

VLR-2/19/80 NRHP-5/7/80

Culpeper 12

Form No. 10-300 REV. (9/77)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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

1 NAME
HISTORIC Mitchells Presbyterian Church
AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION
STREET & NUMBER Route 652
CITY, TOWN Mitchells VICINITY OF Seventh (J. Kenneth Robinson)
STATE Virginia CODE 51 COUNTY Culpeper CODE 047

3 CLASSIFICATION

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

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY
NAME Board of Elders; c/o Clerk of Session
STREET & NUMBER Mitchells Presbyterian Church
CITY, TOWN Mitchells VICINITY OF STATE Virginia zip code 22729

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Culpeper County Courthouse.
STREET & NUMBER
CITY, TOWN Culpeper STATE Virginia

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS
TITLE Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Survey Has this property been determined eligible? Y N
DATE 1979
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission, 221 Governor Street
CITY, TOWN Richmond STATE Virginia 23219

DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT
 GOOD
 FAIR

DETERIORATED
 RUINS
 UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Mitchells Presbyterian Church is located off Route 652 at the small settlement of Mitchells, Culpeper County. The 50' x 30' structure was built in the Carpenter Gothic style in 1879, and the interior was extensively decorated in trompe l'oeil fresco between 1892-99. The building was extended to the northeast by the addition of an educational building in 1965.

Erected on a stone foundation, the wood-frame structure was originally covered with weatherboarding. White aluminum siding installed in the past decade now covers the building. The original wooden brackets at the eaves were retained. The main (south) elevation is dominated by an entrance tower that is defined by buttresses. The main entrance consists of a pointed-arch Gothic doorway that retains its original paneled double doors topped by a glass transom. The entrance is approached by three stone steps with a recently installed iron handrail. Above the doorway is a hung-sash, pointed-arch window. An early photograph shows that it was originally a three-part Gothic opening covered by louvred shutters. A lancet-type opening covered by a louvred shutter is found at the next level. The tower is crowned by a belfry that features paired lancet windows on all elevations. Pinnacles joined by a wooden balustrade complete the tower. The balustrade replaces the original merlons. Fenestration consists of pointed-arch Gothic openings with stained-glass windows. The gable roof is covered with standing-seam sheet metal.

The church contains one of the finest known trompe l'oeil frescoed interiors in the Commonwealth. Painted by the Turin (Italy) native Joseph Oddenino, the paintings depict an eclectic range of architectural elements and details that decorate the north, east, and west walls and the ceiling. The east and west walls depict clustered columns with ornate capitals juxtaposed with pointed Gothic arches and rustication. The arches are painted to imitate stonework, emphasized by the tones of buff, gray, and black. A painted cornice runs the perimeter of the decorated walls. The cornice contains Renaissance-style motifs. A similar motif is rendered on the painted coffered ceiling where quatrefoils imposed within diamonds are found within the panels. The north wall contains spiral and rounded columns, all with embellished Corinthian-type capitals. A rounded niche contains a rear doorway and a semicircular stained-glass window. Later additions of memorial tablets on the north wall have tended to disfigure the original painted scheme. Stove flues added at a later date have marred the frescoes on the east and west walls.

The original ceiling lighting fixtures were insensitively replaced within the last twenty years. The present pews date to the end of the 19th or early 20th century. A cast-iron fence, installed between 1892 and 1899, encloses the church yard and the adjacent cemetery.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION: The nominated property of three acres is a small plateau on which the church and adjoining cemetery are located. The cemetery has been a part of the church yard since the church was built and contains the graves of the church fathers. The area is defined by a cast-iron fence.

RCC

SIGNIFICANCE

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

PECIFIC DATES 1879 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Unknown

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE The simple, Carpenter Gothic Mitchells Presbyterian Church at Mitchells, Culpeper County, contains the most elaborate example of late 19th-century, folk-style rompe l'oeil frescoes in the Commonwealth. Executed 1892-99 by the Italian immigrant painter, Joseph Dominick Phillip Oddenino, the artwork is a curious transplant in the rural Virginia countryside of the ancient art of fresco common throughout Europe. Oddenino's lively but naive architectonic schemes, incorporating Gothic and Renaissance motifs, are suggestive of civic and religious fresco painting practiced for centuries in his native Italy. The church is one of several examples of the painter's work that include fragments at the Lebanon Lutheran Church in Madison County and the Culpeper County Courthouse.

The history of the Culpeper church begins in the early 18th century with the first large migration of Scotch-Irish Presbyterians to America. Many settled in Piedmont, Virginia, where they established the state's first church. In 1814 the Bethesda Presbyterian Church at Culpeper Court House was organized, and in 1818 a mission church was formed at Cedar Run Creek, in the area known as Rapid Ann. The Presbyterian congregation grew, and by the late 1870s under the leadership of the Rev. John P. Strider, a new church was established at Mitchells Station. The new church was dedicated on November 6, 1879, and formally named the Mitchells Presbyterian Church in 1888. By 1891 the church was without a pastor and was struggling to survive. The Rev. E. H. Stover was hired, and his youth and energy infused new vigor into the congregation. It was under his ministry that the interior was painted by Joseph Oddenino.

Oddenino was born in 1831 at Chieri, Turin, Italy. He became head of the family linen manufacturing company where he designed patterns for fabrics. The heavy emmigration of the period lured Oddenino to America, and he arrived in New York City in March 1862. On April 4 he was inducted into the Union army as a musician and was discharged on April 4, 1865, at Harpers Ferry, West Virginia. His love of mountains brought him to the Piedmont region of Virginia where he resided alternately in Madison, Culpeper and Orange counties. He died in Madison County on September 23, 1913.

VDS/RCC

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Phillips, Rev. Zolton J. A Shorter History of Mitchells Presbyterian Church.
 Culpeper, Virginia - 1967.
 Mitchells, Virginia. Mitchells Presbyterian Church. Minutes of Session, November 1879.
 Mitchells, Virginia. Mitchells Presbyterian Church. "Joseph Dominick Phillip Oddenino,
 1831-1913."

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 3 acres

QUADRANGLE NAME Culpeper West, Virginia QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A	1, 7	7 5, 9 9 5, 0	4, 2 5, 1 9 2, 0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION: Beginning at a point on N side of Route 652 about 800' SE of intersection with Route 615; thence extending about 350' WNW along said side; thence extending about 100' N along W cemetery fence, thence continuing along 350' contour line NE then SE for about 800' to point of origin.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE
Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Staff

ORGANIZATION
Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

DATE
February 1980

STREET & NUMBER
221 Governor Street

TELEPHONE
(804) 786-3144

CITY OR TOWN
Richmond

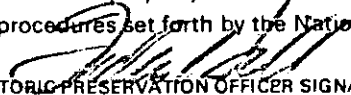
STATE
Virginia 23219

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL STATE X LOCAL

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

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE


TITLE
Tucker Hill, Executive Director

DATE
10/10/80

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

FOR NPS USE ONLY

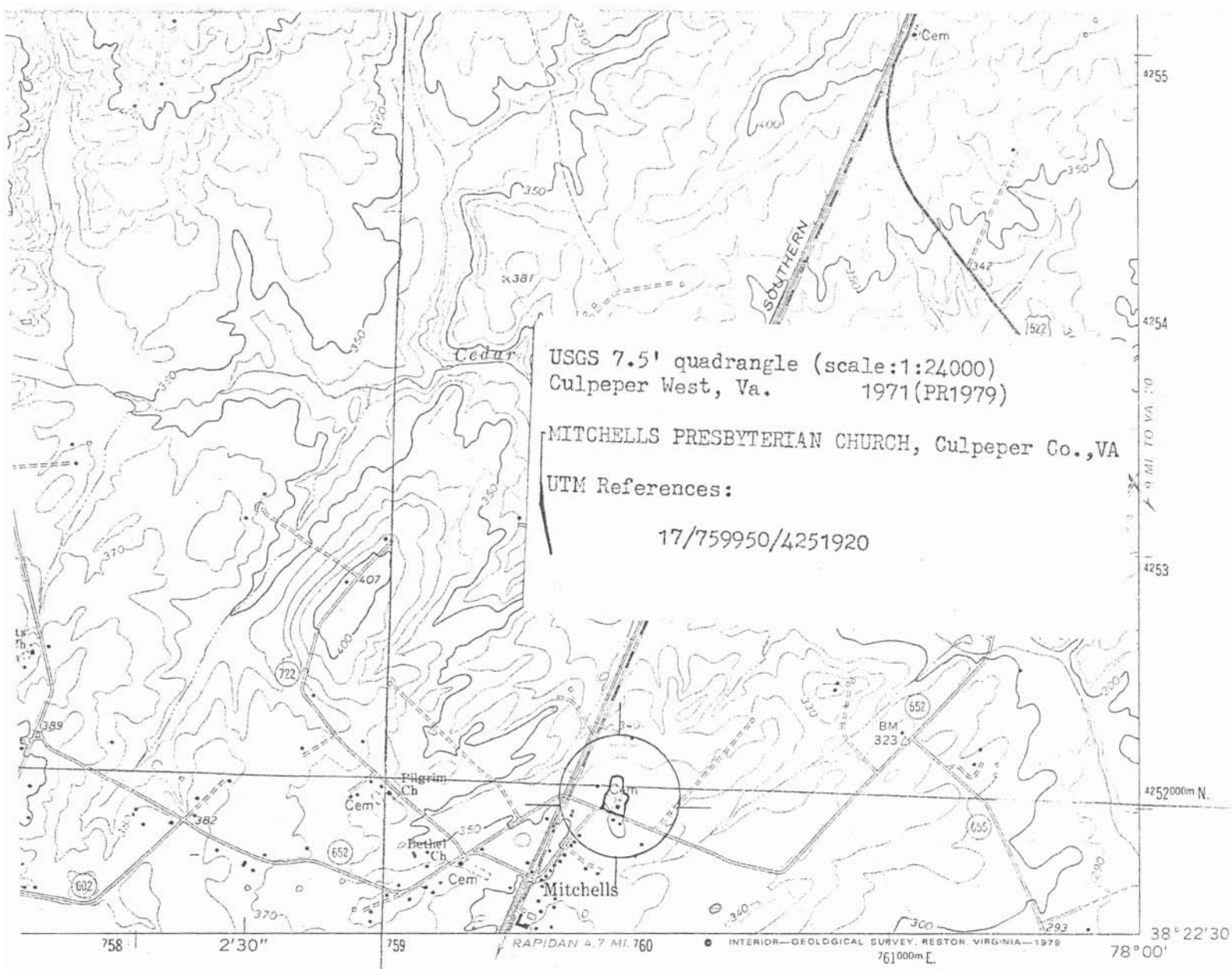
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST: DATE

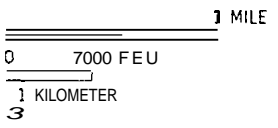
CHIEF OF REGISTRATION



USGS 7.5' quadrangle (scale:1:24,000)
 Culpeper West, Va. 1971 (PR1979)

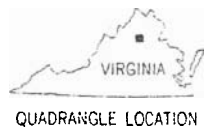
MITCHELLS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, Culpeper Co., VA

UTM References:
 17/759950/4251920



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Primary highway, hard surface	_____	Light-duty road, hard or improved surface	=====
Secondary highway, hard surface	_____	Unimproved road	-----
Interstate Route	_____	U S Route	_____
		State Route	_____



CULPEPER WEST, VA.
 NE/4 RAPIDAN 15' QUADRANGLE
 N3822.5-W780077.5

DS
 22092
 VIRGINIA 22903
 DN REQUEST

1971
 PHOTOREVISED 1979
 AMS 5360 1 YE-SERIES V834

U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
 5360 1 Y 5 74