

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

NOMINATION: (TOURTELLOTTE AND HUMMEL ARCHITECTURE IN IDAHO TR)

✓ SITE NAME: St. Joseph's Catholic Church ✓ SITE NUMBER: 116

✓ LOCATION: ^{1st,} ~~First~~ and Cedar, Bovill, Latah County (057), Idaho

OWNER'S NAME AND ADDRESS:

Roman Catholic Diocese of Boise
420 West Idaho Street
Boise, ID 83702

QUADRANGLE AND SCALE: Bovill, 15 minute ACREAGE: less than one

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

The nomination includes the St. Joseph's Catholic Church and the property on which it stands, lots 7 and 8, block 10, Bovill Original Townsite. Legal description on file at the Latah County Courthouse, Moscow, Idaho.

UTM(S): 11/5,46,125/51,89,400

DATE OR PERIOD: 1928

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE: Architecture

EVALUATED LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE: Local

CONDITION: good unaltered moved ca. 1935

DESCRIPTION:

St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Bovill is a frame bungalow style church which bears close comparison to the Parma Catholic church (site 90) designed by the firm more than a decade before. It is slightly smaller, being built to a 10-by-40-foot plan with a nave only four bays deep. It has, however, the same front-facing gable, somewhat steeper in pitch, and the same outset enclosed entry and steepled, cross-gabled belfry. Differences are primarily in detail.

The siding of St. Joseph's is narrow clapboards from the concrete foundation to the eaves. A narrow molding strip circling the structure at the level of the sills corresponds to the level of the shingled baseband on the Parma church. The bargeboards are more elaborate here, with long angular notches between variously sized figure-four brackets--largest on the porch gable, smallest on the belfry. The notching is particularly dense and decorative on the small belfry gables. The gable has an apron of close-ranked vertical strips above a bargeboard-width horizontal plank. The rafters are fully exposed, though trimmed flush, under the lateral eaves. The belfry and steeple are sided with square shingles. The steeple is surmounted by a small iron cross.

The nave windows are simple rectangular double-hung sash. A Gothic flavor is provided by a pointed-arched transom light over the double entrance doors and by the louvered belfry openings, which have straight-sided pointed-arched tops.

The bungaloid rear addition to the church does not appear in the original plans but is rendered in closely compatible materials and style. The exterior brick chimney is capped at the roofline. The concrete stoop with its raked parapet walls and pipe-rail bannisters was presumably added after the move to the new concrete foundation in Bovill. With these exceptions the structure represents unaltered original fabric.

SIGNIFICANCE:

St. Joseph's Catholic Church is architecturally significant as the alt in a series of sibling churches with bungaloid profiles and cross-gabled steeples--here unusually elaborate, with a picturesque, perhaps appropriately Alpine cast--which has been designed by the firm in the mid-1910s. It also establishes the presence of the firm almost as far north in Idaho as their influence has been found to reach--again as the result of an institutional relationship. The church's remote location, with its checkered economic history, has directly influenced the life of this building.

Among the series of bungaloid churches designed by the firm, all extrapolating from the example of Immanuel Lutheran in Boise, the north Idaho example most closely resembles the Catholic church in Parma. The close resemblance makes particularly clear the firm's recycling of plans, even for the same client. The differences in detail in this church--the fluted bargeboards in particular--show once more the resurgence of picturesque design in the 1920s. Conceivably, too, this Alpine exterior decor was considered appropriate to the location in a north Idaho lumber town.

Elk River, the original site of the church, was founded in 1910 around a single industry, the Clearwater Timber Company. When the mill closed down in 1933, the town nearly did too. Company houses were moved out on skids, and within a short time the Catholic church, which had been built only a few years before, was moved to Bovill to serve a more populous congregation which had lost their church to fire.

The church is included in the Thematic Group, despite the fact that it has been moved, for a number of reasons. First, it is considered important to the Group itself, in establishing within that framework the longevity of the bungalow style, the recycling or resurrection of plans and types, and the geographic reach of the firm's influence. Further, the building has been in its new location close to fifty years and has assumed site integrity and local meaning in its new location; it is one of the most important early buildings in the very small town of Bovill, and the only one known to have been designed by an architect of statewide importance. Finally, the circumstances of the move, far from being random, are themselves significant. They are intimately connected with the economy and social history of the locality, with its reliance on a single industry and the potential for displacement which that entails.

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES:

Lewiston Morning Tribune. December 4, 1977.

Interview with Ruth Ulinder, Potlatch, Idaho (formerly resident of Elk River),
April 1980.

Boise, Idaho. Hummel Jones Miller Hunsucker P.A. File 402B. Collection book
reference 1929. Tracings signed Tourtellotte and Hummel.