

Property Type:

Site No. \_\_\_\_\_

Historic Preservation Research Office

Structure/Site Information Form

IDENTIFICATION 1

Street Address: 7 South 300 East UTM: 12 437650 4468190  
 Pleasant Grove, Utah County  
 Name of Structure: Pleasant Grove Tithing Office T. R. S.  
 Present Owner: Kenneth E. and Dena K. Jakeman  
 Owner Address: 7 South 300 East  
 Pleasant Grove, Utah 84062  
 Year Built (Tax Record): Effective Age: Tax #: 03-033-17  
 Legal Description Kind of Building:

Commencing at NW corner of Block 31, Pleasant Grove City Survey; thence S 111.9 ft more or less to a fence like, S 88° 47' E along said fence line 82.02 ft, N 113.64 ft, W 82 ft to point of beginning. Less than one acre.

STATUS/USE 2

Original Owner: Mormon Church Construction Date: c. 1908 Demolition Date:  
 Original Use: Tithing Office Present Use: Residence  
 Building Condition: Integrity: Preliminary Evaluation: Final Register Status:  
 Excellent  Site  Unaltered  Significant  Not of the  National Landmark  District  
 Good  Ruins  Minor Alterations  Contributory  Historic Period  National Register  Multi-Resou  
 Deteriorated  Major Alterations  Not Contributory  State Register  Thematic

DOCUMENTATION 3

Photography: Date of Slides: 1983 Slide No.: Date of Photographs: 1983 Photo No.:  
 Views:  Front  Side  Rear  Other Views:  Front  Side  Rear  Other

Research Sources:

Abstract of Title  Sanborn Maps  Newspapers  U of U Library  
 Plat Records/Map  City Directories  Utah State Historical Society  BYU Library  
 Tax Card & Photo  Biographical Encyclopedias  Personal Interviews  USU Library  
 Building Permit  Obituary Index  LDS Church Archives  SLC Library  
 Sewer Permit  County & City Histories  LDS Genealogical Society  Other

Bibliographical References (books, articles, records, interviews, old photographs and maps, etc.):

LDS Church Presiding Bishopric Letterbooks. Alpine Stake, 1903-1909. Available in Church Archives.

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Building Materials: Brick

Building Type/Style: Neo-Classical/1-Part Block

## Description of physical appearance &amp; significant architectural features:

(Include additions, alterations, ancillary structures, and landscaping if applicable)

The Pleasant Grove Tithing Office is a one story brick rectangular building with a pavilion centered on the facade. Its basic form is similar to other tithing offices that were built at the same time, but its flat roof and the obvious influence of the Neoclassical style on the building mark it as a unique example among tithing offices. A centered pavilion on a symmetrical facade characterizes one of the standard types of tithing offices that were built between 1905 and 1910 and suggests that the Pleasant Grove Tithing Office may be a variant of a standard plan. Characteristic of the Neoclassical style is the symmetrical facade with a centered pavilion and a decorative parapet extending from the flat roof. Also typical of the style are the wide frieze below the projecting cornice, the Tuscan columns with Ionic capitals that support the pavilion, and the simple pilasters that frame the pairs of windows on the facade. The entrance is set behind a round arch opening in the front wall under the portico. The building is essentially unaltered and therefore maintains its original integrity.

## Statement of Historical Significance:

Construction Date: c. 1908

Built c. 1908, the Pleasant Grove Tithing Office is historically significant as one of 28 well preserved tithing buildings in Utah that were part of the successful "in kind" tithing system of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS or Mormon church) between the 1850s and about 1910. Tithing lots, which usually included an office and several auxiliary structures, were facilities for collecting, storing, and distributing the farm products that were donated as tithing by church members in the cash-poor agricultural communities throughout the state. Tithing offices were a vital part of almost every Mormon community, serving as local centers of trade, welfare assistance, and economic activity. They were also important as the basic units of the church-wide tithing network that was centered in Salt Lake City.

The exact date of construction of the Pleasant Grove Tithing Office is not known, but judging from its appearance and other circumstantial evidence it was probably built about 1908. Some of the basic features of this building, its square block shape with a symmetrical facade and an arched central porch, are much like those found on the tithing offices in Manti, Panguitch, Richmond, Sandy, and Hyrum, all of which were built between 1905 and 1910. The design of those buildings was one of at least three standard tithing office plans that were developed at church headquarters around 1905 and sent out to a number of wards in the state that requested to have a new tithing office built. Those plans were perhaps the first examples of what eventually became a policy with the church - developing standard building plans at church headquarters rather than having each ward generate its own. Although the Pleasant Grove Tithing Office has a flat roof and other minor features that distinguish it from the Type No. 3 design, the similarities between the two are sufficiently strong to suggest that they were built at about the same time.

## Pleasant Grove Tithing Office History Continued:

The only other indications of when the tithing office might have been built are contained in letters from the Presiding Bishopric's Office in Salt Lake City to Bishop Swen L. Swenson of the Pleasant Grove Ward. A letter of April 9, 1908 to Bishop Swenson stated that, "You are authorized to purchase hard wood shade trees and plant them around the [tithing] lot where needed."<sup>1</sup> The letter also granted approval for the purchase of water rights for the tithing lot. Similar improvements were made to tithing lots in other towns immediately after the completion of their new tithing offices, so it is reasonable to assume that the tithing office in Pleasant Grove was constructed in late 1907 or early 1908. The building was definitely built by at least the spring of 1909 when the local bishops were granted approval to have a telephone installed in the building.<sup>2</sup>

Although by the time the Pleasant Grove Tithing Office was built there were three wards in the town, only the one office was built, a practice that was in keeping with the policy of the church at that time. That policy was stated by the Presiding Bishopric as follows:

When two or more wards comprise a town, an office and conveniences are provided for handling the tithes, in which case one of the Bishops acts as a clerk for both wards, to receive and handle the tithes and the Bishops meet in council once a week to discuss and pass all business connected with that office.<sup>3</sup>

It is not known for sure which of the Pleasant Grove Bishops was in charge of the tithing office, though it was most likely Bishop Swenson since most of the correspondence from the Presiding Bishopric was addressed to him.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup>Presiding Bishopric Letterbooks, letter to Bishop Swen L. Swenson, Pleasant Grove Ward, Alpine Stake, April 9, 1908.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., June 11, 1909.

<sup>3</sup>Presiding Bishopric Letterbooks, letter to President Alma Merrill, Benson Stake, June 27, 1907.