

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 of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Methodist Episcopal Church of Burlington
other names/site number "Old Burlington Church"

2. Location

street & number US Route 6 at Township Road #357 N/A not for publication
city, town West Burlington Township N/A vicinity
state PA code PA county Bradford code 015 zip code 16947

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

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

Category of Property

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

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
1	_____
1	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
2	0
Total	

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official _____

Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official _____

Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this 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:) _____

Signature of the Keeper _____

Date of Action _____

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Religion - Religious Structure

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Religion - Religious Structure

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

MID 19th Century - Greek Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation stonewalls woodroof metal

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF BURLINGTON
 NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION - DRAFT

SECTION 7 - DESCRIPTION

The Methodist Episcopal Church of Burlington is located in West Burlington Township, Bradford County and is situated on a knoll above U.S. Route 6 about a mile west of Burlington Borough. Built in 1822, the 30 X 45 rectangular frame structure possesses outstanding integrity, especially on the interior.

In form, the two-story structure is a forward-facing gable type. The foundation is dry-laid fieldstone, and the walls are covered with clapboards. Each side elevation of the building is four bays across: windows are 12/12 sashes (most with original glass) with simple surrounds and shutters. The rear wall has a single 12/12 window on each floor, while the facade has two windows at second floor level and two first-story 3/3 paneled doors with fanlights, pilasters and entablature above. A simple porch with pent roof rests on stone piers to shelter the entrances; like the main roof, it is covered with metal. The corniced eaves have narrow but pronounced returns and a freize-board is applied to the sides and the main facade, omitted on the back. An unused chimney projects through the metal roof near the back of the building. All of the exterior wood is painted white.

The symmetrical entrances lead into two rooms comprising a small narthex, where stairs lead to the balcony. Paneled doors separate these rooms from the sanctuary, and their walls are wainscoted with split lath and plaster above and on the ceiling. The flooring is pine, as is all the other woodwork.

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Methodist Episcopal Church of Burlington
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The graceful elevated octagonal pulpit is the dominant feature of the Church's remarkable interior. About 8 1/2 feet high, it stands within a half-circular alcove; curving stairs on each side of the pulpit give access. Each has a delicate baluster ending in a rectangular newel post. Each face of the pulpit is paneled with a curvilinear cut molding at the top. The front of the pulpit is carried on a tapering, oriel-like base which rests on an octagonal column. A v-shaped wall with its point behind the column provides support at the rear of the pulpit. Within the pulpit are two benches for the preachers.

A balcony which lines the sides and rear walls seems to spring out of the circular alcove behind the pulpit. It is carried on pine columns with chamfered edges and has simple, unembellished pine panels for its facing. Its pews, like those on the main floor, are straight-backed and severe, devoid of ornament.

On the main floor, a simple elliptical wood railing separates the pulpit from the pews. It is carried by delicate balusters and newels, and its shape echoes that of the alcove behind the pulpit. The pews are reached by aisles on each side wall of the building; benches along the walls can accommodate additional worshipers. The block of pews has a solid partition in its center, originally to separate the men and the women. Presumably, the two front doors had a similar purpose.

The walls of the sanctuary are pine wainscoting with plaster above, and the floors are wide pine.

While a number of changes have been made to the building, none of them are notably detrimental to its integrity. A renovation effort in 1888 resulted in the installation of the present front doors and the repair of the windows, along with the addition of the shutters. Some clapboards have been replaced through the years, and the original roof is long-gone; the present roof dates from around 1950. The front porch was added some time near the end of the last century. Finally, downspouts were added in 1976.

The interior is substantially original. The only known changes since the building of the Church have been repairs, such as the replacement of a rotted floor joist in the early 1970's. Some pieces of flooring were splintered during removal and were replaced at that time. In 1976 a cracked balcony support was replaced. Much of the original horsehair plaster survives; a few spots have been patched with more modern material. The interior woodwork has never been painted.

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Methodist Episcopal Church of Burlington

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A late eighteenth to early twentieth century cemetery borders the church on the north and west sides of the building. Rectangularly shaped tombstones made of flagstone or marble are arranged in rows in the cemetery.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance
1822

Significant Dates
1822

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Significant Person
N/A

Architect/Builder
Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

BURLINGTON CHURCH

SECTION 8 - SIGNIFICANCE

The Burlington Methodist Episcopal Church is an exceptionally well preserved rural Protestant Church in Bradford County. Dating from 1822, it is apparently one of the few churches in Bradford County of the region to survive from the first decades of the nineteenth century. With its austere appearance, the nominated building embodies the spartan character of the early nineteenth century Methodist Church.

The present Church replaced two previous log structures on the site, which was set aside for the sanctuary by James McKean in 1794. By 1822, the frontier days were in the past, but the stern simplicity of the Methodists led them to build a plain but beautiful church when they replaced the second log church with the present building. A relative of James McKean and U.S. Senator General Samuel McKean, William McKean built the pulpit and is reputed to have supervised construction of the church. By 1858, the development of Burlington Borough and the Village of West Burlington had led to the establishment of Methodist churches in those places, and the old church was without a congregation. It was used for funerals and quarterly meetings, and was maintained by local people who wouldn't let the building fall into disrepair. An annual meeting has been held there since 1868.

See continuation sheet

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Methodist Episcopal Church of Burlington
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Adorned only by simple pediments and fanlights above its twin doors and modest eave returns of the corniced eaves, the Burlington Church has few pretensions. The deep frieze boards, accented return and narrow end boards are evocative of the Greek Revival Style popular in this period along the Northern Tier of Pennsylvania. The attenuated nature of these details however, suggest not the strong Greek Revival features and detailing characteristic of domestic and church architecture but rather vernacular Greek Revival commercial buildings with Greek Revival elements built in small towns along Route 6 between Mansfield and Towanda and at New Albany, midway between Towanda and Dushore.

The large balanced windows, almost understated, and the simple rectangular shape add a classic quality to this structure. The visible absence on the exterior of any religious symbols or shapes is evocative of the meeting houses that were established by the Friends in Muncy and other areas to the south.

As a comparison, the Sheshequin Universalist Church (begun in 1822 and finished in 1827 and located a mile or so north of the Village of Sheshequin) is an utterly different sort of building. Like the Burlington Church, it is a frame building but the fanciful classically inspired detailing of its facade, which features two story pilasters, a muted entablature and a Palladian window and the ornate, paneled interior with its grand pulpit carried by Tuscan columns mark it as an expression of wealth and even pride, both concepts that the Burlington Methodists de-emphasized in their own unpainted interior and simple exterior. These two superbly original buildings represent opposite poles in the culture of Bradford County Protestants of their day. Another comparative example, the later (circa 1830) Wysox Presbyterian Church is also a larger, richer looking building than the Burlington Church. Built of brick, this classically inspired building features an ornate entrance, extremely tall windows and an interior embellished with paneling and other stylish touches. It too represents a different order of architectural aspiration from the simple Burlington edifice. An extensive rear wing has harmed this building's integrity.

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The East Canton Methodist Church, built in 1832, was probably similar to the Burlington Church. Described by a local historian as a "simple, barn-like structure," the East Canton Church has been heavily altered; the addition of Gothic windows, new entrance, and a complete interior renovation, all in 1888, have destroyed its integrity, as has the attached education wing.

The craftsmanship manifested in the Burlington Methodist Church's interior woodwork is remarkable. More unusual is the severe, almost Medieval atmosphere of this interior. It is spartan and stern, reflecting the culture and religious orientation of its parishioners and builders. This simplicity, in keeping with the tenets of the Methodist Church at the time, was formally expressed in the Doctrines and Disciplines of the Methodist Episcopal Church, published in 1821. The following instructions are contained in Section 2, "The Building of Churches".

"Let all our Churches be built plain and decent, and with free seats; but not more expensive than is absolutely unavoidable; otherwise the necessity of raising money will make rich men necessary to us. But if so, we must be dependent on them, yea, and governed by them. And then farewell to Methodist discipline, if not doctined to.

The spartan character of the Methodist Church and its strong indictment of social and economic pretensions of other denominations, is manifested in another statement from the same source.

As it is contrary to our economy to build houses with pews to sell or rent, it shall be the duty of the several annual conferences to use their influence to prevent houses to be so built in the near future; and as far as possible to make those houses free which have already been built with pews.

Alteration of the church building has been limited. The roof dates from 1950 and the simple roofed porch, new doors, and window shutters date from the late 19th century. All other changes have been repairs, and care has been taken to salvage and reuse as much of the original fabric as was possible.

9. Major Bibliographic References

See Attached

- 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 # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of property Less than 1 acre

UTM References

A 118 31641400 46121561810
 Zone Easting Northing

C _____

B _____
 Zone Easting Northing

D _____

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning at a point on the north northeast edge of Township Road 357 126 feet north northeast of the center line of US Route 6, proceed 290 feet north northeast; then proceed 170 feet east northeast; then proceed 35 feet southeast; then proceed 250 feet south; then proceed 135 feet west southwest to point of beginning.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the church and it's cemetery, and follows the bounds of the original church parcel. The surrounding area is open fields with no nearby buildings.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Thomas Case, revised by Doug McMinn

organization Thomas R. Deans Associates date August 23, 1989

street & number 28 N. Front Street telephone 717/742-9684

city or town Milton state PA zip code 17847

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Methodist Episcopal Church of Burlington

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HISTORY & GEOGRAPHY OF BRADFORD COUNTY, PA. 1615-1924 by Clement F. Heverly pages 339-352

HISTORY OF BRADFORD COUNTY, PA. by H.C. Bradsby, S.B. Nelson & Co. Pub. 1891, Chicago pages: 55-432-441 & 273

METHODISM IN CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA 1771 to 1969 by Frederick E. Moser, Bowers Printing Co. Lebanon, PA., page 265

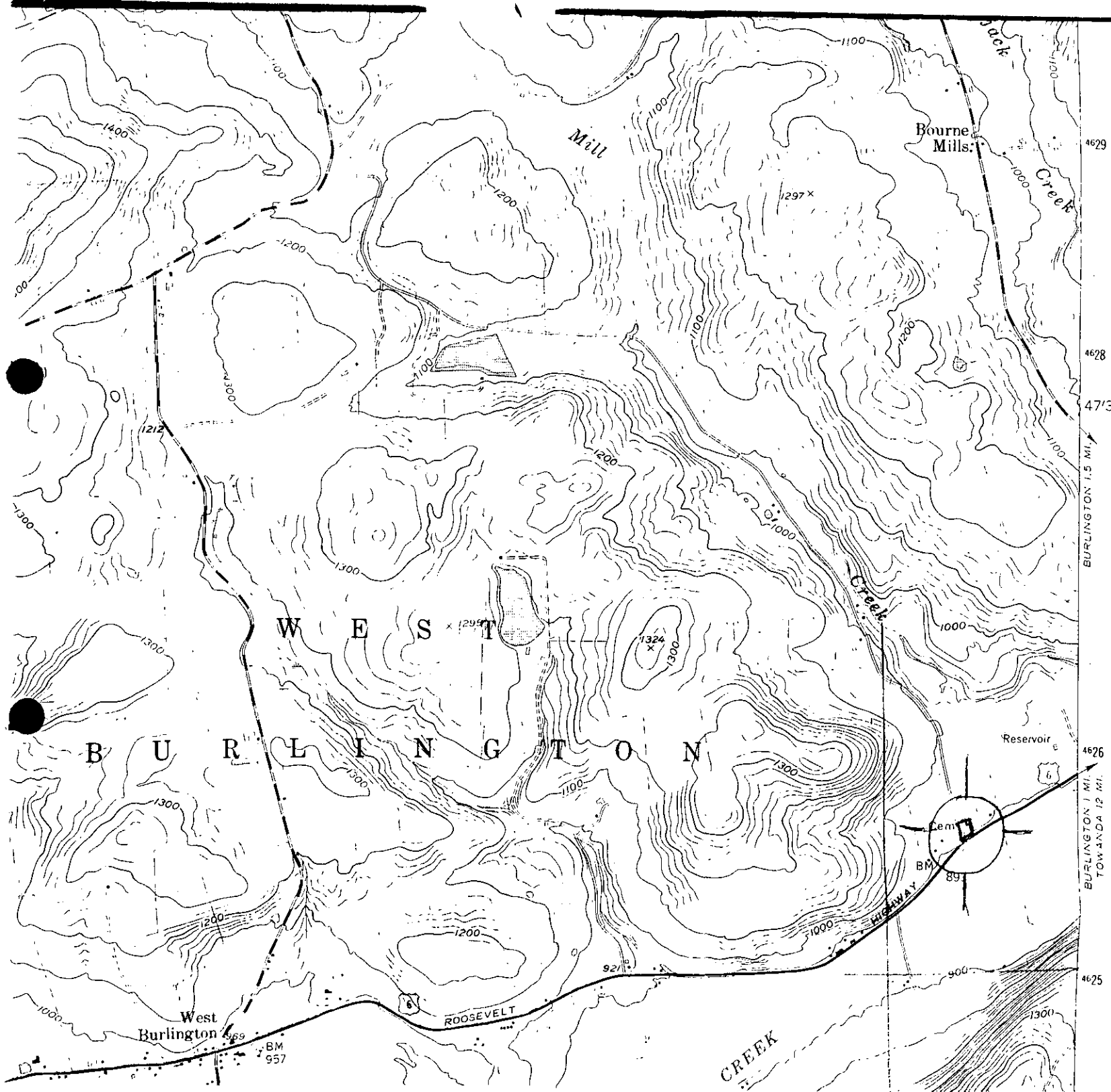
ASBURY'S JOURNAL & LETTERS page 546, 1745-1816, Bradford County Library, R. D. #3, Troy, PA

FRANK WILLING LEACH, An authority of Pennsylvania History wrote a series of Historical Sketches, Number 19, Samuel McKean for the North American, Philadelphia, PA., August 23, 1914

HISTORY OF BRADFORD COUNTY, PA. by Craft 1878, published by L. H. Everts & Co., 714-16 Filbert Street, Philadelphia, PA., Pages 149 & 153

ORIGINS OF METHODISM IN THE WILLIAMSPORT DISTRICT. Some bits of History by Charles F. Berkheimer, D. D. Association meeting in the Old Burlington Church, Bradford County, PA., Sepember 14, 1965, pages 2-5 available at Central Pennsylvania Church Archives at Lycoming College, Williamsport, PA

THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, Doctrines and Disciplines of the Methodist Episcopal Church New York: N. Bangs & T. Mason, 1821, 158 - 161



The Methodist Episcopal
 Church of Burlington
 Bradford County
 East Troy Quadrangle
 Zone 18
 UTM: E 364400
 N 4625600

4629
 4628
 47'30"
 BURLINGTON 1.5 MI.
 4626
 BURLINGTON 1 MI.
 TOWANDA 12 MI.
 4625