

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL SURVEY OF HISTORIC SITES AND BUILDINGS

1. STATE New Mexico	2. THEME(S). IF ARCHEOLOGICAL SITE, WRITE "ARCH" BEFORE THEME NO. Theme XX Architecture (Colonial), IV
3. NAME(S) OF SITE San José de Gracia Church (Church of Santo Tomas Del Rio de las Trampas)	4. APPROX. ACREAGE .5 acre
5. EXACT LOCATION (County, township, roads, etc. If difficult to find, sketch on Supplementary Sheet) North side of the Plaza in Las Trampas, State Route 76, Taos County.	
6. NAME AND ADDRESS OF PRESENT OWNER (Also administrator if different from owner) Roman Catholic Archdiocese of New Mexico.	
7. IMPORTANCE AND DESCRIPTION (Describe briefly what makes site important and what remains are extant)	

The church of San José de Gracia, erected between 1760 and 1776, is probably the best preserved and least altered of the Spanish Colonial pueblo churches built in New Mexico.

History

First settled in 1751 by 12 Spanish families from Santa Fe, the walled village flourished until there were 63 families numbering 278 people in 1776. Construction on the existing church began sometime after 1760 and was completed by 1776. Tree ring datings for two roof beams or vigas gives the date 1791 and 1812; this suggests that a new roof was placed on the church early in the 19th century. In Spanish Colonial times the parish as well as mission churches were staffed by Franciscan missionaries. When the New Mexico missions were secularized by the Mexican government and the friars forbidden to minister as secular clergy in 1834, the shortage of clergy in New Mexico became acute. As no secular clergy arrived from Mexico to replace the regular clergy, the spiritual leadership developed on lay leaders. This situation continued until the 1850's when the Catholic Church in New Mexico was reorganized under Bishop Lamy.

Until the 1920's the Trampas area remained so isolated and its economy so retarded that it was unaffected by American fashions of the late 19th century. It is to this cultural and economic isolation that the remarkable unaltered state of the San José de Gracia church is due.

(Continued)

8. BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES (Give best sources; give location of manuscripts and rare works)

See page 3.

9. REPORTS AND STUDIES (Mention best reports and studies, as, NPS study, IIABS, etc.)

Historical American Building Survey Data Book Report HABS No NM61  
"San José de Gracia Church" by Bainbridge Bunting, December, 1961, 55 pp. "Las Trampas - A Special Report for the Advisory Board," (N.P.S. Mimeo., Santa Fe, N.M.), March, 1967.

10. PHOTOGRAPHS • 4791, 4778 ATTACHED: YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	11. CONDITION Excellent	12. PRESENT USE (Museum, farm, etc.) Parish Church	13. DATE OF VISIT March 25, 1968
14. NAME OF RECORDER (Signature) <i>Charles W. Snell</i> Charles W. Snell	15. TITLE Historian	16. DATE May 1, 1968	

\* DRY MOUNT ON AN 8 X 10 1/2 SHEET OF FAIRLY HEAVY PAPER. IDENTIFY BY VIEW AND NAME OF THE SITE, DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH, AND NAME OF PHOTOGRAPHER. GIVE LOCATION OF NEGATIVE. IF ATTACHED, ENCLOSE IN PROPER NEGATIVE ENVELOPES.

(IF ADDITIONAL SPACE IS NEEDED USE SUPPLEMENTARY SHEET, 10-317a, AND REFER TO ITEM NUMBER)

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NATIONAL SURVEY OF HISTORIC SITES AND BUILDINGS  
SUPPLEMENTARY SHEET

This sheet is to be used for giving additional information or comments, for more space for any item on the regular form, and for recording pertinent data from future studies, visitations, etc. Be brief, but use as many Supplement Sheets as necessary. When items are continued they should be listed, if possible, in numerical order of the items. All information given should be headed by the item number, its name, and the word (cont'd), as, 6. Description and Importance (cont'd) . . .

STATE New Mexico	NAME(S) OF SITE ✓ San José de Gracia Church (Church of Santo Tomas Del Rio) de las Trampas.
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7. Continued:

Present Appearance

The church has a single nave plan 100 feet long by 52 feet wide (outside dimensions) and, there are also transepts and a projecting apse. The adobe walls of the nave measure four and six feet respectively in thickness and rise to a height of 34 feet. Facing south, the facade has no towers, but projecting buttresses enclose a recess containing an outdoor balcony at the choir loft level. The two flanking buttresses are topped by small wooden belfries. Exterior architectural decoration is limited to the paneled main entrance door and the simple wooden balcony above.

Inside a small chapel to the right serves as the baptistry. The nave is lighted by two windows in the east wall, and the wood floor is made of hand-hewn slabs of wood set in rough frames five feet by two feet. Approached by a simple ladder, the wood-floored balcony over the main entrance serves as the choir loft. The under side of this loft is decorated with simple painted designs. The flat ceiling is supported by wooden vigas and corbels. Rather crudely cut but with strong profile, the carved corbels are more elaborate at the crossing area where the dramatic contrasts in lighting accentuate the design. The nave ceiling is 19 feet 6 inches high, and those of the transepts and sanctuary are 22 feet.

One of the most remarkable features of the New Mexico Spanish Colonial Churches, and one that is well illustrated here, is a transverse clerestory window located so that, though invisible from the nave, it throws a mysterious light on the sanctuary and altar. To accomplish this the transept roof was raised a few feet higher than the nave roof and this permitted the introduction of a low horizontal window over the nave roof, light from which would flood the otherwise dark interior of the altar area. Such clerestory windows are unknown elsewhere in Spanish Colonial architecture, or indeed in Christian architecture anywhere in the world, and they seem to have been an invention of the Franciscan padres of New Mexico. Old paintings adorn the carved wood reredos and side walls, and a wooden lattice railing serves as an altar rail.

The forecourt of the church is used for a graveyard and is surrounded by a low adobe wall with a handsome gate. The church has been little altered since the early 19th century. A new earth-filled roof was placed over the

(Continued)

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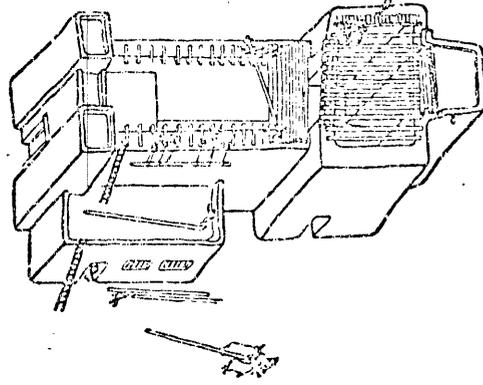
STATE New Mexico	NAME(S) OF SITE San Jose de Gracia Church (Church of Santo Tomas Del Rio) de las Trampas.
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7. Continued:

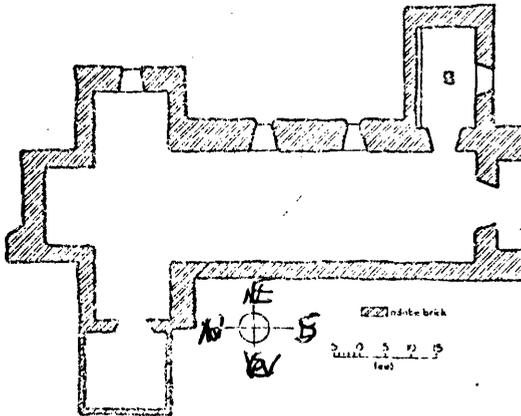
church in 1932 and a built-up asphalt roof covering was added over this in 1955. A new coat of mud plaster was also applied to the exterior of the church in 1961. The structure is still an active parish church and is open to visitors.

8. References:

George Kubler, The Religious Architecture of New Mexico (Colorado Springs, 1940), 126; Fray Francisco Atanasio, The Missions of New Mexico, translated by Eleanor B. Adams and Fray Angelico Chavez (Albuquerque, 1956) 99-101, 251; Eleanor B. Adams, ed., Bishop Tameron's Visitation of New Mexico, 1760, Historical Society of New Mexico Publications in History Vol. 15 (Albuquerque, 1954), 55. Bainbridge Bunting, Taos Adobes (Santa Fe, 1964), 62-67; Bainbridge Bunting and John P. Conron, "A Village and a Church-- Las Trampas," New Mexico Architecture (Sept-Oct. 1966) Vol. 8, No. 9 and 10, pp 27-31; Hugh Morrison, Early American Architecture (New York, 1952) 196-97; Trent E. Sanford, The Architecture of the Southwest (New York, 1950), 142-43.



158. Building a New Mexican mission in the seventeenth century (George Kubler, *Religious Architecture in New Mexico*, The Taylor Museum)



170. Plan of Santo Tomás, Trampas, N.M. (George Kubler, *Religious Architecture in New Mexico*, The Taylor Museum)



# United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

IN REPLY REFER TO:

A1619-DOS

APR 13 1970

Memorandum

To: Secretary of the Interior  
Through: Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife, Parks, and Marine Resources *LP 4/14*

From: <sup>Acting</sup> Director, National Park Service

Subject: National Historic Landmark recommendations, 61st meeting of the Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings and Monuments

Enclosed herewith is the memorandum of the Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings and Monuments summarizing its findings and recommendations on the National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings partial theme study of "Colonial Architecture." This memorandum makes two principal recommendations: (1) That 77 sites encompassed by this study be declared eligible for National Historic Landmark status. These are listed under Sections A, B, C, and D of the memorandum; (2) That 41 of these sites be given further consideration in long range plans for addition to the National Park System.

We recommend that you approve the Advisory Board's memorandum, and that it be returned to this office to become a part of the permanent record of actions recommended by the Board and approved by you.

*Harthon L. Bice*

Enclosure

Approved: APR 15 1970

*Walter Hickel*  
Secretary of the Interior



# United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

IN REPLY REFER TO:

October 8, 1969

## Memorandum

To: Secretary of the Interior

From: Chairman, Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings, and Monuments

Subject: National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings: Partial study of "Colonial Architecture" comprising sites in eighteen States and the District of Columbia

The Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings, and Monuments, at its 61st meeting in Washington, D. C., October 6-9, 1969, having carefully evaluated the partial study of "Colonial Architecture," submits the following statements with recommendations:

A. Of the sites included in the study, the following are recognized as nationally significant in illustrating or commemorating the history of the United States, and it is recommended that they be declared eligible for designation as Registered National Historic Landmarks with boundaries, as appropriate, described in attachments:

### Alaska

1. Church of the Holy Ascension, Unalaska
2. Church of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary, Kenai

### California

3. Anza House
4. Jose Castro House
5. Estudillo House
6. Fort Ross Commander's House
7. Fort Ross Russian Orthodox Church
8. Guajome Ranchhouse
9. Los Alamos Ranchhouse
10. Los Cerritos Ranchhouse
11. Monterey Old Town Historic District
12. Petaluma Adobe
13. San Diego Mission Church
14. San Juan Bautista Plaza Historic District
15. San Luis Rey Mission Church
16. Vhay House

Delaware

17. Aspendale

Florida

18. Llambias House
19. Oldest House
20. St. Augustine Town Plan Historic District

Illinois

21. Church of the Holy Family
22. Pierre Menard House

Louisiana

23. Keller (Homeplace) Plantation House
24. Lafitte's Blacksmith Shop
25. Mayor Girod House
26. Madame John's Legacy
27. Parlange Plantation House
28. Presbytere

Maryland

29. Brice House
30. Chase-Lloyd House
31. Chestertown Historic District
32. His Lordship's Kindness
33. London Town Publik House
34. Montpelier
35. Mount Clare
36. Resurrection Manor
37. Tulip Hill
38. West St. Mary's Manor
39. Wye House

Missouri

40. Louis Bolduc House

New Mexico

41. San Estevan del Rey Mission Church
42. San Francisco de Assissi Mission Church
43. San Jose de Gracia Church

North Carolina

44. Chowan County Courthouse
45. Cupola House
46. Palmer-Marsh House
47. Single Brothers' House

South Carolina

48. Brick House Ruin
49. William Gibbes House
50. Hampton Plantation
51. Heyward-Washington House
52. Middleburg Plantation
53. Pompion Hill Chapel
54. St. James' Episcopal Church, Goose Creek
55. St. James' Episcopal Church, Santee
56. St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

Texas

57. Mission Concepcion
58. Spanish Governor's Palace

Virginia

59. Brandon
60. Bruton Parish Church
61. Carter's Grove
62. Christ Church, Alexandria
63. Kenmore
64. Sabine Hall
65. James Semple House
66. Shirley
67. Waterford Historic District
68. Wythe House
69. Yeocomico Church

Washington

70. Fort Nisqually Granary

B. Three sites included in the portion of Colonial Architecture that considered the Middle Colonies are recognized as nationally significant and it is recommended that they be declared eligible for designation as Registered National Historic Landmarks:

1. William Trent House, New Jersey
2. Christ Church, Pennsylvania
3. Carpenters' Hall, Pennsylvania

C. Two sites included in this study are recognized as nationally significant in Theme IV, "Spanish Exploration and Settlement." It is recommended that they be declared eligible for recognition as Registered National Historic Landmarks:

1. La Purisima Mission, California
2. Cathedral of St. Augustine, Florida

D. Two sites not originally included within this study are recommended for designation as National Historic Landmarks within Theme XX, Subtheme, "Architecture."

1. El Santuario de Chimayo, New Mexico
2. Peyton Randolph House, Virginia

E. Other Recommendations:

1. That the following sites be placed in the category of "Other Sites Considered:"

California

- (1) Avila House
- (2) La Casa de Cota de la Cuesta
- (3) La Casa de Eduardo de la Cuesta
- (4) Covarrubias Adobe
- (5) De La Guerra Adobe
- (6) El Cuartel
- (7) Guadalupe (Olivera) Ranch House No. 1
- (8) Hill-Carrillo Adobe
- (9) Ortega House

- (10) Plaza Church
- (11) Rocha House
- (12) San Diego Old Town Historic District
- (13) San Juan Capistrano Mission Church

District of Columbia

- (14) Alva Belmont House

Illinois

- (15) Cahokia Courthouse
- (16) Cahokia Historic District

Louisiana

- (17) Darby Plantation House
- (18) Ormond Plantation

Maryland

- (19) Emmanuel Protestant Episcopal Church
- (20) Genesar
- (21) Hammond Manor House
- (22) Kilmarock (Burleane Hall)
- (23) Ogle Hall
- (24) Otterbein Church
- (25) Patuxent Manor House
- (26) St. John's Episcopal Church, Broad Creek
- (27) St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Kent County
- (28) Talbot County Court House
- (29) Third Haven Meeting House
- (30) Trinity Episcopal Church, Dorchester County

Missouri

- (31) Jean Baptiste Valle House

New Mexico

- (32) San Geronimo de Taos Mission Church

North Carolina

- (33) Bath Historic District
- (34) St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Edenton
- (35) St. Thomas Episcopal Church, Bath
- (36) Tryon Palace, Original (West) Wing

South Carolina

- (37) Branford-Horry House
- (38) Fenwick Hall
- (39) Medway Plantation
- (40) Thomas Rose House
- (41) Col. John Stuart House
- (42) Sword Gate House

Virginia

- (43) Berkeley Plantation
- (44) Brafferton Hall, College of William and Mary
- (45) The Glebe House
- (46) Noland's Ferry House
- (47) Pohick Church
- (48) President's House, College of William and Mary
- (49) Smithfield Plantation
- (50) Tazewell House

West Virginia

- (51) Crane (Lord Fairfax) House
- (52) Mordington (Happy Retreat)
- (53) Governor Tiffin House

2. That the following sites be given further study under this theme:

California

- (1) Olivas Adobe
- (2) San Gabriel Mission Church

Colorado

- (3) Baca House

Connecticut

- (4) Hatheway House

Delaware

- (5) Christ Church, Laurel
- (6) Prince George's Chapel

Florida

- (7) Spanish Treasurer's House

Louisiana

- (8) African House, Melrose Plantation
- (9) Creole Cottage
- (10) Louis Arceneaux House
- (11) E. D. White Memorial Cottage
- (12) Voisin Plantation House
- (13) Spanish Custom House
- (14) Erariste Blanc House
- (15) Montegut House
- (16) Bank of the United States
- (17) Absinthe House
- (18) Cathedral of St. Louis

Maryland

- (19) Carroll Mansion
- (20) Providence Plantation
- (21) Queen Anne's County Courthouse
- (22) Horatio Sharp (Rideout) House
- (23) Scott House
- (24) St. John's Episcopal Church, Hillsboro
- (25) St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Church Hill
- (26) St. Luke's Episcopal Church or Tuckahoe Chapel, Queenstown
- (27) Old Wye Church
- (28) Doughoregan Manor

New Mexico - Florida

- (29) Pascual Martinez Ranch House
- (30) Santa Fe and Albuquerque and Pensacola town plans

North Carolina

- (31) Breezeway type of Colonial House
- (32) Edenton Historic District
- (33) Hayes Plantation House
- (34) Sycamore Plantation

South Carolina

- (35) Edward's House
- (36) Edisto Hall

Virginia

- (37) Battersea
- (38) Blandfield
- (39) Carlyle House
- (40) Dulaney House
- (41) Elmwood
- (42) Hanover Tavern
- (43) Hanover Courthouse
- (44) King William Courthouse
- (45) Long Bridge Ordinary
- (46) Marmion
- (47) Powhatan Courthouse
- (48) Powhatan Tavern
- (49) Three-story wooden row houses, south side of 200 block of Prince Street in Alexandria
- (50) Smithfield Courthouse
- (51) Washington Historic District
- (52) Wetherburn's Tavern
- (53) Fincastle Historic District

West Virginia

- (54) Harewood
- (55) Sweet Springs

F. The National Park System includes the following structures that are Importantly Related to this study:

1. Tumacacori National Monument, Arizona
2. Castillo de San Marcos National Monument, Florida
3. Fort Matanzas National Monument, Florida

4. Hampton National Historic Site, Maryland
5. Nelson House, Colonial National Historical Park, Virginia
6. San Jose Mission Church, Texas

G. Forty-eight sites related to this theme have been classified as possessing national significance in other theme studies. These are:

Importantly Related to Colonial Architecture

1. Russian Mission Orphanage, Alaska
2. San Xavier del Bac Mission Church, Arizona
3. Carmel Mission Church, California
4. Larkin House, California
5. Old Custom House, California
6. Royal Presidio Chapel, California
7. Santa Barbara Mission Church, California
8. Sonoma Pueblo Historic District, California (with boundaries enlarged and defined in the attachments)
9. Savannah Historic District, Georgia
10. The Cabildo, Louisiana
11. Ursuline Convent, Louisiana
12. Vieux Carre Historic District, Louisiana
13. Jackson Square, Louisiana
14. Colonial Annapolis Historic District, Maryland
15. Hammond-Harwood House, Maryland
16. Maryland State House, Maryland
17. Whitehall, Maryland
18. Ste. Genevieve Historic District, Missouri
19. Palace of the Governors, New Mexico
20. Old Salem Historic District, North Carolina
21. Miles Brewton House, South Carolina
22. Robert Brewton House, South Carolina
23. Charleston Historic District, South Carolina (with boundaries enlarged and defined in the attachments)
24. Drayton Hall, South Carolina
25. Mulberry Plantation, South Carolina
26. St. Michael's Episcopal Church, South Carolina
27. Presidio de La Bahia, Texas
28. Alexandria Historic District, Virginia
29. Bacon's Castle, Virginia
30. Christ Church, Lancaster County, Virginia

31. Colonial Williamsburg Historic District, Virginia
32. Gadsby's Tavern, Virginia
33. Gunston Hall, Virginia
34. Mount Airy, Virginia
35. Mount Vernon, Virginia
36. St. Luke's Church, Virginia
37. Stratford Hall, Virginia
38. Adam Thoroughgood House, Virginia
39. Tuckahoe Plantation, Virginia
40. Westover, Virginia
41. Wren Building, College of William and Mary, Virginia

Also Related to Colonial Architecture

42. Erskine House, Alaska
43. St. Michael's Cathedral, Alaska
44. Commandant's House, Presidio of San Francisco, California
45. Las Trampas Plaza Historic District, New Mexico
46. Salem Tavern, Old Salem, North Carolina
47. The Alamo, Texas
48. Rising Sun Tavern, Virginia

H. The Board recommends that the Old State (Colony) House in Newport, Rhode Island, a Landmark previously placed in the category of Also Related to Colonial Architecture, be noted as being Importantly Related to Colonial Architecture.

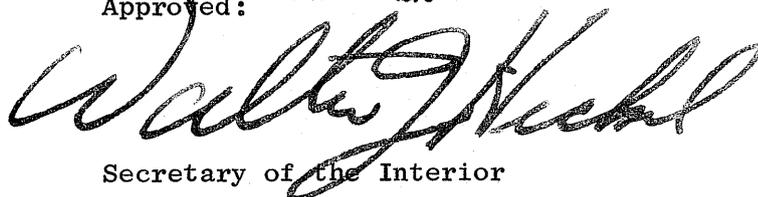
I. The following sites are judged of such prime significance as to merit further study for possible addition to the National Park System. It is recognized that many, such as Colonial Williamsburg, are being adequately preserved at present and are not available. Because unforeseen contingencies may change present circumstances, such sites should nevertheless be identified as potential units of the system and noted for long-range consideration in the evolution of the National Park System Plan.

1. Russian Mission Orphanage, Alaska
2. San Xavier del Bac Mission Church, Arizona
3. Fort Ross, California
4. Guajome Ranchhouse, California
5. Los Alamos Ranchhouse, California
6. Monterey Old Town Historic District, California

7. Petaluma Adobe, California
8. Royal Presidio Chapel, California
9. Santa Barbara Mission Church, California
10. Church of the Holy Family, Illinois
11. Parlange Plantation House, Louisiana
12. Vieux Carre Historic District, Louisiana
13. Colonial Annapolis Historic District, Maryland
14. Resurrection Manor, Maryland
15. Tulip Hill, Maryland
16. Whitehall, Maryland
17. Wye House, Maryland
18. Ste. Genevieve Historic District, Missouri
19. San Estevan del Rey Mission Church (Acoma), New Mexico
20. San Jose de Gracia Church (Las Trampas), New Mexico
21. Old Salem Historic District, North Carolina
22. Charleston Historic District, South Carolina
23. Drayton Hall, South Carolina
24. Mulberry Plantation, South Carolina
25. St. James Episcopal Church, Goose Creek, South Carolina
26. St. James Episcopal Church, Santee, South Carolina
27. Mission Concepcion (San Antonio Missions Park Proposal), Texas
28. Presidio de la Bahia (Goliad Complex), Texas
29. Alexandria Historic District, Virginia
30. Brandon, Virginia
31. Bacon's Castle, Virginia
32. Christ Church, Lancaster County, Virginia
33. Colonial Williamsburg Historic District, Virginia
34. Gunston Hall, Virginia
35. Mount Airy, Virginia
36. Mount Vernon, Virginia
37. St. Luke's Church, Virginia
38. Shirley, Virginia
39. Stratford Hall, Virginia
40. Adam Thoroughgood House, Virginia
41. Westover, Virginia

  
Emil W. Haury

Approved: APR 15 1970

  
Secretary of the Interior