

INVENTORY SHEET FOR GROUP NOMINATIONS: IDAHO STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY, BOISE, IDAHO

NOMINATION: (TOURTELLOTTE AND HUMMEL ARCHITECTURE IN IDAHO TR)

SITE NAME: Ross Fork Episcopal Church

SITE NUMBER: 33

LOCATION: Mission Road, east of Highway 91, Fort Hall, Bingham County (011), Idaho

OWNER'S NAME AND ADDRESS:

Episcopal Diocese of Idaho
510 West Washington Street
Boise, ID 83702

QUADRANGLE AND SCALE: Fort Hall, 7.5 minute

ACREAGE: one and one-quarter acres

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

This nomination includes the Ross Fork Episcopal Church and the property on which it stands, the N 1/2, NW 1/4, NW 1/4, SW 1/4, SE 1/4, Section 36, T4S, R34E, Boise Meridian. Legal description on file at Bingham County Courthouse, Blackfoot, Idaho.

UTM(S): 12/3,90,800/47,82,530

DATE OR PERIOD: 1904

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE: Architecture

EVALUATED LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE: Local

CONDITION: good

unaltered

original site

DESCRIPTION:

The Ross Fork Episcopal Church, or Good Shepherd Mission, is a small buff-brick structure on the outskirts of Fort Hall. The body of the church is rectangular, with a front-facing gable on an outset gabled porch, a ridgebeam steeple, an outset rectangular apse, and an offset vestry ell at left rear. The brick walls are set over a rough stone foundation and cut-stone sill. The entry porch is supported on stone pillars with brick side-walls and has doors in front and in the right side. The nave is four bays deep; windows, one in each available bay of the nave, one on either side of the porch, and one (extra-large) in the apse, employ the pointed Gothic arch. The pointed arch is also used in the louvered vent in the upper angle of the front gable. All of these openings have outset brick sills and label moldings.

The porch may have been enclosed recently, and the curved concrete stoop and metal rails are certainly a modern addition. The present pyramidal steeple cap probably replaces an early open belfry frame set above the original shingled walls. The church is otherwise unaltered on the exterior. The interior also retains substan-

tial interest, particularly in its ship-like lining of narrow wood ceiling strips. The windows, which on the interior show rectilinear frames with gothic-arched insets, are for the most part filled with plain pebbled colored glass. The front and rear windows, however, contain stained glass panels. A plaque at right front commemorates the gift of the chapel from the family of a Virginia woman who died in January of 1904.

SIGNIFICANCE:

The Ross Fork Episcopal Church is architecturally significant as a sturdy and charming example of Gothic revival architecture in southeastern Idaho, where the firm's influence might not have reached were it not for its relationship with the Episcopal Church (see site 6, Bishop Funsten House; note also sites 18, 60, and 75). It has additional historical significance because of its function as a mission church on the Fort Hall Reservation. It is one of only two sites in the Group (see also site 72) which are connected with Idaho minority groups.

The diminutive church at Fort Hall with its stone-trimmed brick body, finely cut lancet windows, and perfectly matched, steeply pitched gables, is a very satisfactory exercise in Gothic revival. Gothic revival was a style which the firm rendered in frame for the Episcopalians (and the Catholics) on a number of occasions. This is the only one of the small churches designed by them to be rendered in such substantial materials. The carpentering of the interior is also admirable.

The building also stands as an illustration of the way an Indian mission might come by a church. The dedication reads: "To the Glory of God and as a thank offering for the life of Anna Robinson Taylor, Who entered into Rest from her home in Norfolk, Virginia, January 20, 1904, this chapel is given by her Children and Grandchildren." By June of the year Mrs. Taylor died, a Boise paper was reporting that Troutellotte and Company had plans accepted by Bishop Funsten for a \$2,500 church "in the usual style of Episcopal edifices."¹

1. (Boise) Capital News, June 30, 1904, p. 9, c. 5.

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES:

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Tourtellotte and Hummel Architecture in Idaho
Ross Fork Episcopal Church, site #33
Mission Road east of Highway 91,
Fort Hall, Bingham County, Idaho

Photographer:
Lisa B. Reitzes
1979

Negative on file at Idaho State Historical Society,
Boise, Idaho

View from south-southeast

Photograph one of two



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Interior view from south-southeast

Photograph two of two