

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:	Oregon
COUNTY:	Grant
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY DATE	NOV 21 1974

1. NAME

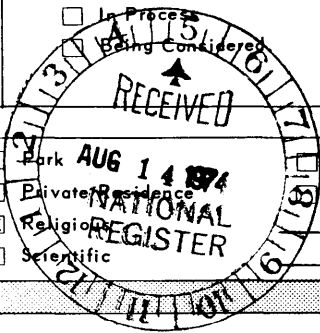
COMMON:	St. Thomas ^b Episcopal Church
AND/OR HISTORIC:	

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:		135 Washington Street		Representative Al Ullman	
CITY OR TOWN:		Canyon City		CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: Oregon Second Congressional District	
STATE	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE		
Oregon	41	Grant	023		

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <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 (Specify) _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Comments _____



4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:	Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Oregon		
STREET AND NUMBER:	P. O. Box 951		
CITY OR TOWN:	Bend	STATE:	CODE
		Oregon	97701 41

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:	Grant County Courthouse		
STREET AND NUMBER:			
CITY OR TOWN:	John Day	STATE:	CODE
		Oregon	97845 41

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:	Statewide Inventory of Historic Sites and Buildings		
DATE OF SURVEY:	1970	<input type="checkbox"/> Federal <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Local	
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:	Parks and Recreation Branch		
STREET AND NUMBER:	Oregon State Highway Division		
CITY OR TOWN:	Salem	STATE:	CODE
		Oregon	97310 41

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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7. DESCRIPTION

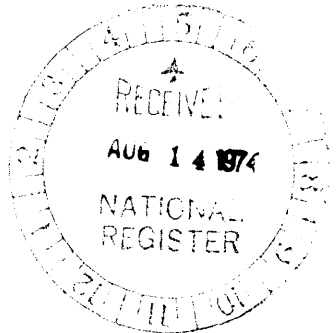
CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

St. Thomas' Episcopal church in Canyon City is one of six so-called "Nevius churches" in Eastern Oregon, after the Rev. Dr. R. D. Nevius, energetic missionary archdeacon of Eastern Oregon who was responsible for their founding and building. St. Thomas is a small example of the Jacobean or "Stick Style," built in 1876 from plans supplied by the Foreign and Domestic Missionary Society of the Episcopal Church.

The building is oriented east to west in the traditional manner with the altar at the east end, and is L-shaped in plan; the nave and sanctuary forming one leg measuring about 20 x 30 feet, and a small wing on the south side measuring about 12 x 12 feet and containing an office/vestry forming the other. Two chimneys with corbelled caps, one on the south wing straddling the ridge and one in the north slope of the nave at the west end penetrate the steeply pitched shingled gable roof. The eaves project slightly with rafters exposed. A gabled bellcote is set atop the west wall on the north side. Each of the three bays of the nave contains a sash window with a triangular pointed transom window. Door and window openings in the wing are similarly detailed. The extended vestibule contains a short flight of steps within a pointed-arched opening. Old photographs indicate that this opening originally had no doors. There is a stained glass equilateral tri-segmental window in the west wall above the vestibule. Exterior walls are covered with drop siding to which an exposed bracing system is applied. Exposed wooden buttress posts support interior exposed roof trusses built up of large chamfered quartered oak members. The vestibule has board and batten siding, suggesting it may be a replacement or addition. The original masonry foundation was replaced with concrete in the 1950s. The interior panneling is hand worked knotty pine, as are the hand-made pews. A small spring in the hill outside the east wall of the church is frequently used for baptisms.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1876

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation			

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

With the discovery of gold in the early 1860s in a canyon on the south side of the John Day Valley in Eastern Oregon, a boom town called Canyon City sprang up to all but disappear in a large conflagration in 1870. The town rebuilt and in 1874 the Rev. Dr. R. D. Nevius organized a congregation of Episcopalians in the Boistrous camp. Nevius, who came to Oregon from Alabama, was an energetic missionary with the extraordinary ability to enlist support from many sources charged with missionary efforts in the two-thirds of the state east of the Cascade Range. He was responsible for the organization of many congregations and the erection of seven churches, all of distinctive architectural form and style. These churches are now referred to as the "Nevius churches." Five of them survive basically intact as well as the lower portion of a sixth. It is thought that Nevius relied on a pattern book supplied by the Foreign and Domestic Missionary Society of the Episcopal Church. An Episcopal church similar to St. Thomas' is to be found in the rural farming community of Green Springs, Virginia.

A lot was purchased for \$130, and the cornerstone was laid in July, August, or September (records are unclear) of 1876 by the Rt. Rev. Benjamin Wistar Morris, Missionary Bishop of Oregon. The first service was held in the new building in July of 1877.

Friends of Bishop Morris in the Germantown, Pennsylvania area, where Morris was from, contributed to St. Thomas', providing it is thought the stained glass and the original reed organ. According to tradition these items were shipped around Cape Horn to Portland and thence to Canyon City by wagon.

Church records for 1878 contain the notation, "Indian raid, great alarm." This would have been during the Piute War of that year, the greatest and last Indian uprising in Oregon. It is not known if the church was in peril at that time, but St. Thomas' has survived two subsequent fires which all but destroyed Canyon City, causing one journalist to note that the venerable old structure is "Consecrated to the Lord and baptised in fire." Canyon City's second great fire was in 1898. A third in 1937 destroyed the building next door and left St. Thomas' scorched and blackened, but standing.

(Continued)

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Allen, Albert E., "Protestant Episcopal Church in the USA, Oregon Diocese." Typescript from records of the Diocese of Eastern Oregon with original documents, Oregon State Library, microfilm 116.

HE 344850
14916350

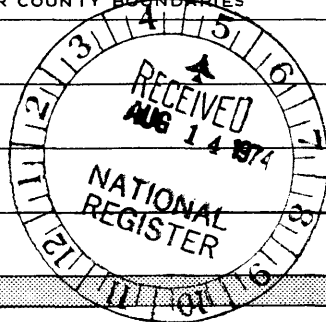
10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		45 ° 23 ' 17 "	118 ° 56 ' 48 "	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 1/4

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Paul B. Hartwig, Park Historian, and D. W. Powers III, Temporary Assistant

ORGANIZATION: Oregon State Highway Division DATE: August 5, 1974

STREET AND NUMBER: State Highway Building

CITY OR TOWN: Salem STATE: Oregon CODE: 97310 41

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name: David Stralbe
 Title: State Parks Superintendent
 Date: August 7, 1974

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

AP Wartensten
 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 11/21/74

ATTEST:
WJ Smith
 Keeper of The National Register

Date: 11.18.74

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(Continuation Sheet)

STATE		Oregon	
COUNTY		Grant	
FOR NPS USE ONLY			
ENTRY NUMBER		DATE	
		NOV 21 1974	

(Number all entries)

ST. THOMAS' EPISCOPAL CHURCH (CONTINUED)

2. Location

St. Thomas' Episcopal Church is located in the NW 1/4 Sec. 1, T. 14S., R. 31 E., of the Willamette Meridian, in Grant County, Oregon, on Lot 56 of Keeley's Addition to the City of Canyon City.

8. Significance

St. Thomas' has been in continuous use since its erection and has always been maintained, though it has known some slender times. Today it serves all of sparsely populated Grant County, an area of 4,520 square miles, and the congregation is active.

