

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

NOMINATION: (TOURTELLOTTE AND HUMMEL ARCHITECTURE ~~IN IDAHO~~ 712)

SITE NAME: Zurcher Apartments

SITE NUMBER: 74

LOCATION: 102 ^{17th} ~~South Seventeenth~~ Street, Boise, Ada County ~~(001), Idaho~~

OWNER'S NAME AND ADDRESS:

Ora Shelton Trust
c/o Wells Norman
1562 South Rexford
Los Angeles, CA 90035

QUADRANGLE AND SCALE: Boise South, 7.5 minute

ACREAGE: less than one

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

The nomination includes the Zurcher Apartments and the property on which it stands, west one-half block 8, McCarty's second addition. Legal description on file at the Ada County Courthouse, Boise, Idaho.

UTM(S): 11/5,63,470/48,29,880

DATE OR PERIOD: 1911

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE: Architecture

EVALUATED LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE: Local

CONDITION: good

altered

original site

DESCRIPTION:

The Zurcher Apartments building occupies its own triangular lot entirely bounded by the intersection of Seventeenth and Main streets and Fairview Avenue in Boise. It is a two-story brick structure with stone trim and pairs of two-story frame porches outset at either end. The building was designed with two apartment units on each floor, all approached through an outset entry porch centered between the two shallow, slightly outset bays which dominate the facade.

The brick surfaces of the bays are relieved by the treatment of the sitting room windows which penetrate them: one three-element ABA group at each level of each bay. Each of these groups has a narrow, broadly denticulated stone sill, as does each of the two windows above the porch in the recessed central entry bay. The first-floor groups have wide concrete lintels. On the upper level, the lintel band is continuous across the facade. Above the lintel band on each of the bays is a narrow attic light in a stone frame with a peaked lintel. Above these the parapet wall of the flat roof is drawn up into a low gable-like peak at the top of each bay. The parapet is finished all around with a narrow concrete coping.

The front porch has blocky brick piers with dropped geometric caps; a pierced brick wall runs between the corner posts, and the steps run up on either side. On each

end of the bulding are two outset, stuccoed frame porches. The front side porch of each apartment was designed as a living porch; the rear one sheltered a secondary entrance. The roofs of the front and side porches represent the only significant exterior alteration; they were designed flat, the front one at least with flower boxes; all are now covered with low-pitched shed roofs. Another probable alteration is the painting of the stone trim. The structure is named and dated on stone plaques centered just under the parapet coping on the entry bay wall.

SIGNIFICANCE:

The Zurcher Apartments building is architecturally significant as the last of the series of ealy apartment houses in the Thematic Group, one which completes a sequence from late Victorian types to a very stylized classicism (sites 21, 30, 51, 65, and 74). The strict symmetry and broad references to such classical devices as dentils and pediments are classical revival in spirit, but are here stylized and geometricized to a very unpretentious commercial level. The survival of this pleasantly textured building on its tree-fronted, triangular island lot appears both fortuitous and welcome. Newer development surrounds it on all sides, especially on Fairview Avenue, one of the main western approaches into Boise.

Like the much more formal and pretentious Eichelberger Apartments (site 65), the Zurcher Apartments departs from the earlier rowhouse format to provide flats, perhaps in this case particularly designed for joint roomers rather than couples or singles: the newspaper description was of four "small but exceedingly convenient apartments . . . each apartment three rooms and bath with disappearing beds in two rooms."¹

Oscar Zurcher was partner with his brother Otto in the Zurcher Brothers grocery on South Thirteenth. He probably paid \$8,000 for this building and occupied one of the apartments after its completion.

1. (Boise) Idaho Statesman, December 21, 1911, p. 3, c. 5.

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES:

(Boise) Idaho Statesman, December 21, 1911, p. 3, c. 5.

Polk and Company. Boise City Directory. 1912-1913.

Boise, Idaho. Hummel Jones Miller Hunsucker P.A. File 408G. Drawing loan book reference, 1912. Tracing signed Tourtellotte and Hummel, dated December 28, 1911.