NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

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Church of Our Savious is a and is 52 ft. high at its pock. The building is no level in the runs of the It over bode toward own a co twiestolage to only a phy-

Like many Episcopal charge. roof is surmounted by a lar rate peaked roof rises to : hell with a rope pull. The the Horn to San Francisco cerville and installed in ... the exterior walls are cove caimney on the north side. broad worden stairs with our perch which in turn leads t The base of the porch and s and part wood construction. month transect.

The first floor contains a The walls are tongue and a is a furnice room on the bathroom built under the : the first floor to the sec tion of the belltower.

On the second floor the ! ceiling and leads through With the exception of the walls are brown painted wa is wood, with red carreti: wooden cushioned kneelers. with a carved wooden raili along with a large brown w choir stalls face each otr Sanctuary, in the chancel. and the lecturn on the sou Sanctuary, Eight lanternchains from the ceiling. f the church. There are 3 in the sanctuary. These glass windows of various are to windows of transpar Sanctuary, as well as the of the most beautiful aspe made of dark wooden beams ed hull of the old clippe Sacristy in the northeast to ground level.

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DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL UP KNOWN PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Ohurch of Cur Saviour is a two-story frame building, approximately 80 ft by &J ft., and is 52 ft. high at its highest point. The roof itself rises 17½ ft. from saves to peak. The building is situated on a hilleide so that the second floor is at ground level in the rear of the building, and the first floor at ground level in the front. It overlooks downtown Placerville and Highway 50, and by use of a highway overpass for redestriant is only a short block from downtown.

like many Episcopal churches, it is constructed in the shape of a cross. The peaked roof is surmounted by a large vooden Celtic cross. A belitower with its own separate peaked roof rises to the same height as the main roof, and contains a working tell with a rope pull. The bell was cast in Boston in 1850 and was brought around the horn to San Francisco where it was used for a time before being brought to Flacerville and installed in Church of Cur Saviour. The roof is aluminum sheeting, and the exterior valls are covered with gray actestos shingles. There is a red brick chimney on the north side. (In the west, or front, there is a rather steep flight of broad worden stairs with outside, center and inside nambrails, leading to a covered porch which in turn leads through double wooden doors into the Narthex of the church. The base of the purch and stairs is red brick. There is also a ramp, part concrete and part wood construction, leading up the slope on the north side to a door in the north transect.

The first floor contains an assembly room, approximately 30 x 50, with a fireplace. The walls are tongue and groove wainscoting with plaster on the upper portion. There is a furnice room on the east end, a storage room are kitchen on the north, and a bathroom built under the front steps at the west end. The only inside access from the first floor to the second is an old circular staircase built into the east section of the belltower.

On the second floor the Narthex, approximately 10 x 10, has a vaulted wood-beared ceiling and leads through double worden doors into the main body of the church. With the exception of the Sanctuary which is panelled in mahogany, all the church walls are brown painted wainscoting topped by off-white celotex squares. The floor is wood, with red carpeting in the aisles and Sanctuary. The pews are wood with wooden cushioned kneelers. In the north transept there is a balcony (no longer used) with a carved wooden railing. There is an electronic organ in the south transept along with a large brown wooden "box" which contains the organ components. Wooden choir stalls face each other in two sections between the transept aisle and the Sanctuary, in the chancel. The wooden pulpit is on the north side of the chancel, and the lecturn on the south. A plain wooden cross, 8 ft by 4 ft, hargs over the Sanctuary, Eight lantern-type lights of brass and glass also hang by long metal chains from the ceiling, four on each side of the aisle and spaced the length of the church. There are 3 beautiful leaded stained glass windows behind the altar in the sanctuary. These 3 definitely are originals. There are 17 other stained glass windows of various shapes, some of which appear to be Victorian era. There are no windows of transparent glass in the church. All the furnishings in the Sanctuary, as well as the altar fail and the altar are of mahogany and oak. One of the most beautiful aspects of the church is its high vaulted ceiling which is made of dark wooden beams and braces in an intricate pattern similar to the inverted hull of the old clipperships. The only other room on the second floor is the Sacristy in the northeast corner of the building, and this room has an outside exit

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SPECIFIC DATES Constructed 1665

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Architectural significances

William Patton, the architect, was an authority leading architect of his day in California. He his apprenticeship in architecture there. He z in the early days of the Gold Rush and spent as which he moved to San Francisco where he opened many prominent buildings in Alameda and San Francisco City Hall for which he was the Supervisic cisco by the time he designed Church of Cur San

The whirch is an example architecturally of the Mother Lode church construction during the perhas a real understanding of the Gothic elegents cathedrals in Europe, but not having the Europe the local timber supply to create the Gothic ellight and delicate vaulted roof. The shape of scissor trusses with a long top cond. By doined roof and in order to provide a continuous attrusses at 3° -0° on center. Structurally to mass built about 3 ft inside the exterior wall, appearance of being openings in a thick stope at the apex to form a quadraplate vaulted roof

It is our understanding that this type of roof United States only in New England and the Calif a few other examples still standing in Cal in excellent physical condition and is particular

Religious Significances

The Episcopal Church of Gur Saviour in Placervil toric sites in the California Gold Country. It is a large construction. The cornerstone was laid on Junear of the Civil War, and the Church was opened It has remained open ever since. It was a large around 200 confortably, and its cost of \$13,500 was

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Ever the 112 years of the church's life there have, of course, been alterations, but there have never been any major design changes. The roof originally was shingle and had 10 domner style vents which have been removed. The outside walls were of wooden lar siding. The bell tower was one story taller ... it is believed that it was lowered for safety reasons. A door to the aouth transert has been blocked off and covered with siding, and the outside steps leading to it have been removed. Another outside door at the rear of the south transept has also been blocked off. The interior walls above the wainscoting were originally plaster, and the church was lit by gas lamps which were replaced when electricity was connected. There was originally a stairway from the floor of the church to the balcony, but this was removed and the Sacristy tuilt in its place. The carved wooden railing of the balcony has been raised by a second section added above the first. Portions of some of the windows are replacements due to breakage. The outside ramp to the north transept is an addition, as are the wooden cross, the organ, and the present double doors from the porch to the harthex. There are no early photographs available of the interior, but we feel sure that the overall effect of the changes has been minor.

On the first floor, the bathroom was added and the kitchen changed or added when when plumbing was installed. An original wood stove has been replaced by a furnace. Several sections of new concrete footings have been added, although parts of the structure still rest on the small stones placed there in 1865. Steel "I" beams have been installed under the church floor and a new ceiling installed in the assembly room. The brick fireplace has been painted white.

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PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

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approximately 80 ft by 80 ft., teelf rises 17; ft. from saves to it the seconi floor is at ground for at ground level in the front. It by use of a highway overpass for

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SPECIFIC DATES Constructed 1865

BUILDER ARCHITECT Exilders C. Taylor of Placerville Architects Wm. Fattor of Sanfrancisco

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Architectural significance:

William Fatton, the architect, was an authority on Anglican Church Architecture and a leading architect of his day in Valifornia. He was born in England in 1821 and took his apprenticeship in architecture there. He sailed around the Horn to San Francisco in the early days of the Gold Rush and spent several years in the Mother Lode after which he moved to San Francisco where he opened an architectural office. He designed many prominent buildings in Alameda and San Francisco, including parts of the San Francisco City Hall for which he was the Supervising Architect. He had moved to San Francisco by the time he designed Church of Our Saviour.

The church is an example architecturally of the Gathic Revival that took place in Mother Lode church construction during the period from 1850 to 1890. The architect has a real understanding of the Gothic elements that were used in the original Gothic cathedrals in Europe, but not having the European materials available to him, he used the local timber supply to create the Gothic effect. With the timber he produced a light and delicate vaulted roof. The shape of a vaulted roof was created by using scissor trusses with a long top cord. By doing this he created the form of the vaulted roof and in order to provide a continuous appearance to the roof, he placed the trusses at 3°-0° on center. Structurally to support the km s brace, a second wall was built about 3 ft inside the exterior wall. This gave all the tall windows the appearance of being openings in a thick stone wall. The trusses are brought together at the apex to form a quadraplate vaulted roof over the Sanctuary.

It is our understanding that this type of roof construction was used in churches in the United States only in New England and the California Nother Lode. There are said to be a few other excaples still standing in California, but the Church of Cur Saviour is in excellent physical condition and is particularly lofty and intricately designed.

Religious Significances

The Episcopal Church of Qur Saviour in Placerville belongs on the roll call of historic sites in the California Gold Country. It is the only church still standing in El Dorado County which has been in continuous use as a house of worship since its construction.* The cornerstone was laid on June 22, 1865 just two months after the end of the Civil War, and the Church was opened to the public on December 23, 1865. It has remained open ever since. It was a large church for those days, built to sext around 200 confortably, and its cost of \$12,500 was a considerable sum for 1865.

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Ine early history of the church is inextricably bound with the life and story of the first rector. Fr. Charles Caleb Feirce, under whose leadership the church was built. he served the church for 43 years from 1601 to 1903, and many legends have grown un around this saintly and such beloved man. He was the sole Episcopal clergyman in the County (and the Churchwas the only Episcopal church, as it still is today). In addition to serving at the church itself, the devoted priest traveled (always by foot) throughout the foothills holding services and ministering to those of his 'flock' who could not attend in Flacerville. At his death in 1903 it is said that schools and shops closed so that everyone could attend his funeral and pay their last respects. On the 75th anniversary of the church, Marguerite Farlor #12 of the Native Daughters of the Golden west placed a bronze plaque on the west wall of the church which says ** "Dedicated to the mexicity of Fr. Charles Caleb Feirce, 'the Apostle of El Dorado County"....." -- a fitting tribute to a man who did so much, through his church, for the early day pioneers.

There were few large buildings in Old Hangtown (Flacerville) in those days, and the church provided shelter for many community gatherings as well as religious services. An old safe built into the east wall of the assembly room has yielded many documents of the church in the 1800's -- financial records, as well as records of the haptisms. marriages and funerals which took place. These old records, though faded, are very well preserved and include many of the names associated with the development of the California Mother Lode. Descendants of many of these old-timers still live in the area today. The graceful and serene old church movides a visible link with the past and a tangible symbol of the pioneers' determination to build their communities with good will and devotion to God.

the Desicated in the memory of Fr. Charles Calab Pierce, Withe Anostle of El Dorado County Form in Circinnati, Obio on Movember 2, 1825 Died in Flacerville on March 14, 1903 kector of Church of Our Savior 1861-1903 Erected by Marguerite Farlor #12, Native Daughters of the Golden West June 23, 1940 The 75th anniversary of the Counding of the Church of Our Savior

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^{*} Three older churches still stand in El Dorado County. The Kethodist-Spiscopal Church in Placerville (California State Landsark #767) has been used as a private residence, and for many years has not been used at all. The two old churches in Colona for many years now have been used only on special occasions and for sightseeing.

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RESTORATION OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF OUR SAVIOUR

The old Eriscorel Church on Coloma Street has been a House of Worship, a community meeting place and a tow landmark for the greater part of the history of Placerville. Now the old building is in dire need of a complete restoration or it will shortly be lost to the community. Over the years many repairs and modifications have been undertaken but the time has now come when halfway measures will no longer suffice and complete reconstruction is essential if the building is to survive. The church is the oldest House of Worship in continyous use in El Borado County and one of the oldest church buildings in Northern California. Its cornerstone was laid on June 22, 1865 just two months after the guns of the Union and Conferate armies fell silent at Appomattox Court House. The church, which was termed "new and elegant" in the local press of the day, was opened to the public on December 22, 1865 and thus began its long witness of both small and momentous events which have made up the history of Placerville and El Dorado County. The old church saw the departure of local militia for the Spanish-American War and the return of their depleted numbers at the turn of century; services were held for the doughboys as they left for France in 1917 and again and again as the youth of El Dorado left for the battlefields of world War II, of Korea and Viet Nam. While perhaps less newsworthy but just as important to the life of the community, the old church as seen hundreds of babies baptized, young couples take their marriage vows and the departed sent to their final rest. Its roof has sheltered inumerable meetings and gatherings of importance to the community: social events, high school graduation services, meetings of civic organizations and the passover celebration of the local Jewish community. to name a few. The committee for the restoration of the Church of Our Saviour feels that it is essential to preserve this link with the past, not only to hand down to our children and grandchildren a unique and historic structure but also a tangible symbol of our forefathers' determination to build a community based on good will among men and devotion to God.

SOME NOTES ON THE CHURCH OF OUR SAVIOUR

The church was designed by San Francisco architect William Patton and built by Placerville contractor 0. Taylor at a cost of \$10,500.00 which was a considerable sum in 1865. The most unique feature of the church is its vaulted ceiling. This particular type of high wooden reef support is found only in the Mother Lode country of California and is the result of employing former shipwrights from San Francisco. The ceiling structure is actually an inverted clipper ship frame with joints and bracing following the marine building practices of the day. Fermino 12 \$200 (924-10-14)

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The colored glass windows of the Apse are original out the remainder of the church windows are replacements; however, those on each side of the Nave arrear to be of the Victorian period. The bell was cast in Boston. Massachusetts in 1850 and was shipped around the Horn to San Francisco where it was used for some years before being brought to Placerville. The tresent alter rail and the vaulted sancturay were installed in 1957. Early photographs show that the bell tower became weakened and was reduced in height as a safety measure but the exact date of this work is unknown. Numerous other modifications have been undertaken during the over one hundred years that the building has stood and many devoted men and women have given of their time and money toward preserving the structure and halting the ravages of age. Some of these changes were necessary structural repairs but some, such as the celotex laid over the original lath and plaster and the asbestos shingles on the outside, hide much of the beauty of the original church. Current restoration plans will restore the buildings to their original form insofar as possible while still meeting the safety standards of the modern building code.

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Patton, William. The Ai California Monthly Magi	sgine. Vol. 4	. July 1555.	conest, <u>lie fiche</u> e for addtl Biblio		
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