structures of the property and the acreage surrounding these resources that has been associated with the Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District since its inception in 1887. The acreage is consequential to the outdoor social activities associated with the camp meeting.

The boundary of the district has been drawn to include the concentration of architecturally and historically significant resources in the Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District that are eligible for the National Register. The western boundary extends to the eastern boundary of Mount Olivet Cemetery. To the south of the southern boundary are houses built after the Period of Significance and not associated with the district. There is no housing to the east of the buildings on the west side of the Connecticut River. To the north are non-historic buildings. The boundaries cover the historic concentrated development of the meeting grounds and are sufficient to convey its significance.

Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District

Name of Property

Windsor, Vermont

County and State

---

### 11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Brian Knight  
organization: BKR  
street & number: 585 Nichols Hill Road  
city or town: Dorset state: VT zip code: 05251  
e-mail brianknight@fastmail.fm  
telephone: 201-919-3416  
date: July 2017

---

### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

### Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

### Photo Log

Name of Property: Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District

City or Vicinity: Hartford

Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District

Name of Property

Windsor, Vermont

County and State

County: Windsor State: Vermont

Photographer: Brian Knight

Date Photographed: April 19, 2016

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

VT\_Windsor County\_Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District\_001: Building #1 from West

VT\_Windsor County\_Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District\_002: Building #2 from East

VT\_Windsor County\_Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District\_003: Building #3 from East

VT\_Windsor County\_Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District\_004: Building #4 from southeast

VT\_Windsor County\_Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District\_005: Building #5 from South

VT\_Windsor County\_Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District\_006: Building #6 from southeast

VT\_Windsor County\_Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District\_007: Building #7 from southeast

VT\_Windsor County\_Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District\_008: Building #8 from southwest

VT\_Windsor County\_Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District\_009: Building #9 from southeast

VT\_Windsor County\_Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District\_010: Building #10 from northeast

VT\_Windsor County\_Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District\_011: Building #11 from northwest

Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District

Windsor, Vermont

Name of Property

County and State

VT\_Windsor County\_Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District\_012: Building #12  
from northwest

VT\_Windsor County\_Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District\_013: Building #13  
from northwest

VT\_Windsor County\_Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District\_014: Building #14  
from northwest

VT\_Windsor County\_Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District\_015: Building #15  
from northwest

VT\_Windsor County\_Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District\_016: Building #16  
from south

VT\_Windsor County\_Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District\_017: Building #17  
from west

VT\_Windsor County\_Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District\_018: Building #18  
from west

VT\_Windsor County\_Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District\_019: Building #19  
from west

VT\_Windsor County\_Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District\_020: Building #20  
from west

VT\_Windsor County\_Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District\_021: Building #21  
from southwest

VT\_Windsor County\_Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District\_022: Building #22  
from southwest

VT\_Windsor County\_Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District\_023: Building #23  
from west

VT\_Windsor County\_Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District\_024: Building #24  
from south

VT\_Windsor County\_Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District\_025: Building #25  
from south



Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District

Windsor, Vermont

Name of Property

County and State

VT\_Windsor County\_Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District\_026: Building #26  
from south

VT\_Windsor County\_Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District\_027: Building #27  
from southwest

VT\_Windsor County\_Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District\_028: Building #28  
from south

VT\_Windsor County\_Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District\_029: Building #29  
from east

VT\_Windsor County\_Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District\_030: Building #30  
from southeast

VT\_Windsor County\_Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District\_031: Building #31  
from east

VT\_Windsor County\_Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District\_032: Building #32  
from east

VT\_Windsor County\_Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District\_033: Building #33  
from southeast

VT\_Windsor County\_Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District\_034: Structure #34  
from south

VT\_Windsor County\_Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District\_035:  
Building #7, #8 and #9 from south

VT\_Windsor County\_Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District\_036: Buildings #19,  
#13, #14 and #15 from northwest

VT\_Windsor County\_Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District\_037  
Buildings #31, #28, #27, #26, #25 and #24 from southeast

VT\_Windsor County\_Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District\_038  
Buildings #12, #33, #28, #29, #27, #26 and #13 from south

VT\_Windsor County\_Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District\_039: Buildings #26,  
#25, #24, #22, and #34 from southwest

VT\_Windsor County\_Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District\_040: Building #13  
interior

Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District

Name of Property

Windsor, Vermont

County and State

VT\_Windsor County\_Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District\_041: Building #13  
interior

VT\_Windsor County\_Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District\_042: Building #2  
interior

VT\_Windsor County\_Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District\_043: Building #2  
interior

VT\_Windsor County\_Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District\_044: Building #2  
interior

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District

Name of Property

Windsor, Vermont

County and State

Historic Photographs



Figure 1. View from Preacher's Stand Towards West



Figure 2. View North

Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District

Name of Property

Windsor, Vermont

County and State

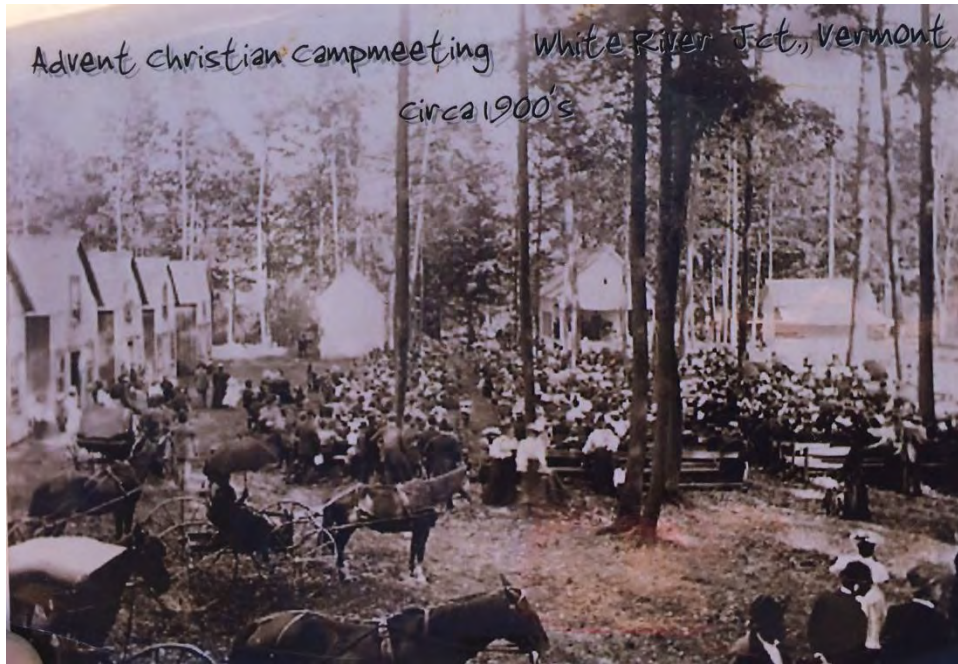


Figure 3. View East, from site of present day tabernacle



Figure 4. Preacher's Stand. No Longer Standing

Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District

Name of Property

Windsor, Vermont

County and State

**CAMP MEETING**  
AT WHITE RIVER JUNCTION, VT.  
**August 6 to 14 Inclusive**

---

**Rev. O. R. JENKS**  
Of Aurora College will be with us Aug. 6 Aug. 10

**Rev. W. S. BEZANSON**  
Pastor of the A. C. Church of New Haven Conn. will be a  
special speaker from Aug. 9 to 14

**MR. CHAS. A. ALLEN** will be the Choir Director and  
**L. GRACE PRIOR** the Organist      **MRS RUBY POWERS** the Soloist

---

**CHILDREN'S MEETING DAILY AT 1:00 P. M.**  
*MISS ELIZABETH SWEETSER Will Have Charge*

---

**Thursday, August 11 will be Mission Day**  
*The Annual Business Meeting will be on Thursday at 4:00 P.M.*

---

**BOARD AND ROOM**  
Mr. Chas. Allen of Waterbury, Vt., Will have charge of the lodging  
house and rooms. Good rooms and Beds will be available.  
Rev. E. S. Hewitt of Brattleboro, Vt. will manage the boarding house.  
*Come, One and All Enjoy the Services and Help Support the Meeting*

---

**L. E. PEABODY, Pres.**      **S. C. WHEELER, Sec. Treas.**

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS, WATERBURY, VT.

Figure 5: C. 1920 Broadside

Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District

Name of Property

Windsor, Vermont

County and State



**Figure 6 View of Baptistery from southwest**

Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District

Name of Property

Windsor, Vermont

County and State



**Figure 7. View to west of Baptistery and Tabernacle**

Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District

Name of Property

Windsor, Vermont

County and State



**Figure 8. View to northeast, from southeast corner of tabernacle**



Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District

Name of Property

Windsor, Vermont

County and State



**Figure 9, Building # 16, c. 1971**

Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District

Name of Property

Windsor, Vermont

County and State



Figure 10. Baptistery, c. 1940



Figure 11. South side of tabernacle

Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District  
Name of Property

Windsor, Vermont  
County and State



**Figure 12. Baptistry**



**Figure 13. South facade of tabernacle**

Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District  
Name of Property

Windsor, Vermont  
County and State



**Figure 14. Dormitory, Kitchen and Bookstore**

Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District  
Name of Property

Windsor, Vermont  
County and State

**Historic Map**

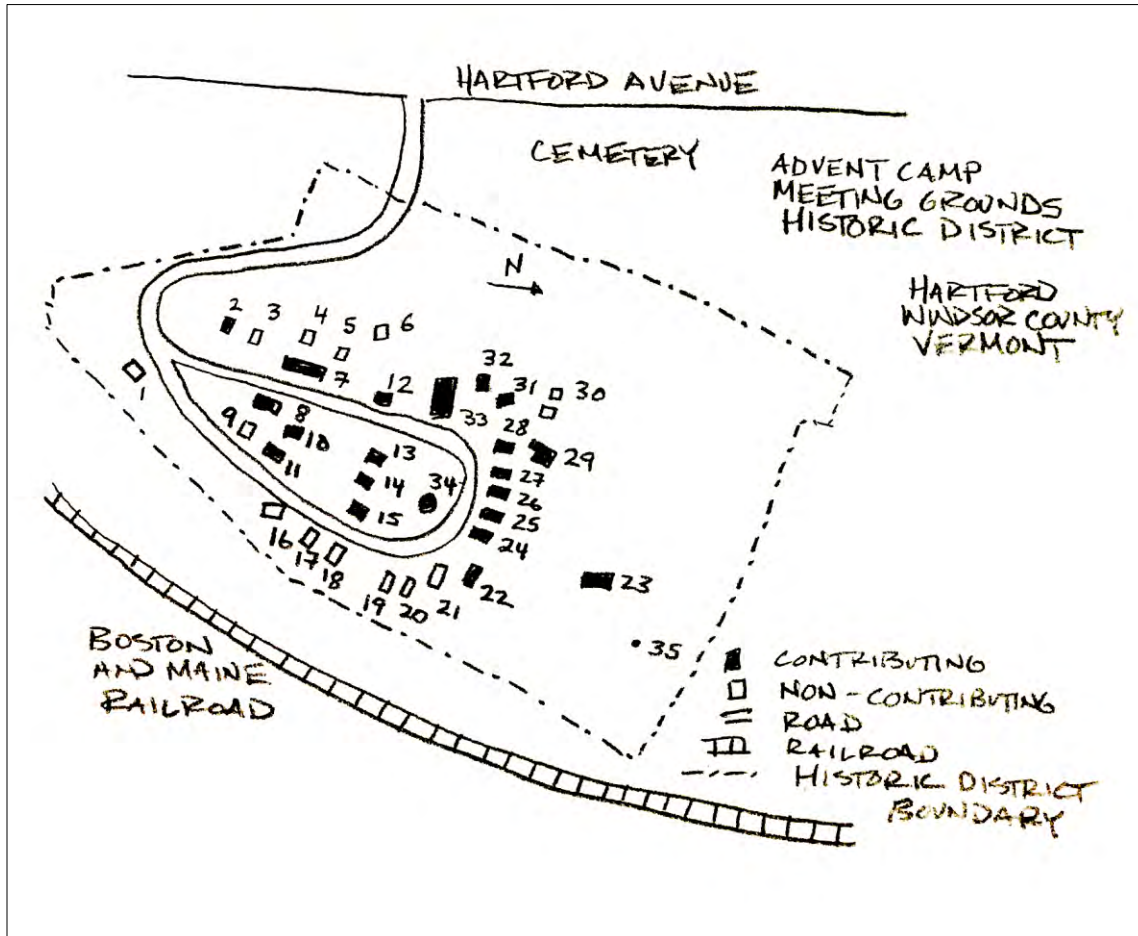


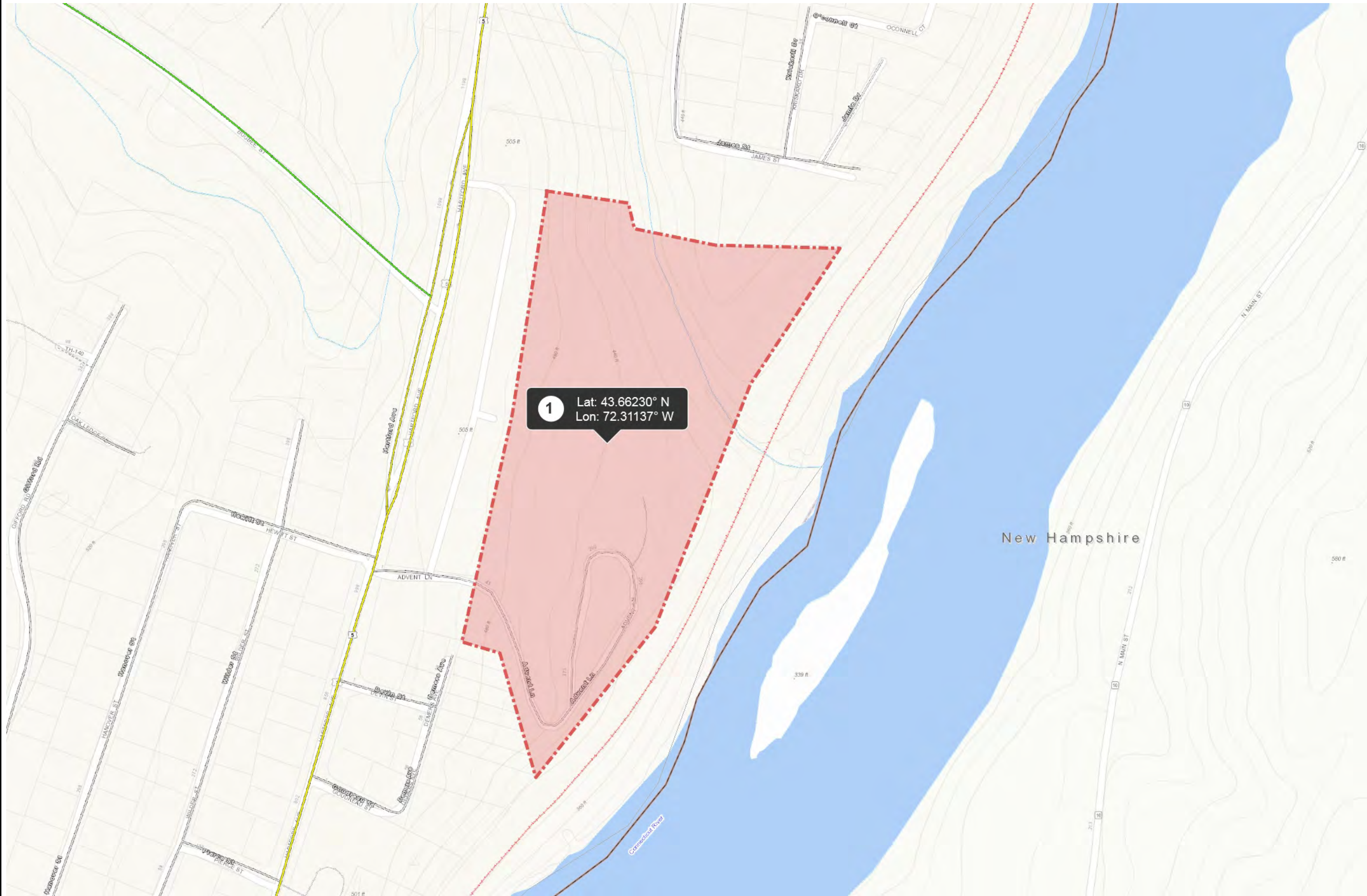
1869 Map, Showing Land of Orren A. Taft

Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District  
Name of Property

Windsor, Vermont  
County and State

**District Map**



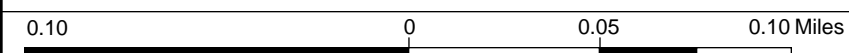


### LEGEND

- Airports
- Rail Lines
- Town Boundaries
- County Boundaries
- Buildings
- Village Boundaries

**1** Lat: 43.66230° N  
Lon: 72.31137° W

1:3,160  
August 3, 2017











VBS+







MEN

WOMEN

Every knee shall bow  
Every tongue confess

JESUS CHRIST  
IS LORD!















GREEN  
PROPANE  
GAS CO.

GREEN  
PROPANE  
GAS CO.

GREEN  
PROPANE  
GAS CO.



EVANGELIST

















BIBLE  
TEACHER

ADVENT CHRIST  
CAMPMEET  
ALL WELCOME



ADVENT CHRISTIAN  
*Advent Christian Heritage Since 1887*  
CAMPMEETING  
ALL WELCOME

ADVENT CHRISTIAN  
CAMPMEETING  
ALL WELCOME

KING







CARETAKER

150-9  
LOWE'S  
LAWN











CAMPER'S  
← TENTS →  
TENT SITES





















CARETAKER

















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white

Near end of

WAKE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:

Property Name:

Multiple Name:

State & County:

Date Received: 8/7/2017      Date of Pending List: 9/7/2017      Date of 16th Day: 9/22/2017      Date of 45th Day: 9/21/2017      Date of Weekly List: 9/21/2017

Reference number:

Nominator:

Reason For Review:

Accept       Return       Reject      9/21/2017 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments:

Recommendation/ Criteria

Reviewer Jim Gabbert      Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2275      Date \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION:    see attached comments : No    see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.





**State of Vermont**  
**Division for Historic Preservation**  
Deane C. Davis Building, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor  
One National Life Drive, Montpelier, VT 05620-0501  
<http://accd.vermont.gov/historic-preservation>

[phone] 802-828-3540



August 3, 2017

J. Paul Loether  
National Park Service  
National Register of Historic Places  
1201 Eye Street, NW 8<sup>th</sup> floor  
Washington, DC 20005

**Re: Nomination to the National Register of Historic Places for Property in Vermont**

Dear Mr. Loether:

The enclosed disks contain a true and correct copy of the nomination for the Advent Camp Meeting Grounds Historic District located at 150 Advent Lane in Hartford, VT, to the National Register of Historic Places.

Notification

The Chief Elected Official, CLG Commission, and Regional Planning Commission were notified of the proposed nomination on February 17, 2017. The property owners were notified of the proposed nomination on March 17, 2017.

- No objections to the nomination were submitted to the Division during the public comment period.
- An objection to the nomination was submitted to the Division during the public comment period. A copy of the objection is included on Disk 1.
- A letter of support for the nomination was submitted to the Division during the public comment period. A copy of the letter is included on Disk 1.

Certified Local Government

- The property being nominated is not located in a CLG community.
- The property being nominated is located in a CLG community, and a copy of the local commission's review is included on Disk 1.

Rehabilitation Investment Tax Credits

- This property is not utilizing the Rehabilitation Investment Tax Credits.
- This property being rehabilitated using the Rehabilitation Investment Tax Credits. A copy of the *Part I – Evaluation of Significance* form is included on Disk 1.

State Review Board

The Vermont Advisory Council on Historic Preservation reviewed the draft nomination materials at its meeting on April 19, 2017. The Council voted that the property meets the National Register Criteria for Evaluation under Criteria A and C, and recommends that the State Historic Preservation Officer approve the nomination.

If you have any questions concerning this nomination, please do not hesitate to contact me at (802) 828-3043 or [devin.colman@vermont.gov](mailto:devin.colman@vermont.gov).

Sincerely,

VERMONT DIVISION FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION



Devin A. Colman

State Architectural Historian