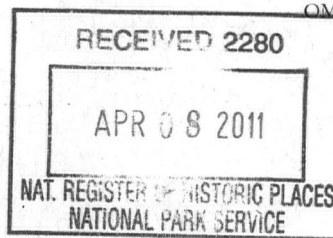


(Oct. 1990)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



291

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 by 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 Christ Church

other name/site number Christ Episcopal Church

2. Location

street & town 416 Valentine Avenue not for publication

city or town Sparkill vicinity

state New York code NY county Rockland code 087 zip code 10976

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.)

Kurt A. Purpont DAPH 3/25/11

Signature of certifying official/Title _____ Date _____

State of 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:)

for _____ Signature of the Keeper _____ Date of Action _____

Edson H. Beall _____

5.18.11 _____

Christ Church
Name of Property

Rockland County, New York
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.)

public-local

private

public-State

public-Federal

district

building(s)

site

structure

object

Contributing

Noncontributing

2

0

buildings

0

0

sites

1

0

structures

0

0

objects

3

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**

6. Function or Use

Historic Function
(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION: Religious facility

Current Function
(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION: Religious facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

MID-19th CENTURY: Gothic Revival

LATE-19th & 20th CENTURY REVIVALS: Late Gothic Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE

walls STONE

roof ASPHALT, METAL

other GLASS, WOOD

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

See Continuation Sheets-

Property Name *Christ Church*
Location *Sparkill, Rockland County, New York*

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CONTINUATION SHEET**

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7. Narrative Description

Location & Setting

Christ Church is located in the hamlet of Sparkill, Rockland County, New York. The nominated property consists of a parcel bounded on the east by Valentine Avenue, on the north by Union Street (New York Route 340), on the west by New Street, and on the south by William Street. Further east of the property, beyond Valentine Avenue, is U.S. Route 9W, while the Sparkill Creek is located a few hundred feet to the south. Situated on the nominated property are two buildings, the church and an associated parish house, the latter located immediately southwest of the intersection of Valentine Avenue and Union Street and a short distance northwest of the church. Vehicular access to the facility is via New Street, which leads past a set of sandstone gate posts to a paved turnaround and associated parking. The nominated parcel is generally flat, though not without a perceptible decrease in grade tending north to south, with a steeper drop off on the east side, towards Valentine Avenue, and likewise immediately south of the church. Landscaping includes ornamental shrubbery around the perimeter of the building and a scattering of mature coniferous and deciduous trees on the property. Overall this neighborhood of Sparkill is comprised largely of residential properties. The church is aligned on a roughly east to west axis, the chancel tending in a northeasterly direction towards Valentine Avenue, the opposite southwest elevation fronting on the church's parking area accessed from New Street.

Overview

Christ Church is a Gothic Revival-style religious building the earliest portion of which was built 1864-65 to the designs of architect Charles Babcock, a one-time associate and partner in the office of Richard Upjohn. This original building was modestly scaled, comprised of a single-story nave and chancel of stone construction built on a linear plan with parallel roof ridges, embellished with characteristic mid-nineteenth century Gothic Revival detailing and features. Original stone work consisted largely of bluestone rubble with larger dressed stones employed to form window jambs and corners. The original 1860s church was subsequently aggrandized with stone transepts; a stone bell tower built in 1892 and raised to its current height in 1900; a stone entrance porch on the west elevation built c. 1900; and a stone cloister or ambulatory on the north elevation, dating to the early twentieth century. A sacristy, located north of the chancel and consumed within the later cloister addition, was presumably part of the original design and footprint given precedents for this building type. The interior of Christ Church is comprised of the original nave and chancel spaces, augmented with a small chapel located in the south transept and the first floor of the tower, a narthex or entrance vestibule on the west side, rooms in the north transept, and the ambulatory. Existing finishes portray a number of periods in the church's physical evolution with original features including the open scissor-truss roof framing of the nave, finished in an ochre wash. The form and decorative treatment of the quarter-sawn oak pews suggest a mid-1860s treatment, though this material is more common to the Late Victorian era. Other historic finishes include oak wainscoting in the chancel and the approach to the tower chapel from the south transept, in addition to stained and decorative glass representing both the original and subsequent historic periods. Access to the building is via the southwest elevation, beneath the stone entrance porch centered on this elevation beneath a large rose window.

As for the parish house, it is a single-story frame building with mansard roof, built on a square-shaped plan. Sanborn mapping indicates it was expanded from its original c. 1870 form to achieve its current footprint in the period c. 1900 to c. 1910, during which time it was briefly used as a Sunday school prior to being aggrandized for its current use as the parish house. The church, parish house, and stone gateposts on the west side of the

Property Name *Christ Church*
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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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property are considered contributing features to the nomination; the period of significance is cited as c. 1864- c. 1910.

Exterior

The southwest elevation constitutes the primary elevation of Christ Church as completed in the early twentieth century. Five bays in width with symmetrical fenestration and a central entrance, this elevation is in part defined by a steeply pitched central gable—corresponding with the three central bays—which intersects with the roofline of the outlying transepts, one bay each flanking the three-bay central section. Walls are laid up in uncoursed local stone, with buttresses forming a point of demarcation between the central portion and the transepts. The two outermost bays, lancet windows corresponding with the transepts, are Gothic arched, the head and jambs formed with brick keying tied into the stone, the sills being formed of bluestone; windows are wood with a diamond-pane configuration with central mullion, set within a moulded wood casing. The two innermost lancet windows, those flanking the central entrance, are similarly treated however the jambs are formed with cut stone while the head and sills are bluestone. As for the entrance, it consists of a large 20-paneled door, which is shielded beneath a stone entrance porch formed of cut stone laid in random range ashlar, with corner buttresses and gable roof surmounted by a wood cross. Above this stone porch is a large rose window, set within the gable field; this window has a central medallion and an outer border of 12 quatrefoils. Most all of the gable field is fitted with fish scale slate shingles, gray-blue in color. The gable has a moulded wood cornice and a wood fascia with modillions at the eaves. The roof, and that of the entrance porch, is clad with rolled asphalt.

The northwest flank elevation consists of the gable of the transept and the c. 1900 cloister addition. The latter feature expanded the footprint and in the process screened the original Babcock-designed elevation from view on the outside. The cloister was built with walls of random range ashlar punctuated by three large Gothic arched window openings, two being windows fitted with diamond-pane sash, the third a door which appears the modification of an earlier window, given the brick infill and portion of a surviving bluestone sill. There is likewise a fourth smaller window, in keeping with the earlier lancet type as described on the central portion of the southwest elevation, reused from an earlier application. The northwest wall is terminated by a crenellated parapet and likewise has a slender rounded turret; east of this turret is a blind expanse of masonry, of the earlier rubble type, presumably reused from the sacristy. As for the gable of the transept, it is punctuated by two apertures, a large Gothic arched window and a small window near the roof's apex, both formed with brick surrounds. The larger window is divided into three vertical units by moulded wood mullions, and has diamond-pane glass. The masonry forming the wall of the transept is uncoursed rubble; the wood cornice is moulded, and there is a wood fascia with evenly spaced modillions at eaves level.

The northeast elevation presents the original gable end of the nave and likewise the projecting chancel, both rendered in rubble stone, and likewise the northeast wall of the cloister. The chancel is covered by a steeply pitched hip roof and is punctuated by a large chancel window—later bricked in—which is set beneath a gabled hood. Two of the facets of the five-sided chancel are punctuated by small quatrefoil-shaped windows with cut brownstone octagonal surrounds; the southeast facet, meanwhile, has a single lancet-type window fitted with diamond-pane wood sash, as does the wall corresponding with the cloister addition. As for the end elevation of the nave, it features corner buttresses and cornice treatments matching those of the opposite elevation. A date stone is likewise present at the base of the chancel, and bears the inscription “AD 1865.”

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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The southeast flank elevation is comprised of two window bays corresponding with the nave, the tower, and the gable of the southeast transept. The stone tower is three stories in height and rises to a crenellated parapet and small spire, each story being distinctly expressed in the design; a rounded buttress is present at the east corner. There are Gothic arched apertures at every level; those at first-story level were bricked in at the time a chapel was created in that space. At second story level are larger window openings divided into double lancets with a lozenge head, all fitted with diamond-pane sash; the voussoirs at this level were formed of sandstone. Meanwhile the bell stage is defined by lancet openings, paired, which are louvered.

Interior

The southwest entrance leads into a narthex or vestibule, which is finished with plaster walls above bead-board wainscot and a moulded wood chair rail, and moulded joists which sustain the bead-board ceiling. The narthex provides access into the nave via double leaf sound-insulated doors; southwards in to the chapel; and northward to the rooms in north transept and the ambulatory. The nave is arranged on a center aisle plan with rows of slip pews aligned to either side, while the floor is laid with oak strip flooring, partially exposed but otherwise carpeted. Pew ends and backs were constructed from quarter-sawn oak, the ends embellished with recessed quatrefoil motifs; the seats appear to be beech and are covered with cushions. Walls are finished with plaster on lath above narrow bead-board wainscot and a moulded chair rail. The ceiling is open and fitted with narrow bead boards, the roof sustained by a series of wood scissor trusses in the English medieval fashion. Each truss has a central king post with decorative drop pendant embellished with diamond-panel motif and chamfered edges; the upper and lower chords are chamfered in the same manner. The lower chord of each truss is footed on a curvilinear wood base set within the wall plane between the lancet openings.

Original window openings along either side of the nave splay inward and feature decorative wood surrounds with attenuated and unfluted colonettes giving way to a cusped-arch head with small perforated quatrefoils. The nave windows, as a group, are fitted with both earlier leaded quarry glass and later memorial stained glass. A carved wood screen with ornate foliate cresting marks the transition between the nave and chancel, as does a carved wood chancel arch. The chancel has paneled oak wainscot with pinned rails and stiles, the edges of which are moulded, forming the wall surface while the ceiling has expressed wood rafters with chamfered edges. Looking back from the chancel towards the entrance into the nave is the wall of the single-story vestibule, which is wood and has Gothic paneling and a crenellated parapet and other detailing. Above this enclosure is the large rose window, which admits natural light into the nave; artificial lighting is provided by electric wall sconces and suspended fixtures.

The area contained in the south transept and base of the tower is known as St. Mary's Chapel. It features plaster walls and ceilings above high paneled oak wainscot, the rails and stiles of the wainscoting being pinned and having decorative chamfered edges. Flooring, meanwhile, is of the strip oak type. Notable is the tripartite transom on the south wall, formed of green-hued jeweled leaded glass, and the Arts & Crafts style electric wall fixtures. Within the chapel is a date stone for the tower, inscribed "A D 1892." On the opposite side of the plan, outside of its 1860s extent, are a small office and robing room in the north transept, in addition to the roughly east to west axis of the ambulatory. Visible here is part of the original north exterior wall of the 1860s church.

8. 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.)

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.

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

Areas of Significance

(enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

c. 1864- c. 1910

Significant Dates

c. 1864-65; c. 1880; c. 1892; c. 1899; c. 1910

Significant Persons

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Babcock, Charles; architect (1864-65 section)

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: _____

Property Name *Christ Church*
Location *Sparkill, Rockland County, New York*

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

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8. Narrative Statement of Significance

Overview

Christ Church in Sparkill is an architecturally significant example of Gothic Revival style ecclesiastical design in Rockland County, New York. Its design is a composite of the original mid-nineteenth century building campaign and subsequent nineteenth and early twentieth century historic-period modifications. The original edifice was built 1864-65 and designed by Charles Babcock, a one-time partner in the architectural office of R. Upjohn & Company, the first dean and director of the School of Architecture at Cornell University, an author and Episcopal clergyman, and a founding member of the American Institute of Architects. Babcock's original scheme was conceived within the framework of the Ecclesiological movement which shaped architectural design in the Episcopal Church in the second and third quarters of the nineteenth century, with characteristic Gothic Revival massing and features, the design informed by medieval English parish church examples. Historic-period additions included a bell tower, c. 1892, raised to its current height c. 1900; and, in the early twentieth century, a stone entrance porch added to the southwest elevation and a cloister or ambulatory built on the northwest elevation. The original edifice built to Babcock's design in the mid-1860s replaced an informal religious facility—known as “Lord's lime kiln building”—which was first put into service by this Episcopal group in 1847. When completed the new church offered itself as a tangible symbol of this religious group's place within the community, the physical manifestation of the efforts of Reverend Solomon G. Hitchcock and early warden Thomas Blanch, among others, to extend the influence of the Episcopal faith in Sparkill and Piermont. Christ Church remains a largely intact and noteworthy example of Gothic Revival-style religious design in Rockland County, with salient ties to noteworthy nineteenth century architect, author, educator and clergyman Charles Babcock. It is being nominated under Criterion C for its architectural merit, retaining as it does a high level of integrity to the period of significance, c. 1864 to c. 1910.

Historical Context

The hamlet of Sparkill is located a short distance southeast of Piermont and the Hudson River. Sparkill developed historically in relation to Piermont's considerable nineteenth century growth, the latter having grown from an eighteenth century settlement known as Tappan's Landing, which benefited from its fortuitous position on the Sparkill Creek. This location was one of a limited number of navigable points of entry into the Hudson River in this vicinity. Prior to the construction of the Nyack Turnpike and the advent of steamboat transportation, the Sparkill Creek—known otherwise as “Tappan Slote”—functioned as a critical transportation artery that facilitated the movement of goods and products from regional farms to distant markets. At high tide fully-loaded sloops could navigate the Slote successfully, making it an ideal point of entry into the river. The development of Piermont and Sparkill in the nineteenth century, however, is closely aligned with another transportation feature, that being the New York & Erie Railroad. Established in the 1840s, the railroad had its eastern terminus there, prior to being relocated to Jersey City. As nineteenth century historian Frank Green observed, “The construction of the Erie Railroad was an invaluable aid to the growth of [Rockland] county. From its necessities Piermont was born, and by the communication thus opened, the villages of Blauveltville, Nanuet, Spring Valley and Monsey were rendered possible.”¹ At Piermont there was a considerable growth spurt associated with the railroad's presence, which called for the construction of related facilities and buildings covering multiple acres; Christ Church

¹ Frank B. Green, *The History of Rockland County* (New York: A.S. Barnes, 1886), 219.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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was organized during this period. This period of economic stimulus and population growth in Piermont was somewhat short-lived, however, as the railroad's terminus was eventually shifted closer to New York City. By the time the new building was erected in the mid-1860s, this change had already occurred.

Efforts to organize an Episcopal Church at this locale were first undertaken by Reverend William Walker, a missionary who came to Sparkill from Haverstraw and, working in association with Thomas Blanch, secured ownership of what was termed "Mr. Lord's lime kiln building" in 1847. "Mr. Lord" was presumably Eleazer Lord, one-time president of the New York & Erie Railroad and a Piermont resident. Purchased by Blanch for the sum of \$250, this edifice was in turn modified, a portion given over for use as a temporary worship space complete with a second-hand organ procured in New York City, the remainder to "family tenements and other apartments." In March 1848 the parish of Christ Church was officially organized in Piermont at a meeting in the stone house of Dr. James Hopson, with Edward Mariott and John Quakenbos as wardens, and Thomas Blanch, George Hoogland, W.E. Smith, Henry Ayers, William Armstrong, Zira Trowbridge, J.B. Gerard and S.S. Post as vestrymen. The act of incorporation was recorded in the Rockland County clerk's office on April 10, 1848.²

William Walker left the newly formed Christ Church parish that summer and was succeeded by the Reverend J.C. Sterling, who shortly thereafter retired from the ministry. Following Sterling's departure Solomon G. Hitchcock of Amenia Union, Dutchess County, received a call from Christ Church to serve as Rector and in autumn 1849 agreed. Hitchcock's duties included his service to Christ Church as Rector but likewise encompassed all of Rockland County for the purpose of missionary efforts by the Episcopal Church. The first overtures towards the construction of a permanent house of worship were made in the summer of 1851 however these failed to gestate into a building campaign. In 1859 Trinity Parish in Manhattan was petitioned by Christ Church's members for financial aid to construct a new and more appropriate house of worship, but Trinity refused assistance on the grounds of "pecuniary embarrassment."³ Yet another effort was mounted in the summer of 1860, which again failed, however in the autumn of 1863 conditions were finally favorable and plans for a new church were at long last initiated. A site was selected and paid for by Thomas Blanch, who had previously purchased Lord's lime kiln building and the church's first organ. Mrs. George A. Jones had by that time received pledges to the amount of \$3,000, augmented by other subscription efforts.⁴

Ground was broken for the new building in April 1864 and the cornerstone for the church laid on the 20th of July. The total cost of the original building campaign, including furnishings, was just over \$8,000, and the debt from the construction campaign satisfied in the summer of 1866. That same summer a new organ was purchased and a gallery built, at the added expense of just over \$1,300. A prayer desk, lectern, altar, chancel and ante chancel chairs and other furnishings were constructed by a local cabinetmaker from black walnut furnished by George Jones of New York City. Christ Church was consecrated by the Right Reverend Horatio Potter on September 7, 1866. The date of conveyance for the parcel was October 12, and included the following proviso: "This conveyance is upon the express condition that the premises hereby granted are to be used solely for the purpose of a Protestant Episcopal Church and the appropriate buildings connected

² "Christ Church History," compiled from information in the Archives of the Diocese of New York; David Cole, *History of Rockland County, New York, with Biographical Sketches of Its Prominent Men* (New York: J.B. Beers & Company, 1884), 224.

³ "Christ Church History."

⁴ *Ibid.*

Property Name *Christ Church*
Location *Sparkill, Rockland County, New York*

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CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section Number 8 Page 3

therewith, and for no other purpose, except if consent, in writing, of the parties hereto, of the first part, or their heirs, is first obtained.” In September 1867 a new chancel window, since removed, was installed, a gift of wealthy industrialist Robert Seaman of New York City.⁵

Reverend S.G. Hitchcock, who had proved so instrumental in the early history and development of Christ Church, died in September 1877. Next to lead the parish was Joseph M. Waite, followed in 1883 by Theodore Peck, who left in 1885 to serve St. John’s Church in Huntington, New York. It was during Reverend Arthur H. Profitt’s tenure as Rector, initiated in 1899, that the last major modifications were undertaken at Christ Church. Refurbishment work was undertaken between February and May of that year, and the building rededicated by Bishop Henry C. Potter in June 1900. At this time the adjacent dwelling north of the church was purchased and refitted, used for a time as a Sunday school prior to being further modified to serve as the parish house.⁶

While church records suggest the cloister or ambulatory along the north elevation was added during the c. 1900 renovations, this change strangely does not appear in Sanborn map documentation until the October 1916 map. This addition to the original footprint of the church allowed for the formation of rooms for the Rector, choir, and church committee. Other modifications included the addition of the stone entrance porch on the west elevation and the raising of the bell tower nearly 30’ in additional height. The lower portion of the tower was not part of the original Babcock composition, but instead was added c. 1892, replacing a bell cote dating to the later 1870s and Reverend Waite’s tenure. These improvements undertaken during Profitt’s tenure amounted to an expense of approximately \$8,000.⁷

Architectural Context: Charles Babcock, the Ecclesiological Movement, & the Design of Christ Church

Charles Babcock (1829-1913), the architect of Christ Church, was raised in Ballston Spa, Saratoga County, and educated at Schenectady’s Union College. Babcock’s professional accomplishments in the field of American architecture are numerous and include his work as a designer, his inclusion as a founding member of the American Institute of Architects, and his position as the first Professor of Architecture at Cornell University. He likewise was an Episcopal minister and author. Babcock gained experience as an apprentice in Richard Upjohn’s architectural office in Manhattan, and in 1853 entered into partnership with Upjohn, the latter’s son Richard Michell Upjohn, and James Cowing in the firm of R. Upjohn & Company. He married Richard Upjohn’s eldest daughter Elizabeth about the time he became a junior partner in the business. In 1857 Babcock was one of the 13 founding members of the American Institute of Architects, of which Richard Upjohn served as president, this group also including Richard M Hunt, Leopold Eidlitz, and Henry Dudley.⁸ Babcock was recorded as a draftsman in the employ of the Upjohn office as early as April 1850, and remained with the firm until 1858. Upjohn family history maintains that Babcock’s father, the Reverend Deodatus Babcock, made a personal appeal to Richard Upjohn to accept his son into the

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ E. M. Upjohn, *Richard Upjohn, Architect and Churchman* (New York: Columbia University, 1939), 105; Henry & Elsie Withey, *Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased)*, (Los Angeles: Hennessey & Ingalls, Inc., 1970), 27-28.

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practice.⁹ Babcock was significantly influenced by the elder Upjohn's interest in Gothic Revivalism and his religious devoutness—religion was an important aspect of the office's culture¹⁰—which appears to have directed him towards service in the ministry. In 1864 Babcock was ordained as an Episcopal priest and entered the ministry as Rector of St. John's Church in present-day Arden, Orange County, known at that time as Greenwood Iron Works; here a furnace produced iron used in the manufacture of Parrott guns. Babcock was responsible for the design of the Arden church, which will be considered subsequently.

Beginning in 1871, Babcock opened up a new phase of his professional career when he agreed to serve as Cornell University's first professor of architecture and likewise as the Dean and Director of the School of Architecture. During that time the school's curriculum was based in large measure on the work of John Ruskin, and the buildings Babcock designed for the campus reflect Ruskinian principles as espoused in the Venetian Gothic style. Babcock taught a variety of courses, including building technology and architectural history, and until 1880 was the Architecture Department's only professor. In addition to his teaching and administrative responsibilities, he also completed two textbooks, *Elementary Architecture* (1876) and *Vaults* (1884), and developed an extensive set of illustrations for the history of architecture and construction. He additionally organized and served as the Rector of St. Paul's Episcopal Church, which held services in Sage Chapel, which was built in 1874 to his designs.¹¹

By all indications Babcock enjoyed a prominent place in the Upjohn office, responsible for developing schemes through architectural renderings and, it has been asserted, for significant contributions to the designs offered in Upjohn's 1852 book *Rural Architecture*.¹² This book had in part been published to respond to the growing demand placed upon the services of the office as Upjohn's popularity increased. Numerous surviving drawings for high-profile Upjohn projects, among them St. Paul's in Buffalo, bear Babcock's initials and attest to his importance in the design process within the office. He is also credited in this period with providing on-site supervision of buildings erected to the Upjohn office's plans, and collaborated on designs with the office after his formal association had ended. Christ Church in Ballston Spa, 1860-62, and St. John's Church at Arden, 1863-64, are both attributed largely to Babcock's hand.¹³ He is additionally credited with the design of St. Andrew's Church in Walden, c. 1871.

The design of Christ Church relates to the Ecclesiological phase of the Gothic Revival in American architecture and the influence of the New York Ecclesiological Society, which was responsible for the dissemination of architectural doctrine within the Episcopal Church in New York during the third quarter of the nineteenth century. This reform movement, guided by developments in England, sought a return to authentic medieval Gothic forms for new church architecture, as these offered an appropriate setting for worship imbued by centuries-old tradition. In the words of architectural historian William H. Pierson Jr., churches built under the influence of the Ecclesiological movement were "functionally designed around

⁹ Judith S. Hull, "The 'School of Upjohn': Richard Upjohn's Office" (Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians: vol. 52, No. 3, September 1993, 281-306), 285-86.

¹⁰Ibid, 292.

¹¹Information on Babcock's time at Cornell derived from the History of the College of Architecture, Art & Planning, Part 3.

¹²Hull, "The School of Upjohn," 287; the *Rural Architecture* assertion was made by K.C. Parsons.

¹³Upjohn, *Upjohn*, Appendix; Withey & Withey, *American Architects*, 28.

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liturgical principles,"¹⁴ and were distinguished from the earlier generation of American Gothic Revival churches by their more authentic design characteristics, as opposed to the application of Gothic details on to otherwise Neoclassic forms. Richard Upjohn, in whose employ Babcock learned the rudiments of architectural design, proved one of the early stalwarts of the Ecclesiological movement in America, even though his landmark Gothic essay Trinity Church in Manhattan, 1839-46, failed in many regards to satisfy the requirements set forth by Ecclesiologists. Notable shortcomings, in the eyes of the Ecclesiologists, included Trinity's derivation from English Perpendicular sources, the lack of articulation of the chancel on the exterior—as separate from the nave—and the use of plaster and lath faux vaulting.

Among those design prototypes which gained favor in this period, and the endorsement of the doctrinaire Ecclesiologists as appropriate for smaller parishes, was the medieval English Gothic parish church represented by noteworthy examples such as St. Michael's, Longstanton, c. 1230, which served as the indirect prototype for examples in New York such as the frame board-and-batten churches built to the plans of the Upjohn office and their masonry counterparts like St. Thomas's Episcopal Church in Amenia Union, 1849-51. This subtype, of the so-called bell-cote type, found its first American expression with the design of St. Thomas's and the slightly earlier St. James-the-Less in Philadelphia, 1846-48, the latter example being closely modeled after its distant English prototype. These were typified by the separate massing of the nave and chancel, flank entrances, and, as the name implies, the use of a bell cote in lieu of a larger engaged or freestanding bell tower. More ambitiously scaled churches drew from larger medieval prototypes, the prescribed models being drawn from the Decorated, or Middle period, of English Gothic architecture. These typically featured prominent offset bell towers such as that used by Babcock for St. Andrew's in Walden and Christ Church, Ballston Spa, and by Upjohn for St. Paul's in Brookline, Massachusetts, 1848-52.

Christ Church was built using plans and other construction documents given to the group by Babcock, who gratuitously furnished them for work rendered by their Rector S.G. Hitchcock on behalf of the Episcopal Church in the Greenwood area. The previous year Babcock had designed the church at Greenwood, or present-day Arden, where he would serve as Rector, which was completed in July 1863 at the cost of \$5,500. The circumstance of an architectural designer serving as the first Rector of a church built to his own plans is presumably relatively rare and not one with many precedents in the annals of nineteenth century American architecture. St. John's formed an excellent example of the smaller parish or bell-cote type church popularized by the Upjohn office, executed with walls of bluestone masonry and brownstone dressings, exterior buttressing, a polychrome slate roof, and a highly picturesque open bell cote of frame construction. Plan wise the church featured a nave block and chancel and was entered via the flank elevation in traditional fashion. Babcock's design for St. John's was fully expressive of the bell-cote church type, rendered in masonry.

As for Christ Church, subsequent nineteenth and early twentieth century modifications have to some extent altered Babcock's original design intent for the church, though the original building is still in large measure interpretable. A search is currently underway to determine the survival of construction documents or correspondence relating to the initial building campaign of 1865-65, in order to bring more clarity to the

¹⁴William H. Pierson, *American Buildings and Their Architects: Technology and the Picturesque. Vol. 2. The Corporate and Early Gothic Styles* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1978), 173.

Property Name *Christ Church*
Location *Sparkill, Rockland County, New York*

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section Number 8 Page 6

nature and extent of the original design. The edifice Babcock designed was built on a rectangular plan with the nave and chancel arranged in linear fashion, both covered by steeply pitched gable roofs covered with slate. The stone walls were laid up in a highly picturesque manner with some tooled surfaces, the nave having corner buttresses, the windows being of a pointed-arch lancet type. It is not known whether the original design included a bell cote, though one was added in the mid-1870s, possibly to replace an earlier version. While renovated subsequently, the interior retains its original open scissor truss ceiling; the quarter-sawn oak slip pews with quatrefoil embellishment likewise may be original, as are some of the diamond-pane casements. Questions remain as to when the transepts on the west side were built; not an original feature, they were added prior to the October 1893 Sanborn map. It bears noting that the small parish type church was a form with which Christ Church's Rector, Solomon G. Hitchcock, was presumably already well familiar, given he came to Sparkill from Amenia Union the same year construction began on St. Thomas's Church, built to the designs of Upjohn and described by W.H. Pierson as ". . . A coherent and austere beautiful building, as expressive of its immediate circumstances as it is reflective of the ancient Gothic tradition from which it was born."¹⁵

Subsequent changes have already been noted, and included the addition and subsequent raising of the bell tower, which supplanted an earlier bell cote; and the addition of the cloister or ambulatory on the north flank elevation, a change which Sanborn mapping suggests occurred between September 1910 and October 1916, a scenario which runs counter to church tradition, which places this addition in the first years of the 1900s.

¹⁵Ibid, 192.

Property Name *Christ Church*
Location *Sparkill, Rockland County, New York*

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 9 Page 1

9. Major Bibliographical References

Archives of the Episcopal Diocese of New York.

Cole, David. *History of Rockland County, New York, with Biographical Sketches of Its Prominent Men*. New York: J.B. Beers & Company, 1884.

Green, Frank B. *The History of Rockland County*. New York: A.S. Barnes, 1886.

Hull, Judith S. "The 'School of Upjohn': Richard Upjohn's Office," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 52, no. 3 (September 1993).

Pierson, William H. *American Buildings and Their Architects: Technology and the Picturesque. Vol. 2. The Corporate and Early Gothic Styles*. Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1978.

Upjohn, E. M. *Richard Upjohn, Architect and Churchman*. New York: Columbia University, 1939.

Upjohn, Richard. *Rural Architecture*. New York: George Putnam, 1852.

Withey, Henry & Elsie. *Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased)*. Los Angeles: Hennessey & Ingalls, 1970.

Christ Church
Name of Property

Rockland County, New York
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property .91 acres

UTM References

(Place additional boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

1 18 590233 4542627
Zone Easting Northing

2
Zone Easting Northing

3
Zone Easting Northing

4
Zone Easting Northing

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title William E. Krattinger

organization NYS OPRHP, Field Services Bureau

date October 2010

street & number Peebles Island State Park

telephone (518) 237-8643

city or town Waterford

state NY zip code 12866

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black & white** photographs of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name/title Steve Dunlop, c/o Christ Church

street & number same as nomination address

telephone _____

city or town _____

state _____ zip code _____

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. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

Property Name *Christ Church*
Location *Sparkill, Rockland County, New York*

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 10 Page 1

10. Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary for the National Register of Historic Places nomination is shown on the enclosed tax map, entitled "Christ Church, Sparkill, Rockland County, New York."

Boundary Justification

The boundary for the Christ Church NRHP nomination has been drawn to correspond with the current legal tax boundary for the property. All of this land, .91 acres in extent, is historically associated with the cited period of significance for Christ Church, c. 1864- c. 1910. This acreage includes the parcel upon which the church was built and that subsequently acquired in the historic period which included a domicile, converted for use as the parish house.

Property Name *Christ Church*
Location *Sparkill, Rockland County, New York*

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Photographs

Photographs

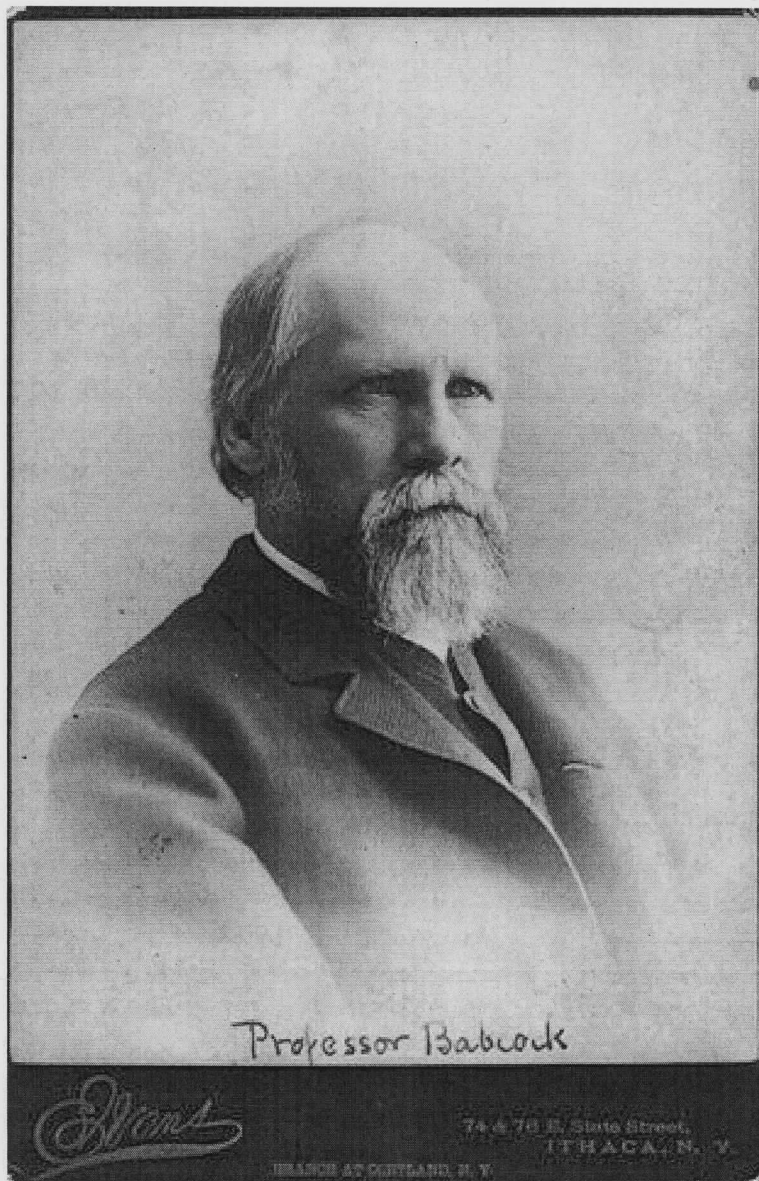
Photographs by William E. Krattinger
July 2010

1. Exterior: west-facing facade, view roughly east, showing entrance porch, transepts, and upper stage of bell tower
2. Exterior: east-facing elevation, view roughly west, showing chancel, end wall of nave, and bell tower
3. Exterior: north-facing elevation, view roughly south, showing cloister and, at extreme right, a portion of the north transept
4. Interior: view within nave looking westward towards narthex and rose window
5. Interior: detail view of nave window showing wood surround, glass, and bead-board wainscot
6. Interior: detail view showing quarter-sawn oak pews
7. Interior: detail view showing jeweled-glass transom in chapel

Property Name *Christ Church*
Location *Sparkill, Rockland County, New York*

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Appendix

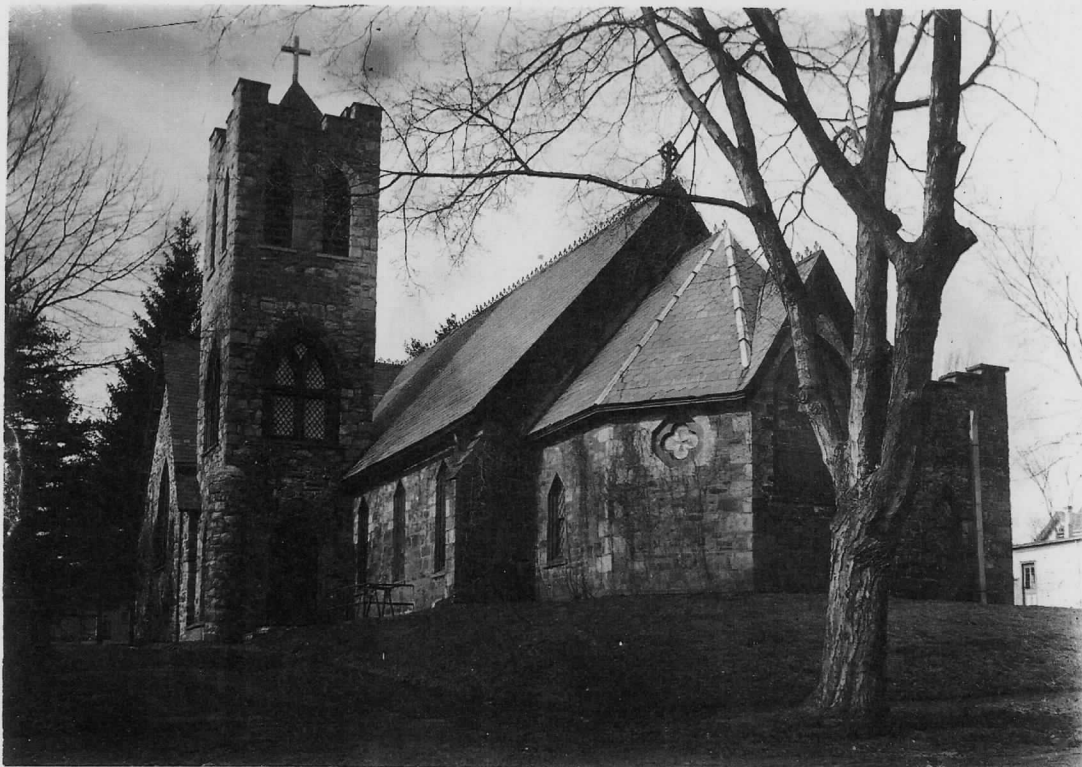


Charles Babcock

Property Name *Christ Church*
Location *Sparkill, Rockland County, New York*

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Appendix



Images depicting the building before (below) and after (above) the raising of the bell tower



Property Name *Christ Church*
Location *Sparkill, Rockland County, New York*

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Appendix

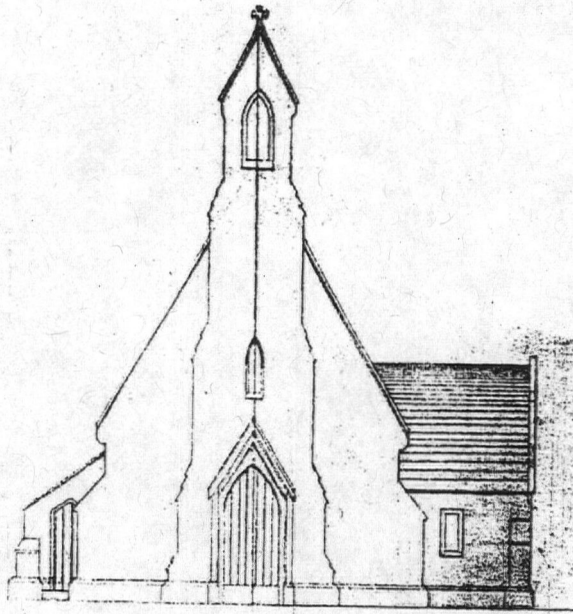


St. John's Church, Arden, Orange County

Property Name *Christ Church*
Location *Sparkill, Rockland County, New York*

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Appendix



FRONT ELEVATION

LITHGOW CHURCH

UPJOHN & CO. ARCHITECTS

Upjohn office rendering for the bell-cote elevation of St. Thomas's Church, Amenia Union 1849-51



ST. ANNE'S, KEIGHLEY.



ST. MARY'S, SOUTHPORT

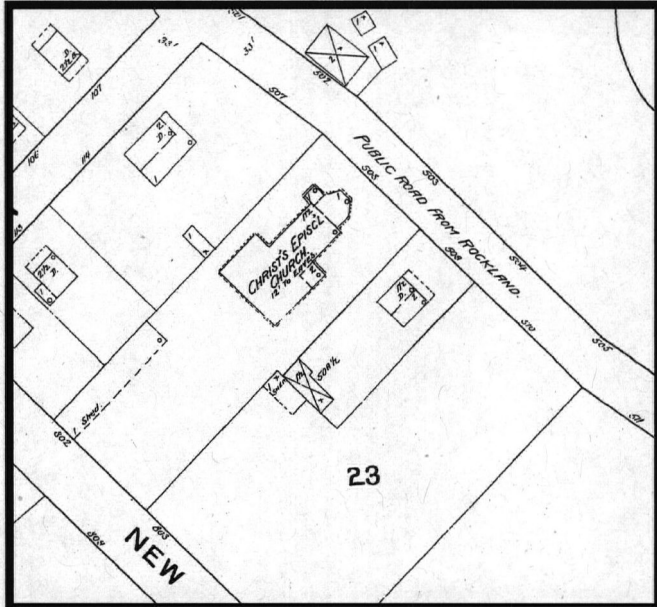
Bell-cote type parish churches illustrated by A.W. Pugin in The Present State of Ecclesiastical Architecture in England

Property Name *Christ Church*
Location *Sparkill, Rockland County, New York*

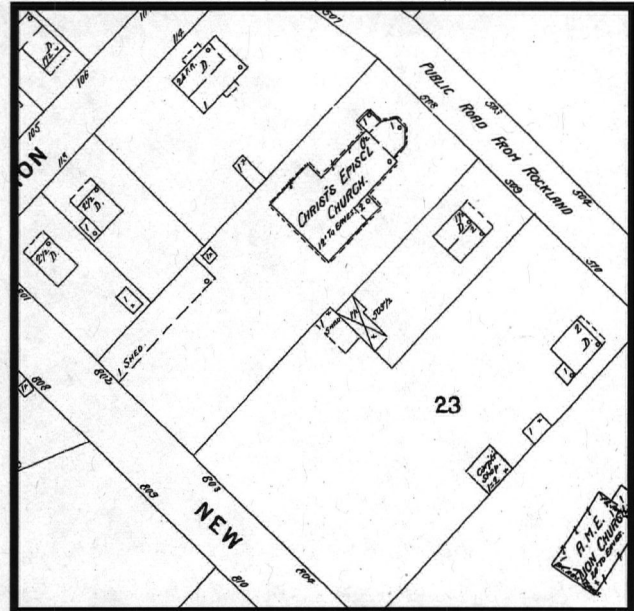
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

APPENDIX

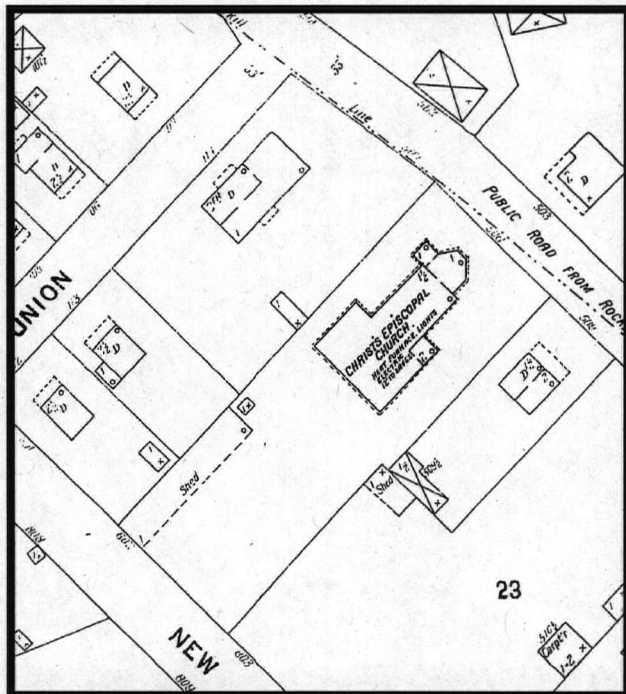
APPENDIX: Sanborn Mapping



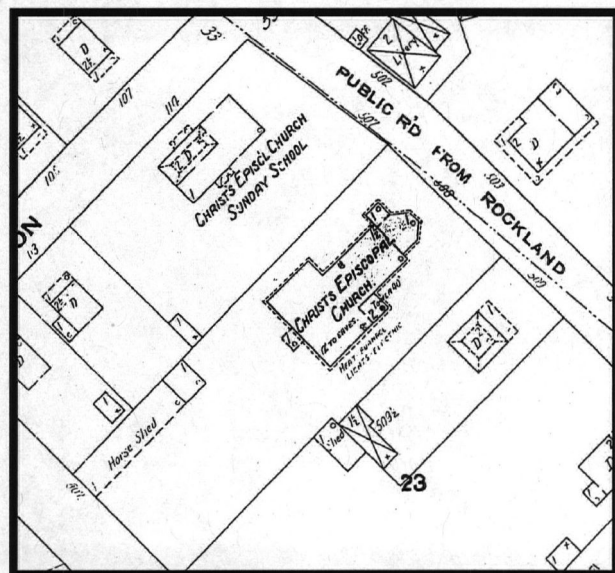
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MAY 1898



SEPTEMBER 1903

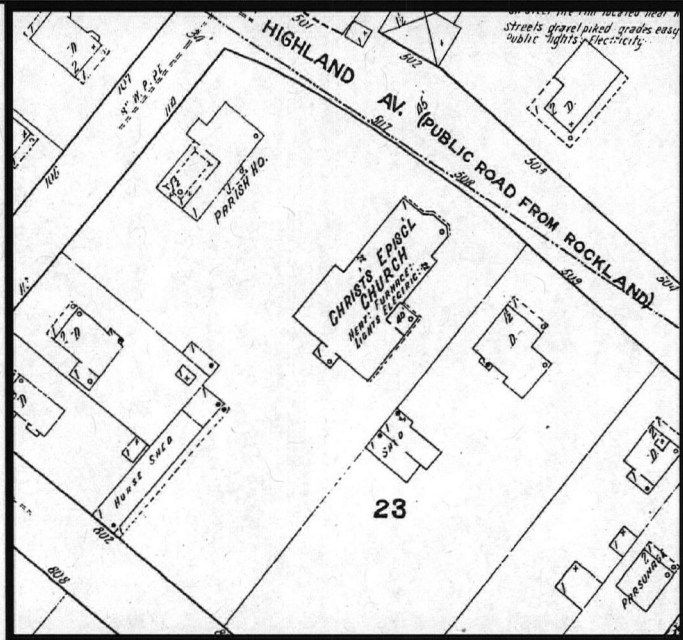


SEPTEMBER 1910

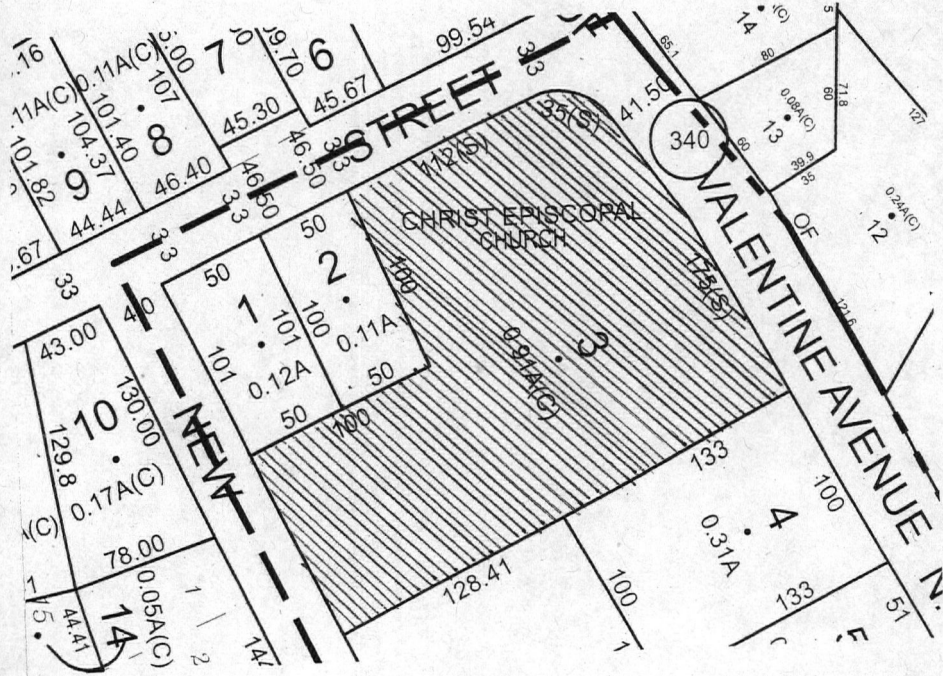
Property Name *Christ Church*
Location *Sparkill, Rockland County, New York*

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

APPENDIX



OCTOBER 1916



*Christ Church, Sparkill
Rockland County, New York*

Boundary indicated by shading
Scale: 1" is equal to approximately 100'

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Christ Church

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: NEW YORK, Rockland

DATE RECEIVED: 4/08/11 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 4/25/11
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 5/10/11 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 5/24/11
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 11000291

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N	DATA PROBLEM: N	LANDSCAPE: N	LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N	PDIL: N	PERIOD: N	PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N	SAMPLE: N	SLR DRAFT: N	NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 5-18-11 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

**Entered in
The National Register
of
Historic Places**

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.

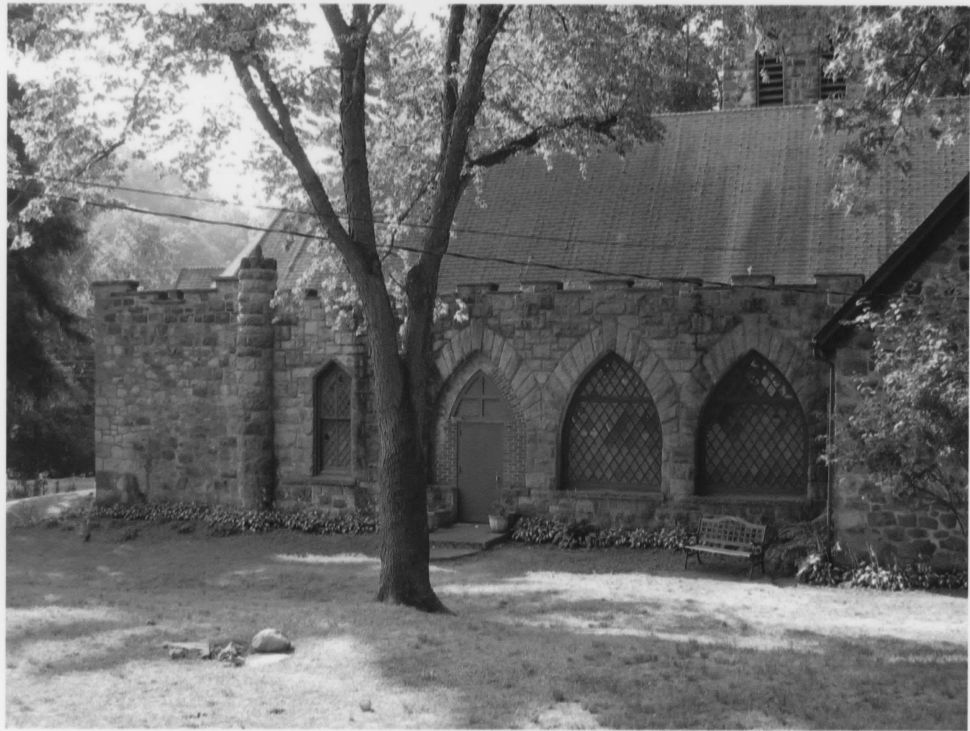


CHRIST CHURCH
SPARKILL, ROCKLAND CO. NY

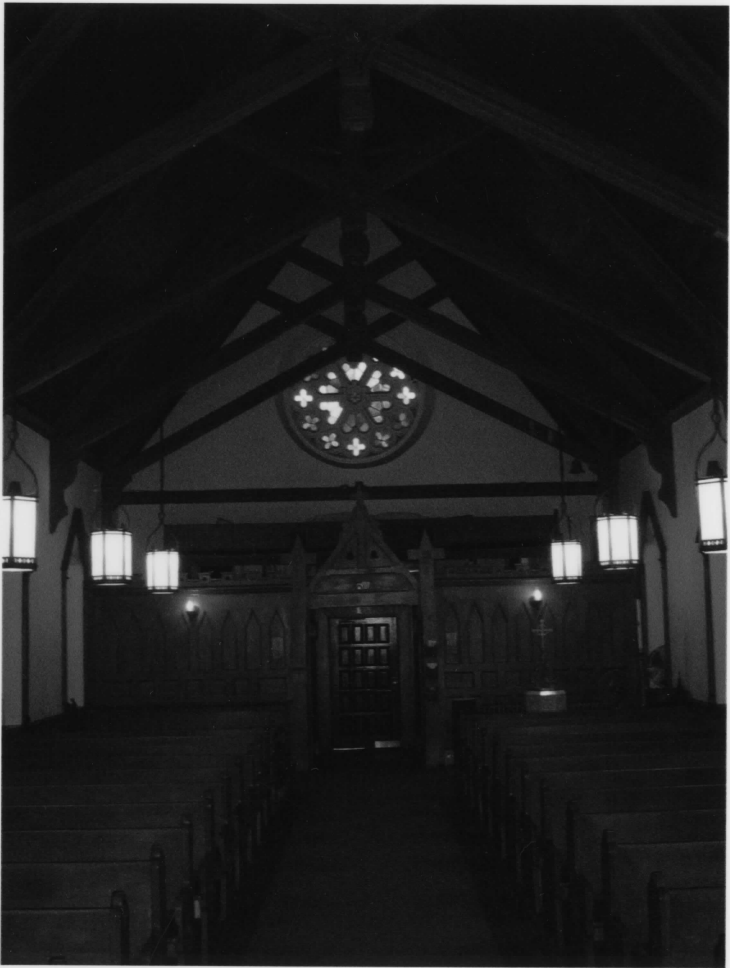
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CHRIST CHURCH
SPARKILL, ROCKLAND CO. NY
#2



CHRIST CHURCH
SPARKILL, ROCKLAND CO. NY
#3



CHRIST CHURCH

SPARKILL, ROCKLAND CO. NY

#4



CHRIST CHURCH
SPARKILL, ROCKLAND CO. NY
#5



CHRIST CHURCH

SPARKILL, ROCKLAND CO. NY

#6

EPSON

EPSON

EPSON

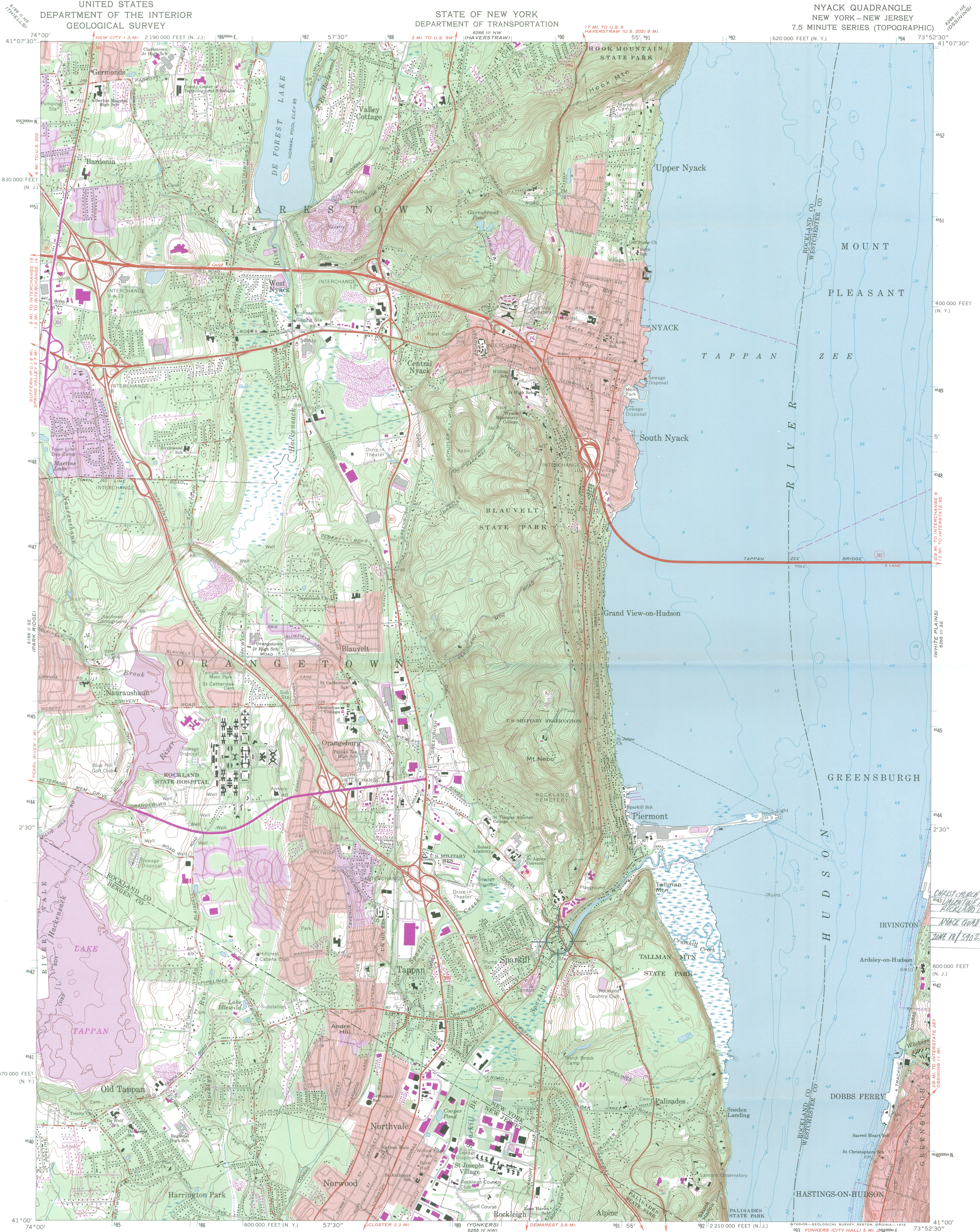
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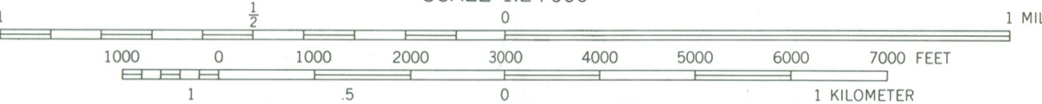
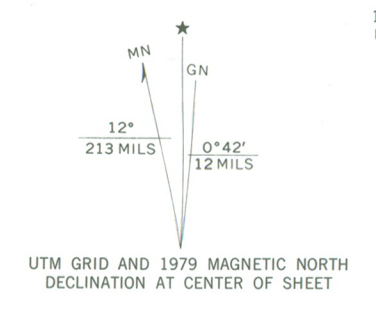
CHRIST CHURCH

SPARKILL, ROCKLAND CO. NY

#1



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, USC&GS, USCE, and New Jersey Geodetic Survey
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs
taken 1964 and 1965. Field checked 1967
Supersedes map dated 1957
Selected hydrographic data compiled from USC&GS Charts 282 (1965)
and 748 (1966). This information is not intended for navigational purposes
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grids based on New York coordinate system,
east zone, and New Jersey coordinate system,
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 18,
shown in blue
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines
where generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown



CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929
DEPTH CURVES AND SOUNDINGS IN FEET-DATUM IS MEAN LOW WATER
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO DATUMS IS VARIABLE
SHORELINE SHOWN REPRESENTS THE APPROXIMATE LINE OF MEAN HIGH WATER
THE MEAN RANGE OF TIDE IS APPROXIMATELY 3.2 FEET

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of
the National or State reservations shown on this map
Boundary lines shown in purple compiled from latest
information available from the controlling authority
Revisions shown in purple and woodland compiled
from aerial photographs taken 1977. This information
not field checked. Map edited 1979

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Heavy-duty	Light-duty
Medium-duty	Unimproved dirt
Interstate Route	U.S. Route
	State Route

QUADRANGLE LOCATION
NEW YORK

NYACK, N. Y. - N. J.
N4100-W7352.5/7.5
1967
PHOTOREVISED 1979
AMS 6266 III SW-SERIES V821

CHARLES MARCH SANDZILL
4543 WALKER AVENUE
ROCKLAND CO. NY
NYACK QUAD 1:24000 SCALE
ZONE 18 / 310233 4542827





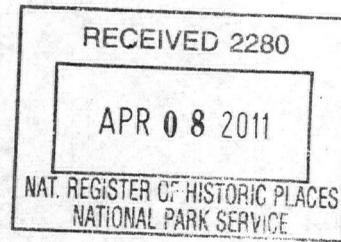
New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau
P.O. Box 189, Waterford, New York 12188-0189
518-237-8643 Fax: 518-233-9049

31 March 2011

Alexis Abernathy
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
1201 Eye St. NW
8th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20005

Re: National Register Nominations



Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor

Rose Harvey
Commissioner

Dear Ms. Abernathy:

I am pleased to enclose five new National Register nominations to be considered for listing by the Keeper of the National Register:

Wells Memorial Library, Essex County
Gilbertsville Waterworks, Otsego County
Young Memorial Church, St. Lawrence County
Christ Church, Rockland County
William Ferdon House, Rockland County

Thank you for your assistance in processing these proposals. Please feel free to call me at 518.237.8643 x 3261 if you have any questions.

Sincerely:

Kathleen LaFrank
National Register Coordinator
New York State Historic Preservation Office

enclosures