

PH 036135x

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED AUG 19 1976
DATE ENTERED APR 13 1977

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC

✓ ** First Welsh Congregational Church
AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

about 5 mi. SW of Iowa City off SA 1

CITY, TOWN Union Township

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE Iowa

VICINITY OF First

COUNTY Johnson

CODE 103

3 CLASSIFICATION

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

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Congregation of the First Welsh Congregational Church

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Iowa City

VICINITY OF

STATE

Iowa

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Johnson County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Iowa City

STATE

Iowa

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The church is a plain, one-room frame structure set upon a concrete foundation, dimensions 36' x 50'. A centered door is at the front. Four tall, narrow stained-glass windows are on each side. The only ornamentation is a steeple set upon a square base, with hexagonal drum and roof (the spire was removed after damage by a storm). The church roof is covered with composition shingles.

The wood floors, wainscoating, and other furniture are original. Interior modifications have been limited to repapering, laying of carpet, and the installation of modern lighting. The interior and exterior are in excellent condition.

The church stands on the crest of a semi-wooded hill in a rural farm area, overlooking a small creek. It is flanked by a small cemetery, which was first used in 1851 and is still used today for the burial of the descendants of the early Welsh settlers.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

1871

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This simple, rural church derives significance from its place (then and now) in the ethnic heritage of a particular group of people. In the late 1830's, a group of Welsh migrated from Pennsylvania to southeastern Iowa, and built a settlement along "Old Man's Creek." They founded their Welsh Congregational Church in 1846. The first church was built in 1856; over the next decades, more Welsh arrived to take advantage of coal mining operations in the area, and in response, the congregation replaced their early church with the present structure.

The Welsh Church operated regularly until 1954, closing only because there were too few people to maintain it. The remaining members, however, arranged with the Welsh Missionary Society in Iowa to hold services in the church once a year. In 1963, active measures were taken to reestablish the church as a "working" congregation. Today, services are held frequently, as are various social events which reflect the long tradition of Welsh culture in Iowa.

This particular Welsh church is the mother church of two other long-established congregations in Iowa. The first, founded in 1849, is in Iowa City. The second, in Williamsburg, was the result of a dispute over the use of Welsh or English during services. The advocates of English- led by Owen Evans, removed to Williamsburg around 1860. Both of these churches are still active.

In very important ways, the Welsh Church at Old Man's Creek has since its founding served the cultural, as well as the religious needs of its congregation. For over 50 years, the church was the site of the "Gymanfa," an annual meeting of the Welsh Congregational Church Association. Circuit preachers came from Welsh communities in Pennsylvania, Ohio, and sometimes from Wales, to exhort the crowds to a revivalistic fervor (for which the Welsh had a name, "hywl," or "uncontrollable enthusiasm"). The Gymanfa was revived in 1970, as part of the church's centennial celebration.

Less spiritual, but no less culturally important, was the "Eisteddfod" (literally, a "singing" or "session"), a yearly expression of the rich musical tradition of the Welsh and their descendants. This gathering, originally of bands and musicians who competed in oratory, poetry, and musical contests, was only slightly modified in transplantation to America. A variety of choral groups (men, women, mixed, quartets, octets, etc.) assembled at this church, and specialized in religious works by Handel, Haydn, and Mozart. The "hywl" generated by these performances contributed to those feeling of ethnic solidarity so important to newcomers to a strange land.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Reichard, George. History of the Welsh Congregational Church. West Branch, Iowa: Times Printing Co., 1946.
 Wilson, Ben Hur, "The Iowa Eisteddfod," Palimpsest XXII, #12, (December, 1941) pp. 357-373.
 Records of the First Welsh Congregational Church.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY One acre

UTM REFERENCES

A	15	16	15	88	0	46	07	54	5	B							
	ZONE	EASTING			NORTHING					ZONE	EASTING			NORTHING			
C										D							

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Agnes Jones

ORGANIZATION

DATE

1 January, 1976

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

1618 Wilson Street

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Iowa City

Iowa

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

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

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Adrian D. Anderson

TITLE

State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

August 10, 1976

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

CHIEF DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

9/13/77

ATTEST

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

3.18.77