

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

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

✓ SITE NAME: Bliss, F. T., House SITE NUMBER: 59

✓ LOCATION: ~~Southwest corner East Second~~^{E. 2nd.} and McKinley ~~streets~~, Emmett, Gem County
(045), ID 83617

OWNER'S NAME AND ADDRESS:

Farmers and Merchants State Bank
3 West Main Street
Middleton, ID 83644

QUADRANGLE AND SCALE: Montour, 15 minutes ACREAGE: less than one

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

The nomination includes the F. T. Bliss House and the property on which it stands, tax 17, block 3, Central Addition. Legal description on file at the Gem County Courthouse, Emmett, Idaho.

UTM(S): 11/5,40,575/48,57,700

DATE OR PERIOD: 1909

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE: Architecture

EVALUATED LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE: State

CONDITION: excellent unaltered original state

DESCRIPTION:

The F. T. Bliss House in Emmett is a one-and-a-half-story residence of bungaloid-eclectic character. The body of the house is rectangular, its long side containing the entrance and its main ridgebeam set laterally to the street. The first story is stone, probably veneer, rough-cut and random-coursed. A shingled upper half-story is deeply flared above it and has a subsidiary gable, in effect a wall dormer, breaking the lateral eave at center front as well as side-facing gables at either end. A gabled front entry porch is outset slightly left of center and crosses the facade to the left as a sun porch terminating in a large, glassed-in, polygonal gazebo outset from the left front corner.

The prominent gables are bungaloid in character--low-pitched, and with raked eaves supported on figure-four brackets--and the lateral eaves and the flattened tent roof of the gazebo show exposed notched rafters. All supports on the entry and sun porches are solid rough-cut stone. The gables contain triple sets of sash windows, those in front with picket-shaped upper panes. These curious flat-bottomed panes also occur in the upper sections of the first-story windows, which are arranged in an ABAB band of broad and narrow elements, rather than in the familiar parlor-window configuration of one wide window flanked by two narrow ones.

A stone-walled, shed-roofed side porch is outset on the right rear side and a hip-roofed frame porch at left rear. There are two stone chimneys, one interior on the left rear slope and one exterior on the front right sidewall. The house appears to be entirely unaltered. Two frame outbuildings at the rear of the lot are architecturally significant, although the designer of them is unknown. They are a one-and-a-half-story carriage house or city barn and a small single-car garage; both have jerkin-headed gabled roofs with hip knobs and exposed rafters.

SIGNIFICANCE:

The F. T. Bliss house is architecturally significant as the most striking and original evidence in the firm's work of the influence of the western stick and bunglaow styles. It is in fact the only work in their architectural production which suggests the former style. Its low profile, spreading roofs, flattened gables, exposed rafters and rustic materials make it clear that the architects had been looking at such buildings as Greene and Greene's Gamble house in Pasadena. (Architect Frederick Hummel, one of the Hummel sons, recalled in later years that California style were especially important in Idaho, where the well-to-do went south to vacation; he was talking about the taste for mission revival, but his remarks would apply to the less retrospective styles as well.) A newspaper reference to this house's being in the mission style presumably meant an architectural style consistent with the Craftsman aesthetic and Stickley furniture.

At the same time, the house has idiosyncracies which hark back to the Queen Anne. The upper half-story, instead of projecting (as does that on the Gamble house), is gently flared; the surface is veneered with the Boise Valley's favorite Queen Anne combination, sandstone and shingle; the sunroom outset at the end of the porch is an engaged octagon.

This remarkable house was built for the Bliss family of Emmett at a reported cost of \$5,000.

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES:

(Boise) Idaho Statesman, January 3, 1909, sec. 3, p. 32, c. 3.

Hummel, Frederick, in taped interview by Arthur A. Hart. May, 1974. OH 498A, 498B. Idaho Historical Library, Idaho State Historical Society.

Boise, Idaho. Hummel Jones Miller Hunsucker P.A. File 410D. Collection book reference to Bliss, 1908. Tracings signed John E. Tourtellotte and Company.