

Structure/Site Information Form

IDENTIFICATION 1

Street Address: Approximately 31 South State Street
 Richmond, Cache County UTM: 12 433040 4641230
 Approx. 31
 Name of Structure: Richmond Tithing Office (Bishops Storehouse) T. R. S.
 Present Owner: Richmond City Corporation
 Owner Address: Richmond, Utah 84333

Year Built (Tax Record): Effective Age: Tax #: 09-055-0008
 Legal Description: Kind of Building:

Commencing 6 rods S of NW corner of Lot 5, Block 17, Plat A,
 Richmond City Survey; thence S 4 rods, E 6 rods, N 4 rods,
 W 6 rods to beginning. Less than one acre

STATUS/USE 2

Original Owner: Mormon Church Construction Date: 1907 Demolition Date:
 Original Use: Tithing Office Present Use: Museum
 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-Resource
 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.):

Nielson, Evelyn Burnham. Interview, June 1983, Salt Lake City.
 LDS Church Presiding Bishopric Letterbooks. Benson Stake, 1907-08. Available at LDS Church Archives.

Architect/Builder: Unknown/James Lewis Burnham

Building Materials: Brick

Building Type/Style: Victorian Eclectic/Pyramid Cottage

Description of physical appearance & significant architectural features:

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

The Richmond Tithing Office is a one story square red brick building with a pyramid roof, a coursed ashlar foundation, and a projecting gabled pavilion on the facade. It was designed from one of at least three standard plans which were created for tithing offices about 1905, two of which have been identified. The design of the Richmond Tithing Office has been identified as type No. 3, and is almost identical to the design of the Sandy, Manti and Panguitch Tithing Offices. It is also very similar to the Hyrum Tithing Office. The facade is symmetrically arranged with a gabled pavilion centered between pairs of one over one double hung sash windows. The pavilion has a flat arch opening. Above the opening is an inset rectangular panel above which is an enclosed semi-circular vent. Pilasters are attached to the corners of the pavilion. Two doors open off the pavilion, each set at an angle into the wall under the pavilion. The arrangement of openings on the other three sides of the building is irregular, but is very similar to that of other tithing offices of this type. Decorative elements include a wide frieze which wraps around the building below the cornice line. It consists of string courses of brick which project at different levels. Rock-faced brick highlights the relieving arches of the windows. A small domed cupola structure tops the building. The Richmond Tithing Office is unaltered, is in good condition, and therefore maintains its original integrity.

Statement of Historical Significance:

Construction Date: 1907

Built in 1907, the Richmond Tithing Office is 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. This building is also significant as one of about tentithing offices which, having been built according to standard plans issued from church headquarters, represent the first known instances of centralized building administration in the LDS church.

In January 1907, Stake President Alma Merrill and Bishop Thomas H. Merrill of the Richmond Ward, submitted a request to the Presiding Bishopric of the LDS church for approval to construct a new tithing office which would also serve as offices for the stake presidency and a meeting place for the stake high council.¹ Land for the new building was provided on the tithing lot in the center of town. Although plans for the building were provided by church headquarters in Salt Lake City, detailed instructions for constructing the building were not given. The Presiding Bishopric offered the following explanation for those omissions: "...regarding specifications for tithing office no. 3, will say, that no specifications were provided other than the bill of material listed on the plans, owing to the fact that the different stakes erect the office of the material at their disposal."² A local builder,³ James Lewis Burnham, was reportedly hired to construct the tithing office,³ which was completed by December 1907 or January 1908. In February
(See Continuation Sheet)

Richmond Tithing Office
History Continued:

1908, Bishop Merrill applied to the Presiding Bishopric for help in furnishing the office. Construction of a fence around the new building and planting grass on the property were finishing touches to the new tithing office that were recommended by the stake clerk in June 1908, but it is unknown whether or not they were ever accomplished.

The design of the Richmond Tithing Office 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. In addition to the Richmond Tithing Office, other tithing offices in the state that were built according to the plans of "tithing office no. 3" are those in Manti, Sandy, Panguitch, and Hyrum, all of which were built between about 1905 and 1910.

The Richmond Tithing Office was owned by the Richmond Ward of the LDS church until 1968, when it was sold to Richmond City. The city has allowed the local chapter of the Daughters of the Utah Pioneers to use the building as their relic hall.

Notes

¹Presiding Bishopric Letterbooks, letter to President Alma Merrill, Benson Stake, January 24, 1907.

²Ibid., letter to Bishop Thomas H. Merrill, Richmond Ward, Benson Stake, May 28, 1907.

³Telephone interview with Evelyn Burnham Nielson, June 1983.