

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

NOMINATION: (TOURTELLOTTE AND HUMMEL ARCHITECTURE ~~IN IDAHO~~ TR)

✓ SITE NAME: Tourtellotte, John, Building      SITE NUMBER: 115

✓ LOCATION: 210-222 North <sup>10th</sup> ~~Tenth~~ Street, Boise, Ada County ~~(001)~~, Idaho

OWNER'S NAME AND ADDRESS:

Gem State Investors, Inc.  
900 Fourth Avenue  
P. O. Box 21545  
Seattle, WA 98111

QUADRANGLE AND SCALE: Boise South, 7.5 minute      ACREAGE: less than one

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

The nomination includes the John Tourtellotte Building and the property on which it stands, lot 7, block 45, Boise City Original Townsite. Legal description on file at the Ada County Courthouse, Boise, Idaho.

UTM(S): 11/5,64,290/48,29,560

DATE OR PERIOD: 1927

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE: Architecture

EVALUATED LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE: Local

CONDITION: fair      unaltered      original site

DESCRIPTION:

The Johnh Tourtellotte Bulding is a one-story stuccoed reinforced concrete commercial building filling the 50-by-122-foot southeast corner lot at the intersection of Tenth and Bannock streets. The decorative format of the long, low, flat-roofed block is quite simple. The surface is veneered with cast panels laid up to resemble stone blocks. The upper facade is embellished with a continuous frieze of swags and discs. Below a recessed strip that allows the upper facade to visually float above their capitals, blocky pilasters divide the elevations into bays of equal width: three on Bannock street, eight on Tenth Street. The shop fronts are plate glass below and very deep multi-light mezzanine lights above, with a panelled strip between. The mezzanine lights extend all the way to the pilaster caps.

The mezzanine opening on the left-most bay on Bannock has been reglazed with plain plate glass. The mezzanine lights of the second and third bays from the left on Tenth Street have been screened over the original panes. The right-most bay on Tenth has aluminum screening from the top of the lower shopfront windows to the roofline. The base of the building below the shop display is also screened. Aside from these screens and some contemporary signage, the building is unaltered.

## SIGNIFICANCE:

The John Tourtellotte Building is architecturally significant on at least two levels. First, this is the first frankly cast-concrete commercial structure in the Group. All previous ones had been veneered, at least, with brick or stone, or with classical trappings in the case of the Boise High School Manual Arts building. The Troutellotte building represents the classicizing impulse of the 1920s in interaction with new structural systems and the functionalist aesthetic which accompanied them. Second, and probably not unconnected to its structural progressiveness, the building is significant as a design sent out of the Portland office and built under the supervision of the local office of Tourtellotte and Hummel, as were several larger projects of the period. In this case, the project was an investment property for the senior partner.

The architectural significance of the building is the more clear in a comparison of it with the J. O. Jordan building, a block away on Bannock and ten years younger. It is a virtually identical building structurally, and almost certainly built from only slightly modified plans. The Jordan building has an art deco sheath: stylized fiddle-head ornament capping the pilasters, angular crests at the roofline. The pre-cast concrete panels of the Troutellotte building, by contrast, are relieved by simple classicizing pilaster capitals and a frieze above conservative, multiple--segmented mezzanine lights. The effect is one of restraint and conservatism, therefore, despite the obviously modern materials which only a decade later would produce a more progressive and machined effect.

John Tourtellotte had owned the lot at Tenth and Bannock streets, at least originally in partnership with William Ridenbaugh, for many years. In 1910 a "Tourtellotte and Ridenbaugh building," to which we have found no other reference, was reported for the site. Among the miscellaneous papers held by the successor firm is a Boise City sprinkling assessment for this lot dated 1912. The building permit issued for the site in the December of 1927 lists John E. Troutellotte as the owner, T. G. Rowland as the contractor, and the value as \$16,675. Since the Tourtellotte and Hummel offices in Portland and Boise were by this time financially independent; since neither plans nor collection book references were found in the office of the successor firm in Boise; and since the job does appear in the Frederick Hummel retrospective file, dated 1928, it would appear that the plan was generated by the Portland firm and supervised by the Boise office. This arrangement was followed, with varying amounts of participation by the Boise architects, for several much larger projects of the period: the 1927 C. C. Anderson store, the Empire building remodeling and addition of the same year, and the 1929 Hotel Boise, which brought the art deco style to the city.

## MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES:

(Boise) Idaho Statesman, March 3, 1910, sec. 2, p. 2, c. 1.

Boise, Idaho. Boise City Building Permit. December 5, 1927.

Boise, Idaho. Hummel Jones Miller Hunsucker P.A. Frederick Hummel retrospective file; a reference to 1912 sprinkling assessment among miscellaneous papers.