

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK NOMINATION

NPS Form 10-900

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

FIRST REFORMED PROTESTANT DUTCH CHURCH OF KINGSTON

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United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. NAME OF PROPERTY

Historic Name: First Reformed Protestant Dutch Church of Kingston

Other Name/Site Number: Dutch Reformed Church
Old Dutch Church

2. LOCATION

Street & Number: 272 Wall Street

Not for publication:

City/Town: City of Kingston

Vicinity:

State: New York County: Ulster Code: 111

Zip Code: 12401

3. CLASSIFICATION

Ownership of Property

Category of Property

Private: X

Building(s): X

Public-Local: ___

District: ___

Public-State: ___

Site: ___

Public-Federal: ___

Structure: ___

Object: ___

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing

Noncontributing

1

___ buildings

___ sites

___ structures

___ objects

1

___ Total

Number of Contributing Resources Previously Listed in the National Register: 1

Name of Related Multiple Property Listing: N/A

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4. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this ____ nomination ____ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ____ meets ____ does not meet the National Register Criteria.

Signature of Certifying Official

Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

In my opinion, the property ____ meets ____ does not meet the National Register criteria.

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
- Determined eligible for the National Register
- Determined not eligible for the National Register
- Removed from the National Register
- Other (explain): _____

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

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6. FUNCTION OR USE

Historic: RELIGION

Sub: Religious facility

Current: RELIGION

Sub: Religious facility

7. DESCRIPTION

ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION: Mid-nineteenth century: Renaissance Revival

MATERIALS:

Foundation: Stone

Walls: Stone

Roof: Metal

Other: Glass

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Summary

Completed in 1852, the Renaissance Revival First Reformed Protestant Dutch Church of Kingston, New York, is a nationally significant religious building by noted architect Minard Lafever that encapsulates both the maturation of his own career and design abilities, and a key moment in nineteenth-century architectural expression in the United States. Lafever's contribution to antebellum architecture is considerable, in particular church architecture and, more generally, the dissemination of the Greek Revival form through his pattern book publications. He attained visibility in New York City during the 1830s as a talented group of architectural practitioners were exploiting a period of marked cultural activity, economic prosperity, and geographic expansion, initiated by the completion of the Erie Canal and overall drift of westward settlement.¹ Lafever stood among this prominent group of early architectural professionals at a time when they began convening to collaborate on the establishment of standards in an effort to distinguish themselves from builders.²

In its early stages, Lafever's career was characterized by a facility, and later, a command of the various eclectic styles that defined the age architecturally and contributed to a massive spread of high-style architectural ideas and finished commissions in cities, towns, and small communities well beyond the Atlantic seaboard. Jacob Landy, Lafever's biographer, records that he was "one of the pioneer eclectics in New York" and headed an "extensive architectural practice [that] included works in the various revival styles...which prevailed in the pre-Civil War period."³ His mastery of composition and architectural ornament has led architectural historian Talbot Hamlin to offer Lafever as "perhaps the greatest designer of architectural ornament of his time in America."⁴ His achievements in creating sophisticated and highly original architectural and decorative programs have been recognized through the National Historic Landmark (NHL) designation of Sailors' Snug Harbor on Staten Island (Greek Revival; 1831-33 and later; NHL, 1976); First Presbyterian Church (Old Whaler's Church) in Sag Harbor, New York (Egyptian and Greek revivals; 1843-44; NHL, 1994); and the Church of St. Ann and the Holy Trinity in Brooklyn Heights (Gothic Revival, 1844-47; NHL, 1987).

The First Reformed Protestant Dutch Church is deserving of recognition within the larger body of Lafever's work as a mature handling of Renaissance Revival forms and details, an eclectic mode that he helped to pioneer in America—particularly its religious applications. His Renaissance Revival ecclesiastical work influenced other architects working in this manner as evidenced by buildings erected in the Midwest; additionally, he included designs in this style in his *Architectural Instructor* published posthumously in 1856.⁵ The First Reformed Church in Kingston retains a high degree of integrity and fully demonstrates Lafever's skill in devising architectural decoration described in this building by renowned nineteenth-century architect Calvert Vaux as "ideally perfect," as well as his important mark in contemporary architectural eclecticism in the United States. The church is not just Lafever's sole surviving, fully intact Renaissance Revival design—its physical

¹ For more on the civic and commercial development of "eastern frontier" cities, see: Diane Shaw, *City Building on the Eastern Frontier: Sorting the New Nineteenth-Century City* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004).

² The American Institution of Architects, a short-lived organization, was founded in 1836. See: Talbot Hamlin, *Greek Revival Architecture in America; Being an Account of Important Trends in American Architecture and American life prior to the War Between the States* (New York: Dover, 1944, repr. 1964), 60.

³ Jacob Landy, "Lafever, Minard," *Macmillan Encyclopedia of Architects*, vol. 2, ed. Adolf K. Placzek (New York: Free Press, 1982), 598. Landy's biographical entry was assuredly distilled and refined from his earlier publication *The Architecture of Minard Lafever* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970). This book remains the principal authority on Lafever and his career.

⁴ Hamlin, *Greek Revival*, 147.

⁵ Landy, *Architecture of Minard Lafever*, 190-91. Landy cited two examples, the First Congregational Church of Detroit, Michigan, by Albert Jordan, 1854; and the First Congregational Church of Beloit, Wisconsin, by Lucas Bradley, ca. 1856. Neither building is extant. See plates XCVIII and XCIX in Minard Lafever, *The Architectural Instructor* (New York, 1856).

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integrity is readily comparable to the already designated First Presbyterian Church, Sag Harbor, and St. Ann and Holy Trinity, Brooklyn Heights.

Describe Present and Historic Physical Appearance.**Location and Setting**

The First Reformed Protestant Dutch Church is located within the confines of the congregation's historic churchyard and cemetery in Kingston, a small city situated in northeastern Ulster County, New York, west of the Hudson River and north of the Rondout Creek. The nominated property is contained within and is a contributing component of the Kingston Stockade Historic District, which was nominated at the state level of significance and listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1975. This district contains Kingston's earliest streets and many examples of regional vernacular building practices, most notably in its collection of dwellings of rough limestone construction exhibiting elements of pre-Revolutionary architectural modes. The boundaries of the nominated parcel are formed on the west by Wall Street; on the south by Main Street; to the east by Fair Street; and to the north by adjacent development. This L-shaped religious building of masonry construction consists of a sanctuary with an attached, multi-stage bell tower carrying a spire that rises 225 feet, and an attached two-story lecture hall and annex. The tower is located on the west-facing Wall Street elevation, while the primary entrance to the sanctuary is located on the south-facing Main Street elevation. The body of the church is oriented on a roughly north-south axis and the lecture hall and annex on an east-west axis. Deciduous and coniferous trees and ornamental shrubbery populate the nominated parcel, which is partially enclosed by an iron fence with cut stone and iron posts. A walkway of bluestone flagging leads from the sidewalk to the primary entrance and along both sides of the building; a similar walk leads from Wall Street to the tower entrance. Standing immediately to the south across Main Street is the building the current church was erected to replace, which since 1869 has served as St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church, though subsequently altered from its original Greek Revival-style appearance.

Surrounding the First Reformed Church is the church burial ground, the earliest recorded interments of which date to the late seventeenth century. The burial ground contains approximately 300 headstones, the majority of which are pre-nineteenth century in age with many excellent representations of the stone-cutters craft. Among the more prominent people interred in this cemetery are George Clinton, first Governor of New York and former Vice President under Thomas Jefferson, and James Madison, whose remains were transferred to Kingston from Washington, D.C., with great fanfare in 1908. Clinton's grave is marked by a neoclassical obelisk situated to the southwest of the Main Street entrance to the church. Also of note is the monument "Patriotism" that congregation member George Sharpe commissioned to memorialize the 120th Infantry Regiment, New York Volunteers, a regiment that fought under his command during the Civil War; it is located near the southeast boundary of the property. A variety of nineteenth- and twentieth-century buildings contribute to the historic setting and architectural context, including the Federal-period John Sudam house (now the Fred J. Johnston Museum) located on the northwest corner of Main and Wall Streets, a Greek Revival-style bank on the northeast corner of Fair and Main Streets, and the early-nineteenth century Ulster County Courthouse immediately to the north on Wall Street.

Overview

The First Reformed Protestant Dutch Church of Kingston is a masonry building with load-bearing walls of local bluestone, laid up in random range ashlar with limestone dressings. The picturesque, asymmetrical building is a single unit combining a lofty sanctuary with offset bell tower and attached lecture hall. In 1882-83, the lecture hall was expanded northward under the direction of architect J. A. Wood. The lecture hall portion of the building was again enlarged in 1951 with a two-story annex containing classrooms and a kitchen positioned to the east of the lecture hall. The round-headed windows are generously scaled along the east and west lateral

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elevations of the sanctuary; these openings are fitted with their original geometric-patterned colored glass, providing filtered natural light to the interior. Modillioned cornices enliven the church's roofline. The roof of the sanctuary is clad with raised-seam metal sheathing supported by a system of scissor-type trusses, though earlier in its history the roof had been clad with slate shingles. The interior consists of a shallowly excavated and unfinished basement—necessitated by the construction of the church within the burial ground—a vestibule or narthex, the sanctuary, and the attached lecture hall and annex; the tower contains a vestibule at ground level, a second floor office area, and the bell tower and steeple above. The sanctuary is richly detailed with a complex groin-vaulted ceiling of suspended plaster construction. The physical integrity of the original Lafever design is particularly high, notwithstanding minor renovations and refurbishments typical of churches constructed during the nineteenth century; it continues to effectively convey Lafever's original design intent for the commission. Only the large Tiffany stained glass memorial window forming a backdrop for the liturgical area deviates from the mid-nineteenth-century decorative scheme as a replacement for the original tinted glass.

Exterior

The First Reformed Protestant Dutch Church maintains a considerable physical presence in this area of Kingston, distinguished by a prominent location and setting, its scale, and the effect of the bluestone walls. The church's exterior walls are formed of dressed and tooled random-range bluestone ashlar laid up in lime-based mortar with subsequent spot repointing, the stone having acquired a mellow patina from a century and a half of weathering. This locally quarried bluestone exhibits earth-toned gray, blue, tan, and olive hues, and is rich in texture. Cut limestone window and door dressings, belt courses, water table, and molded pier bases display a whitish-gray hue helping to accentuate the bluestone, however this organically rich limestone has significantly deteriorated in some areas due to weathering. A modillioned cornice of wood, painted an off-white hue, provides a sense of rhythm to the roofline of the sanctuary and two stages of the tower. The high spire rises impressively from the Wall Street elevation tapering quickly in attenuated fashion from its base.

The Main Street elevation conveys a strong Palladian feeling, its gabled pavilion projecting from the main mass of the church to create the effect of superimposed gables not unlike Palladio's San Giorgio Maggiore in Venice (ca. 1566). The corners of the pavilion and those of the body of the church are battered and treated as large, slightly projecting buttress-like piers—more suggestive of Egyptian architecture than Renaissance sources—and lend the church a sense of massiveness. The primary entrance is centered in this projecting pavilion, and is slightly recessed from the plane of the façade. Double leaf four-paneled wood doors access the vestibule or narthex, the threshold being approached from two bluestone steps which are flanked by curved iron railings. A half-round fanlight with curvilinear tracery surmounts these paired doors, while a molded cut-limestone surround encases the doorway treatment, terminated at its apex by a large keystone. A large light fixture has been placed above this entrance, fitted into the keystone. Directly above this entrance is a similarly scaled opening fitted with a glazed Palladian motif; it rests on a limestone belt course terminated on either side by the projecting piers. The corner piers of the pavilion are delineated at their bottom by heavily molded limestone bases and at their top by a limestone belt course that forms a continuation of the cornice from the body of the church. Both of these piers have received large bronze plaques commemorating important events in the history of the church; two brownstone markers likewise are fitted in the wall between these piers and the central door.

Flanking the center pavilion on either side—and recessed approximately five feet from the south wall of the pavilion—are two additional doors at first story level of the south elevation, one on each side, and two windows, similarly one on each side, the latter corresponding with the gallery level. These openings have a narrower, taller profile than those of the pavilion but are similarly recessed and spanned by molded limestone arches. The doors at ground story level are of a four-paneled type and lead into stair halls accessing the galleries. The treatment of the corner piers are identical to that of the pavilion though here the piers are terminated by a belt course corresponding with the spring point of the upper window arches. Small cut

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limestone brackets adorn the bottom of the belt courses and the window sills on this as well as the other elevations.

The west flank of the church that forms the Wall Street elevation is punctuated by five large round-arched windows that light the interior of the sanctuary, and at the extreme northern end, a projecting gabled pavilion that engages the body of the church at a right angle. Molded cut limestone casings define these openings as do bracketed sills. Intersecting the center portion of this pavilion and the pitched roof of the body of the church is the bell tower, consisting of a three-story lower stage; two intermediate stages including a clock stage; and a tall spire that tapers rapidly as it rises upward to its apex. The first three stories of the four-sided bell tower were built of bluestone with some interior brick masonry work, and taper upwards following the battered piers at the tower's northwest and southwest corners. The remainder of the tower, including two additional stages and the spire, are of frame construction; these two uppermost stages are octagonal in profile while the spire is conical in shape. The masonry portion of the tower is terminated by a segmental curved, modillioned wood cornice, the curved section echoing the arched head of the louvered bell-stage opening directly below. Above this cornice there is a slight setback before the next stage, a clock stage, begins, and above that a second stage with louvered openings and moldings relating it to the lower treatments, and then the steeple itself. Rising to a thin, narrow terminus, the steeple springs from an octagonal base located above a second modillioned, segmental-arched cornice. The steeple has prominent ribs defining its eight facets and is covered with diamond-shaped wood shingles. From the cornice crowning the third story of the tower upwards, the entire treatment is painted a uniform off-white hue.

An entrance treatment similar to the general lines of that on the south-facing Main Street elevation is centered within the tower at ground story level on the Wall Street elevation—though in this instance the entrance is fitted with a single door, with the door panels having been subsequently glazed—and above it is a slender round-arched window. The third story, consisting of the belfry stage, has round-arched openings fitted with wood louvers punctuating all four sides of the tower. Four narrow windows, two to either side of the tower mass, punctuate the first and second stories of the projecting pavilion and are recessed from the plane of the tower's west wall. Battered piers form the corners of the projecting pavilion as they do on the Main Street elevation and the corners of the bell tower. The molded limestone arches that crown the windows at the second story level of the pavilion spring from a belt course that terminates the corner piers. The second story window of the tower rests on a belt course as does the louvered third story opening.

To the immediate north of the tower entrance is the chapel addition added to the building in 1882-83. This addition was successfully integrated into the Lafever design, the exterior of this hipped-roof unit harmonizing with the earlier building by virtue of its random-range bluestone ashlar walls, fenestration, and a modillioned wood cornice that continues the rhythm of the earlier cornice. The roof of this addition is clad with slate shingles. Fenestration on the west elevation consists of two-round arched windows with limestone dressings. At the time of this 1880s building campaign, two carved stones from the congregation's 1752 building were fitted into the wall between the window bays. In 1951, the Bethany Annex was constructed adjacent to the north and east sides of this chapel, and it too was built of bluestone. The annex is expressed on the west elevation by a flat-roofed one-story section that abuts the west and north wall of the Wood-designed chapel, and is pierced by a single bay, an entrance fitted with a three-paneled door.

The east elevation is defined by five round-arched windows following the dimensions and treatments of those on the opposite west elevation. Punctuating the roof and aligned with these windows on both the east and west elevations are skylights, which provide natural light to a mock clerestory level on the interior; these are currently covered by modern plastic covers that detract from the exterior effect. A large engaged buttress, added in 1882-83 due to the movement of the east wall, is situated between the second and third bays; it was

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designed to follow the lines of the corner piers and in that regard was effective, and represents the first formal recognition of structural issues with the building. Beyond the northernmost window of the five lighting the worship space, is the three-bay wide gabled pavilion. Fenestration on the pavilion consists of two slender round arched windows roughly matching the height of the five worship space windows, and a smaller window lighting a second floor room. There is likewise an eight-paneled door spanned by a round arch with limestone dressing situated where the gabled pavilion projects from the remainder of the elevation. To the west, above the roofline, rises the bell tower and spire, while extending eastward from the north side of this elevation is the two-story Bethany Annex, a low-slung building the south elevation of which is punctuated by symmetrically placed double-hung windows.

The north elevation of the lecture hall and annex is essentially shielded from view by virtue of the adjacent properties.

Interior

The rectangular-shaped vestibule or narthex is entered via the main central entrance on the Main Street elevation. From it are accessed the balconies and choir loft via stairs located in square-shaped anterooms along the east and west walls, while centered against the north wall is the door leading into the sanctuary which enters this space below the choir loft. Three round-arched doors lead into the sanctuary; a central entrance corresponding with the center aisle, and two side entrances that access outer aisles located beneath the galleries, these entrances opening up from the anterooms. Round-arched doors fitted with eight-paneled doors, lead from the upper landing of the anteroom stairs north into the galleries, while a second set of doors access the choir loft. Similar doors are located on the opposite, north end, of the gallery. Within the vestibule are displayed items of historical interest to the church, among them the first communicants tablet and a letter to the congregation written by George Washington.

The sanctuary has a vertical aspect to its dimensions not in keeping with meetinghouse models, an effect accentuated by the mock clerestory level. The space is currently painted an off-white hue, in part accented by the colored glass windows, gilding, red carpeting, and the mahogany used to trim the pews. The sanctuary is spanned by a series of groin vaults of suspended plaster on lath construction, the vaults corresponding with the spacing of the window bays. These simulated vaults spring from decorative corbels aligned above the Corinthian columns which support lateral arcading on the east and west sides of the sanctuary, and have their terminus in alternating diamond and circular-shaped bosses. The arcading in turn defines the side aisles and partially encloses the balcony which also has groin-vaults springing from corbels aligned on the east and west walls centered between the window openings. The large round-arched windows—which are by necessity bisected by the galleries—in concert with smaller windows set within a simulated clerestory level lighted by skylights, provide natural lighting that is filtered by the original colored glass panes. In the gallery the upper sections of the window openings are fitted with a stair-rail like enclosure with turned balusters and handrail.

Lining the sanctuary walls between the windows, both at and below gallery level, are period wall sconces of plaster construction that have been fitted with electric lighting; artificial lighting is also provided by fixtures placed in housings beneath the clerestory windows. Walls are of plaster on sawn lath above beaded wainscoting terminated by a molded chair rail. Floors are carpeted. For the Kingston design, Lafever employed fluted Corinthian pilasters, columns, and a vaulted ceiling of greater complexity than that used earlier for Holy Apostles, the gallery fronts in this instance employing blind balustrades, the engaged balusters displaying complexly turned profiles. The larger fluted columns that support the lateral arcades are crafted from wood with beautifully crafted wood Corinthian capitals that have been painted a gray hue with gilding; within the hollow interior of the columns are wood members that help support the roof framing and transmit the

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roof loads downward. These columns rest on bases, or plinths, that are situated within the two inner ranks of pews immediately adjacent to the side aisles.

Forming the visual focal point of the sanctuary is the rear wall behind the pulpit, where a large modified Palladian motif is situated. In January 1892, a new memorial stained glass window executed by the Tiffany Glass Company was installed here—replacing an earlier painted glass window—lighted by artificial light from behind, first by gas and later by electricity. The window depicts the “Presentation in the Temple” and is crafted from Favre glass. Two pairs of fluted Corinthian pilasters, from which concentric blind arches spring, provide a frame for the Palladian motif. The moldings of the three windows that form the tripartite arrangement have been gilded, as has that framing the concentric arch that unifies the composition—which is further embellished by six large gilded rosettes—as well as the three paneled aprons below the windows. Within these paneled aprons is a motif repeated below on the backdrop’s base and once again on the pulpit, that being a rectangular-shaped lozenge, set upright, with rounded ends. The liturgical center, located against the north wall below the Palladian motif, consists of a large pulpit or reading desk set on a slightly raised dais, with an altar in front of it and a baptismal font set off to the side. The pulpit is accessed by two sets of flanking stairs that lead to an elevated platform. It is substantial in its proportioning, its central section treated as a three-part composition with a base, body and cornice, the front section being curved and terminated by antae-like piers. On the front, the lozenge motif is repeated as that used on the wall behind, and the pulpit is further embellished with neo-classical foliate motifs that harmonize with the remaining architectural program with some of these motifs being gilded.

Opposite the liturgical area on the south wall, is a choir loft, behind which rises a large pipe organ. The Moller pipe organ was built in 1955, however the front row of pipes are not functional but instead remain from the original Henry Erben organ. The organ case is divided into three distinct sections, the central one mimicking the modified Palladian motif of the north wall, the three openings being framed by fluted Corinthian pilasters with gilded capitals and terminated by a large broken pediment of the “swan’s neck” type. A second pair of pilasters frames the outside of the case while the front of the loft is embellished by a blind balustrade like the side galleries. Pews are of the boxed type with hinged doors and scrolled mahogany armrests that terminate in a cylinder shaped newel and are aligned in two ranks between the central and outer aisles; there are additionally pews below and within the gallery, those below facing forward (with the exception of two rows at the front), and those in the gallery facing toward the opposite wall. Pews are fitted with cushions. Memorial plaques of both marble and metal are fitted along the side walls beneath the gallery. To the right of the pulpit, facing north, is a bronze statue “The Praying Angel,” which was crafted by the German sculptor Carl Burbel and which was awarded a first premium at the 1893 Chicago’s World Fair; to the left of the pulpit is a second bronze statue “The Flying Angel,” the work of Italian sculptor Oranza Maldarelli and dating to 1931. Also at the front of the sanctuary, to the right of the pulpit, is the Ministers Plaque, which lists the names and dates of twenty-two domines who have served this congregation.

A door at the northwest corner of the sanctuary leads into the tower vestibule, which itself opens up eastward into the lecture hall. This is a large open space, with a stage placed against the north wall and a balcony aligning the south wall. Leading eastward from the east wall of this area is a hallway that provides access to the annex, with its kitchen, classrooms, and bathroom.

Legacy and Integrity

Minard Lafever’s First Reformed Protestant Dutch Church in Kingston, New York, continues to serve the worship needs of its nearly 350-year-old congregation. Since its completion in 1852, the sanctuary portion of the building has seen relatively little change. The spire is an 1861 replacement for the original, which was

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twenty-two feet taller and toppled in a December 1853 storm.⁶ The spire pierced the roof and ceiling of the church and the building remained closed until May 1854.⁷

Although not nearly as dramatic as the spire collapse, structural problems in the sanctuary's east wall have proven more problematic over time. Issues with this wall were already manifest by July 1874 when the State Engineer examined it, but it appears that no action was taken to remedy the situation until the early 1880s.⁸ "The rebuilding or security of the east wall," according to an 1883 building committee report, was one of two most commonly voiced concerns by members of the congregation (the other being the repair of the sanctuary's plaster ceiling).⁹ The report also acknowledged that Lafever—"the accomplished architect"—had designed the building to carry a tin roof, but against his advice, the building committee permitted the substitution of this specified roof with slate increasing the load on the framing by approximately fifty tons.¹⁰ Along with the slate, the committee recognized the use of shallow foundation footings because of burials and trauma caused by the falling steeple, as contributing to the deflection in the east wall. At this time, the congregation replaced the existing slate roof with "a new tin standing groove roof," and added an engaged masonry buttress, making the east wall, in the words of the committee, "never so strong as it is now."¹¹

Over the past few years movement has been observed again at interior surfaces near and adjacent to the east wall, and as a precautionary measure a steel bracing system was installed to stabilize a twenty foot section of the wall's exterior. The wall was preliminarily surveyed and found to be approximately thirteen inches out of plumb between the line of grade and the top of the thirty-two foot tall masonry wall; however, it is not entirely clear that a specific event, such as the toppling of the original steeple, or a combination of factors such as the substitution of slate for metal roofing or building the church over existing burial grounds, caused this wall's relatively isolated but extraordinary settlement. As part of the congregation's new initiative of analysis in the spring of 2007, the wall will be closely evaluated over the course of at least a twelve-month period utilizing the most advanced techniques of Non-Destructive Evaluation and Testing (NDE) such as x-ray tomography and infrared thermography to determine the exact characteristics and tendencies of the wall's movement. This is an important step in the process of determining the most effective, least invasive method of stabilizing and repairing the wall in place and its adjacent structural conditions, at which time the exterior bracing will be removed.

The interior of the sanctuary maintains its essential character-defining features and a high degree of physical integrity despite damage early in its history. The weighty slate roof not only caused deflection issues, but apparently was also poorly installed—a situation that along with the damage from the spire collapse caused water damage to the interior finish plaster. The 1882-83 campaign replacing the roof and buttressing the east wall, also included the repair and refurbishment of interior plasterwork. At this time, the church also sought to expand the original lecture room to the north of the sanctuary into a larger chapel space. For this work, they

⁶ *Kingston Democratic Journal*, 28 Dec. 1853. Strangely, the same fate met the steeple of the new Second Reformed Protestant Dutch Church nearby on Fair Street.

⁷ John Garnsey Van Slyke, *Historical Address...Reformed Protestant Dutch Church, Kingston, New York, on the Occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Dedication of the Present Edifice, September 28, 1902* (Kingston, 1902), 16.

⁸ Volume 51, "Cash Book," 1838-1885, entries for 6 and 9 Jul. 1874, First Reformed Protestant Dutch Church Archives (hereafter **RPDC**, courtesy Donna Light).

⁹ "Report of the Building Committee of the First Reformed Church, Kingston, NY," attachment to "Proceedings of the Eldership & Consistory," vol. 9B, 29 Sep. 1883, 2-3, RPDC. This Report includes an appendix, "Report of the Treasurer of the Building Committee," printed by the *Journal & Freeman*, Wall Street, Kingston.

¹⁰ "Report of the Building Committee of the First Reformed Church, Kingston, NY," vol. 9B, 29 Sep. 1883, 5, RPDC.

¹¹ "Specifications of materials to be furnished and work done by metal roofer in putting a new tin standing groove roof on the First Reformed Church in the City of Kingston," RPDC. These specifications confirm the continued presence of the slate roof until this time.

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hired architect John A. Wood. He was able to successfully integrate the new exterior walls of his hipped-roof chapel with the existing building using the same random-range ashlar bluestone walls, identical window units, and a modillioned cornice, that continued the rhythm of the earlier Lafever-designed one.

In 1892, a new memorial stained glass window executed by the Tiffany Glass Company was installed in the north wall behind the pulpit. The glass replaced the original 1850s installation—painted glass with a geometric design—in the same location. New York City merchant and Kingston native David H. Houghtaling commissioned and paid for the window in memory of his parents, which was dedicated in a ceremony presided over by Reverend Van Slyke on January 3, 1892.¹² The design, attributed to Von Beck Canfield of the Tiffany studio, depicts the “Presentation in the Temple” and is crafted from Favrile glass. A letter to A. T. Clearwater from the Tiffany Glass Company in December 1891, documents the installation of gas lines and fixtures to back-light the window following its installation, the outlines of this work having been laid out by Canfield during a visit to Kingston.¹³

Except for modern utility systems, the sanctuary has remained essentially unchanged since 1892. The church complex as a whole was expanded once more with an addition to the north and east of the Wood-designed chapel. The Bethany Annex, dedicated in December 1951, consisted of a one-story extension to the north containing a stage for the reconfigured chapel area (now "Bethany Hall") and a two-story extension to the west containing a kitchen, choir room, and classrooms. The Bethany Annex does not negatively impact the original street presence of the building and is in excellent condition considering its age and the degree of use it has seen over the years. It has a low profile with a combination of low-sloped and flat roofing, and is set back from both of the two primary facades: the front of the church faces south toward Main Street, and the side with the tower and the secondary entrance is oriented west to Wall Street.

¹² “In Honor of Parents: The Houghtaling Memorial Window Unveiled,” *Kingston Daily Freeman*, January 4, 1892.

¹³ Letter from the Tiffany Glass Company to A. T. Clearwater, December 28, 1891, RPDC.

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8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

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

Nationally: X Statewide: __ Locally: __

Applicable National Register Criteria: A__ B__ C X D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): A__ B__ C X D__ E__ F__ G

NHL Criteria: 4, Exception 1

NHL Theme(s): III. Expressing Cultural Values
5. Architecture, landscape architecture, and urban design

Areas of Significance: Architecture

Period(s) of Significance: 1851-52

Significant Dates:

Significant Person(s): N/A

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: Lafever, Minard (architect)

Historic Contexts: XVI. Architecture
G. Renaissance Revival (1830-1920)
3. Cast Iron: Gothic, Romanesque, Renaissance

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State Significance of Property, and Justify Criteria, Criteria Considerations, and Areas and Periods of Significance Noted Above.**Introduction**

The Renaissance Revival First Reformed Protestant Dutch Church of Kingston, New York, dedicated in 1852, is a nationally significant expression of mid-nineteenth-century architectural eclecticism by an important American architect, Minard Lafever. Importantly, it marks both a high-point within his development as well as a key point of transition toward greater flexibility in approaches to architectural design at mid-century in the United States. Lafever's contribution to antebellum architecture is considerable—as a designer of churches; a primary distributor of Greek revival ideas through his pattern books; as a skilled practitioner in the various eclectic modes defining the buildings of the age; as a gifted inventor of decoration and architectural detail; and as an architect taking part in that field's nascent professionalism. His achievements in creating sophisticated and highly original architectural and decorative programs are well known and have been recognized through the National Historic Landmark designation of Sailors' Snug Harbor on Staten Island (Greek Revival; 1831-33 and later; NHL, 1976); First Presbyterian Church (Old Whaler's Church) in Sag Harbor, New York (Egyptian and Greek Revivals; 1843-44; NHL, 1994); and the Church of St. Ann and the Holy Trinity in Brooklyn Heights (Gothic Revival, 1844-47; NHL, 1987). The First Reformed Protestant Dutch Church is deserving of recognition within the larger body of Lafever's work as a mature handling of Renaissance revival forms and details, an eclectic mode he helped pioneer in America, particularly its religious applications. The building retains a high degree of integrity and fully demonstrates Lafever's skill in devising architectural decoration. It is not just his sole remaining, intact Renaissance revival design, but its physical integrity is comparable to the already designated First Presbyterian Church, Sag Harbor, and St. Ann and Holy Trinity, Brooklyn Heights.

Minard Lafever: An Eclectic, Ecclesiastical Architect

In addition to his popular builder's handbooks, two of which contributed broadly to the spread of Greek-inspired architectural forms and details at the folk level, Minard Lafever's primary contribution to the field of American architecture in the antebellum period was as a designer of ecclesiastical buildings.¹⁴ He is definitively associated with the design of a score of churches, and few of his contemporaries beyond Richard Upjohn, James Renwick, and Patrick C. Keely, left as profound an imprint on contemporary religious design as Lafever. He has also been identified as "one of the pioneer eclectics in New York" with an "extensive architectural practice."¹⁵ Lafever's body of ecclesiastical work suggests a versatile architect and artist skilled in composing architecture within a diverse range of styles, yet also with a highly personal and free approach to design increasingly conspicuous as his career unfolded.¹⁶

Minard Lafever was born in August 1798 near Morristown, New Jersey, to parents of Huguenot and Scottish ancestry. He worked as a carpenter-builder in the Finger Lakes region of New York, and later Newark, New Jersey, before moving to New York City sometime around 1827. Like many architects of that era, he lacked formal training in the profession, which was largely unavailable outside of apprenticeship within the small field of urban practitioners; in time and through various means, Lafever moved from work in the building trades into the growing ranks of professional architects. Antebellum America was an epoch of upward mobility for the ambitious (and lucky), and he took advantage of its opportunistic fluidity.

¹⁴ *The Young Builders General Instructor* (Newark, 1829); *The Modern Builder's Guide* (New York, 1833); *The Beauties of Modern Architecture* (1835); he additionally authored *The Modern Practice of Staircase and Handrail Construction* (1838), and *The Architectural Instructor* (1856). *The Modern Builders Guide* and *Beauties of Modern Architecture* were particularly influential for Greek Revival design.

¹⁵ Landy, "Lafever, Minard," 598.

¹⁶ See "Appendix" at the end of this document for a list of his known church commissions.

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Little is known of Lafever's earliest professional activities prior to his participation in the competition for the Albany City Hall and the publication of his first book, *The Young Builder's General Instructor* (1829). In a preface to his second book, *The Modern Builder's Guide* (1833), Lafever noted a debt to two early leaders on the New York scene—Josiah Brady and Martin Thompson—indicating an influential association with central figures of the emerging architectural field.¹⁷ It is likely that one, if not both, of these men had recognized his talents and potential and played a role in his seemingly quick professional ascendancy. Around this time, Lafever began to refer to himself as an architect, rather than a builder, in city directories. This documented change likely resulted from his work as a draftsman for Brady and Thompson and possibly furthered by the study of books and prints in the Town & Davis Library, generously made available as a service to aspiring architects.

During his career, Lafever is known to have maintained formal professional associations with Lewis Lindsley, James Gallier, Sr., Benjamin F. Smith, and W. Haddon. It also appears that he and James H. Dakin may have forged a brief partnership, which seems all the more likely given similarities in their Greek Revival work, in particular the use of the anthemion motif.¹⁸ This interaction undoubtedly furthered his development and the honing of his creative sensibilities that would shape the progression of his later career while at the same time maintaining some of the common-sense experience earned during his years as a carpenter and conveyed through his books.

Two of Lafever's publications, those released in 1833 and 1835, contributed to the popularity of Greek forms in American architecture as that fashion ran its course. Although only newly attributed to Lafever when designated an NHL in 1976, his Sailors' Snug Harbor in Staten Island, New York, was recognized as nationally significant for the extent of its urban planning, landscaping, and Greek Revival architecture and stands as the key milestone for that period of his career.¹⁹ Over time, he became much more than a skilled disseminator of the Greek Revival ideas, presented as one of America's ground-breaking, nineteenth-century eclectics with a particular legacy in church architecture.

Except for analysis related to the nineteenth-century impact of Pugin and the rise of the Ecclesiologists, the skill and recognition of American architects who specialized in churches has been largely restricted to formal, style-based critiques. It is a logical, if traditional approach, that pragmatically avoids the potential pitfalls and controversy that threatens consideration of associated religious beliefs or functions. Churches and other religious buildings are a perennially popular and almost tailor-made subject for glossy photographic publications, but at the same time suffer as a comparatively understudied type within the historiography of American architecture.²⁰ This situation is particularly problematic since churches are near-universal features of every American town and neighborhood, and frequently the most dominant buildings within their environments.

¹⁷ Hamlin, *Greek Revival*, 12.

¹⁸ Landy, *Lafever*, 12, 49, 249 n. 6. W. Haddon is shown in partnership with Lafever in an advertisement published in the *Brooklyn Eagle* in the latter 1840s. The possibility of a formal Dakin-Lafever partnership was previously suggested by W. R. Wheeler in "59 Second Street: Design and Construction," in *The Marble House in Second Street: Biography of a Town House and Its Occupants, 1825-2000* (Troy, NY: Rensselaer County Historical Society, 2000), n. 89.

¹⁹ Carolyn Pitts, "The Sailor's Snug Harbor," National Historic Landmark Nomination Form (Washington DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service), 1976; Barnett Shephard, "Sailors' Snug Harbor Reattributed to Minard Lafever," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians (JSAH)* 35 (May 1975): 108-123. Shephard later expanded this work into *Sailors' Snug Harbor, 1801-1976* (New York: Publishing Center for Cultural Resources, 1979). See also Historic American Buildings Survey documentation for "Sailors' Snug Harbor," contained under seventeen different HABS NY survey numbers. The centerpiece of this complex is a temple-front building with an octastyle Ionic portico.

²⁰ See Roger G. Kennedy, *American Churches* (New York: Stewart, Tabori & Chang, 1982), and Roger W. Moss and Tom Crane (photographer), *Historic Sacred Places of Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), for examples of books with a photographic emphasis.

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Such works as Peter W. Williams's *Houses of God: Region, Religion, and Architecture in the United States* (1997), are commendable in their attempt at breadth, but the multiplicity of denominations across American geography and history makes drawing widely applicable conclusions about church buildings—aside from the way they look—at best, difficult. Because of this disparateness, analysis of church architecture by necessity almost always falls into a predominantly stylistic discourse, for example, Phoebe B. Stanton's *The Gothic Revival & American Church Architecture: An Episode in Taste, 1840-1856* (1968). The few studies that have moved beyond this type of evaluation tend to focus on a specific denomination, time, or location, as with Dell Upton's *Holy Things and Profane: Anglican Parish Churches in Colonial Virginia* (1986) and the independent essays in a more recent collection edited by Louis P. Nelson, entitled *American Sanctuary: Understanding Sacred Spaces* (2006). Expanding the investigative focus for religious architecture is much needed and welcome, but tends toward regionalism and does not necessarily expand comprehension of national significance. This incongruent and uneven consideration of American churches seems to be lessening as scholars begin finding ways to relate church architecture to larger cultural trends in an objective manner. Ryan Smith's *Gothic Arches, Latin Crosses: Anti-Catholicism and American Church Designs in the Nineteenth Century* (2006)—documenting the rapid adoption of Roman Catholic church imagery and architectural elements by mainline Protestant sects even while acute anti-Catholicism pervaded the country—is a solid start, but much more is needed before universal methodologies are fully developed to analyze churches, without bias, beyond their formal arrangements of brick, stone, wood, and glass.

When considering nineteenth-century American architecture, historians cannot discount style wholesale. To some present scholars, Minard Lafever's previously documented national significance as an "important designer of architectural decoration" and a "great Revival architect" may seem somewhat stale given the revolutions in architectural historical investigation over the last generation; yet, discounting his facility in negotiating the never-ending march of nineteenth-century eclectic design trends disregards fundamental characteristics of the age in which he lived and worked.²¹ In the recent benchmark study, *Architecture in the United States, 1800-1850* (2002), W. Barksdale Maynard observes:

We often dismiss style as elitist or superficial, but in doing so we risk overlooking an essential avenue to understanding the built world as contemporaries conceived it. A history of vernacular design may with some safety ignore style, perhaps, but one that aims to consider the productions that the nineteenth-century observer called *architecture* must grapple with the meanings of styles—not using them as a convenient crutch but looking beyond their surface qualities to understand their complex relationship to contemporary culture.²²

Antebellum Americans enjoyed a major period of national expansion in virtually every way conceivable. The accompanying prosperity and progress gave those Americans a widespread confidence yet, paradoxically, also a self-consciousness that played out clearly in an emerging national architectural discourse. "Architecture" both represented and contributed to the maturation of nationalism in the young country, which so greatly desired to move beyond its widely held status (both inside and outside the United States) as a cultural outpost.²³ Without a doubt, the question "In Which Style Should We Build?" plagued architects and intellectuals in all of the nations participating in the rapid industrialization of the nineteenth century.²⁴ Yet, in the United States the

²¹ Shephard, "Sailors' Snug Harbor," 115; Talbot Hamlin, "The Rise of Eclecticism in New York," *JSAH* 11 (May 1952): 3.

²² W. Barksdale Maynard, *Architecture in the United States, 1800-1850* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 76-77.

²³ *Ibid.*, 67-70.

²⁴ See Kathleen Curran, "The German Rundbogenstil and Reflections on the American Round-Arched Style," *JSAH* 47 (December 1988): 351-373, particularly 353-354.

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consideration of the question was far less theoretical and the answer less sophisticated and exact—a building designed using any of the period’s eclectic modes could only demonstrate national progress.

Lafever and his contemporaries understood the contemporary architectural challenge and fully engaged in finding appropriate solutions. In America’s rapidly expanding cities and towns, commissions for churches were particularly plentiful and are a major resource for understanding the architectural aspirations of the age. Departing from his early published and built works in the Greek Revival, Lafever quickly moved on to other modes for his inspiration and execution showing first a strong affinity for the Gothic Revival. His churches in the Gothic manner lacked the liturgical and archaeological “correctness” of those produced by Richard Upjohn in the spirit of the prevalent Ecclesiological movement and were instead defined by a creative and idiosyncratic handling of architectural detail and organization. His definitive Gothic work, the Church of St. Ann and the Holy Trinity in Brooklyn Heights (1844-47), is representative of the manner in which Lafever creatively responded to original sources. With Holy Trinity, he fused Gothic features from a variety of English and French models into a cohesive composition and ornamental program.²⁵ Lafever’s ability to effectively compose buildings and architectural ornament expanded as his career unfolded, and shows Lafever to have been, in Talbot Hamlin’s words, a “designer of unusual and continually growing aesthetic sensitiveness.”²⁶ Emerging from his growing skills, Lafever “secured his reputation with the design of Holy Trinity,” and the building’s benchmark status in his career has been recognized through its 1987 NHL designation.²⁷

The concern of architectural professionals for design in antebellum America extended well beyond the existing bastions of culture in major east coast cities. Their desire to distinguish themselves from contractor-builders helped to nurture an expanding sphere of geographic influence. While personal contacts often played a considerable role in securing distant commissions, without the increased visibility of the professional ranks beginning in the 1830s many of these projects may well have remained in the hands of local contractor-builders. Such publications as A. J. Downing’s *Cottage Residences* (1842) and *The Architecture of Country Houses* (1850) began to reinforce expanding professionalism by further popularizing good and bad taste and disseminating the designs and architectural ideas of established figures like Davis, Notman, and Upjohn. Though he based his practice in Manhattan and later Brooklyn, Lafever competed for the City Hall commission in Albany, New York, and offered designs for buildings in distant areas elsewhere in the state, among them Syracuse, Elbridge, Sag Harbor, and Kingston, and as far away as Virginia.

Completed just as Holy Trinity was being launched, Lafever’s design for First Presbyterian Church (Old Whaler’s church) in Sag Harbor, New York (1843-44), is another major point of reference in his development as an eclectic architect as well as in the expansion of his architectural presence beyond the New York City area, in this case to a prosperous whaling town on the east end of Long Island.²⁸ With the First Presbyterian Church, the architect combined an exterior developed from Egyptian, Greek, and other exotic sources with an interior of largely Greek motifs rendered and reinvented in an idiosyncratic fashion. A cornice aligned with blubber-spade cresting and the attenuated, now-lost steeple (suggestive in its form of a mariner’s telescope) paid tribute to the seafaring community that erected the building and their traditions. On eclecticism, historian Talbot Hamlin

²⁵ Landy, *Lafever*, 105-31.

²⁶ Hamlin, *Greek Revival*, 146. Of note in considering his career as a religious designer is Lafever’s Unitarian background, which, as Landy observed, presumably accounted for his willingness to field commissions from a broad range of Protestant denominations; comments made by Lafever likewise suggest some level of at least playful irreverence (*Ibid.*, 4).

²⁷ Carolyn Pitts, “Holy Trinity (Protestant Episcopal) Church,” National Historic Landmark Nomination Form (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service), 1987.

²⁸ At the time of Landy’s book the attribution to Lafever remained speculative. The subsequent discovery of a letter written by a builder associated with the project—in which he mentions Lafever as the architect— finally confirmed the pedigree of the design.

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remarked: “many of the best architects (especially—in New York—Lafever, Davis, and Upjohn)...design[ed] freely beyond the limitations of the then dominant Greek and Gothic manners...a movement bound to result in creative change.”²⁹ Lafever’s work in Sag Harbor is a testimony to this change. Though staid in form—essentially the building represents a minor variation of the standard central-towered meetinghouse recast in Egyptian pylon form—the ornamental treatments and various sources from which they are derived mark the Whaler’s Church as one of the more distinctive and eclectic offerings of the Romantic period. It was designated a NHL in 1994.³⁰ In addition to his work in the Greek, Gothic, and Egyptian eclectic modes, Minard effectively developed a usable Renaissance design vocabulary for American churches, employing it first for the Church of the Holy Apostles, Manhattan (1846-48), and subsequently in a fully matured form with the Reformed Protestant Dutch Church of Kingston.

Lafever and the Renaissance Revival: A Contribution to Nineteenth-Century Eclecticism

The introduction of Renaissance forms into American architecture in the decades immediately preceding the Civil War, much like the Gothic and other historical styles, emerged from the revivalist spirit that defined the second quarter of the nineteenth century. As with previous architectural trends in the antebellum period, the roots of the Renaissance Revival are found in England and its renewed interest in Italian High Renaissance architecture, expressed prominently in the work of Sir Charles Barry (1795-1860) in the 1830s.³¹ In the United States, the Boston-based architect and critic Arthur D. Gilman (1821-1882) was a vocal advocate of Barry and the new Renaissance fashion in the 1840s, and joined A. J. Downing in denouncing the Greek Revival style. Gilman, writing anonymously in the *North American Review* in 1844, believed the architecture of Renaissance Italy as a more appropriate point-of-departure for new American buildings than the pagan temples of classical antiquity, and, like Lafever, also referenced English Renaissance themes in his own work.³²

The Renaissance Revival in America was largely initiated in the middle years of the 1840s, although a second revival emerged later in the century with the work of McKim, Mead & White and others. The best-known early landmarks of the Renaissance Revival in the United States, both derived from Renaissance palazzo forms, are John Notman’s brownstone Philadelphia Athenaeum (1845-47; NHL, 1976) and the A. T. Stewart Company Store in Manhattan (1845-46; NHL, 1978). Palazzo prototypes were particularly well adapted to the emerging tradition of cast-iron construction, as expressed in work such as the Haughwout Store in Manhattan (1857), and because of their traditional urban location suited American cities very well.³³ Because the palazzo was domestic in nature and initially created for urban centers, it quickly became a favored model for mid-nineteenth-century houses as well.³⁴ Renaissance Revival architectural ideas quickly spread into the country’s interior due in no small part to the efforts of Ammi B. Young during his tenure as Supervising Architect for the

²⁹ Hamlin, “The Rise,” 4.

³⁰ David H. Cory, “First Presbyterian (Old Whaler’s) Church,” National Historic Landmark Nomination Form (Washington DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1994).

³¹ Marcus Whiffen and Frederick Koeper, *American Architecture, 1607-1976* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981), 201-07.

³² *Ibid.*, 201, 207; Andrew Jackson Downing, *Cottage Residences, or a Series of Designs for Rural Cottages and Cottage Villas and Their Gardens and Grounds Adapted to North America* (New York, 1842), 11.

³³ *Ibid.*, 204-5.

³⁴ Although at first mainly used for architect-designed dwellings of the wealthy, the palazzo prototype soon morphed into the wildly popular and far more prevalent Italianate row house. The Mount Vernon neighborhood in Baltimore, Maryland, preserves a core of antebellum mansions that includes a number of palazzos. The best-known, but by no means the only district of nineteenth-century Italianate rowhouses, are the brownstone dwellings of Brooklyn. For more information, see Randolph W. Chalfant and Charles Belfoure, *Niernsee and Neilson, Architects of Baltimore: Two Careers on the Edge of the Future* (Baltimore: Baltimore Architecture Foundation, 2006); James A. Jacobs, “Decatur Miller House,” HABS No. MD-1175 (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. National Park Service), 2004; Charles Lockwood, “The Italianate Dwelling House in New York City,” *JSAH* 31 (May 1972): 145-151; and Margaret Supplee Smith and John C. Moorhouse, “Architecture and the Housing Market: Nineteenth Century Row Housing in Boston’s South End,” *JSAH* 52 (June 1993): 159-178.

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U.S. Treasury Department. In the 1850s, Young utilized the palazzo prototype for a number of new U.S. custom houses in such cities as Rutland, Vermont, Mobile, Alabama, and Cleveland, Ohio.³⁵

Minard Lafever played a central role in the emergence of the Renaissance Revival in American architecture; however, like his work in other stylistic modes his was a personal and highly eclectic interpretation that drew from a diverse range of precedents. Lafever's design for the Brooklyn Savings Bank (1846, now demolished), deviated further from Italian Renaissance models than the English sources referenced by Notman and others because of its subtle use of additional historical motives—notably Greek—and a low interior dome decorated with Adamesque detailing. It was in the area of ecclesiastical design that Lafever most fully explored the potential of the Renaissance Revival, and the churches he designed in this manner owe a considerable debt to earlier English buildings, with the work of renowned architect Sir Christopher Wren ranking most prominently as a source. In the words of architectural historian Marcus Whiffen, Lafever's contribution to Renaissance Revival ecclesiastical design in America represented “a one-man Wren revival.”³⁶ Common to his career, these designs often fail to divulge specific precedents and borrow inconspicuously from their models as a means for originality. Known Lafever works designed in the Renaissance Revival mode include: Church of the Holy Apostles, Manhattan (1846-48, considerably altered); Dutch Reformed Church, Syracuse (1849-50, demolished); First Baptist Church, Syracuse (ca. 1850, demolished); Reformed Church on the Heights, Brooklyn (1850-51, demolished); the Pearl Street Congregational Church, Hartford (1851-52, demolished); and the First Reformed Protestant Dutch Church, Kingston (1851-52).

Preceding the Kingston church in design by four years, and possibly familiar to a member of the congregation or offered by Lafever as a suitable model for their new building, was the Renaissance Revival Church of the Holy Apostles in Manhattan (1846-48), Lafever's first known religious work in this vein. For the exterior of Holy Apostles Lafever used an engaged central tower and attenuated spire of Christopher Wren-James Gibbs precedent, with detailing ascribed by Lafever biographer Jacob Landy as having similarities to seventeenth- and early-eighteenth-century English sources, and an interior design vocabulary that conveyed, however vaguely, Italian Renaissance sources.³⁷ Strangely, in an era of rising interest in Ecclesiological reform, manifesting prominently in the work of Upjohn, the Episcopal congregation of Holy Apostles chose a design conspicuously incongruent with these principles. The choice of the Renaissance over the Gothic and the failure to fully express the chancel area were, when viewed through the lens of Ecclesiological advocates, severe shortcomings of the design. Subsequent modifications addressed these areas, altering Lafever's original design, while a fire in the 1990s further impaired the physical integrity of Lafever's original scheme.³⁸ Even more decidedly influenced by English Wren-Gibbs precedent than this example was the design for the First Baptist Church of Syracuse, which combined an engaged tower and portico in the spirit of James Gibbs's St. Martin-in-the-Fields (1726), Trafalgar Square, London. This church and the other demolished representatives of his work in the Renaissance Revival depict a more confident handling of form and detail by Lafever.

Lafever designed the First Reformed Protestant Dutch Church in the final years of his career and it represents the most fully developed extant example of his handling of the Renaissance Revival. Historian W. Barksdale Maynard notes: “the Kingston church is one of his last commissions and reveals an experienced architect at the height of his powers, broadening his approach beyond the Greek Revival he had done so much to popularize.”³⁹

³⁵ For more information, see Antoinette J. Lee, *Architects to the Nation: The Rise and Decline of the Supervising Architect's Office* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), chap. 3.

³⁶ Whiffen and Koeper, *American Architecture, 1607-1976*, 207.

³⁷ Landy, *Lafever*, 155-56.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 150-57.

³⁹ W. Barksdale Maynard to James A. Jacobs, August 7, 2007, in NHL file for First Reformed Protestant Dutch Church of Kingston, Washington, D.C.

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Local patrons had been looking beyond the Kingston area for architects since the 1830s. In 1832, the Albany-based architect Henry Rector, a sometime associate of James H. Dakin and author of a number of prominent buildings in Albany, provided a Greek Revival design for the church that immediately preceded Lafever's work for the First Reformed Protestant Dutch congregation. At the time of Lafever's hiring, at least two other New York architects—Richard Upjohn and Thomas Thomas, Jr.—were also working in Kingston.

Lafever's choice in using Renaissance-derived concepts for the new Kingston church may have simply been an obvious and easy application of elements and interests manifest in his later work; however, it may have also met a desire by the congregation to architecturally assert itself within the community. In 1850, the Second Reformed Dutch Church—an offshoot of the First Church—hired New York architect Thomas Thomas, Jr., to design a Gothic Revival church on a lot not far from the First Church.⁴⁰ Lafever may have been specifically instructed not to consider a Gothic church in order to visually distinguish the two rival congregations.⁴¹ It seems plausible that while the Second Church chose the Gothic mode as a way of distinguishing itself as “new,” the First Church decided on a design that may have been intended to make the building appear older than it actually was.⁴² A Wren-Gibbs inspiration for the new religious building, which was then constructed in local bluestone within the bounds of the historic churchyard, may have been a conscious effort to trick observers into thinking that the church survived from the colonial period or, at the very least, made direct reference to the congregation's relatively ancient foundations. Their adoption of a church so clearly derived from English precedent not only suggested its historical primacy, but was also a declaration that the First Reformed Protestant Dutch Church had completely assimilated into the dominant Anglo-American culture, which had been slowly eroding that of the Dutch since the seventeenth century.

For the Kingston design Lafever abandoned the engaged center-tower format and rigid classical symmetry of the Wren tradition used for Holy Apostles and the Whaler's Church at Sag Harbor—this form being a staple of American church builders since the eighteenth century—and instead employed a tower and spire situated along the flank of the building in a decidedly more irregular and Picturesque manner. The joining of two seemingly disparate architectural sensibilities, the rational logic of classicism and romantic evocations of the Picturesque, was a key element of nineteenth-century eclecticism, and wove a universal thread between the multiplicity of stylistic modes. W. Barksdale Maynard has observed:

rapid growth of nineteenth-century populations, along with extraordinary social and technological change, brought the need for new building types on a scale hitherto unknown. A desire for stylistic choice simultaneously arose, and so the 1830s saw the flowering of an increasingly disparate eclecticism, various styles bound by a common commitment to fitness and the Picturesque.⁴³

Lafever's last book, *The Architectural Instructor* (1856), included a design for a “Village Church,” which was similar to, but a less elaborated example of the Renaissance Revival—perhaps, as noted by Landy, reflecting Lafever's familiarity with the more modest designs directed to smaller congregations in Upjohn's *Rural Architecture* (1852).⁴⁴ Lafever's publication of the “Village Church” portrays his intent of disseminating Renaissance Revival ideas to a broader American audience, as he had done earlier in his career with publications featuring the Greek Revival. Historian W. Barksdale Maynard has noted the value of this rare

⁴⁰ Thomas's building, still extant but lacking its spire since 1854, was erected nearby on Fair Street with limestone ashlar quarried from a site on upper Pearl Street.

⁴¹ William B. Rhoads, *Kingston, New York: The Architectural Guide* (Hensonville, NY: Black Dome Press, 2003), 70.

⁴² This possibility was suggested by Bill Brandow, J. G. Waite & Associates.

⁴³ Maynard, *Architecture in the United States, 1800-1850*, 81.

⁴⁴ Landy, *Lafever*, 157.

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instance of having both a mid-nineteenth-century building that retains high integrity and a contemporary publication by the same architect, stating:

Historians have laid great stress on Lafever's early publications that helped spread Greek Revival nationwide...but he continued to write even as the styles changed after 1850. This is a significant but under-appreciated fact. Given how intact the Kingston church is, it offers an unusual opportunity for students of architectural history to study both an architect's printed words and built design, giving an unusually full picture of the architectural conditions around 1850.⁴⁵

Unlike Holy Apostles in Manhattan, which was constructed of brick masonry, Lafever employed a more expressive and suitably Picturesque material for the exterior walls of the Kingston church, regionally quarried Hudson Valley bluestone. It is Lafever's only known extant work utilizing this material. The rich and varied quality of the bluestone ashlar, which was tooled and trimmed off with a fossil-rich limestone, in concert with the asymmetrical composition, soaring spire and modillion-embellished cornices, mark the exterior of the First Reformed Church as Lafever's most fully articulated eclectic conception in the Renaissance Revival.

The particularly unified architectural program for the interior of the First Reformed Dutch Church of Kingston overtly references English Renaissance works by Wren and Gibbs; Landy suggests sources as prominent as St. Paul's, London.⁴⁶ The spirit of the sanctuary can also be traced to Georgian sources built in colonial America. The proportional systems and vaulting are similar to that used by Thomas McBean for St. Paul's Chapel in New York in the 1760s. Although the design grew out of his recent experiments with eighteenth-century details—side aisles and galleries defined by arcades and a window and molding treatment behind the pulpit inspired by Palladian arrangements common for that area in colonial churches—the interior of the First Dutch Reformed Church is more reliant on earlier sources. Landy suggests that the parish consistory may have insisted on a more clearly Wren-Gibbs interior for the same reasons driving the design of the exterior: to set the church and its august congregation apart from its rivals.⁴⁷

Lafever's triumph with the organization of interior form and detailing at the First Dutch Reformed Church was acknowledged by Calvert Vaux sometime in the early 1880s. When asked by Reverend John Van Slyke to offer a new design for the church's pulpit, Vaux—a former associate of Andrew Jackson Downing and later partner of Frederick Law Olmsted—not only purportedly referred to Lafever as “the Sir Christopher Wren of America,” but also offered the following commentary:

I cannot change a thing without impairing the exquisite unity. Le Fever's [*sic*] construction embodied a mathematical ideal. If the span of these arches were one foot more or less, or these columns a foot taller or shorter, there might have been those to whom it would have made no difference, but as it is, it is ideally perfect.⁴⁸

During the final years of his life and career, Minard Lafever continued to evolve and expand his design interests and philosophies grounded in Renaissance, in particular, English sources. The Kingston, Brooklyn, and Hartford churches, the latter two now lost, represented the culmination of the architect's work in this area of

⁴⁵ Maynard to Jacobs, August 7, 2007.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 186.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ As quoted in Landy, *Lafever*, 44. During an address marking the fiftieth anniversary of the Lafever church in 1902, Reverend John G. Van Slyke recounted comments previously made to him by Vaux. Van Slyke had likely engaged or at least communicated with Vaux during the major renovations of early 1880s.

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design and should be understood as the crowning achievements of his work as an eclectic designer, primarily, of American churches. During a relatively short professional career that covered barely more than a quarter century, Lafever assumed a leading role among his contemporaries and broadly influenced the direction of eclectic design that was the character defining element of antebellum architecture. His passing on September 26, 1854, was quietly noted in the obituary sections of the *Brooklyn Eagle*, the *New York Daily Times*, and the *New York Tribune*.

The First Reformed Protestant Dutch Congregation of Kingston and Its Churches, 1659-1850

Within its first two-centuries of existence, the First Reformed Protestant Dutch congregation of Kingston, New York, constructed a series of no fewer than four substantial church buildings. Considerable are the church's direct associations with the colonial history of the Hudson Valley region and the hamlet of Wiltwyck, a seventeenth-century Dutch settlement that later became Kingston. The church maintains vital records dating to the time of its organization in the seventeenth century, recorded in the Dutch language until 1809, and serving as tangible evidence of its centuries-old connection to this community and as an important source of information for historians and genealogists. The church assumed a central role in the life of many residents of Wiltwyck and early Kingston and continued as the only established religious institution in the town until the second quarter of the nineteenth century.

Kingston's First Reformed Protestant Dutch Church is among the oldest congregations in the United States with continuous worship services dating to the time of its formation.⁴⁹ The church, formally organized in 1659 with twelve members, was officially chartered by King George I of England in 1719. Hermanus Blom, the first of many ministers (dominies) associated with the church, delivered the group's first sermon in September 1660, and administered the first communion to members three months later on December 26.⁵⁰ Though formally organized in 1659, as early as May 1658 informal religious services were being held in the dwelling of resident Jacob Jansen Stoll, who served as the voorleeser, or reader, in the absence of an ordained minister.⁵¹

Since the seventeenth century, public worship has been conducted uninterrupted within or adjacent to the same churchyard. Some past historical accounts place a meetinghouse of log construction on the parcel as early as 1661, but this notion has been questioned in subsequent histories.⁵² Regardless of these discrepancies, records indicate that by 1680 a stone meetinghouse had been erected and dedicated for use by this congregation within the confines of the current church parcel. Dominie Laurentius Van Gaasbeek's description of this building indicates it measured sixty feet long by forty-five feet wide, and in his estimation offered conspicuous evidence of his new congregation's zeal; one early-nineteenth-century account noted that it was "highly finished" with

⁴⁹ Much of the information included in this section has been compiled by Donna Light, the present church historian for the congregation. Although there were periods during which the Kingston church was without a minister, interim ministers were provided and the church was never closed. According to an account in a church program dating to May 1914, the Kingston church "was the fifth Protestant church in order of organization on the Western Hemisphere, and the third having a continuous history, as follows—the church of the Jamestown Colony, the church of the Plymouth Colony, the church of the Dutch Colony, Manhattan Island, now Marble Collegiate, New York, First Dutch Church, Kingston."

⁵⁰ Van Slyke, 4; "The Reformed Protestant Dutch Church" (a pamphlet dating to Reverend Leeper's pastorate, 1910-20), RPDC.

⁵¹ William C. DeWitt, *People's History of Kingston, Rondout and Vicinity* (New Haven, Tuttle, Morehouse & Taylor, 1943), 208; Nathaniel B. Sylvester, *History of Ulster County, New York, with Biographical Sketches of its Prominent Men and Pioneers* (Philadelphia: n.p., 1880), 220.

⁵² The undated pamphlet from the Leeper pastorate placed the 1661 log church "upon the corner where the cenotaph to the memory of the Reverend John Gosman. . . now stands." Marius Schoonmaker's *History of Kingston New York* (New York, 1888), 206, likewise makes note of a log building, "substantial and convenient," in the location of the subsequent 1680 stone church. See Marc B. Fried, *The Early History of Kingston & Ulster County, New York* (Marbletown and Kingston, New York: Ulster County Historical Society, 1975), 49, for alternative viewpoint.

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“windows of stained glass with armorial bearings on them.”⁵³

In 1710, the fifty-five year pastorate of Petrus Vas was initiated, which would see considerable construction efforts forwarded by the congregation. A *doop huys* was built in 1721, functioning as a support area where baptisms, meetings, and other consistorial-mandated business could be undertaken; repairs to the older church were also completed at this time. Three decades later in 1752, Vas oversaw either the wholesale rebuilding or substantial renovation of the ca. 1680 church.⁵⁴ It was likely at this juncture that the church first assumed the appearance of a gambrel-roofed meetinghouse, two bays in depth, with a tower fronting the primary elevation. Walls appear to have been of rubble limestone construction—though the earliest print suggests coursed ashlar, or perhaps a parging treatment meant to replicate the effect of coursed masonry—pierced by round arched windows. The building was dedicated on November 29, 1752, in a ceremony presided over by Georg Wilhelm Mancius, who was an assistant to Vas and had been brought on in 1732 to assist the aging seventy-four year old minister.⁵⁵

During the largely uncontested raid by British forces on Kingston on October 16, 1777, the Reformed church, along with all but one village residence, was badly burned. Though gutted, the stone walls of the meetinghouse were reused and the church eventually rebuilt, after which it continued to serve its congregation for another half-century during which time ministers began conducting services in English for the first time. It was not until the fourth decade of the nineteenth century that the congregation felt the need or desired to build a new church, which was dedicated on a site across from the historic churchyard in August 1833. They hired Albany architect Henry Rector to design what became known as the “Brick Church,” a typical linear plan Greek Revival-style building of the meetinghouse type, with a fully pedimented gable-front façade and a boldly articulated Doric frieze that continued from the front to the flank elevations of the building.

The present church building was erected during the pastorate of John Cantine Farrell Hoes, a graduate of Amherst College with further training at the Princeton Seminary. Hoes arrived to assume his duties from Ithaca, New York, in November 1845.⁵⁶ Not long into his pastorate, twenty-two members of the congregation left the church and, with the blessing of the Classis (church leadership), formed the Second Reformed Dutch Church, also known as the Fair Street Reformed Church. Despite this loss and competition, church membership increased considerably under Hoes’s leadership; after much consideration the decision was made to initiate a campaign to erect a larger building to accommodate the congregation’s worship and related needs. The formation of the Second Reformed Protestant Dutch Church and the construction campaign for a new church launched in 1850, likely provided additional impetus for the new First Church building. After two decades of worship outside the bounds of the churchyard, the congregation decided to return to their historic roots and build the new church on the site of its colonial predecessors.

The Campaign to Erect the First Reformed Protestant Dutch Church, 1850-52

The first mention by the consistory of the First Reformed Protestant Dutch Church of Kingston regarding the proposed construction of a new edifice occurred in the minutes of their July 1, 1850, meeting, in response to a June 29 letter.⁵⁷ Their existing church seems to have no longer met the needs of the congregation and appears

⁵³ Martha B. Partlan and Dorothy A. DuMond, *The Reformed Protestant Dutch Church of Kingston, New York: Three Hundred and Twenty-Fifth Anniversary, 1659-1984* (Kingston: privately printed, 1984), 13-16. The nineteenth-century account was William Craig Brownlee, ed., “Kingston Church” by Boorhaave in *The Magazine of the Reformed Dutch Church for 1826*, September 1826, 190.

⁵⁴ Partlan and DuMond, *Dutch Church of Kingston*, 26-30.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 29.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 46.

⁵⁷ “A Record of the Proceedings of the Eldership & Consistory of the Reformed Dutch Church of Kingston—commencing

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to have also had continuing physical problems associated with a lightning strike from a decade earlier. The June letter suggested that the congregation should “sell & dispose of the present Church lot & edifice,” using the proceeds to “erect a new edifice upon the old church yard.”⁵⁸ At their next meeting, the consistory unanimously resolved to move forward with plans for a new building, and soon after named a building committee and set a budget.⁵⁹

Sometime before the August consistory meeting, the building committee engaged Lafever—likely at his Brooklyn offices—for preliminary plans. It is not known how the committee arrived at Lafever as a potential architect, although numerous factors could have shaped the decision-making process. A member of the building committee, James C. Forsyth, was at the time having a new Italianate dwelling erected in Kingston on a design by Richard Upjohn and it is possible that Upjohn was also considered. Given Upjohn’s tendency to secure commissions primarily from Episcopal congregations and his familiarity with Lafever’s New York City area designs, it could have been Upjohn himself who steered the building committee towards Lafever. It is also possible that a member of the congregation was familiar with Lafever’s work for Dutch Reformed congregations in Manhattan, Brooklyn, and Syracuse, or simply that Lafever’s status as a skilled religious designer was well established. Given that the Second Church had called upon the services of a New York-based architect for their edifice, it is not surprising that the First Church eventually settled on Lafever—the building campaign was a likely effort to reassert the congregation’s position in Kingston.

Regardless of their motivations, the building committee “submitted sketches of plans, elevations, etc. for the new church edifice, drawn by Minard Lafever of New York” at the August 10 consistory meeting.⁶⁰ After reviewing the materials, the consistory directed the committee to obtain from Lafever “a sketch or draft for a church & lecture room of the same general model, with the Church & Lec. Room disconnected from each other.”⁶¹ The Lafever plan ultimately agreed upon was in excess of the original \$16,000 limit, with a projected cost of \$22,000.⁶² The choice to build the new edifice in the old churchyard also raised the issue of removing gravestones and disinterring remains for the enlarged foundations; in the end, however, no bodies were disinterred—a total of eighty-one graves were left in place below the new building—a situation that presumably contributed to the building’s subsequent structural problems.⁶³

The campaign to erect the First Reformed Protestant Dutch Church, and the contemporaneous effort to erect the Second, or Fair Street Reformed Church, designed by Thomas Thomas, Jr. in the Gothic Revival style, did not go unnoticed in the local press. A piece in the *Ulster Republican* entitled “Progress and Better Taste,” which provided an overview of Kingston’s architectural progress, concluded with the following:

November 1841,” Consistorial Minutes, vol. 12, entry for July 1, 1850, RPDC.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ “A Record of the Proceedings of the Eldership & Consistory,” entry for July 9, 1850.

⁶⁰ “A Record of the Proceedings of the Eldership & Consistory,” entry for August 10, 1850.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² “A Record of the Proceedings of the Eldership & Consistory,” entry for November 11, 1850.

⁶³ Information provided by Donna Light, church historian. Though initially it was proposed to remove graves in advance of the construction campaign, angry outburst from locals and an injunction required that the graves be left undisturbed. As such, the foundation and footing work was influenced by the position of existing graves. The monuments and graves were left undisturbed until the 1882-83 building campaign, when most of the monuments beneath the church were placed in the yard and marked with a St. Andrew’s cross to denote that person was interred below the church. At that time, four marble markers were placed inside the sanctuary next to the pulpit, with the names of those beneath the church.

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The good taste shown in public structure, has a decided effect upon domestic architecture. The Dutch Church now erecting, and the one for which the foundations are about being laid [the Reformed Protestant Dutch Church], will be very imposing in their different styles. This influence is one of the great advantages of magnificent public buildings, and Kingston in 1860 will bear witness to the truth.⁶⁴

The congregation laid the cornerstone on May 20, 1851, and construction progressed steadily for the remainder of the year.⁶⁵ The firm of Hallenbeck & Brink executed the carpentry contract while the masonry work for the new church was overseen by Elias Van Nostrand; both were subsequently furnished with monies for “extra work” outside the scope of their original contracts.⁶⁶ Additional interior carpentry work, specifically the carving of interior elements including the Corinthian column capitals, was executed by J. W. Banta & Company. Balfe & Pedretti were noted as executing the interior painting. Colored glass for the windows was procured from the studio of William Gibson, who established a manufacturing business in New York City in the 1830s and operated a glass works on Broadway at the time the church was built; in addition to Lafever, he likewise produced glass for projects by Alexander J. Davis. The church’s organ, complete with a case designed by Lafever, was constructed at the cost of \$2,000 by the noted New York organ-builder Henry Erben, who provided instruments for many important religious buildings erected in this era, among them Lafever’s Whaler’s Church in Sag Harbor. Lafever was paid \$800 for his design and the accompanying construction documents.⁶⁷ No concrete reference has been found regarding his visiting the construction site for superintendence duties or other related matters.

The congregation dedicated the church on September 28, 1852, described by the *Ulster Republican* as “now complete at all points.” The newspaper continued:

Its architectural character and other peculiarities may be fairly estimated. The main building, i.e. the church proper, fronts on Main street, and is 100 by 65 feet on the ground, and 50 feet to the peak of the roof. The tower stands at the N.W. angle of the whole structure, and running parallel to the north end; there is a lecture and Sunday school rooms on two floors (there being no basement) each about 45 by 28, the whole building being so constructed as to seem under one form of roof, and looking like a single structure. The general style of architecture is Roman, with round arches. The material, externally is free stone with natural face, laid in irregular courses, but making a solid and beautiful wall of dark blue color, with hammered stone sills, &c. The tower is carried up some 65 feet, whence rises an exceedingly graceful spire to the extreme altitude of 200 feet, and presenting one of the most graceful features in our village outline. The roof is of slate. The spire is of wood. The interior of the principal auditorium room or oratory, is finished and decorated in the most elaborate and antique church style. It has galleries at the sides, and a music gallery at the south end. The prevalent style of the columns, &c., is Corinthian, the nave being separated from the aisles by Corinthian pillars to the roof, with arches between, and the whole compartments overhead being formed by elaborate and graceful arches and paneled compartments springing in curves from the capitals. The windows, of which there are five at each side, are of ground glass, with stained glass borders. There is besides an immense stained window, between the oratory and the lecture and school room of elaborate pattern, and another window in the organ recess. And above the capitals of the pillars, at the

⁶⁴ *Ulster Republican*, January 15, 1851.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, May 21, 1851.

⁶⁶ “Proceedings of the Eldership & Consistory,” vol. 12, audit of building committee accounts; entry dated October 2, 1854, audit dated September 30, 1854, RPDC.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

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spring of the arch of the nave, are ground glass windows, transmitting a dim and softened light from sky lights in the roof. The general appearance of the church in the interior is rich and massive. The pulpit at the north end is an elaborately ornamented construction, and, indeed the same may be said of all the finishings. The pews are finished with mahogany, the carpeting is an exceedingly rich specimen of Brussels tapestry, and the church is lit with gas, the gas house being built in the N.E. corner of the old burial ground.⁶⁸

This architecturally and historically distinguished church continues to serve the worship needs of this nearly 350-year-old congregation.

Conclusion

Minard Lafever stands as one of the most important architects practicing in antebellum America; his religious designs, in particular, were both admired and influential among his contemporaries. As an inventive and fully mature expression of nineteenth-century architectural eclecticism, the Renaissance Revival First Reformed Protestant Dutch Church of Kingston is an important building within Lafever's nationally significant career as it ably conveys his skill in creating highly original designs within one of the many competing period eclectic modes. A majority of his churches, the type for which Lafever is celebrated, have been demolished and many of those that survive have undergone alterations—both radical and piecemeal over time—because of damage, relocation, or changing fashion and congregation needs. The First Reformed Protestant Dutch Church remains the most intact and fully-developed example of Lafever's Renaissance Revival work, a mode that he was heavily involved in developing and promoting. It maintains physical integrity equal to that of his First Presbyterian Church, Sag Harbor, and St. Ann and Holy Trinity, Brooklyn Heights, both already designated NHLs. Using a variety of classical sources and precedents, especially those of Englishmen Sir Christopher Wren and James Gibbs, Lafever devised an eclectic Renaissance vocabulary conditioned to American functional needs and aesthetic inclinations. His tendency toward eclecticism, skill in working inventively using a multiplicity of inspirational models, and his mastery of architectural ornament, are all manifest in the design of the First Reformed Protestant Dutch Church and confirm its national significance within the discipline of American architecture.

⁶⁸ *Ulster Republican*, October 6, 1852.

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1834-35	First Reformed Church, Brooklyn Heights. Greek Revival (with Gallier, Sr.)	Demolished
1838	St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Granville, Ohio. Interior decorative program, Greek Revival	Extant
1839-40	Washington Square Dutch Reformed Church, Manhattan. Gothic Revival	Demolished
1841-42	First Baptist Church (Broome Street), Manhattan. Gothic Revival	Demolished
1843-44	Pierrepont Street Baptist Church, Brooklyn. Gothic Revival	Demolished
1842-44	Church of the Savior, Brooklyn Heights. Gothic Revival	Demolished
1843-44	Whaler's Presbyterian Church, Sag Harbor. Egyptian and Greek Revival (NHL, 1994)	Extant
1844-47	St. Ann's and Holy Trinity, Brooklyn Heights. Gothic Revival (NHL, 1987)	Extant
1845-46	Church of Our Savior, Hartford, Connecticut. Gothic Revival (Disassembled and rebuilt as Trinity Episcopal Church)	Extant
1846-48	Holy Apostles, Manhattan. Renaissance Revival	Extant
1847-48	Second Presbyterian Church, Richmond, Virginia. Gothic Revival	Extant
1848-50	Church of the Neighbor, Brooklyn. Gothic Revival	Demolished
1849-50	First Presbyterian Church, Syracuse. Gothic Revival	Demolished
1849-50	Dutch Reformed Church, Syracuse. Renaissance Revival	Demolished
ca. 1850	First Baptist Church, Syracuse. Renaissance Revival	Demolished
1850-51	Reformed Church on the Heights, Brooklyn. Renaissance Revival	Demolished
1851-52	Strong Place Baptist Church, Brooklyn. Gothic Revival	Extant
1851-52	First Reformed Protestant Dutch Church, Kingston. Renaissance Revival	Extant
1851-52	Pearl Street Congregational Church, Hartford, Connecticut. Renaissance Revival	Demolished
1853	South Congregational Church, Hartford, Connecticut. Interior decorative program	Extant

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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. Contributing resource, Kingston Stockade District, 1975
- Previously Determined Eligible by the National Register.
- Designated a National Historic Landmark.
- Recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey: # HABS No. NY-5573
- Recorded by Historic American Engineering Record: #

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other (Specify Repository): Archives of the First Reformed Protestant Dutch Church of Kingston

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10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Acreage of Property: 1.4 acres

UTM References:	Zone	Easting	Northing
	18	581300	4642549

Verbal Boundary Description:

The boundary for the nomination is shown on the enclosed map, entitled "First Reformed Protestant Dutch Church of Kingston, 272 Wall Street, City of Kingston, Ulster County, New York."

Boundary Justification:

The boundary has been drawn to correspond with the current legal lot lines for the property, which is 1.4 acres. All of this property was associated with the church at the time of its completion in 1852.

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DESIGNATED A NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK
October 6, 2008