

Utah State Historical Society

Property Type:

Site No. _____

Historic Preservation Research Office

JAN 25 1984

Structure/Site Information Form

IDENTIFICATION 1

Street Address: 35 West Center
Smithfield, Cache County, Utah

UTM: 12 430860 4631780

Name of Structure: Smithfield Tithing Office *Tithing Office of the Smithfield Stake*

Present Owner: Cache County Board of Education
101 West Center Street

Owner Address: Smithfield, Utah 84335

Year Built (Tax Record): _____ Effective Age: _____ Tax #: 08-068-0002

Legal Description: _____ Kind of Building: _____

Commencing 184 feet W of SE corner of Lot 1, Block 18, Plat A, Smithfield City Survey; thence W 6.85 rods, N 165 feet, W 6.5 rods, N 59 feet, E 203 feet, S 136 feet, E 16 feet, S 88 feet to beginning. Less than one acre

STATUS/USE 2

Original Owner: Mormon Church Construction Date: c.1912 Demolition Date: _____

Original Use: Tithing Office Present Use: Vacant

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.: 1983 Date of Photographs: _____ 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.):

Downs, Theoda. Telephone interview, September 7, 1984, Smithfield, Utah.
 LDS Church Presiding Bishopric Letterbooks. Benson Stake, 1906-08. Available at LDS Church Archives.
 Olson, Mr. and Mrs. Leonard. The History of Smithfield. Smithfield, Utah: City of Smithfield, 1927.

Researcher: Roger Roper

Date: 9/84

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Building Materials: Brick

Building Type/Style: Bungalow/Bungalow

Description of physical appearance & significant architectural features:

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

The Smithfield Tithing Office is a one story brick bungalow with a hip roof and a concrete foundation. The roof has a low pitch and a wide overhang, typical of bungalows that were influenced by the Prairie Style. From the front the tithing office looks like a residential house, but it is only about half as deep as most bungalows. It is a small rectangular building with a porch that extends the width of the facade. The porch is open on the ends. The openings of the facade are symmetrically arranged with a door and window on either side of a slightly projecting central bay. There is a single window centered in the bay, one on the west end, a pair on the east end, and three small windows across the north facade. All of the windows with the exception of two square ones at the rear, are the one over one double hung sash type. The building is unaltered, with the exception of some deterioration of the porch balustrade, is in good condition, and therefore maintains its original integrity.

Statement of Historical Significance:

Construction Date: c. 1912

Built c. 1912, the Smithfield Tithing Office is historically significant as one of 28 well preserved tithing offices 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 Smithfield Tithing Office is not known, but judging from its appearance and other evidence it was probably built around 1910. The Bungalow styling of the the building indicates that it was built between 1905 and about 1920. Although this style was primarily a residential style, it is also found occasionally on smaller, residential-scale institutional or commercial buildings.

Further support for a construction date of about 1910 comes from indications that the building was constructed to replace the old tithing office that was apparently torn down c. 1908-09.¹ That older building was located nearby at 30 S. Main.² This new tithing office served both as a tithing office and as the meeting place of the Relief Society (women's organization), and it has even been claimed that the building was actually constructed for the Relief Society and that its use as a tithing office was only a temporary and secondary use of the building.³ However, other historical evidence supports the assumption that it was indeed the tithing office. The 1917 Sanborn

(See Continuation Sheet)

Smithfield Tithing Office
History Continued:

Insurance Map (the first drawn for the city) shows the building as the "Tithing Office," and it was referred to again as the tithing office in a 1927 history of the town.⁴ It was not unusual, though, for tithing offices to be used for a variety of purposes, and the most common auxiliary use of tithing offices throughout the state was as a meeting place for the Relief Society.

The Smithfield Second Ward continued to own the building until 1951, when they sold it to the Board of Education of the Cache County School District, the current owners. It is unknown how long the building was used as a tithing office, but by at least 1917 at least part of it was being used as a temporary public library.⁵ It probably continued as such until 1922 when the Carnegie library in town was completed. It is unknown what the building was used for after that.

Notes

¹Presiding Bishopric Letterbooks, letter to Smithfield bishops, Benson Stake, June 24, 1908.

²Telephone interview with Theoda Downs, September 7, 1984.

³Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Olson, The History of Smithfield, p. 60.

⁴Telephone interview with Theoda Downs, September 7, 1984.

⁵Olson, p. 60.