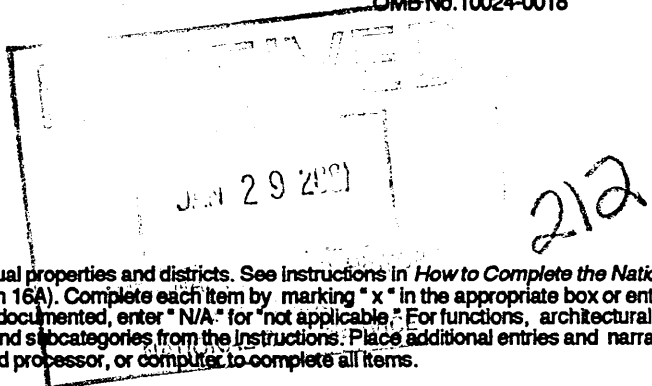


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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 *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or entering the information requested. If an 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. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Salisbury Congregational Church

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

street & number West Salisbury Road  a not for publication

city or town Salisbury  vicinity

state Vermont code VT county Addison code 001 zip code 05769

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  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  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Eva Mulbertz NR Specialist January 24, 2001  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Vermont State Historic Preservation Office  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register  See continuation sheet
- determined eligible for the National Register  See continuation sheet
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other, (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

Edson H. Beall  
Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

3/2/01

Salisbury Cong. Church  
Name of Property

Addison County, Vermont  
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property  
(Check only one box)

Number of Resources within Property  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

Religious Buildings, Sites and Structures of Vermont

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

Religion/Religious Facility  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Current Functions

(Enter Categories from instructions)

Religion/Religious Facility  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. Description

Architectural Classification  
(Enter Categories from instructions)

Greek Revival  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Materials  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation limestone  
walls Weatherboard  
\_\_\_\_\_  
roof Slate  
other Tin

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See Continuation Sheet.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 1Salisbury Congregational Church  
Salisbury, Addison County, Vermont       

The Salisbury Meeting House, completed in 1842, is a Greek Revival style church whose medium pitched, gabled, front facade faces West Salisbury Road in a southwesterly exposure. Rectangular in plan, the timber framed, white, wood clapboarded structure measures forty two feet wide by fifty seven feet long. Pleasantly situated on a half-acre lot in the village of Salisbury, the church lies on a gentle rise in elevation overlooking the east-west road that passes by the church fifty feet in front of it. The church sits atop a four foot high foundation of exposed local limestone that has been chinked with modern mortar. The roof consists of coursed slate tiles. Landscaping consists of several mature hardwood trees set freely in front of the church. A narrow gravel driveway wraps around the church on the east and west sides enlarging to a modest parking area behind the north facade. The Salisbury Congregational Church retains its integrity of design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

EXTERIOR

The north and south facades of the church have large pedimented gables with wooden clapboards comprising the area inside the tympanum. Slender corner pilasters and simple cornice moldings accent the structure with clean and spare ornamentation. The gabled front facade is one story high and three bays wide with an eight paneled, center double door. The trabeated door surround is composed of engaged, flat pilasters carrying a full and unadorned entablature. The stairs to the front entrance consist of an eight foot wide by six foot deep central landing at level with the double doors with divergent stair runs leading down east and west, all of poured concrete. One window, measuring two feet by four feet, resting lengthwise, pierces the foundation wall on either side of the central stairs. Massive thirty over thirty, double-hung windows are centered on either side of the doorway. Window casing is square stock, simple and unadorned. Both windows are eight feet tall and four feet wide and have green painted, wooden, louvered shutters. These shutter sets are split. The bottom set folds to cover the lower sash while the matching upper shutter is one complete, louvered panel that's fixed in place. Presently, the meeting house has its top sash window covered by this louvered shutter panel while the lower shutters are kept open.

Finishing off the south facade is the wooden bell tower. The tower sits atop the southern edge of the gable directly over the center doors and is comprised of four stages. Each stage is superimposed and diminishes one over the other so the entire tower is tapered. The first stage is a square pedestal sheathed in wooden clapboards that straddles the roof ridge. The second stage is a square base with chamfered corners. This base is clad with

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number   7   Page   2  Salisbury Congregational Church  
Salisbury, Addison County, Vermont       

wooden flush board that displays a plain circular panel on each of its four sides. The third stage is the belfry with a square, paneled column on each outside corner. A green louvered shutter lies recessed in each side, giving the columns an articulated presence. Topping off the belfry is a replacement octagonal steeple. The original slate-clad steeple was destroyed when the Great Hurricane of 1950 knocked it over. The new steeple echoes the former in size and symmetry but is now clad with coursed tin shingles and painted white. In total, the bell tower doubles the height of the church.

The sides of the church to the east and west are pierced with three windows, all spaced equidistantly along the wall. These windows are the same size as the front, but are paired, two over two, wooden double-hung units. Window casings and shutters are identical to the front windows. The walls are clapboarded and enframed with a bottom sill apron of square stock and on top a fascia board of unadorned square stock that runs around the building just under the eaves. A small, enclosed entryway, leading into the basement, is also located on the south end of the east facade. It measures four feet deep by six feet wide. A gabled roof of coursed slate covers the wood clapboarded structure. The vestibule has a centered steel door in the east wall with one small window each in the north and south walls. Two windows, measuring two feet by four feet, resting lengthwise, pierce the foundation walls on the east and west sides of the church. Both sets are irregularly spaced.

In back, the north facade of the church is plain and unadorned except for a recently added vestibule for handicap accessibility. It measures ten feet deep by sixteen feet wide. Rising straight up the middle of the north wall is a slender brick chimney that rises directly over the roof gable by roughly four feet. Attached to the western corner, this vestibule is a one story addition in the exact style as the rest of the church. A gabled roof of coursed slate covers the wood clapboarded structure. A steel door is off-set in the north side with a six over six window placed equidistantly in the east and west facades of the vestibule.

INTERIOR

Entering the interior of the church through the south-end double doors leads you into the enclosed, one story foyer. This room is roughly twelve feet deep and runs the full width of the church. The interior casing of the thirty over thirty windows in the south wall consists of painted, square stock punctuated with square corner blocks with a plaster floriated design in the middle. Walls and ceilings are smooth plaster. Two doors each are on both the east and west sides of the vestibule. Painted white with four panels, one leads to the upstairs balcony and the other leads to a small closet. The floor is carpeted.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number   7   Page   3  Salisbury Congregational Church  
Salisbury, Addison County, Vermont       

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On the interior wall is a white, centered, eight paneled double door that leads into the main room of the church. The door casing is identical to the interior window casings. The layout of the main room is a double aisle floor plan that encloses two sets of box pews in the middle and a single set on each outside aisle. Painted white, these box pews are accented with a scrolled arm rest and a top rail against the seat backing. This trimming is stained hardwood. The interior windows are cased in the same simple square stock with corner blocks accented in a plaster cast floral pattern. All trim is painted white. The side walls on the east and west facade are smooth plaster and painted an off-white. The baseboard is wide, square stock, painted brown. The flooring is face nailed, soft wood planking, in various widths ranging from ten to thirteen inches and painted brown. Looking upwards, the ceiling rises roughly two stories high and is flat. Pressed fiber board tile has been installed to cover the damage left from the 1950 hurricane. Painted white, the original plaster ceiling medallion remains in the center. Looking at the pulpit centered on the back north wall, the rostrum is a simple, rectangular platform that holds a modest lectern and two high back chairs. In the northeast corner lies another raised platform whose outside corner is rounded over and railed with a large hardwood balustrade. Both carpeted platforms are not original to the church except for the balustrade. In the west corner of the back wall is a replacement six-panel door that leads into the aforementioned north vestibule. The doorway is trimmed identically to the other doors and windows in the church. Inside the vestibule is exposed modern stick framing and a painted wood plank floor.

Back inside the main entrance vestibule, the door leading up to the balcony opens onto a one hundred-eighty degree turning, narrow and steep staircase. The stairs land onto the shallow balcony that overlooks the main floor. A single, open hardwood pew runs the width of the balcony. In the east side of the south wall is a narrow, four paneled door that opens into a modern, rough framed stairway that leads up to the ceiling and bell tower, all of which is uninsulated with exposed post and beam framing.

Salisbury Cong. Church  
Name of Property

Addison County, Vermont  
County and State

### 8. Statement of Significance

#### Applicable National Register Criteria

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

Property is:

- 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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

#### Areas of Significance ( Enter categories from instructions )

Architecture

Social History

#### Period of Significance

1839-1947

#### Significant Dates

1839

#### Significant Person

( Complete if Criterion B is marked above )

N/A

#### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

#### Architect/Builder

Parsons, Asahel

### Narrative Statement of Significance

( Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets. )

### 9. Major Bibliographical References

#### Bibliography

( Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets. )

#### 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 # \_\_\_\_\_

#### Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

UVM Special Collections



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number   8   Page   1  Salisbury Congregational Church  
Salisbury, Addison County, Vermont       

The Salisbury Congregational Church, built in 1839, is significant as an excellent example of a vernacular, Greek Revival church. The church qualifies under National Register Criteria C by embodying the distinctive characteristics of a particular type of architecture that emphasizes this temple inspired form. Noteworthy architectural features include a boxed pediment, corner pilasters, massive thirty over thirty, double-hung windows, a paneled, centered double door with trabeated door surround including a full entablature, and a three stage bell tower with steeple. The church also qualifies for local significance under Criteria A because it is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the historical development of Salisbury Village's past prominence as one of the former major seats of industry in western Vermont. Many of the building's materials were locally produced at various mills in town. The architectural merit and long standing civic association of the Salisbury Congregational Church ensures eligibility under criteria consideration A. This church is being nominated under the multiple property submission, "Religious Sites, Buildings, and Structures in Vermont", and meets the registration requirements for the church property type. The Salisbury Congregational Church retains its integrity of design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Greek Revival was the dominant style of American architecture from roughly 1830 to 1870 in Vermont. At the close of the eighteenth century, interest in classical art and architecture led to the rediscovery of Grecian culture. In addition, American interest was also fueled by sympathy for modern Greece's war for independence (1821-30) as well as America's separation from Great Britain. Common characteristics of the form include a rectangular massing whose main entrance lies in the gabled front facade. This design emphasizes a Grecian temple, an architectural style that instills a commanding aesthetic on the rural countryside.

Church design underwent significant architectural changes by the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Internally, the church's seating plan changed so that the pulpit and entrance were now at the opposite ends of the long axis of the building. Previous designs placed the main entrance on the long sides of the building. In addition, the bell tower, attached to the short side of the church, sprung directly from the ground. The new Greek Revival style now absorbed the tower into the body of the church, placing it directly over the main entrance, so it appeared to begin on the roof. This revision to the temple form proved very successful.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number   8   Page   2  Salisbury Congregational Church  
Salisbury, Addison County, Vermont       

Vernacular church design in the Greek Revival form also increased due to the new popularity of builder's pattern books that established construction and design guidelines for new buildings. These publications helped the rural builder who was not exposed to many examples of distinctive architectural styles due to his isolated location. In particular, Asher Benjamin, a master builder and designer from Greenfield, Massachusetts, published a number of pattern books (beginning in 1797) that promoted a temple inspired church form with an integrated tower over the main entrance. While this style was of the federal period, Benjamin would later update his books to include the Grecian forms, publishing *The American Builder's Companion* in 1827. The Salisbury Congregational Church displays a sober disregard for ornamental pretension. Benjamin's approach to New England church design clearly influenced this building. Summed up in his own words: "let it be a grave and simple elegance, and not of the gaudy kind."

Preparations for the construction of the Salisbury Congregational Church began in 1840. A general fund drive among the church's members raised \$3,600.00 to finance a new meeting place that would seat 250 members. Ever since the Congregational Societies' inception in 1790, members gathered in various informal locations including private log home residences and barns. This was to finally become their permanent place of worship for the society. Design of the building drew inspiration from the work of Lavius Fillmore, who built the Congregational Churches in Middlebury and Bennington, Vermont. The church was constructed by local builder, Asahel Parsons. Parsons also built the Old Chapel at Middlebury College in 1836, and the Methodist Church in Middlebury two years later. The Methodist Church, completed in 1838, was destroyed by fire in 1892. The new Salisbury Congregational Church was also a symbol of refinement for the hardworking mill town, for local historian, Max Peterson noted; "This fine edifice...added considerable beauty and a note of permanency to the raw, young village growing rapidly up the hills from the falls."

The Salisbury Congregational Church also qualifies under Criteria A for its significance to the local history of the town. Salisbury was chartered in 1761 by a Connecticut man, John Evarts. Named after his hometown, Evarts' charter issued 68 shares comprising roughly 23,000 acres of land. By the 1770's, the first white settlers began to establish farm sites in the fertile floodplain of the Otter Creek and the Cedar Swamp in the western side of town. This area known as "Salisbury Flats" continued to grow as a farming area. In 1849, the "Salisbury Flats" experienced increased importance when it became a stop on the Rutland and Burlington Railroad. Salisbury village, located in the south-central part of town, developed into an industrial and commercial center. In the village were excellent mill

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 3

Salisbury Congregational Church  
Salisbury, Addison County, Vermont \_\_\_\_\_

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sites along the Leicester River. The Leicester, while small, was known for its series of falls and flood-free areas along the banks. These attributes reputed the Leicester River to be one of the finest industrial rivers in early nineteenth-century Vermont. In addition, the Rutland-to-Burlington post road, laid out in 1797, passed right through the village. This increased traffic brought travelers and expanded trade activity for the town. While most settlers continued farming the rich "Salisbury Flats", Thomas Sawyer built the first saw mill in town in 1783, followed by a grist mill the year after. In 1791, Sawyer built a forge. This mill construction was the basis for the popular industrial development and subsequent growth of Salisbury village for the years to come. By the close of the century, two trip hammer shops and a shovel factory were also operating in Salisbury. In addition to industrial activity, the village mills also served the neighboring agricultural communities. Wheat, one of the prominent early pursuits of the town's farmers, was processed in Salisbury's mills. Subsequently, wool, which became the basis of the region's early nineteenth century economy was processed too. To the east, the Lake Dunmore Glass Factory went into business in 1813. By the early 1800s, Salisbury was a major industrial power in Vermont.

As a tangible record of the rise of Salisbury's industrial prominence, Salisbury Congregational Church is a material representation of the town's ability to produce a wide variety of building materials. The huge beams for the structure were sawn from virgin timber by local native, John Deming, at his mill by the falls. Nails and ironwork were forged there as well from the mills at the falls. Glass for the church, contends local historian, Max Peterson, originally came from the Lake Dunmore Factory. While this cannot be firmly established, it is possible that the Dunmore factory, still operating during the time of church's construction, furnished some of its locally produced glass. Chartered in 1811, the Lake Dunmore Glass Factory did brisk business until it abruptly closed in 1815 due to a sudden change in glass prices and unforeseen casualties from the war with Great Britain. By 1832, the factory was renovated for business once again and produced glass for another 10 years with some profit until it finally closed its doors in 1842. In fact, all mills and factories in Salisbury Village have since closed down for quite some time. Yet, the Salisbury Meeting House is one of the few remaining structures that stand as a material record of the town's once bustling past of commercial and industrial prominence.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   9   Page   1  

Salisbury Congregational Church  
Salisbury, Addison County, Vermont       

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

# **National Register of Historic Places**

## **Continuation Sheet**

Section number   10   Page   1  

Salisbury Congregational Church  
Salisbury, Addison County, Vermont           

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### Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property is a rectangular lot 120 feet wide at the front and rear and approximately 185 feet in depth, and is the original lot associated with the building. The front meets West Salisbury Road in a southwesterly exposure. The property is listed on the Town of Salisbury's tax map under the heading, "Salisbury Village", lot # 38, VT map # 14. The map was prepared by Russell Graphics in 1993.

### Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the immediate grounds that have been historically associated with the property.