

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

For NPS use only

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received **MAR 6 1984**
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic St. Matthew's Cathedral Close

and/or common St. Matthew's Cathedral Square

2. Location

street & number 104 South 4th Street _____ not for publication

city, town Laramie _____ vicinity of

state Wyoming code 56 county Albany code 001

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> n/a in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> n/a being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Episcopal Diocese of Wyoming

street & number 104 South 4th Street

city, town Laramie _____ vicinity of state Wyoming

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Albany County Courthouse

street & number 405 Grand Avenue

city, town Laramie _____ vicinity of state Wyoming

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Albany County Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1981 _____ federal _____ state _____ county _____ local

depository for survey records _____

city, town _____ state _____

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date Deanery moved 1921

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

St. Matthew's Cathedral Close, named from the early custom of securing the privacy of the cathedral precincts by enclosing them within a wall, comprises a square block in the center of downtown Laramie. It is bounded on the north by University Avenue, by Third Street on the west, on the south by Ivinson Avenue (formerly Thornburgh Street), and by Fourth Street on the east. The square has a frontage of 280 feet on the avenues and 264 feet on the streets. The Close contains St. Matthew's Cathedral, a massive stone Gothic Revival church; the Deanery, a two-story Victorian brick structure; Hunter Hall (formerly Sherwood Hall), a two and five-story stone and stucco building in the eclectic style; and the First World War Memorial Cross, located at the center of the complex. The grounds feature traditional plantings, which occupy those portions of the block not taken up by buildings and walkaways. All buildings are set back from the main streets providing some protection from the busy downtown surrounding the site. The complex retains integrity of design, location, setting, workmanship, materials, feeling, and association and demonstrates the expansion of the church and the Episcopal diocese as it grew with the needs of the community of Laramie and the State of Wyoming.

SEE ADDENDUM

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1892–1925 **Builder/Architect** William Halsey Wood/W.H. Holliday, Walter Thomas, and Wilbur A. Hitchcock

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

St. Matthew's Cathedral Close is a religious property deriving its primary significance from historic and architectural importance. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, and method of construction representative of a 19th century trend for buildings to reflect their use and the intentional influence of a group of English Ecclesiologists determined to promote construction of accurate Gothic parish churches as the only suitable structures for Christian worship. St. Matthew's is a unique example of this influence because its stone construction, powerful vertical lines, and traditional Gothic elements reflect a sincere effort to 'copy' the Ecclesiologist's standards rather than adapt them to local tastes and demands by using alternate materials and simplified elements as was often the trend in small western communities. Thus, it is possibly Wyoming's best example of Gothic Revival church architecture. Additionally, St. Matthew's is associated with the powerful 19th century Episcopalian drive to exert a civilizing effect on the frontier through active missionary work in the west, where religion became a social thing and encouraged the development of well-ordered, civic-minded communities, nurtured strong community spirit, and accelerated social cohesion by providing a variety of family and community oriented social activities.

SEE ADDENDUM

9. Major Bibliographical References

SEE ADDENDUM

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 4.5 acres
Quadrangle name Laramie

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A	1 3	4 5 0 4 6 0	4 5 7 3 4 4 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
C	1 3	4 5 0 3 6 0	4 5 7 3 3 4 0
E			
G			

B	1 3	4 5 0 4 6 0	4 5 7 3 3 4 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
D	1 3	4 5 0 3 6 0	4 5 7 3 4 4 0
F			
H			

Verbal boundary description and justification

SEE ADDENDUM

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	n/a	code	n/a	county	n/a	code	n/a
state	n/a	code	n/a	county	n/a	code	n/a

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Mike Gorman/Sheila Bricher-Wade

organization Wyoming Recreation Commission date _____

street & number 1920 Thomes Ave. telephone 777-6179

city or town Cheyenne state Wyoming

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Alvin J. Bastron

title State Historic Preservation Officer date 2/23/84

For NPS use only
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date 4/12/1984

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: _____ date _____
Chief of Registration

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ST. MATTHEW'S CATHEDRAL

St. Matthew's Cathedral, designed by William Halsey Wood of New York City, is of Gothic revival design. It is built of siliceous limestone, quarried nine miles northeast of Laramie (the same quarry has provided material for most of the buildings at the University of Wyoming, also in Laramie). The finished structure is somewhat changed from Wood's original design; the major change was an overall reduction in size, a move dictated by financial considerations.

The Cathedral is 128 3/4 feet long, including buttresses, and is 76 feet wide across the choir and flanking towers, the widest point. The cross on the front spire is 118 feet above grade, and 7,276 feet above sea level (St. Matthew's is the highest cathedral in the United States). The main axis is north-south, with choir, sanctuary, and altar at the north end; this untraditional axis (most cathedrals have an east-west axis) was probably dictated by the demands of the site.

The church itself is approximately three stories in a generally cruciform plan. The main roof is a steeply pitched gable while a 1-story wing on the northwest corner and a tower wing on the northeast corner feature flat roofs with battlements, other wings feature steeply hipped roofs. Windows are irregularly placed, often in pairs and are lancet shaped with stained glass and radiating surrounds. There are also traditional groupings of three windows with the central window larger than its companions. The doors are wooden with simple raised designs, lancet shaped with radiating surrounds and irregularly spaced. The front door is larger with an enclosed arched entry. The spire is located over the front and features a stylized Gothic witch's cap and lancet louvers. There are half-story stone buttresses irregularly placed.

Passing through the main portal in the front tower (the south), one passes through the narthex into the nave. The nave is 27 feet wide and 80 feet long, paralleled on each side by an aisle five feet wide. The pews flanking the aisle seat approximately four hundred persons. The nave is divided into five bays by longitudinal arches resting on low, heavy piers. The central bay on each side is of greater span than the others, being extended five feet in depth beyond the aisle, thus forming a shallow transept on each side and giving the ground plan of the nave the shape of a cross. The clerestory rises immediately over the stringcourse above the aisle arches without the intervention of a triforium.

The west aisle, north of the west transept, is doubled by the substitution of four small arches for the corresponding solid wall, thus widening it to the additional width of the transept. This aisle parallels the west transept and the northwest aisle and is separated by glass screens and doors filling the archways in the Chapel of Our Savior, described below.

North of the nave is the choir, consisting of two bays, one of which is devoted to the choir proper, the other to the presbytery and sanctuary. The roof of the nave and choir is open timbered, in the hammer-beam style of construction,

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reminiscent of many English churches. On either side of the first bay of the choir is a chamber for the organ pipes. These chambers connect with the flanking towers which are used as stairways. North of the towers are the Dean's study on the west and the vestry room on the east. The main altar and reredos are of stone; the reredos features crosses surmounting its three pinnacles and a large floriated cross and circle in its center. There are 21 stained glass windows throughout the nave and choir and an additional six in the Chapel of Our Savior. The majority of the windows were installed during the Cathedral's construction and were made by Heaton, Butler & Bayne of London. The rest have been added since the turn of the century and are the work of Cornick of Boston, and Rowan and Irene LeCompte of New York and Washington. The windows depict various Biblical themes as well as events and personalities from the history of the Cathedral. In the east and west transepts respectively hang copies of Raphael's "Transfiguration of Christ" and "The Last Communion of St. Jerome," by Domenichino.

The Chapel of Our Savior may be entered from outdoors through a door at its south end or from the Cathedral through the doors in the glass screen which separates it from the west transept and northwest aisle. The Chapel interior is twelve feet wide by 50 feet long. At the north end is the chancel with two levels, two steps, and three steps above the main floor. The chapel is illuminated by six stained-glass lancet windows in the west wall. The pavement consists of tiles, many of which bear ecclesiastical symbols in relief. The altar and credence table are of primitive simplicity, being composed of unadorned stones with dressed sides and rough-hewn edges. CONTRIBUTING

THE DEANERY

The Deanery, a 2-story brick Victorian style building with 2 bay windows, was originally erected as a Rectory on the south side of the square facing Ivinson Avenue. Constructed by W.H. Holliday in 1882 at a cost of \$2,600, the Deanery remained at its original location until 1921. In that year the building was moved to its present location on the north side of the Square facing University Avenue. Throughout its history the house has been occupied by the Dean of the Cathedral, or has been rented. Currently, the building is rented and occupied by a real-estate firm (Golden Key Realty). CONTRIBUTING

MEMORIAL CROSS

In the center of the square stands a stone cross of Gothic Revival design, approximately twenty-five feet high, dedicated to Wyomingites of the Episcopal faith who died in the First World War. It was designed by Walter Thomas of the studio of Thomas, Martin & Kilpatrick of Philadelphia. Dedicated on July 4, 1924, the base of the cross bears the names of 29 men; there is no other inscription. When erected, the memorial featured four figures: the Archangel Michael, a soldier, a sailor,

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and an aviator around the shaft. Three of these figures are gone; only the aviator figure remains. CONTRIBUTING

HUNTER HALL (FORMERLY SHERWOOD HALL)

Hunter Hall is a structure ranging in size from $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 5 stories in height. Built of siliceous limestone and stucco, it is L-shaped with a flat-roofed cut stone Gothic tower wing at the southern end of the L formation. The tower has battlements and is 5 stories high. The structure has a steeply pitched intersecting gable roof of slate with a cement-capped central chimney. An octagonal cupola, topped by an ornamental finial, is perched on the roof ridge near the intersection of the "L". Regularly spaced rectangular casement windows are varied with 2 over 6, 2 over 8, and 6 over 8 lights. Windows have cement dripstone surrounds. Dormers are gabled, shed, and parapeted, and are regularly spaced. There are substantial bays on both the east and west sides of the north/south section of the "L". One bay, 2 stories high, has six window sets with 2 over 8 lights. The other bay has six window sets with 6 over 8 lights. Both bays are constructed of cut stone, similar to that used in the Cathedral building.

The same cut stone of coursed rubble is coursed $\frac{1}{4}$ of the way up the building and is pilastered with stepped buttresses of the same material ranging along the west and east side of the building. The remainder of the structure is covered with stucco. A Gothic tower insert on the south side of the building is constructed of stucco with a flat roof and battlements. There is a steel fire escape in the courtyard formed by the "L" on the west side of the building.

The structure is surrounded by a low stone wall capped with cement on three sides and an ornamental wrought iron railing on the north side.

Ornamentation on the building is simple with close eaves on the north and south faces and slightly overhanging eaves with simple wooden brackets elsewhere. The north and south faces have keyhole slots near the roof line.

The front facade, on the east features a portico and a stepped Tudor arch over 2 double paneled wooden doors which repeat the arch design. The doors have simple raised details. There is a keyhole slot above the arch and a keyhole window on the south side of the portico. There is a five-step cement stoop.

The building was constructed to house the Cathedral School for Boys. The construction was financed by a \$200,000 gift from Mrs. J.J. Blodgett of New York City in memory of her father, John H. Sherwood. The hall was designed by Walter Thomas of Philadelphia, who also designed the Memorial Cross in the Close/Square. Erected under the supervision of architect Wilbur A. Hitchcock of Laramie, the building was ready for use in September, 1925. Costing \$125,000, Sherwood Hall is $92\frac{1}{2}$ feet by 96 feet and is built partly of native stone and partly of clay tile covered with stucco and trimmed with artificial stone. The main part of the

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building facing 4th St. has two stories and attic, while the square Gothic tower on the southwestern corner has five stories.

Today the building, known as Hunter Hall, houses the administrative offices of the Diocese, a youth crisis center, and a day-care center. The tower is sealed off. CONTRIBUTING

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In May, 1868, the tracks of the Union Pacific Railroad crossed the Laramie Plains in Wyoming Territory, and a suitable piece of land was selected for the construction of a temporary town. Laramie was expected to house railroad workers and those men and women who catered to them, and was then expected to disappear like most "end of track" towns when the railroad pushed further west. But Union Pacific officials decided that Laramie would be a permanent station on the trans-continental route and the town's future was assured.

The year 1868 also saw the creation of the Territory of Wyoming, and the founding of Laramie's St. Matthew's Episcopal Parish. The driving force behind the creation of St. Matthew's Parish was the Rev. Joseph W. Cook, Rector of St. Mark's church in the infant city of Cheyenne located fifty miles to the east of Laramie. On March 4, 1868, fully two months before the tracks reached the site of Laramie, Cook wrote to his Bishop informing him of the need for an Episcopal Church in the new town:

There is to be a town up the railroad near Fort Sanders, two miles off, to be called Laramie City . . . The railroad will reach there before long, as soon as spring opens. I wish we could have a man there to take time by the forelock as regards the interest of the Church.¹

Cook himself visited Laramie several times during the summer of 1868, and continued to urge his superiors to send a permanent church representative to the new town. On September 13, he held Laramie's first Episcopal service at the Laramie Hall, normally used as a dance hall. Eight days later St. Matthew's Parish was organized, and the Rev. John Cornell was sent to Laramie to take charge.

The first order of business for Cornell was to acquire a church building. Early services were held in the lobby of a Laramie hotel and later in a log cabin school-house. Eventually the Union Pacific donated a parcel of land, and plans were made to erect a stone edifice. Joseph Evans, a stone contractor to the railroad, offered to provide cut stone free of charge; but a means of hauling the stone to Laramie was unavailable. Instead, a ready-made wood frame building was ordered from a Chicago firm; and the cornerstone for the church was laid on May 6, 1869.

The church building cost \$4,230 and was consecrated on September 21, 1869. It stood on the site of the present Cathedral fronting Ivinson Avenue (then known as Thornburgh Street). The church was 25 by 50 feet and was made of vertical planks with battered joints; the plain gabled roof was twice as high as the walls.

¹Edward Hagaman Hall, St. Matthew's Cathedral, p. 34.

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At the front end was a small gabled porch and directly above the porch at the end of the ridge of the main roof was a small bellcote surmounted by a wooden cross.

In the years that followed the construction of the church, St. Matthew's Parish faced a constant financial struggle for survival. The population of Laramie, upon which the church relied on for support, remained small; in 1881 there were only 27 communicants in the Parish. But in 1888 the future of St. Matthew's was assured. Ethelbert Talbot was consecrated as Bishop of Wyoming, and several cities in Wyoming were suggested for his home. Talbot chose Laramie to be his See City, in part because Laramie Episcopalians promised him a suitable home, and also because Laramie had been selected as the site of the new University of Wyoming. A new home was constructed for the Bishop to the rear of the present-day site of the Cathedral. The structure cost \$8,000 and was Talbot's home until 1898. It was later used by other Bishops and Deans and by the Cathedral School for Girls. The Bishop's house was demolished in 1977 and the site is now a parking lot.

St. Matthew's had suddenly become a Cathedral Parish, that is, the Bishop's home and the center of the church's work in the vast region of Wyoming Territory. The Episcopal Church's missionary work, including the administration of several Indian missions, was directed from Laramie. It was a great responsibility to be thrust upon a struggling parish. The most visible evidence of the changes which occurred was the erection of St. Matthew's Cathedral.

Early in 1892 plans were approved for the cathedral to be designed by William Halsey Wood of New York City. Wood had designed the Church of Zion and St. Timothy in New York City and had unsuccessfully submitted a design for the Church of St. John the Divine. There are some similarities between the designs for these churches and that of St. Matthew's, but the plan of the latter appears to have been an original work.

The original wooden church at St. Matthew's was moved in 1892 to the northwest corner of the square so that services could be continued while construction of the Cathedral proceeded. After completion of the Cathedral, the original church was used for various purposes and was eventually sold for \$100 and was torn down.

The funds for construction of the Cathedral came from a variety of sources. Bishop Talbot took personal control of collecting financial support; the parish vestry was hard-pressed to keep the Parish itself afloat and could spare little effort in the direction of the proposed Cathedral. Although Laramie citizens contributed as much as possible to the project, a large proportion of the Cathedral's funding came from outside Wyoming. Eastern friends of Bishop Talbot, including financiers J. Pierpont Morgan and Cornelius Vanderbilt, made contributions, as did the Church of England.

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Funding problems were eventually solved and on May 12, 1892, the contract for building the Cathedral was awarded to Frank Cook of Laramie. The foundation was laid and the cornerstone was dedicated in elaborate ceremonies in September. The Cathedral was dedicated on December 17, 1896, but due to financial problems it was then incomplete. The towers reached only to the height of the ridge of the Nave roof. In 1916-1917 after a donation, the towers were completed. The final cost of the Cathedral exceeded \$100,000.

For over a century St. Matthew's Parish has served the religious needs of the Laramie area. Since 1888 St. Matthew's has been the headquarters of the Episcopal Diocese of Wyoming. From St. Matthew's, clergymen went out to the rough cattle and mining towns of Wyoming as well as its more sedate farming communities. The historically important missionary work of the Episcopal Church on the Arapaho and Shoshone Indian reservations was directed from St. Matthew's Cathedral Square. For its historical importance, St. Matthew's is deserving of recognition. In addition, it is possibly the best example of Gothic Revival church architecture in Wyoming, a style often copied in the west but extremely rare in the pure form exemplified by St. Matthew's. For these reasons, St. Matthew's Cathedral Square is deserving of enrollment on the National Register of Historic Places.

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The St. Matthew's Cathedral Square comprises the whole of Block 175 in Section 33 of Township 16 North, Range 73 West, Old Town, in the City of Laramie.

It is bounded on the north by University Avenue, on the south by Ivinson Avenue, on the east by Fourth Street, on the west by Third Street, with a frontage of 280 feet on the avenues, and 264 feet on the streets (Boundaries are defined by the inside edges of the existing sidewalk). This block includes the properties associated with important Episcopalian missionary work in the state as well as the architecturally significant Cathedral and associated structures and retains integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.