

# 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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any 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.

## 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Bristol Congregational Church

Other names/site number: Yorkville Congregational Church, Chapel on the Green

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

## 2. Location

Street & number: 107 W. Center Street

City or town: Yorkville State: IL County: Kendall

Not For Publication:  Vicinity:

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this x 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 x meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

\_\_\_ national \_\_\_ statewide x local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

\_\_\_ A \_\_\_ B x C \_\_\_ D

|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| <hr/>  |             |
| <b>Signature of certifying official/Title:</b>             | <b>Date</b> |
| <u>Illinois Historic Preservation Agency</u>               |             |
| <b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b> |             |

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|   |  |
|---|--|
| In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria. |  |
| _____   | _____  |
| <b>Signature of commenting official:</b>  | <b>Date</b>  |
| _____   | _____  |
| <b>Title :</b>  | <b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b> |

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

**Category of Property**

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site

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Structure

Object

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

| Contributing | Noncontributing |            |
|--------------|-----------------|------------|
| <u>1</u>     | <u>0</u>        | buildings  |
| <u>0</u>     | <u>0</u>        | sites      |
| <u>0</u>     | <u>0</u>        | structures |
| <u>0</u>     | <u>0</u>        | objects    |
| <u>1</u>     | <u>0</u>        | Total      |

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

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**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION/Religious facility

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

\_SOCIAL/Meeting hall\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MID NINETEENTH CENTURY/

Greek Revival

Carpenter Gothic

\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property:

Walls: Weatherboard siding

Roof: Asphalt shingles

Foundation: Concrete block

### **Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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### **Summary Paragraph**

The Bristol Congregational Church is a timber-framed, clapboard-covered, mid-nineteenth century rural church in form, design and setting. Since 1855, it has been a prominent landmark on the northeast corner of Center and Church Streets overlooking Yorkville's Public Square to the south. The two-and-one-half story, front-gabled, rectangular building is three bays wide and four bays deep. The architecture is the traditional New England meeting house type with Greek Revival massing and windows, blended with modest early Carpenter Gothic decorative elements. The most prominent feature is the 60 foot high, two stage tower which projects from the center of the front-gabled façade. In 1953, the rear of the building was extended ten feet and a two story classroom addition was attached, resulting in a "T" footprint. During the same construction, a concrete block basement was built under old and new. Asphalt shingles cover all roofs. The original portion of the building has rectangular windows of stained glass set in metal came and topped with simple wood lintels. The windows in the 1953 construction are wood double hung sash of clear window glass. With the exception of the 1953 additions to the rear, which could be removed without harming the original church, and the minor alterations noted below which do not impact the overall integrity, the exterior appearance is practically unchanged. In 1871, a brick parsonage (not included in this nomination) was built on adjacent Lot 6. It is a two-story, Gabled Ell, Italianate residence at 105 W. Center Street owned by a private party. The former parsonage is in excellent condition and has retained most of its historic integrity.

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### **Narrative Description**

#### **SETTING**

The property is located at 107 W. Center Street in Yorkville, a city of roughly 17,000 in Kendall County, about fifty miles southwest of Chicago. It occupies Lot 5 in Block 12 of the original Village of Bristol, which was platted in 1844 and incorporated into the city of Yorkville in 1957. The lots are 80 feet wide, 160 feet deep. With the exception of the Yorkville School on the northwest corner of Church and Center streets, the neighborhood is residential. The building which has a T-shaped plan, is set back from Center Street approximately 40 feet; the west elevation is about 30 feet from Church Street. Public sidewalks are located along Center and Church Streets; sidewalks also lead to the front and side entrances. The property is bound on the east side by a

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narrow alley. While there are some mature trees on the lot, most of the plantings are small bushes located along the periphery of the south and west walls of the church. A small bench and a church sign are in the east and west sides of the front yard, respectively. They do not contribute to the property's significance.

## **EXTERIOR**

### Front Elevation

The church, which faces south on Center Street, is divided into three bays, with a steeple in the center. This elevation measures 39-feet wide and has the Greek Revival's distinctive massing, low-pitched roof, pediment, and symmetry of fenestration. Carpenter Gothic details include wood ornament (vertical sheathing with saw-tooth borders, scalloped molding), finials, and brackets. The remainder of the front façade is covered with horizontal clapboard. Eight-inch pilasters trim the corners. Each of the two bays on either side of the steeple has a four-panel door (no longer in use) with simple entablatures. Above each door, on the second level, is a wood-framed, double-sash, stained-glass window with a simple entablature.

The principal ornamentation of the south elevation is the centrally placed tower. The steeple is 60 feet in height, 12 feet wide and it projects 3.75 feet from the front façade. Inverted scallop molding is repeated under the steeple's pent roof. The narrow stained-glass windows, stacked two high above the entry doors provide natural light to the interior stairway leading to the belfry. The belfry sits astride the steeple's pent roof, is 24 feet high, and has louvered windows on all four sides. The wall surfaces of the belfry have horizontal and vertical bands of clapboard. Each side of the belfry's pyramidal roof is interrupted by a steeply pitched wall dormer. A finial adorns the apex of the belfry's roof.

The double -leaf door, located below the bell tower, serves as the main entrance. It is covered by a gabled roof that is topped with a Carpenter Gothic finial and supported by wall brackets. A simple, poured- concrete porch pad with three concrete steps and metal hand rails lead to the entrance. The 39-foot wide south elevation has the distinctive massing, low-pitched roof, pediment, and symmetry of fenestration of the Greek Revival style. Carpenter Gothic vertical sheathing cut with a saw tooth border covers the area between the gable and the lower eaves and is set off from the lower clapboard siding by an ornamental course of inverted scalloped molding. The remainder of the front façade is covered with horizontal clapboard. Eight inch corner boards trim all exterior walls.

### Side Elevations

The east and west elevations of the original church are nearly identical. Each measure 48.5 feet wide and 14 feet high to the eaves. The siding is horizontal clapboard and the walls are divided into five bays. The center bays have three rectangular, double-hung, wood-sash windows of stained glass with metal came. They are proportionally spaced and are separated from the front and rear bays by eight-inch pilasters. The window sills abut a wood water table, which is only located on the original part of the church. The front bays have two smaller and slightly narrower windows, stacked vertically to illuminate an interior gallery and stairwell. The east elevation is

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identical to the west elevation except for the clear glass window on the second story on the southeast elevation.

### 1953 Extension and Addition

The rear bay is a two-story hyphen, constructed in 1953 that connects the original church and the rear addition, also built in 1953. It measures 10 feet across and 14 feet high, and is visible on the east and west elevations of the church. Both elevations of the hyphen are identical and have two smaller, clear glass double-hung sash windows in an 8/1 configuration on each floor. The hyphen extends the gable roof of the original church but is demarcated from it by an 8-inch pilaster.

The 1953 addition, which is also clapboard, runs perpendicular to the church, forming a "T" footprint. It measures 65 feet wide and 38 feet deep. The addition extends about 11 feet beyond the width of the church on each side. The southeast and southwest sides of the addition each have one window on the second floor. The west and east elevations of the addition also are identical. Each has three windows spaced evenly on the second story, two windows on the first floor and a double-door entry beneath a gabled roof supported by plain brackets. The north elevation of the original church is concealed by the 1953 addition which is 65 wide. This elevation has six clear glass, double-hung, sash windows in an 8/1 configuration evenly spaced on each floor.

The addition and extension have no architectural significance.

## **INTERIOR**

### Vestibule

The 10.5-foot-wide by 4.6-foot-deep vestibule on the south end of the building is set off from the auditorium by a wall with double wood doors with glazing in the shape of a cross. A single conventional staircase on the west side leads to the balcony.

### Auditorium

The layout of the 34.8-foot-wide by 47-foot-long auditorium is similar to that of the common New England meeting house plan of the early nineteenth century, with the orientation of two blocks of pews arranged between the center and side aisles so as to focus attention on the altar. The walls are plastered, and the floor is carpet over wood. A balcony, or singers' gallery, is on the south wall. The balcony resembles an entablature and is supported by two square columns with inset capitals above the architrave. Two columns with Doric capitals are constructed on top of these capitals on the balcony rail that extend to the ceiling. The east, west and south walls have the original wainscot reaching from the floor to the bottom of the windows. The chancel area is one-step higher than the nave and has three rows of pews on the east wall facing west. The altar is in the center of the north wall and is accessed by two steps. The altar area is recessed about two feet deep, twelve feet high, and eight feet wide. To the west of the altar is a flat door painted to match the walls; to the east is an opening that enters onto the organ room.

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A pressed-metal ceiling, installed in 1903, has been covered with acoustical tile but the wide pressed-metal decorative cornice around the room's perimeter is intact. The kerosene lamps were replaced with electric fixtures in 1898; these were replaced at some unknown date with six brass electric chandeliers.

#### Singers' Gallery & Belfry

The gallery has two irregular rows of pews separated from the stairwell opening by an aisle leading to the door to the belfry. The belfry door consists of four vertical boards painted white with an eye and hook latch.

#### Rear Extension

In 1953, an 8.3-foot-wide by 7.4-foot addition was built onto the north wall of the original church, mimicking it in height and width but clearly differentiated on the exterior by clear glass, double-hung windows and in the interior by knotty pine paneling. This space houses the original 1899 Hinners & Albertson tracker action pipe organ, a small office, and a storage room. A second addition, an adjoining two-story classroom addition was built perpendicular to the church.

#### The Classroom Addition

The first floor of the 1953 addition has five classrooms, three restrooms and a wide hallway with stairs leading to additional classrooms on the second floor. The walls are covered variously with drywall, knotty pine boards and wood paneling; the floors are covered in linoleum floor tiles and carpet.

### **THE BASEMENT**

The basement was built of concrete block in 1953. It houses a large meeting room with fireplace, a full kitchen, furnace room and storage rooms.

### **INTEGRITY**

The Bristol Congregational Church is eligible for listing in the National Register as a good example of a meetinghouse building type with Greek Revival and Carpenter Gothic influences. It retains all seven aspects of integrity as defined by the National Park Service: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Most of the changes to the exterior and interior of the church have taken place within the period of significance. The most notable change to the exterior of the church is the replacement of the steeple. In comparing the photograph of the church taken about 1860 with one published in an 1934 history of the church, it is apparent the spire on the steeple was replaced at some time. No mention of the replacement has been found to date, but if the 1898 Sanborn Map correctly gave the height at 60', as it is now, the replacement must have occurred prior to then.

The stained-glass windows were likely installed after the church was constructed and probably before 1903 when additional alterations were made to the interior. One stained-glass window (on

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the second story of the east elevation) was removed in 1987 and is on display at the Yorkville Congregational United Church of Christ. It was replaced with a double-hung, wood-sash window with clear glass.

In 1953, a small chapel on the rear of the church that dated to 1900 was demolished and an extension connecting the original church to a new addition was constructed. It is the same height as the church but is clearly differentiated by two smaller, stacked clear glass double-hung sash windows in an 8/1 configuration and separated by an 8-inch wide pilaster. The church was raised to add a full basement.

On the interior, the wainscot, the singers' gallery, the second floor door to the belfry and the stairway to the belfry date to the 1855 construction. Additional historic changes noted below were taken from the October 28, 1903 publication of the Kendall County Record newspaper:

- 1898: Two interior circular staircases were replaced by a single conventional staircase on the west side which leads to a singers' gallery. The kerosene lamps were replaced with electric ones.
- 1899: The pipe organ was added
- 1900: A new addition was built in back of the church. A recess for the pulpit was built into the north wall.
- 1902: A new heating plant was installed. Cement walks were added around the building.
- 1903: A pressed-metal ceiling and frieze was installed, the pews were replaced, and the wainscoting was painted to resemble wood grain.

Non-historic changes on the interior consist of acoustical tiles on the ceiling (the steel cornice around the room's perimeter is still intact), doorways constructed in the north wall to provide access to the 1953 addition (1953), and double-doors between the vestibule and the sanctuary (believed to be 1953). At some point, the faux wood graining on the wainscoting was painted over and the light fixtures dating from 1898 were replaced with six brass electric chandeliers.

## 8. Statement of 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,



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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.)

- 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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1855 - 1903  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1855; 1903  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

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Henry Austin, architect  
Menzo W. Lane, builder

### **Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph**

The Bristol Congregational Church is eligible for listing in the National Register as a locally significant example of rural church architecture exhibiting Greek Revival and Gothic Revival influences. It meets Criterion Consideration A for religious properties since it derives its significance from architecture. It was built based upon a pattern published in 1853 in *A Book of Plans for Churches and Parsonages* and is Kendall County's singular specimen of a triple-entry New England style-meeting house. It is Yorkville's oldest surviving non-residential building and the city's sole extant 19<sup>th</sup> century church. Additionally, it is one of only six existing mid-nineteenth century churches in all of Kendall County and one of three that have retained good integrity. Constructed in 1855 for the Bristol Congregational Church & Society, twelve years after the village of Bristol was platted, its style as a New England meeting house attests to the origins of the village's founding families, many of whom contributed to the development of the village, the town and the county. One of the church's founding families, the Bristol family, gave its name to the village and township. Further, for 161 years, the church has been a prominent landmark on the town's city park, making a strong contribution to the community's sense of place. The period of significance is 1855, the year it was built, until 1903, by which date the steeple is believed to have been replaced and minor alterations to the interior were made.

### **Statement of Significance**

#### **Early Church Architecture in the United States**

##### The meetinghouse

The forebear of the nation's iconic New England style churches is the Puritan meetinghouse of the 1600s and 1700s. Although a mix of styles was brought to these shores by other religious denominations and ethnicities, the meetinghouse predominated as the preferred Protestant style. In rebellion against the Church of England, these Puritan dissidents rejected not only the conventional concept of a church building having sacredness to it, but also, they avoided the use of ornamentation including religious symbols and the traditional sanctuary which they considered "popish." As a result, the 17<sup>th</sup> century meetinghouse was an austere box-like building that functioned as a "neutral public space" as well as a religious hall, a dual function that would not be abandoned entirely until the mid-1800s.<sup>1</sup> In his article "Meeting-houses: Considered Historically and Suggestively," published in 1859, author Rev. H. M. Dexter gave this description:

It was originally a perfectly plain and semi-cubical erection, without porch, tower, steeple, or chimney, and differed, in outside aspect, from an overgrown barn, almost wholly in the fact that it had a door on three of its sides, with two (sometimes three) rows of small windows piercing its walls, interrupted in their continuity on that side

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<sup>1</sup> Williams, 5-7; Sweeney, 88.

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where the pulpit was placed, by a larger window, on a level with its exigencies of light and ventilation. From 40 to 60 windows was the allowance for such a building. Its size varied with the size and ability of the town, and number of people to be accommodated... The main front door was placed in the middle of one of the long sides; the pulpit being in the center of the other, directly opposite. The side doors were placed in the center of each of the ends of the building. Galleries were built along the side over the front door opposite the pulpit, and across the two ends over the side doors."<sup>2</sup>

In contrast, in the South and Mid-Atlantic cities where the Anglican Church predominated, the Anglicans and Roman Catholics adapted the European basilica plan to their New World churches. Typically, this was "a long rectangle consisting of nave and side aisles, with bell tower and entrance on the short side and sanctuary at the other." By the late 1700s, all denominations had adopted the basilica plan.<sup>3</sup> Soon even the Puritans embraced the use of ornamentation in their houses of worship:

In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, the Puritans (who by that time formed the Congregationalist denomination) abandoned the plain style. As the onetime dissenters became more numerous and prosperous, they desired "an elegance and dignity of architectural expression which the simple meetinghouse could not provide." Influenced by architectural forms developed by the Anglican Church in the American colonies, and particularly by the designs of English architects Sir Christopher Wren and James Gibbs, they added high-standing towers and spires to the traditional meetinghouse's structure....The influence of the Puritan meetinghouse extended beyond New England Congregationalists. Other eighteenth and nineteenth century dissenters (Presbyterians, Quakers, Baptists, Methodists, and Shakers) made use of the meetinghouse form.<sup>4</sup>

There was a proliferation of rural churches in the United States during the first half of the nineteenth century due to the Second Great Awakening, a religious revival movement among Protestants. Additionally, some rural religious groups split over religious differences, creating many denominations and sects. This too increased the number of churches, as each group eventually built churches of their own.<sup>6</sup>

### Greek Revival

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<sup>2</sup> Dexter, Rev. H. M., "Meeting-houses: Considered Historically and Suggestively." *The Congregational Quarterly* Vol. 1 (1859): 186-214.

<sup>3</sup> Rifkind, Carole: *A Field Guide to American Architecture*. New York: New American Library, 1980, pp. 117-118.

<sup>4</sup> Loveland and Wheeler, 9-10.

<sup>6</sup> (Williams, 1997, p. 212-213).

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During the church building boom of the early-to-mid 1800s, Greek Revival design was the dominant architectural style in the United States. Greek Revival borrowed classical ideas and details from Greek and Roman models. These included columns, porticos, symmetrical arrangements, low-pitched roofs, cornices with entablature and frieze, horizontal sills and lintels, and temple-like forms. Greek Revival style became extremely popular for ecclesiastical architecture because of the versatility of the style.<sup>7</sup> Greek Revival borrowed classical ideas and details from Greek and Roman models. These included classical inspired columns, porticos, symmetrical arrangements, low-pitched roofs, classical cornices with entablature and frieze, horizontal sills and lintels, and temple like forms.

### Gothic Revival

The Greek Revival style, based upon pagan Greek and Roman temples, fell out of favor for ecclesiastic architecture just about the time the English-based Gothic Revival style made its American appearance during the early to mid-1800s.<sup>8</sup> The style was inspired by Europe's medieval cathedrals and is characterized by an emphasis on the vertical: high pitched roofs often with cross gables; castellated towers; windows and doors of pointed, arched, or squared shape, generally with elaborate surrounds; decorative trefoils, quatrefoils and tracery. In Europe and America's large cities, the style was primarily executed in stone but in rural areas where lumber was readily available, a variation known as Carpenter Gothic became very popular. Distinctive elements of Carpenter Gothic include: steeply pitched roofs, sometimes with vergeboard; gables often topped with finials or cross bracing; cross gables; vertical board and batten exteriors; pointed arches, and fanciful gingerbread trim, the latter made possible by the invention of the scroll saw. American architect Alexander Davis Jackson and others popularized the style in rural architecture by publishing building plans in books and widely-circulated periodicals. Andrew Jackson Downing's *The Architecture of Country Houses* (1850) sold over 16 thousand copies.<sup>9</sup> But it was Richard Upjohn, the immigrant architect from England, who dominated the style for America's rural wooden churches. His 1852 publication *Upjohn's Rural Architecture* and his large body of work made the Gothic Revival "the most influential style for churches well into the twentieth century."<sup>10</sup> Upjohn is believed to have designed about 150 churches in the United States.

### Bristol Congregational Church (Bristol Township)

The Bristol Congregational Church, as originally constructed, was built from Design No. II, a plan from architectural pattern book *Rural church architecture: comprising a series of designs for churches, exemplified in plans, elevations, sections, and details, with practical descriptions*. The compilation of drawings included works from Upjohn and other well-known architects of the day, including Renwick, Wheeler, Wells, Austin, Stone, Cleaveland, Backus, Reeve, and Eveleth. The church has characteristics of both Greek Revival -- distinctive massing, low-pitched roof, pediment, and symmetry of fenestration; and Carpenter Gothic -- vertical clapboard with

<sup>7</sup> Caravan, 1996, p. 24

<sup>8</sup> Chamberlain, 21-23.

<sup>9</sup> Berg, 17.

<sup>10</sup> Stanton, 269; Poppeliers, 40-42

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decorative wood trim (saw-tooth edges and inverted-scallop trim), horizontal and vertical bands, high-pitched dormers, and finials. Its simple plan is reminiscent of the rural meetinghouses favored by denominations who disapproved of the use of ornamentation and religious symbols in their houses of worship.

Historic changes made to the church were more in keeping with Gothic Revival of the Victorian Era – particularly the stained-glass windows and the pressed-metal ceiling and cornice. The steeple, which is believed to have been replaced prior to 1905, may have been done out of necessity.

### Comparable Churches

Bristol Congregational Church is Yorkville's only surviving mid-nineteenth century church. There are a few extant churches in Kendall County from that era. These were built in the Greek Revival style and none of them display Gothic Revival features.

#### 1850 - Oswego Methodist Church (Oswego Township)

The Oswego Methodist Church, now the Little White School Museum, was built as a single-story Greek Revival frame church at 72 Polk Street, Oswego. It was used as an elementary school from 1913 to the 1960s but now functions as a museum, archives and social meeting venue. It is a vernacular, 3-bay by 3-bay front gabled rectangle with the typical Greek Revival wide pitched roof, symmetrical fenestration, full pediment, broad frieze band, pilaster corner boards and double door entry with sidelights. A rear addition was added at some unknown date prior to 1910. The windows and belfry were reproduced, based upon historic photographs, during a volunteer-led restoration. It is owned by the Oswegoland Park District and operated by the Oswegoland Heritage Association. A favored icon of the village, it was recently designated a local landmark. Both integrity and condition are very good to excellent.

#### 1850 - Lisbon Congregational Church (Lisbon Township)

The Lisbon Congregational Church at 201 E. Woodman St., Lisbon, is a single-story Greek Revival front-gabled rectangular stone church built in 1850 and closed in 1890. The local school board, a subsequent owner, removed the west wall, added an addition and stripped the architectural elements.

Built in 1850 by John Sidlow...Rough fieldstone walls, one story, wood timpinum [sic] front and rear. 1/3 pitch roof...Church had stall pews of excellent design. Altar and balcony have been removed... Alterations have been made (June 1935) to the interior, the pews, balcony and rostrum having been taken out and will be sawed up for next winter's fuel supply. The steeple has been removed and the old Menelly

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Bell, dated 1855, has been reset in the recently built Community Church across the street.<sup>11</sup>

It is currently being used for storage and its integrity has been compromised.

#### 1857 Millbrook Methodist Church (Fox Township)

The Millbrook United Methodist Church, 8360 Fox River Drive, Millbrook, was built between 1857 and 1858 as a vernacular 3bay by 3-bay front-gabled rectangle with the typical Greek Revival wide pitched roof, symmetrical fenestration, full pediment, broad frieze band and corner boards and double door entry with transom and sidelights. In modern times, probably during the 1960s or 1970s, the rear wall was removed and the building extended at the same height and width of the original, to provide a wood paneled sanctuary with altar, communion rail, pulpit and baptismal font. Another addition, connected to the main church by a hyphen, is set back slightly from the front façade on the south side. Artificial siding covers the exterior walls. The ceiling is covered in acoustical ceiling tile, windows were replaced with patterned glass at some unknown date, and the pews, ceiling fixtures and sanctuary were replaced probably during the 1960s or 1970s. Ghost imprints on the wainscot show evidence of earlier pews nailed to the walls. The basement reveals timber construction. A simple, stock replacement steeple tops the closed belfry. The integrity is fair.

#### 1857 Millington Methodist Church (Fox Township)

The Millington Methodist Church, dedicated in 1858, at 200 Orleans Street is almost identical in design and architectural features to the Millbrook United Methodist Church. It features the Greek Revival form, triangular pediment, transom windows, simple pilasters on the corners. Pews are arranged in two blocks, flanked by a center and side aisles. This too, has an attached addition set back slightly from the front on the right as you face the building. In 1933, the abandoned Lisbon Center Church was moved to Millington and attached perpendicular to the rear of this church to serve the congregation's needs and for use as a community social center. According to the minister, the side windows were taken from a church in Sandwich, Illinois; and the pews from a church in Newark, Illinois. In 1965, the wood steeple was replaced with a stock steeple of fiberglass. The exterior is covered in artificial siding. The integrity is fair.

#### 1868 Reorganized Church of the Latter Day Saints (Little Rock Township)

This church at 304 S. Center Avenue in Plano was built to serve as the headquarters of the Reorganized Church of the Latter Day Saints from 1868 to 1881. It is a single-story, gable-front Greek Revival building constructed of stone. Three windows with rounded keystone arches are spaced across the side elevations and one semi-circular transom window is set above the double door entry. Cut stone quoins decorate the building's corners and windows. It was added to the National Register, No. 90001724, in 1990. It is in excellent condition and has excellent integrity.

### **Kendall County Churches: Historical Background**

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<sup>11</sup> HABS ILL, 47-LISB, 1; (1935) <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/hh/item/il0177/>. Accessed November 15, 2014.

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When Illinois achieved statehood in 1818, its 34,000 or so inhabitants were concentrated in the southern quarter of the state. They were primarily from Kentucky, Tennessee, and the southeastern coastal states. Except for the mining region around Galena and the garrison at Fort Dearborn, Northern Illinois remained virtually devoid of European settlement until the Native Americans were removed shortly after the Black Hawk War of 1832. “By this time the Erie Canal and the Great Lakes, which together formed a great highway to the East and New England, were having their effect. After 1830 northern Illinois was not only settled rapidly; it was settled principally by “Yankees” whose habits, backgrounds, and points of view were often radically different from those of their neighbors to the South.<sup>12</sup> They came in smaller numbers from other locations as well. Pioneer Methodist preachers Jesse Walker and Rev. Royal Bullard were from Virginia and South Carolina respectively, although Bullard was a native of Pepperell, Massachusetts, and was educated at Yale.<sup>13</sup> A contingent of Germans came to the Oswego Prairie in the 1840s and built their first meeting house in 1848. Rev. Hicks, author of *The History of Kendall County (1877)* gives 1847 as the date the Norwegians came in earnest and notes that “. . .now they are numerous enough to maintain two churches and two or three schools.”<sup>14</sup> A much smaller group of Scots settled in the far northwest quarter of the county and built a church in 1856.<sup>15</sup>

Rapid growth led to the formation of nine new counties in Northern Illinois between 1836 and 1841, when Kendall County was created.<sup>16</sup> Many of the Yankees, if not most, were settlers twice, having removed from New England to the wilds of western New York before coming to Illinois. There they had been thoroughly and zealously evangelized during the Second Great Awakening, a period of intense religious revival, the epicenter of which was the Burned-Over District of New York. It was a time when the social reform issues of education, anti-slavery, temperance, and strict observance of the Sabbath were integrated into the Puritan-based religions.<sup>17</sup> Methodist, Baptist, Congregational and Presbyterian missionaries were sent out to minister to the religious needs of the settlers in the “deserted churches” in Illinois but also, to advance the denomination’s presence and influence. In 1852, noted Presbyterian minister and co-founder of the American Temperance Society Dr. Lyman Beecher, told the assembly at the Congregational Convention at Albany, New York, “If you want to get martins about your house, you must put up a martin box. It is meeting-houses, too, that we want, rather than log houses. A village at the West grows up in six months and he who has a house to assemble them in will take the flood.”<sup>18</sup>

Like the Puritans arriving on virgin soil, Kendall County’s pioneer congregations first met wherever space accommodated them, usually in private homes. Methodist preacher Rev. Royal

<sup>12</sup> Angle, 89; Quaife, xvi.

<sup>13</sup> Hicks, Rev. E. W.; website <http://www.litchfieldhistoricalsociety.org/ledger/students/465>.

<sup>14</sup> Hicks, Rev. E. W., 384, 260.

<sup>15</sup> Wheatland Presbyterian Church – 150<sup>th</sup> Year Observance, 1848-1998; Kendall County Historical Society collection

<sup>16</sup> 1836- Will, Kane, McHenry, Ogle, Whiteside, Winnebago; 1837- DeKalb; 1839 – DuPage, Lake; 1841 – Kendall, Grundy.

<sup>17</sup> Cross, 5-11; Muelder, 9.

<sup>18</sup> Congregational Convention, Albany, NY, 65-66.

<https://archive.org/stream/americancongrega04amer#page/338/mode/2up>

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Bullard preached the first sermon heard in the county in the loft of the Hollenback store in Newark.<sup>19</sup> In Oswego in 1850, the Methodists met in the county courthouse.<sup>20</sup> The precinct house in Big Grove Township was used as a union church of sorts. “Preachers of all denominations followed each other, just as they did in most of the early school houses throughout the county. The practice made cosmopolitan hearers. It enabled the community to judge the relative merits of preachers and distinguishing characteristics of denominations.”<sup>21</sup> With the exception of the Reorganized Church of the Latter Day Saints in Plano, religious groups were initially supplied irregularly by circuit preachers, sometimes of a different denomination.

The county’s first building constructed for religious purposes was built of logs in 1837 in rural Big Grove Township on donated land; neighbors, both members and not, contributed materials and labor.<sup>22</sup> It was about 24’ by 32’ and one story high. The church, which was originally built by Congregationalists from New England and New York, “was used for years ... by all denominations without regard to sect or belief, or the qualifications of the minister.”<sup>23</sup> The following year, the Methodists in Millington built their first church, said to have been a “plain frame building.” Subscribers to the building fund were five church members and other residents of the community, as the building was also used for secular purposes, a practice common to the pioneer churches.<sup>24</sup> Neither of these two buildings has survived. The county’s first frame and timber churches were built in the New England meetinghouse style in 1850 by the Methodists in Oswego and the Baptists at Pavilion.<sup>25</sup> The religious fervor of the Second Great Awakening and the fact that a large immigrant population from New York’s Burned Over District may account for the fact that in 1870, there were twenty-nine active churches in Kendall County, a ratio of 1 for every 427 persons.<sup>26</sup> Of those twenty-nine churches, six survive.

#### History of the Bristol Congregational Church

On October, 13, 1834, a wagon carrying the David Johnson and James Gillam families arrived in what is now Kendall County from Chautauqua County, New York.<sup>27</sup> The land, as far as they could see was high-grass prairie, punctuated here and there with stands of timber. Mrs. Johnson, the first woman of European descent on the Bristol side of the Fox River, would later recall “everything was wild” and “deer and wolves were plenty” and the presence of Indians frightened her. They came upon a cabin at present day Yorkville where the owner, Mr. VanEmon, obliged them with a meal. The following morning, the wagon party trekked another several miles south to attend Sabbath services and reunite with other Chautauqua County expatriates at a fledgling

<sup>19</sup> Hicks, Rev. E. W., 182.

<sup>20</sup> Alvira Walker Shumway letter, February 4, 1850; Little White School Museum archives collection.

<sup>21</sup> Hicks, Rev. E. W., 182.

<sup>22</sup> Hicks, Rev. E. W., 140-141

<sup>23</sup> *A History of Fern Dell School; A Window to the Past School- Four Walls With Tomorrow Inside*; Fern Dell Historic Association, Newark, IL., 1992.

<sup>24</sup> Rasmusen, p. 1-5.

<sup>25</sup> Hicks, Rev. E. W., pp. 141, 144; Oswegoland Heritage Association archives.

<sup>26</sup> Church locations appear on Warner, Higgins & Beers’ *1870 Atlas of Kendall County, IL*; 1870 population number in 1870 is from Fisher’s *Biographical Directory of the Voters and Tax-payers of Kendall County, Illinois*, p.30.

<sup>27</sup> Lowry letter; Rev. E. W. Hicks incorrectly identified Mrs. Johnson’s husband as Elisha Johnson.



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little settlement the inhabitants called Long Grove (later Pavilion). The next day, they moved into a small cabin owned by Lyman Bristol.<sup>28</sup> The worshippers who met that Sunday were the nucleus of the Pavilion Baptist Church, Bristol Congregational Church and the Bristol Baptist Church.<sup>29</sup> The three congregations would join together on January 18, 1920, to form the Yorkville Federated Church.<sup>30</sup>

The Bristol Congregational Church began as the Congregational Church at Long Grove in either 1835 as the following letter suggests, or 1836, which is the date recorded in history. It was organized in the home of Elisha Johnson by Rev. Samuel Perry, a landowner in Lisbon Township and an 1824 graduate of Yale University.<sup>31</sup> The founding members were: Elisha Johnson and his wife Philena and daughter Sally, Justus Bristol and his daughter Hester and sons Lyman and George, and James W. Gillam and wife Helen.<sup>32</sup>

In December of 1836, Elisha Johnson, deacon and trustees of the church in Long Grove --Justus Bristol; James W. Gillam; and John Witherspoon -- applied for financial aid in a letter to the American Home Missionary Society (AHMS):

"The Congregational church in Long Grove respectfully and ardently request aid of your benevolent society to enable her to support the Rev. Herman [Heman] S. Colton to labor stately and constantly amongst us as a minister of the Gospel. Mr. Colton who has recently come amongst us by the invitation of this church is the man of our choice... Our Church was formed about 18 months ago, but has not enjoyed the stated administration of the gospel since that time. Rev. Mr. Baldwin [Theron Baldwin] agent of your society... visited us last June and expressed his conviction to us that ours was a field of sufficient importance to demand the labors of a stated and regular ministry and told us that if we would obtain a minister that the A.H.M.S. would aid us in giving him a full support. We named to him the man who is now with us and Mr. Baldwin has since twice personally encouraged him to become our minister. Our church consists of only nine members but would probably number twenty in a very few weeks if we have a minister to labor amongst us . . . [sic]"<sup>33</sup>

The AHMS responded to this request with the appointment of the twenty-nine-year-old Presbyterian Rev. Heman S. Colton, and a commitment to furnish seven and a half months of his

<sup>28</sup> Johnson, Sylvia B. letter.; Lowry letter

<sup>29</sup> Sylvia Johnson letter; Hicks, Rev. E. W., 142-143; Records of the Yorkville Congregational United Church of Christ, 409 Center Parkway, Yorkville, IL 60560.

<sup>30</sup> Munson, 23.

<sup>31</sup> Hicks, Rev. E. W., 279; *Biographical Notices of Graduates of Yale College*, 132-133; Bureau of Land Management, Land Office Document #2962, patented October 1, 1839, see <http://www.glorerecords.blm.gov/details/patent/default.aspx?accession=IL0760...350&docClass=STA&sid=3vwurx0z.5d2>.

<sup>32</sup> Records of the Yorkville Congregational United Church of Christ, 409 Center Parkway, Yorkville, IL 60560; Hicks, Rev. E. W., p. 279; Munson, p. 3.

<sup>33</sup> Sweet, p. 125, citing A.M.H.S. correspondence.

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salary.<sup>34</sup> The appointment of a Presbyterian minister to a Congregational church was not unusual. In places where preachers of both denominations were under-supplied, they cooperated with each other under a “Plan of Union”. Like many pioneer preachers, Rev. Colton supplemented his pastoral income by farming. He and his wife remained active members of the Bristol Congregational Church for the remainder of their lives.

Rev. Colton and the Johnson and Bristol families were well known to each other through their association with the Bristol Hill Congregational Church in Volney, Oswego County, New York.<sup>35</sup> Enoch Bristol was one of the nine charter members of that church organized in 1812, and Justus Bristol’s woodhouse housed the Bristol Hill congregation until a church edifice was erected. Rev. Colton preached the Bristol Hill dedication sermon and supplied the pulpit through the first half of 1835.<sup>36</sup>

The Long Grove Congregational Church changed its name to the Bristol Congregational Church between 1838 when Lyman Bristol sold his Long Grove claims and 1839 when services were moved into the village school in Bristol.<sup>37</sup> A contemporary later reminisced, “The village of Bristol was named after Lyman Bristol, a very energetic, ambitious worker at that time, who had a contract for a deed from Deacon McClellan for a part of the village plat and some of the farm land. Bristol was not an able financier and failed to comply with the terms of his contract, which was forfeited and part of it assigned to others.”<sup>38</sup>

The nation-wide panic of 1837 left Kendall County settlers struggling to come up with the funds needed to purchase their claims when the public domain lands came up for sale in 1842. Nevertheless, in 1840, the Bristol Congregational Church, with thirty members, was able to purchase a store for its use and in 1843, they built a brick building which was also rented to the village school.<sup>39</sup> By 1852, increased enrollment and an improvement in finances led the congregation to consider building a new church. On February 28, 1854, the Trustees of the “First Congregational Church or Society” purchased for \$50 Lots 5 and 6 in Block twelve of the original Village of Bristol, from William R. and Matilda Yourt of Troy, New York.<sup>40</sup> Each lot measured 80 feet wide, 160 feet deep. The building was constructed on Lot 5 by local builder Menzo W.

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<sup>34</sup> American Home Missionary Society, Eleventh Report, William Osborn, NY, 1837, p. 20.

<sup>35</sup> The Bristol Hill Congregational Church, also known as The First Congregational Church Of Volney, was added to the National Register, #01000675, in 2001 under Criteria C for architecture and Criteria A for its association with the history of the Underground Railroad, abolition and African American life.

<sup>36</sup> Bristol Hill got its name from this same Bristol family. (See Johnson, Crisfield, pp. 229, 232.) and [http://www.townofvolney.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=75:bristol-hill-congregational&catid=51:churches&Itemid=70](http://www.townofvolney.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=75:bristol-hill-congregational&catid=51:churches&Itemid=70) Accessed: April 4, 2014).

<sup>37</sup> No official record of the change has been found but the AHMS report of 1838 lists Long Grove while that in 1839 reports Bristol; Kendall County Deeds Book U, pp. 386-388.

<sup>38</sup> *Kendall County Record*, November 8, 1911. From <http://kendallkin.org/county-history/town-histories/bristol/james-godard.html>

<sup>39</sup> Farren, 166; Munson, 5.

<sup>40</sup> Kendall County Deed Book M, page 448.

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Lane<sup>41</sup> at a cost of \$900. Mr. Lane's aunt was the wife of Rev. Colton, the first minister. Members' subscriptions and pew rents provided \$600 and the remaining \$300 was borrowed from the Congregational Church Building Society. It was said to have been built with hand-hewn oak and walnut beams cut from the woods along the Fox River. Members of the church provided volunteer labor by hauling gravel and installing a hitching post. A dedication ceremony was held the first Wednesday in June, 1855.<sup>42</sup> The 1905 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Yorkville shows two buggy sheds on Lot 5, one extending the entire width of the northern boundary of the lot, another smaller shed located on the western lot line. Both were removed at some unknown date.

The Congregational Convention held in Albany, New York in 1852 appointed a Building Committee to raise \$50,000 in donations to help subsidize church construction in the "destitute churches" of Ohio, Michigan, Wisconsin, Iowa, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri and Minnesota and a Planning Committee to commission architectural drawings suitable for the future churches.<sup>43</sup> The resultant *A Book of Plans for Churches and Parsonages* was published in 1853 with fourteen plans designed by such notable national architects as Richard Upjohn and James Renwick, Jr. Henry Austin of New Haven, Connecticut and his assistant David Russell Brown furnished four of the plans although, the lithograph for Design No. 2, on which the Bristol Congregational Church was built, is credited to Austin only. "It has never been noted that anyone ever erected one of the Austin and Brown churches". (O'Gorman, 103) The text accompanying Design No. 2 read<sup>44</sup>,

This Design is little more than an attempt so to modify a style of church-building very common in our rural parishes as to make it more in accordance with architectural principles and with good taste. The size of the edifice is thirty-nine feet in width and seventy-three in length. The tower is twelve feet square, projects three feet and six inches from the front of the building, and is sixty-seven feet in height. This design has been planned with reference to an enlargement of the original structure without detriment to the proportions of the building. It is supposed to measure, as first built, fifty-four feet in length and to be afterwards enlarged by the addition of nineteen feet, or one section, to its length. In the one case there will be accommodation for two hundred and eighty-five persons, and in the enlarged plan for four hundred and ten. The arrangement of the pews is such, it will be seen, as to leave aisles along the sides of the house as well as in the center; a feature which we have already commended in our preliminary remarks. The singers' gallery is placed over the vestibule, and is approached by stairs as indicated on the plan.

The construction and finish of the interior may be comprehended easily from an inspection of the ground-plan and accompanying section. The walls are designed to be wainscoted to the height of about four feet from the floor.

The outside of the building is designed to be clapboarded, except a part of the front,

<sup>41</sup> "Death of M. W. Lane", Kendall County Record, October 15, 1874.

<sup>42</sup> Munson, 6-7.

<sup>43</sup> Yearbook of the American Congregational Union, (1854), 340-343.

<sup>44</sup> See *Attachments B through E* for drawings.

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which is to be covered with upright sheathing as indicated in the front elevation. Bristol Congregational Church, built and dedicated in 1855, saw membership decline after the Civil War, mostly due to death and Western emigration. It became a constant effort to stay solvent. In 1886, they were forced to request and obtain \$150 in financial assistance from the Home Mission Board. By the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the congregation was reduced to 32 members. Similar difficulties were being experienced by the Bristol Baptist Church which had assumed the members of the Pavilion Baptist Church in 1904. In 1920, the membership of those three churches, merged to form the Yorkville Federated Church, an association that lasted until February 15, 1959 when the church was renamed the Yorkville Congregational Church. “In 1964 the congregation voted to become a member of the United Church of Christ and be named the Yorkville Congregational United Church of Christ. The church which had begun as a Congregational/Presbyterian institution and then added the Baptist influence in 1920, now gained the heritage of the German Reformed, Christian Churches, German Congregational and the German Evangelical.”<sup>45</sup>

In the last decades of the twentieth century, Yorkville had grown in population and the church building was no longer adequate to serve the congregation. After careful consideration, a new church was built at 409 Center Parkway, Yorkville Illinois in the Countryside Subdivision and ownership of the old church was transferred, for the consideration of one dollar, to the Kendall County Historical Society with a right of reversion should the historical society “impair the historical preservation and significance” of the property or, fail to use it for the purposes set forth in the society’s Statement of Purposes in the Articles of Incorporation.<sup>46</sup> It served as the home of the historical society’s collections, archives and programing space until maintenance was considered too great a burden. In 2011, a grass roots organization, the Chapel on the Green, LLC, under the leadership of attorney Fred Dickson, assumed ownership for the purpose of preserving the building. Today, it is actively used as a venue for cultural programs, civic meetings, and weddings.

## Conclusion

Bristol Congregational Church is eligible for listing in the National Register for its display of both Greek Revival and Gothic Revival architecture. Its simple form is also reminiscent of the rural meetinghouses favored by religious denominations who frowned upon decoration and religious iconography. The non-historic alterations -- the two story addition on the rear (which could be removed without harm) and the acoustic tiles and double-doors and entryways in the sanctuary – have not adversely affected the integrity of the church and it has sufficient integrity for listing on the National Register.

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<sup>45</sup> Munson, 42-42.

<sup>46</sup> Kendall County Deeds Book 288, page 53, recorded June 22, 1990.

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**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

\_\_\_\_\_ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested  
\_\_\_\_\_ previously listed in the National Register

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previously determined eligible by the National Register  
 designated a National Historic Landmark  
 recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_  
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_  
 recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

State Historic Preservation Office  
 Other State agency  
 Federal agency  
 Local government  
 University  
 Other  
Name of repository: Kendall County Historical Society

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** \_\_\_\_\_

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**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreeage of Property** Less than one acre

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- |                        |                       |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 41.661696 | Longitude: -88.448684 |
| 2. Latitude:           | Longitude:            |
| 3. Latitude:           | Longitude:            |
| 4. Latitude:           | Longitude:            |

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

That part of Lot 5 lying westerly of a line drawn from a point on the South line of said Lot 5 which is 5.0 feet westerly of the Southeast corner thereof to a point on the North line of said Lot 5 which is 3.0 feet westerly of the corner thereof, in Block 12 of the Original Village of Bristol, Kendall County, Illinois together with an easement for ingress and egress over and across the following described land: the westerly eight feet of Lot 6 in Block 12 and that part



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of Lot 5 lying easterly of a line drawn from a point on the south line of said Lot 5 which is 5.0 feet westerly of the Southeast corner thereof to a point on the North line of said Lot 5 which is 3.0 feet westerly of the Northeast corner thereof, in Block 12 of the Original Village of Bristol, in the United City of Yorkville, Kendall County, Illinois.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary includes the church and the lot historically associated with it.

---

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Stephenie Todd  
organization: \_\_\_\_\_  
street & number: 83 Brock Way  
city or town: Oswego state: IL zip code: 60543  
e-mail: foxrivervalley@aol.com  
telephone: 630 554-2321  
date: May 23, 2016

---

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

**Photographs**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

**Photo Log**

Name of Property: Bristol Congregational Church

Bristol Congregational Church  
Name of Property

Kendall County , Illinois  
County and State

City or Vicinity: Yorkville

County: Kendall County

State: IL

Photographer: Darius Bryjka, 1-7/ Stephenie Todd, 8-9.

Date Photographed: January 2014/ November 2013

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 9. Front and west elevations, camera facing northeast
- 2 of 9. Sanctuary and front of the church, camera facing north
- 3 of 9. Sanctuary and rear of the church, camera facing south
- 4 of 9. Looking into church extension from sanctuary, camera facing northeast
- 5 of 9. Stained glass window in sanctuary, camera facing southwest
- 6 of 9. Pressed tin cornice, camera facing southeast
- 7 of 9. New addition, camera facing west
- 8 of 9. North elevation of church, showing new addition, camera facing southeast
- 9 of 9. Front and east elevation of church, camera facing northwest

**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.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Bristol Congregational Church  
Name of Property

Kendall County , Illinois  
County and State

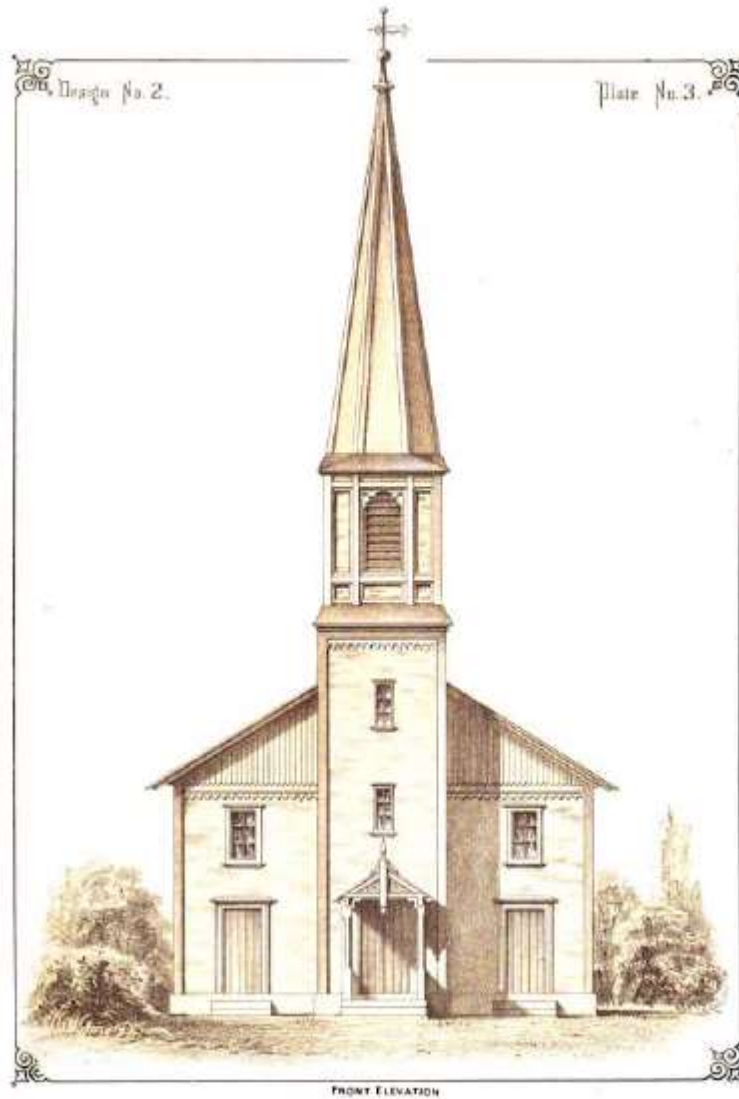


Bristol Congregational Church  
107 West Center Street  
Yorkville, Kendall County, IL

41°38'51.06"N  
88°26'49.52"W

Bristol Congregational Church  
Name of Property

Kendall County, Illinois  
County and State



Design II: Pattern used for the Bristol Congregational Church

From *Rural church architecture, comprising a series of designs for churches, exemplified in plans, elevations, sections, and details. With practical descriptions.* By Upjohn, Renwick, Wheeler, Wells, Austin, Stone, Cleaveland, Backus, Reeve, and Eveleth.

Bristol Congregational Church  
Name of Property

Kendall County, Illinois  
County and State



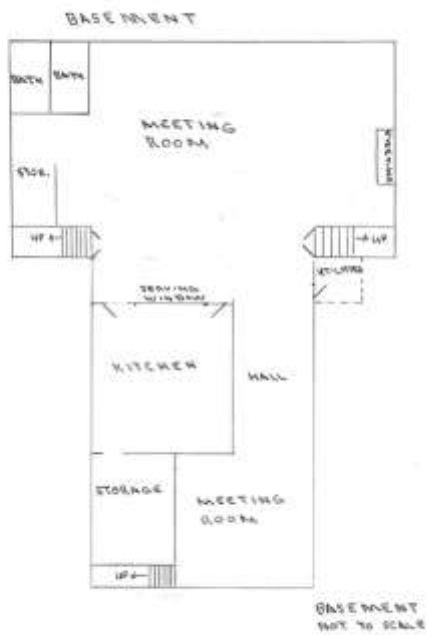
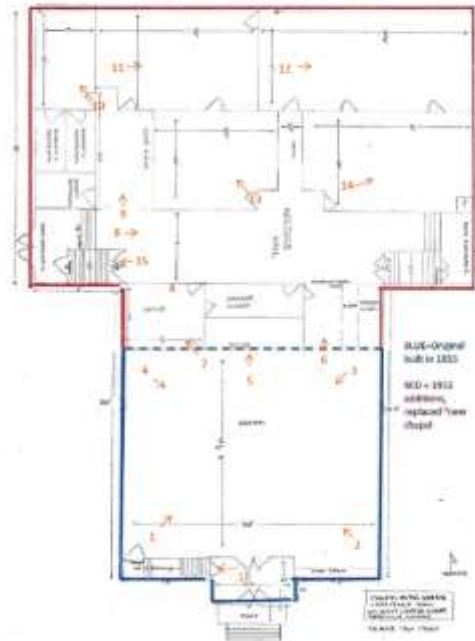
Left: Bristol Congregational Church, ca. 1860. Kendall County Historical Society

Top Right, Bristol Congregational Church, pre-1920. *A Bicentennial History of Kendall County, Illinois.*

Bottom Right: Bristol Congregational Church, 1934. *A Church and Its History: Yorkville Congregational Church*

Bristol Congregational Church  
Name of Property

Kendall County , Illinois  
County and State



Bristol Congregational Church Floor plans  
Top: First Floor  
Bottom: Basement

Bristol Congregational Church  
Name of Property

Kendall County , Illinois  
County and State



West elevation of the Bristol Congregational Church, showing the 1953 extension and addition (outlined in orange).

*Pictures enclosed.*

*KE-H-28*

1. Name of Site:

Common YORKVILLE CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST 143546  
Historic

2. Location:

Street and Number 107 W. CENTER ST.  
City or Town YORKVILLE  
County KENDALL  
Zip Code 60560  
Township  
Range  
Section  
1/4 Section

3. Classification:

Category (check one) Integrity (check one)  
( ) District (X) Building ( ) Altered ( ) Unaltered  
( ) Site ( ) Structure ( ) Moved (X) Original Site

4. Ownership:

(X) Private ( ) Public  
(X)\* Occupied ( ) Unoccupied ( ) Preservation work in progress

Access to Public

(X) Yes ( ) Restricted (X) Unrestricted ( ) No

Present Use (check one or more)

( ) Agricultural ( ) Industrial (X) Religious  
( ) Commercial ( ) Military ( ) Scientific  
( ) Educational ( ) Museum ( ) Transportation  
( ) Entertainment ( ) Park ( ) Other  
( ) Government ( ) Private Residence

5. Ownership of Property:

Owner's Name Yorkville Congregational Church  
Street and Number 107 W Center  
City or Town Yorkville  
State Ill. County Kendall Zip Code 60560  
Phone Number

6. Description:

(X) Excellent ( ) Good ( ) Fair ( ) Deteriorated  
( ) Ruins ( ) Unexposed

Is there a program of preservation underway? ( ) Yes (X) No



7. Historical Themes: (check one or more of the following)

- |   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Archaeological Site        | (Pre-Columbian)          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Archaeological Site        | (Post-Columbian to 1673) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> French Influence           | (1673-1780)              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Illinois Frontier          | (1780-1818)              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Illinois Early             | (1818-1850)              |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Illinois Middle | (1850-1900)              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Illinois Late              | (1900-present)           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Famous People              | (give names & dates)     |

8. Specific Date: 1855

Areas of significance (check one or more of the following)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal (historic)     | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal (pre-historic) | <input type="checkbox"/> Military                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture               | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                          |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture   | <input type="checkbox"/> Political                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Science                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communication             | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation              | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering               | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Industry                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Invention                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify)                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture    |   |

Brief statement of significance: (include all names and dates)

Use additional sheets if necessary. OLDEST REMAINING CHURCH BUILDING IN COUNTY

Enclosed - copy of special section Kendall Co Record May 23, 1974.  
9. Form prepared by: also current brochure of Yorkville Congregational Church  
also 2 black + white gloss photographs 1 - interior 1 - exterior

Name and Title: Alice H. Dickson Date: April 16 - 1980

Organization: Kendall Co Historical Society Phone: 553-7811

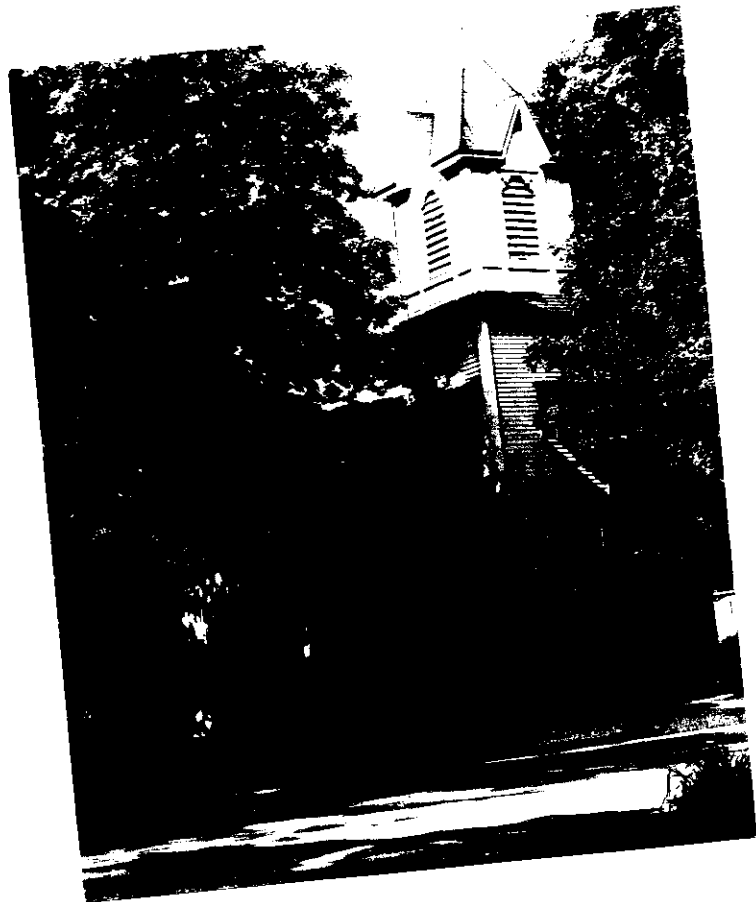
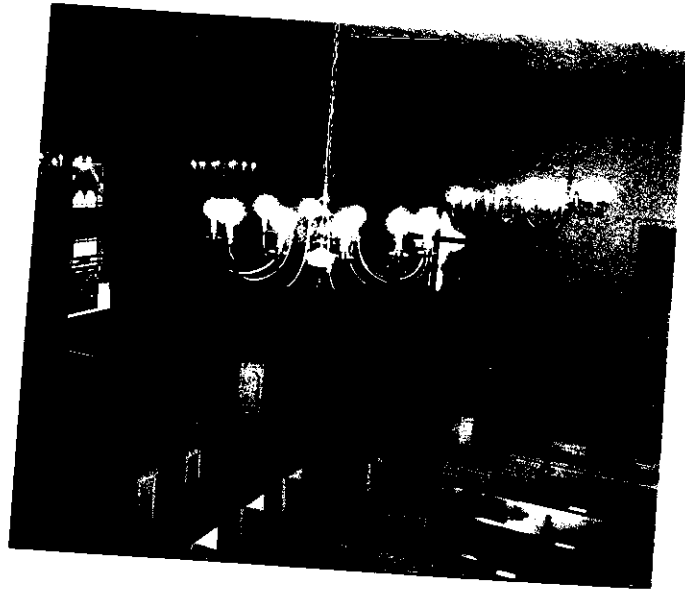
Street and Number: P.O. Box 123

City or Town: Yorkville, Ill. County: Kendall Zip Code: 60560

During the course of the Survey we often find it necessary to search for a particular site. When filling out the Survey form, please list according to the following example, published references to the site for which forms are being completed. If a bibliography can be compiled, it will greatly deduct from the Survey's task.

Bibliography

Robertson, Robert, Of Whales and Men. New York, Alfred K. Knopf, Inc., 1954.



— —

CONDITIONS GOVERNING USE

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Illinois Historic Landmarks Survey  
P. O. Box 986  
Carbondale, Illinois 62901

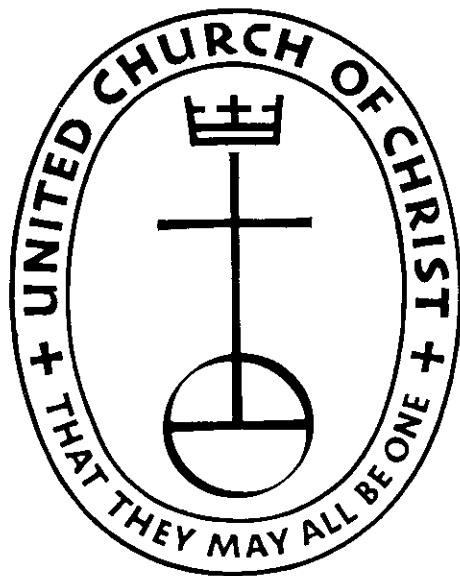
**WAITING TO BE OF SERVICE**  
A staff of ordained ministers, dedicated lay  
persons and a host of friendly people.

Church Office: 553-7308  
Minister's Home: 553-7045  
Minister of Pastoral Care: 553-0022

**YORKVILLE  
CONGREGATIONAL**

**United Church of Christ**

A Member of the  
Northern Association  
Illinois Conference



A Growing Church  
In An  
Expanding Community

**W E L C O M E**

Corner of  
West Center and Church Streets  
Yorkville, Illinois  
553-7308

-- HISTORY --

The Yorkville Congregational Church dates back to 1834 when several families began a Sunday School in Pavilion. Soon thereafter, a Baptist Church was organized. In November of 1834 a Baptist Church was organized in Bristol (north side of Yorkville), followed by the founding of the Yorkville Congregational Church in 1836.

Over the years, these three churches served their memberships and communities. In 1920 they combined to form the Yorkville Federated Church, until 1959, when they solely affiliated themselves with the Illinois Conference of the Congregational Christian Churches. In 1964 the congregation voted to become a part of the United Church of Christ.

Mindful of their rich heritage and tradition, the congregation retains the name of "The Yorkville Congregational Church." The sanctuary dates back to 1855, with Friendship House being built in 1953. The congregation freely shares its buildings with the Yorkville area as a community building.

The church is community based and oriented. It draws its membership from a wide range of Christian denominations. It seeks fellowship with all who believe that Jesus is Lord. We are ecumenical in spirit and worldwide in our outreach.

**MISSION AND OUTREACH**

Yorkville Congregational Church is rooted in the essentials of the Christian Gospel. It seeks to minister in every way possible to the needs of its members, the call of the community for support and ministry and is ever mindful of the larger world of which the church is a part.

-- SERVICES --

**WORSHIP: Each Sunday**

8:15 a.m.

10:45 a.m. (nursery available)

9:30 a.m. Combined service, months of July-August (no Church School)

Special recognition of Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, Pentecost.

**CHRISTIAN EDUCATION:**

9:30 a.m. Church School (ages two through adult)

Daily Vacation Bible School

Adult seminars, spring and fall

Mid-winter Bible study groups

**FELLOWSHIP GROUPS:**

Adult Fellowship

Young Adult Fellowship

Junior High Pilgrim Fellowship

Senior High Pilgrim Fellowship

Women's Fellowship

Gracia Circle, Senior Citizens

Shalom Circle, mission study

Joy Circle

**CARING FELLOWSHIP:**

Laity involved in pastoral ministry to the community, to personal growth, to shut-ins in hospitals, nursing-retirement homes, private homes and involved in community outreach.

**MISSION OUTREACH:**

Fox Valley Older Adult Services

Wayside Cross Rescue Mission

Acorn Yokefellow Center

Church World Service

One Great Hour of Sharing CROP

Elmhurst College

Theological Education in UCC

Christian World Missions

*Now in Our 111th Year!*

Kendall County

**RECORD**

Special  
Section

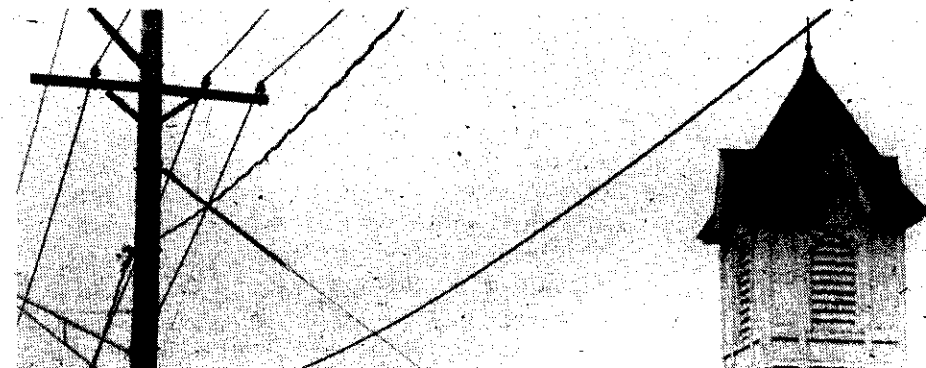
Thursday, May 23, 1974

# A History of the Yorkville Congregational Church 1834-1974

By *LAWRENCE J. REZASH*

## Brief Historical Setting

The first Europeans to explore the prairie land of northern Illinois were



Jesuit mission to the Indians, and also to discover the commercial advantages of fur trapping. This whole area was a part of New France.

During the eighteenth and early nineteenth century northern Illinois was basically a hunting grounds for trappers, with trading posts scattered about. There was a huge profit in furs. No permanent settlements were established.

Inasmuch as England won the French and Indian War, this region was given to England by the Treaty of Paris in 1763. After the Revolutionary War the land was given to the United States. Unlike the French the Americans were interested in permanent settlements so that in 1818 Illinois was admitted as one of the states of the Union. The first white child born in Kendall County was born in December 1831.

The great westward movement from 1830 to 1840 brought thousands of people from the East, particularly New England, into northern Illinois. Two events influenced this great tide of immigration: 1) the completing of the Erie Canal in 1825, and 2) the coming of steam navigation on the Great Lakes.

Trouble with the Indians prevented an immediate settlement in northern Illinois. The Pottawatomies had camps where Aurora and Oswego are now located. In 1831 the Pottawatomies were moved to reservations across the Mississippi, but in 1832 Black Hawk and his tribesmen returned to re-possess their ancestral lands. The crucial Battle of Bad Axe Rivers was won by the United States Army, and thereafter the Indians were no longer a factor in northern Illinois history.

The settlement of Kendall County began in earnest in 1833. The early settlers took their land by pre-emption and after 1839 were permitted to buy it at one dollar and twenty-five cents an acre at public auction. Claim jumping



The Yorkville Congregational Church and Friendship House as it is today

was a common feature of these pioneer days. The combination of cheap land, hard work, unlimited eastern markets, and inexpensive transportation gave many inhabitants an opportunity to accumulate wealth and land for the first time in their lives.

The first settlers of Yorkville were Earl Adams and Ebenezer Morgan, who settled here in 1833, and built a log cabin on "court house hill." The village of Yorkville was laid out and organized in 1836, making it one of the oldest established communities in the state. Across the river, on its north side, the village of Bristol was being laid out. Bristol was founded by two Bristol brothers, Lyman and Burr. Lyman gave property to be used as a village square; consequently, the developing village was called Bristol.

Kendall County was organized in 1841 out of the existing counties of Kane and LaSalle. Six townships were taken from LaSalle and three townships were taken from Kane by the authority of the State Legislature, making it the County of Orange (named after a similar county in

New York). Before the final reading the authorizing legislation was amended to change the name to Kendall, after the man who was Postmaster General in President Andrew Jackson's cabinet. Yorkville was made the county seat.

Yorkville was basically a small farm community, meeting the necessities of the farm. As a result there were merchandising stores, two banks, blacksmith shops, saloons, shoestore, a bakery, post offices, a hotel, farm equipment store, a restaurant, a harness and wagon shop, a doctor and churches.

## Church Development

The Yorkville Congregational United Church of Christ is the product of three historic churches in Kendall County. And we must devote some attention to their individual histories.

### PAVILION BAPTIST CHURCH

In the spring of 1834 the families of Almon Ives, William Harris, the Ament brothers, and John Matlock were settled