

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

NOMINATION: ~~TOURTELLOTTE AND HUMMEL ARCHITECTURE IN IDAHO~~

L SITE NAME: Mitchell Hotel

SITE NUMBER: 42

LOCATION: ~~Northwest corner of Tenth, and Front Streets, Boise, Ada County (001), Idaho~~

OWNER'S NAME AND ADDRESS:

Boise Auto Mart
P. O. Box 2797
Boise, ID 83707

QUADRANGLE AND SCALE: Boise South, 7.5 minute

ACREAGE: less than one

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

The nomination includes the Mitchell Hotel and the property on which it stands, east one-half lot 5, lot 6, block 19, Boise City Original Townsite. Legal description on file at the Ada County Courthouse, Boise, ID.

UTM(S): 11/5,64,40/48,29,280

DATE OR PERIOD: 1906

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE: Architecture and Commerce

EVALUATED LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE: Local

CONDITION: fair altered original site

DESCRIPTION:

The Mitchell Hotel building is a two-story, 122-by-60-foot commercial structure with the long side facing Tenth Street and a corner entrance in the short beveled wall facing the intersection. The fabric is brick, with a coursed stone foundation, stone trim around the main entrance, and fancy brickwork on the second-story windows and parapet.

The Front Street elevation, which is really a sidewall, is five bays deep beyond the corner entrance. The downstairs openings--two deep, transomed, double-hung sash windows, two untransomed sash windows, and door--are all segmentally arched with triple-coursed headers and are arranged AABCB. The upper-story windows, like those on the Tenth Street elevation, are segmentally arched double-hung sashes with elaborate outset and denticulated surrounds of header brick. On the Tenth Street side these windows form eleven bays past the corner. Below them seven shopfronts, including the one entered by the corner entrance, originally opened. The corner entrance has stone trim on the bases and tops of its supporting members. The next entrance north of the corner led to the upstairs hotel rooms, which were ranged

around a central light well. This entrance also retains its stone pilaster-like bases, capitals, and stone arch. The second-story parapet, above a plain outset cornice, is cut low in the middle of the elevations, raised and embellished with broad recessed chevrons at the corners, and finished with a smooth coping along its entire length.

The brick and stone surfaces of this building have been painted and the Tenth Street storefronts subjected to screening and reglazing. Otherwise the building closely resembles its historic appearance and is in stable condition.

SIGNIFICANCE:

The Mitchell Hotel is architecturally significant as one of the few commercial structures in the Thematic Group. It illustrates fancy brickwork--particularly the denticulated window--which the firm was using frequently for commercial commissions in the first decade of this century. The functional type of the hotel, located across from an early Boise railroad depot, is of historical interest as well.

The segmentally arched upper-story windows of the Mitchell are surrounded on three sides with smooth-sided surrounds lined with dentil-like forms. This pattern was a signature of the firm at this time, as the elongated wooden keystone on Queen Anne Houses had been. The Thomas Woodcock House and the Boise Turnverein Building, both dated 1906 and included in the Boise Historic District (National Register, November 9, 1977) also have denticulated surrounds. So does the 1906 Egleston Building in Caldwell. The Meridian Exchange Bank (site 45), again 1906, shows a variation on the type, with the inverted dentils enlarged to the scale of inverted quoins. On the Lewiston City Hall (site 61), the dentils face outward and the inner surfaces of the surrounds are smooth. The use of signature motifs may be seen in two ways, and probably in fact performed two functions: they saved design time, and they established a personal (or corporate) style for the firm.

The hotel is an interesting survivor historically as well as stylistically, as an example of a company undertaking a business venture not directly related to its product. Clearly intended from its siting to attract the business trade, the Mitchell would also, its owners hoped, become a dining establishment of note. The latter ambition was given up within a year, but the Mitchell survived as a functioning hotel until recent years despite competition from other Boise hotels and despite the removal of the depot to the Boise Bench in the 1920s.

The Mitchell was completed in 1907 at a reported cost of \$25,000.

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES:

(Boise) Idaho Statesman, December 7, 1906, p. 7, c. 2; December 30, 1906, sec. 4, p. 5, c. 1; January 13, 1907, p. 5, c. 2; January 15, 1907, p. 5, c. 2; January 5, 1908, p. 14, c. 4; December 12, 1908, p. 7, c. 2.

Boise, Idaho. Hummel Jones Miller Hunsucker P.A. File 125C. Drawings signed John E. Tourtellotte and Company.