UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY

# RECEIVED JUL 1 6 1976

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#### SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

St. Luke's Episcopal Church was built in 1889 of red brick, in the Gothic Revival style of architecture. Very little change has been made in the appearance of this beautiful little church, except that a hall for educational and social activities has been added on the south side, and a door opened through to the sanctuary. This was done prior to World War I.

The furniture of the chancel of the church was given by the Vanderbilt family of New York. Beams in the ceiling were hewn in the sawmill of Martin Woodward from lumber which was cut in the Big Horn Mountains. The red brick was made by the Curran brothers in their brickyard in Buffalo.

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# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

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SPECIFIC DAT	<sup>ES</sup> 1889	BUILDER/ARCH	HITECT Thomas Hut	tton

#### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

St. Luke's Episcopal Church displays many noteworthy architectural features, and is considered one of the best examples of the Gothic Revival architectural style in the state of Wyoming. Particularly interesting in the exterior design are the flat, pointed arches; the exposed framework around the narthex, with chamfered edges; the bull's-eye window; and the steeple surmounted by the Celtic cross (symbol of eternal life). The placement of the steeple askew to the main axis is unusual.

The interior plan, with a small narthex, long narrow nave, chancel elevated by two steps, sanctuary elevated by two more steps, typifies the plans of small Episcopal churches throughout the country. The focal point is the altar. Exceptional features of the interior are the wooden trusses with chamfered edges, treenails, posts, arched braces and the decorative pendants. Configurations between the posts and arched braces were placed to hold candles. Stained glass windows add to the interior beauty, and the dormers provide soft lighting from above.

The cornerstone was laid in 1889 by the Masonic Lodge of Buffalo. The builder, Thomas Hutton, used red brick made by the Curran brothers in their brickyard on the west side of town (now the Buffalo City Park). Buffalo was still an infant town when the new Episcopal Church was built. In that year the Wyoming Constitutional Convention was preparing for the admission of the Territory into the Union. As the seat of government for a very large county, Buffalo was a thriving agricultural community and trade center.

In 1892 the "Johnson County War" occurred, and following that incident a U. S. Deputy Marshal named George A. Wellman was murdered, allegedly by a group known as the "Red Sashes Gang". Wellman's funeral was conducted in the St. Luke's Episcopal Church on May 13, 1892. Generally, however, the church played a more important part, though less prominent on front pages of newspapers, in the life and development of the town and the county.

# **9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

A history of St. Luke's Episcopal Church compiled by Lillian Hogerson Baker.

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Form No. 10-300a (Rev. 10-74) UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8

PAGE One

On the Parish Register of the St. Luke's Episcopal Church are the names of families of George Munkers, Eugene Mather, W. P. Adams, Dr. John Lott, J. A. Jones, H. W. Davis, James Wall, W. J. Thom, T. P. Hill, Wilbur Williams, Dave Cummings, H. P. Rothwell, John Stevenson, and Carl Parmalee. All these were pioneers who united their means and efforts with the early founders to build for St. Luke's with loyalty and devotion.

The beauty of this near-perfect example of the Gothic-Revival style of architecture has been preserved since 1889, and will endure for many years to come as a monument to the hardy people and excellent craftsmen of the late 19th century who built by hand, when this part of our country was just being settled.