

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 Salem Methodist Church

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number State Road 1522

N/A not for publication

city, town Huntsboro

vicinity

state North Carolina code NC

county Granville

code 077

zip code 27565

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

1

2

3

Noncontributing

1

1

buildings

sites

structures

objects

Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
Historic & Architectural Resources of
Granville County, N.C.

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

William S. King, Jr.
Signature of certifying official
State Historic Preservation Officer

6-14-88
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

Funerary: cemetery

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Religion: religious structure

Funerary: cemetery

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Greek Revival

Italiante

Gothic Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick

walls aluminum

roof metal

other wood

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

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Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 1 DESCRIPTION

The Greek Revival, Italianate and Gothic Revival styles provide a striking and rare form and finish for the long frame rectangle of the Salem Methodist Church. The use and articulation of these three Romantic styles indicate that the church was designed by, or strongly influenced by the work of, noted regional architect Jacob W. Holt. Located in a rural area northeast of Oxford, with its early contributing cemetery stretched to its west, the well-maintained church still looks much as it did when it was built by slaves at the verge of the Civil War in 1860 and 1861.

A heavy timber frame building, the church is one-story tall with three bays spanning its front elevation. This main, gable front elevation is marked by a Greek Revival style triangular pediment, Italianate style brackets and three entries, the double doors of which are adorned with inset Gothic arches. The use of these elements, all favorites of Jacob Holt, indicate his involvement in, or heavy influence on, the design. The brackets, which terminate in acorns, depend not only from the underside of the pediment, but also from the eaves of the side elevation, from the tops of the pilasters that flank the doors and from the building's cornerposts. These cornerposts rise from plinthes and terminate in capitals; the aluminum siding that now sheathes them has been shaped to conform with their original fluted articulation. Aluminum siding of an appropriate size, also added in the early 1980s, now covers the building's original weatherboards and fills the formerly flush-sheathed pediment as well. The side elevations of the church continue to be marked by their original brackets and tall fifteen-over-fifteen windows, which are filled with later added colored glass. The rear elevation retains its bracketed cornerposts and original flush gable end; it was never finished with a pediment or eave brackets as the front elevation was.

Inside, the church retains almost all of its original Greek and Gothic Revival style finish in excellent condition. The original boxed pews, boarded from seat to floor, are in place. The central row of pews is divided by a low partition for men's and women's seating. The backs of some of the pews are adorned with a raised Gothic pointed-arch motif that was part of Holt's design vocabulary; a similar motif is found at the house on the National Register nominated John Henry Royster Farm, which also was designed or influenced by Holt. Eight thin posts support the ceiling and its unusual central barrel vault of stained, beaded

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boards. The four-panel doors are ringed by Greek Revival style fluted and cornerblocked surrounds. And fanciful tulip sawnwork balusters adorn the pulpit railing.

To the building's west is a contributing cemetery, established around the time of the church's construction, that contains the graves of many of the founders. The monuments of the Crews family, located immediately to its east, are perhaps its most handsome. To the rear of the building and extending to the east is attached a one-story, concrete block education and fellowship wing built in 1962. A large open non-contributing frame arbor, built in the late 1960s, stands to the building's west.

¹ Rev. Charles D. Myers, in his "Early Methodists of Salem Township, Granville County, North Carolina," of February 12, 1984, discusses the history of the interior.

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
1860-1861

Significant Dates
1860-1861

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Holt, Jacob-school of or designed by
Short, John-slave carpenter

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

See continuation sheet

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Salem Methodist Church, built in 1860-61, is significant for its handsome and unusual Greek Revival, Italianate and Gothic Revival style architecture. Its triangular temple front pediment, multiple brackets and exuberant and varied decorative motifs are reminiscent of the work of noted regional architect Jacob W. Holt, who either designed the church or strongly influenced its construction. (See associated Property Type 2 - Greek Revival and Romantic Style Dwellings) One of only three extant church buildings raised in the county prior to the Civil War, the church is further significant as one of the county's oldest and most ornate, plantation era, non-residential buildings. (See associated Property Type 5.A. - Plantation Era Commercial, Industrial, Institutional and Religious Buildings - and Historic Context 1 - The Plantation Era in Granville County, 1746-1865). Although exterior aluminum siding has partially impinged upon its integrity, the church's major significance to Granville County's architectural heritage, and its intact brackets, doors and interior, make it eligible for the National Register. See Property Type Addendum Sheet, Religious Buildings, for evaluation of the significance of surviving historic churches in the county.

Jacob W. Holt (1811-1880), whose offices were to the east in Warren County in 1860, was a major regional architect who is known to have designed a small number of buildings in Granville County. These buildings included the St. John's College building of the Oxford Orphanage, one of his major commissions, which was built in the 1850s, and perhaps the house standing on the National Register nominated John Henry Royster Farm in northern Granville County. The church resembles his work in a number of ways. Most notably, it is profusely draped with Italianate style brackets that terminate in acorns, a favorite motif of Holt. They depend from its gable front triangular pediment, its side eaves, the pilasters that frame its front doorways and its cornerposts. These cornerposts, in typical Holt fashion, are fluted and rise from plinthes.

The design of the church is reminiscent of Holt in further ways, both smaller and larger than its brackets and cornerposts. In the larger sense, the church's rectangular, temple front, pedimented form is similar to his design of the Warren County Courthouse, 1853-1857, and the Boydton [Virginia] Methodist Episcopal Church, 1871, and, most notably, his attributed 1855

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design of the Warrenton Presbyterian Church.⁴ The building is also similar to central Granville County's Knott's Grove Baptist Church, which may have been designed by him as well. In its smaller details the church also employs a number of Holt's favorite decorative elements. These include the inset Gothic Revival style arches of the three front entries and the raised pointed Gothic motif - similar to the window aprons of the John Henry Royster house - which is found at the backs of some of the interior's original pews. All of its decorative elements combine to create an exceptionally handsome design that was certainly deeply influenced, if not indeed drawn, by Holt.

Salem Methodist Episcopal Church began its life as a distinct entity after it broke from the Harris Meeting House and built a church near the present building's site in 1828. According to a church history of 1928 written by local historian A. A. Hicks, that building remained adequate for the congregation until the year 1860:

In that year Col. Richard P. Taylor whose ancestors [sic] had helped to build the former church conveyed an additional 2 32/160 acres to the church yard by gift, and he and the late James Crews superintended and largely paid for the construction of this magnificent building. The building was constructed by John Short, a slave belonging to Colonel Taylor's wife, Mrs. Martha B. Taylor, and one or two helpes. It was completed and dedicated in July or August 1861.

Both James Crews and Col. Taylor, whose National Register nominated farm stands to the south, are buried in the contemporary contributing cemetery adjoining the church building. The monuments of the Crews family, particularly the tall Victorian one of Edward Norfleet Crews, are among the cemetery's most striking.

Crews family descendant Charlotte Crews recalled in interviews in January and February of 1984 a family tradition that the lumber for the church was cut off of Edward Norfleet Crews' land and fashioned and planed by sawmills brought for the task. She also recounted a family tradition that the old church, which no longer stands, was rolled up the road on logs and given to slaves to worship in.⁷

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The present church building has been little changed over the years. An education wing and fellowship hall was constructed at its rear in 1962, colored glass panes have been added to its windows, and aluminum siding was affixed over its exterior weatherboards in a sensitive manner in the early 1980s. Its brackets, doors, pews and other interior finish have been retained, however, and the building and its cemetery are maintained in excellent condition by the congregation.

¹The other two pre-Civil War church buildings are the National Register nominated Brassfield Methodist Church in southern Granville County, built in the early 1840s, and part of the Amis Chapel Baptist Church, in the north of the county, which was built in 1855. The latter structure is now used as an outbuilding.

²Catherine W. Bishir, "Jacob W. Holt: An American Builder," in Common Places: Readings in American Vernacular Architecture, 1986.

³Many of the buildings illustrated in Catherine W. Bishir's "Jacob W. Holt: An American Builder" display Holt's trademark brackets. In Granville County, at the ruinous "Tar River" Jimmy Crews House, which was designed or heavily influenced by Holt, some acorn brackets can still be seen through the tangle of vines. A member of the large Crews family, which was very active in the affairs of the church, it is not surprising that his house and the church are stylistically similar.

⁴All three are illustrated at Catherine W. Bishir's, "Jacob W. Holt: An American Builder."

⁵A. A. Hicks, "Salem Church, Its History as Related at its One Hundreth Anniversary," This short history, written by local historian A. A. Hicks and printed by the Oxford Orphanage in 1928, is located in the Richard H. Thornton Public Library in Oxford.

The transfers of land by Crews and Taylor are recorded, respectively, at Deed Book 14, Page 47 (1845) and Deed Book 25, Page 203 (1860).

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⁶In "Salem Church, Its History as Related at its One Hundredth Anniversary," A. A. Hicks writes about James Crews and Col. Richard Pelham Taylor:

Just a word about James Crews, who was a member at Harris Meeting House from his childhood and who helped to move the church to this place and gave the land upon which the first Church was erected and who gave the church the first organ which ever graced a country church in this county. He was an ardent Methodist, a liberal supporter of his church and a Christian gentleman. His remains by those of his wife rest in the cemetery here.

Col. R. P. Taylor, was a younger man, but his religion was of the right type. He gave part of the ground for the church, his carpenters built it and he supported it with his presence and money until his death. His remains by those of his wife are also interred in the cemetery here.

⁷Rev. Charles D. Myers, "Early Methodists of Salem Township, Granville County, North Carolina," February 12, 1984. In this recent typewritten history, Myers added to the history of the church by interviewing the older Methodists in the area, including members of the Crews family.

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Section number 9 Page 1 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bishir, Catherine W., "Jacob W. Holt: An American Builder," in Dell Upton and John Michael Vlach's Common Places: Readings in American Vernacular Architecture. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1986.

Granville County Deeds. Granville County Courthouse, Oxford, N.C.

Hays, Francis B. Unpublished collection of 135 scrapbooks on Granville County history located at Richard H. Thornton Public Library, Oxford, N.C.

Hicks, A. A. "Salem Church, Its History as Related at its One Hundredth Anniversary." Oxford Orphanage Press, 1928. Short printed history located at Richard H. Thornton Public Library, Oxford, N.C.

Interviews with Salem Methodist Church member Sadie Lawrence, November and December, 1987.

Myers, Rev. Charles D. "Early Methodists of Salem Township, Granville County, North Carolina." February 12, 1984. Typewritten history of church, including interviews with descendants of church's founders, located in records of Salem Methodist Church.

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GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

UTM REFERENCES

	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	17	720700	4025290
B	17	720670	4025420
C	17	720730	4025500
D	17	720880	4025500
E	17	720900	4025420
F	17	720970	4025430
G	17	720970	4025370

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Beginning at point A: 17 720700 4025290 on the USGS polygon, where the field line meets the north side of State Road 1522, continuing in straight line north, through a field (approximately following a field line) and then along the tree line, approximately 475 feet to point B: 17 720670 4025420 on the polygon, where the tree line turns northeast. Continuing in a straight line northeast, approximately following the edge of the woods, approximately 225 feet to point C: 17 720730 4025500 on the polygon, where the tree line turns east. Continuing in a straight line east, approximately following the edge of the woods, approximately 275 feet to point D: 17 720880 4025500 on the polygon, where the tree line turns southeast. Continuing in a straight line southeast, approximately following the edge of the woods, approximately 275 feet to point E: 17 720900 4025420 on the polygon, where the tree line turns east. Continuing in a straight line east, approximately following the edge of the woods, approximately 475 feet to point F: 17 720970 4025430 on the polygon, where the tree line turns south. Continuing in a straight line south, approximately following the edge of the woods, approximately 325 feet to point G: 17 720970 4025370 on the polygon, where the tree line meets the north side of State Road 1522. Continuing along the north side of State Road 1522, approximately 975 feet to the point of origin.

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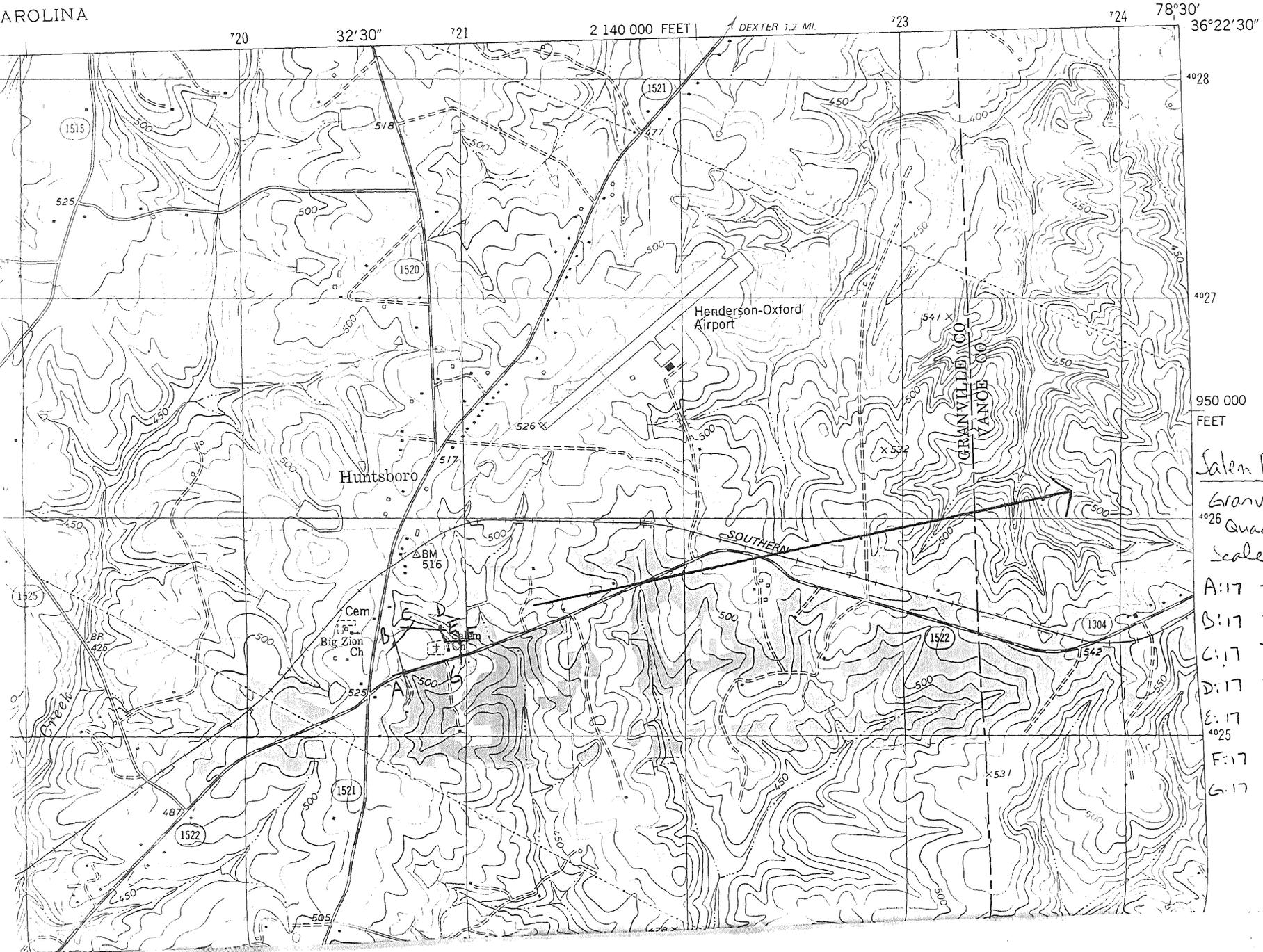
BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

Approximately 8 acres that have been historically associated with the property, maintain historic integrity, and convey the property's historic setting are being nominated for the National Register. The remaining acreage has been excluded because it is now woodland.

The western boundary from UTM points A to B includes the church and cemetery to its east and excludes property not owned by the church to its west. The northern boundary from UTM points B to C, C to D, D to E and E to F includes the church and cemetery to its south and excludes woodland to its north. The eastern boundary from UTM points F to G includes the church and cemetery to its west and excludes woodland to its east. The southern boundary from UTM points G to A includes the church and cemetery to its north and excludes property not owned by the church to its south.

OXFORD QUADRANGLE
 NORTH CAROLINA
 7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)
 SE/4 OXFORD 15' QUADRANGLE

5356 IV NW
 (TOWNSVILLE)



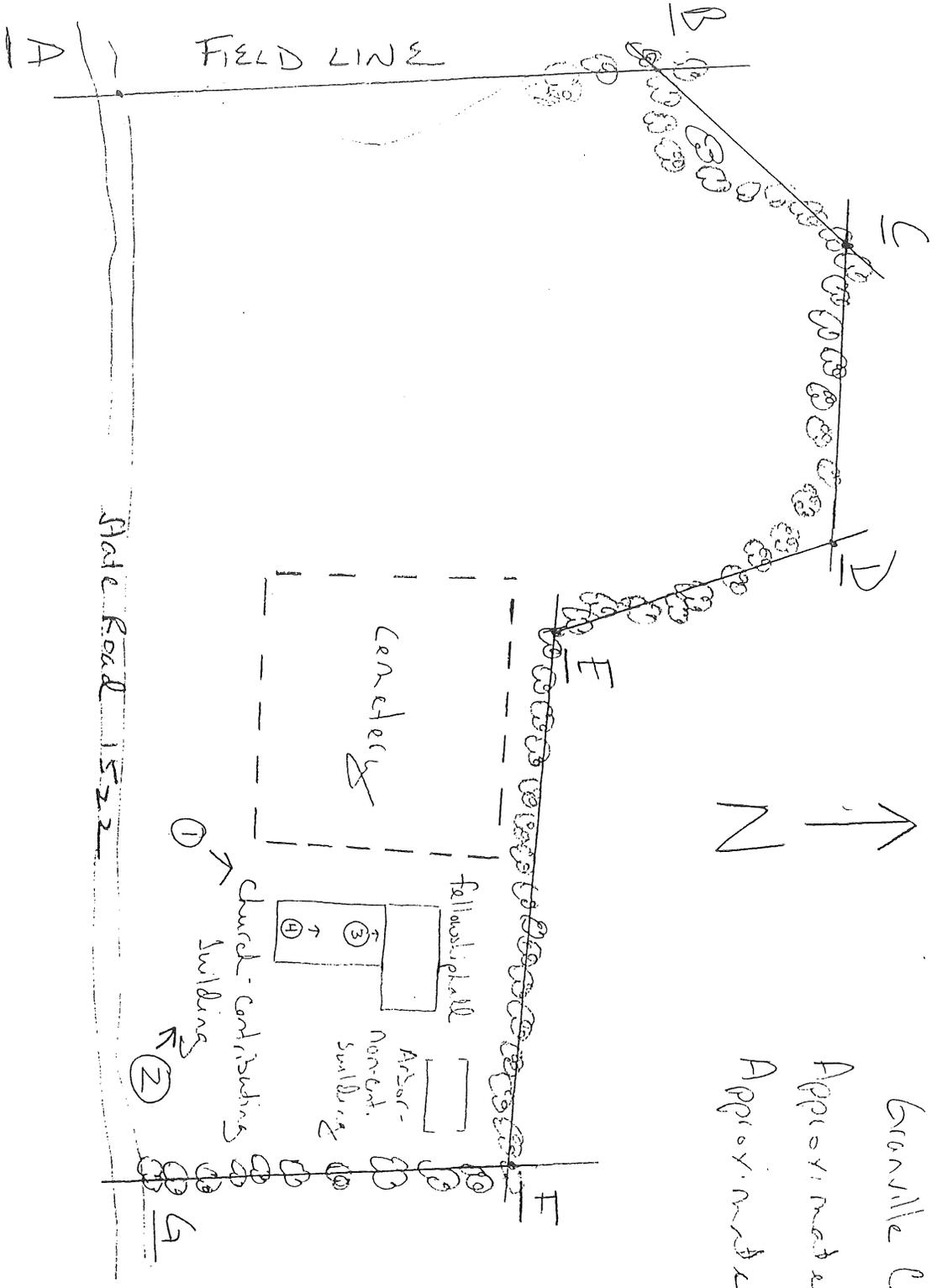
Salem Methodist Church
 Granville County, N.C.
 Quad: Oxford, N.C.
 Scale 1:24,000
 A: 17 720700 4025290
 B: 17 720670 4025420
 C: 17 720730 4025500
 D: 17 720880 4025500
 E: 17 720900 4025420
 F: 17 720970 4025430
 G: 17 720970 4025370

SALZM UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Granville County, N.C.

Approximately 2 acres

Approximate scale 1" = 150'



Underlined capital letters represent the vertices of the polygon drawn to enclose the property on the accompanying USGS map.



SALEM
S. SCHOOL 1909
PASTOR
CHARLES WYER