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

	DATA	SHEET
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SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS **TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**

1 NAME

HISTORIC ST. GEORGE TEMPLE

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

Block bounded by 200 East, 300 East, 400 South, and 500 South **STREET & NUMBER**

		NOT FOR PUBLICATIO	N
CITY, TOWN		CONGRESSIONAL DIS	TRICT
St. George	VICINITY OF	02	
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
Utah	049	Washington	053

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESE	NTUSE
DISTRICT	PUBLIC	_XOCCUPIED	AGRICULTURE	MUSEUM
_XBUILDING(S)	X_PRIVATE	UNOCCUPIED	COMMERCIAL	PARK
STRUCTURE	вотн		EDUCATIONAL	PRIVATE RESIDENCE
SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	ENTERTAINMENT	XRELIGIOUS
OBJECT	IN PROCESS	XYES: RESTRICTED	GOVERNMENT	SCIENTIFIC
	BEING CONSIDERED	YES: UNRESTRICTED	INDUSTRIAL	TRANSPORTATION
		NO	MILITARY	OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

Salt Lake City

I	NAME Church of Jes	sus Christ of Latter-day	y Saints		
5	STREET & NUMBER				
	50 East North	n Temple			
(CITY, TOWN			STATE	
	Salt Lake Cit		F	Utah	
5]	LOCATION OF	LEGAL DESCRIPTIO	N		
	COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS,ETC.	County Recorder's Offi	ce, Washin	ngton County Courthouse	
	STREET & NUMBER	197 East Tabernacle			
(CITY, TOWN	St. George		STATE Utah	
6	REPRESENTAT	ION IN EXISTING S	URVEYS		
	TITLE			• *	
	Utah Hist	oric Sites Survey			
l	date February	3, 1971	FEDERAL	_XSTATECOUNTYLOCAL	
	DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Uta	n State Historical Soci	ety		
	CITY, TOWN			STATE	
	Sal	t Lake City		Utah	

7' DESCRIPTION

COND	DITION	CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE	
XEXCELLENT GOOD FAIR	DETERIORATED RUINS UNEXPOSED	UNALTERED X_ALTERED	XORIGINAL SITE MOVED DATE	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The St. George Temple was built according to the following specifications which were announced at the time of the dedication of the site: "Outside measurement. 142 feet long by 96 feet wide, including the buttresses, and 80 feet high to the top of the parapet. It will be built of stone, plastered outside and inside. There will be a tower in the center of the east end, and on the extreme corners of the same end, right and left of the tower, are cylindrical staircases; one side of the stairs rests in the cylinder, the other side in a newel in the center of the cylinder. The roof will be flat, and covered with roofing similar to that on the New Tabernacle in Salt Lake City. The building will consist of two stories and a basement. The two main rooms or halls, one over the other, will each be 100 feet by 80 feet. The ceiling of these will be arched, resting upon columns, and so constructed as to admit of sixteen rooms for council and other purposes in each of these two main stories. The height of the main ceiling in the centre is 27 feet; the height of the other ceilings about 9 feet. The basement will contain the font, and will be used for ceremonial purposes."

In addition, a single tower, 31 feet square with a vane 175 feet above the ground was built at the center of the eastern facade. The foundation of the basement story consists of black basaltic lava and extends ten feet below ground level. The foundation is 12 feet thick at the bottom but gradually diminishes to a width of three feet at the level of the basement window sills. Above the basement story the superstructure is constructed of red sandstone, the exterior walls having been whitened with the intention of causing the building to stand out in striking contrast to the dark red sandstone surroundings.

Inside, the basement floor was divided into fourteen rooms, of which the 35×40 foot baptistry or font room is the most important. As in other Mormon temples, the baptismal font rests upon twelve oxen of cast iron, which occupy a depression slightly below the floor.

Above the basement are two stories, each of which originally contained one main room 78 x 99 feet in size with an elliptically vaulted ceiling 70 feet from the floor. Flanking the main rooms on either side were smaller rooms used for ordinance work and as assembly rooms for councils of the Priesthood. The large room on the middle floor corresponds in use to the Celestial Room in the Salt Lake Temple. In the same way the large room on the upper floor corresponds to the main assembly room on the fourth floor of the Salt Lake Temple. and was provided with pulpits at both east and west ends, the former devoted to the use of the Higher or Melchizedek Priesthood, the latter reserved for officials of the Lesser or Aaronic Priesthood.

The exterior design of the temple basically relies on a gothic decorative vocabularly but has Roman-arched bays, a window pattern copied in the Manti and Logan Temples as well. The front and rear facades are symmetrical and the side facades are identical. Window and door bays are splayed with windows and doors deeply recessed to express the thickness of the exterior walls. A crenellated parapet wall goes around the top of the building, with squared pinnacles rising directly over the stepped buttresses below. The buttresses alternate with the window bays and give the overall design a sense of rhythm and wall relief. To break up the box-like effect of the rectangular structure, the corners of the front facade are segmented in a semi-octagonal manner. This feature was repeated in the later Manti and Logan Temples, although in a more exaggerated and impressive fashion. The vertical emphasis of the buttresses is somewhat balanced by wide, moulded belt courses which express the floor level.

The architectural impact of the St. George Temple is best appreciated when seen in its environmental context. Not only does it stand out in brilliant contrast to

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the surrounding red sandstone bluff, it looms majestically over the small single family residences around it. In its present setting, its effect is almost cathedral-like.

The first modification of the temple occurred in 1882 when a lightening bolt struck and destroyed the original cupola on the tower. Squatty and poorly proportioned and scaled, the tower was remodeled and increased to its present double-tier configuration. In 1975 the temple underwent a major renovation and expansion which involved three areas: (1) the addition of a one-level annex to the north side of the temple; (2) an addition to the west side; and (3) extensive remodeling of some of the older interior areas. Included in the north-side annex were a chapel, offices for the temple presidency, a cafeteria, laundry and locker facilities. The west-side addition was chiefly constructed for new stairways and elevators which provide additional access to various rooms of the temple. Other changes include new electrical, heating, air conditioning, plumbing and fire prevention systems, new carpeting, drapes and furnishings, four new sealing rooms and a brides' room. Externally, the additions follow the original forms, lines, details and materials of the older building. Belt courses, buttresses, window types and stucco finish are all carried from the original structure to the additions. Some original interior fabric was removed or altered during the renovation, however. The temple was rededicated November 11-12, 1975, following the renovation.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	PERIOD AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW					
PREHISTORIC	ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	COMMUNITY PLANNING	LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE			
1400-1499	ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	CONSERVATION	LAW	SCIENCE		
1500-1599	AGRICULTURE	X_ECONOMICS	LITERATURE	SCULPTURE		
1600-1699	X_ARCHITECTURE	EDUCATION	MILITARY	SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN		
1700-1799	ART	ENGINEERING	MUSIC	THEATER		
X1800-1899	COMMERCE	$\underline{\mathbf{X}}_{EXPLORATION}$ SETTLEMENT	PHILOSOPHY	TRANSPORTATION		
1900-	COMMUNICATIONS	INDUSTRY INVENTION	POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	OTHER (SPECIFY)		
·	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·					
SPECIFIC DAT	ES 1871-1877	BUILDER/ARCH	HITECT Truman O. Ang	je11		

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Historically the St. George Temple served to unite the settlers of Utah's Dixie and provided a great stimulus to the local economy. It was the first Mormon temple dedicated in Utah, and the only temple in which Brigham Young participated in the dedication services after the Mormons left Illinois. In explaining the significance of the St. George Temple, Nels Anderson writes:

"No event in Mormon church history exceeded in spiritual importance the dedication of the St. George Temple. Here was the first sign that God's people had permanently established themselves in the valleys of the mountains. Other temples had been planned or begun, but here was one dedicated eternally. It was a kind of victory monument for thirty years of effort."¹

Located over three hundred miles south of the Mormon capitol of Salt Lake City, Utah's Dixie was initially settled in the mid 1850's as a series of small settlements were established along Ash Creek and the Santa Clara River. It was discovered that cotton could be grown in the temperate climate and early in 1857 families were called to go to Washington and produce cotton. The success of the first year's cotton crop was only partially encouraging. However, the settlers fought the ravages of malaria, faced a critical food shortage and found their efforts to divert irrigation water from the Rio Virgin fruitless as spring floods destroyed diversion dams and irrigation ditches. The difficult circumstances led many of the settlers to abandon the communities leaving an inadequate number of discouraged farmers to carry out the cotton experiment.

Faced with cotton shortages as a result of the Civil War and convinced of the importance of a local source of cotton to the Mormon plan of self sufficiency, Brigham Young called over three hundred men, most of whom were heads of families, to move to Southern Utah and establish a new town which would become the center of the cotton mission. The new community, called St. George in honor of Apostle George A. Smith, was located on the slope north of the confluence of the Virgin and Santa Clara Rivers.

Despite the strong support of Brigham Young, the new settlement of St. George suffered from the same problems which plagued the earlier settlers and an atmosphere of discouragement and defeatism prevailed as Brigham Young visited St. George in the summer of 1862.

Brigham Young's solution to the problems was to initiate a public works program which began with the construction of the St. George Tabernacle in 1863 and was continued in the construction of the St. George Temple which was begun in 1871.

While the Tabernacle was to serve for general church meetings and gatherings, the Temple served a specific function in the Mormon religion. Special ordinances such as marriages, baptisms for the dead, and the temple endowment could be performed only in the temple. Prior to construction of the St. George Temple two other temples had been completed. The first, at Kirtland, Ohio, was completed in 1836 but

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Kirk M. Curtis, "History of the Saint George Temple," Master's Thesis, Brigham Young University, 1964.

Andres Karl Larson, Erastus Snow: The Life of a Missionary and Pioneer for the Early Mormon Church, Salt Lake City, Utah: University of Utah Press, 1971. Leonard J. Arrington, Great Basin Kingdom: An Economic History of the Latter-day Saints, 1830-1900, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1958.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY <u>less than one a</u>cre. UTM REFERENCES



VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

STATE		CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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STATE		CODE	COUNTY	CODE
FORM PRE	PARED BY			
NAME / TITLE				
. Kent Powell	, Preservation His	storian/A	11en D. Roberts	s, Architectural Historian
ORGANIZATION				DATE
Itah State His	storical Society			March 15, 1977
STREET & NUMBER				TELEPHONE
03 East South	1 Temple	·····		(801) 533-5755
CITY OR TOWN				STATE
alt Lake City	7			Utah
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abandoned when the Mormons left Kirtland in 1838. The second at Nauvoo, Illinois, was completed in the winter of 1845-1846 as the Mormons were preparing to abandon their homes in Illinois. Once in Utah, work on the Salt Lake Temple began in 1853. However, work progressed slowly and it was not until forty years later, in 1893, that the Salt Lake Temple was completed.

Impressed with the success of the Tabernacle project as a unifying force in the cotton mission and anxious to witness the completion of at least one temple in the new Mormon homeland before his death, Brigham Young disclosed plans for a temple in St. George in early January of 1871. Local leaders were enthusiastic about the project for two reasons: first the temple would provide a convenient place to perform the ordinances sacred to the Mormon religion, and secondly the construction would have a positive affect in stimulating the local economy.

Local leaders were instructed to look over various sites for the purpose of selecting the best one. A location was selected and the temple site was dedicated by George A. Smith on November 9, 1871.

Eager to proceed with the construction work, men with teams and scrapers began preparing for the foundation a few hours after the dedicatory services.

Because of the high water table, workers faced severe problems in preparing the foundation. Realizing that the abundant sandstone would quickly deteriorate, it was decided to use black volcanic rock. A road costing several thousand dollars was constructed along the volcanic ridge and rocks weighing a few pounds to several tons were hauled by ox teams. At the temple site a pile driver made from an old cannon barrel filled with lead was used to drive the rocks into the soft ground to create a solid foundation.

Construction of the temple was a tremendous undertaking for the relatively few inhabitants of Southern Utah. Therefore the project was of necessity a cooperative endeavor and one to which other Mormons of the state contributed liberally of their talents and resources. A temple district was established which worked in the following "Officers of the temple districts were charged with organizing the manner: labor, produce and cash resources within the district for the building of the temple. In most instances the trustee-in-trust placed at the disposal of each district the tithing paid by members living in the district during the period the temple was being constructed. Within each district, the presidents of stakes and bishops of wards were assigned the responsibility of supplying the construction needs of the temple from their ward or settlement. Each ward, then, under the chairmanship of the bishop, selected a temple committee, and these committees were responsible for organizing their areas and providing the needed assistance upon proper notice. Within each district a number of industries were established to supply needed materials. Thus, each temple had its sawmills, lime kilns, rock quarries, and carpentry shops. Most of these industries contributed revenue to the temple fund by selling a part of their production on the market. For the utilization of donations in supplying its workers, each temple also had a dining hall, meat market, laundry, and general store. Nearly all of the hundreds of men engaged in obtaining materials, and in working on the temples were individual volunteers or were supported by local church groups through cooperative fund-raising ventures."2

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Because of the relatively mild climate in Utah's Dixie during the winter several groups of men from northern communities journeyed to St. George to spend the normally dormant winter months working on the temple.

In a letter to the editor of the <u>Descret News</u>, published on December 10, 1874, an observer wrote: "The temple is progressing rapidly. About fifty tons of rock is laid on the walls daily by the energetic labors of some twenty rock layers. There are about thirty cutters and dressers engaged in the quarry and on the ground preparing the rock for the layers; also at present twelve teams are engaged in hauling rock from the quarry. On an average they haul thirty-five hundred each trip, making three to four trips per day. At present the walls all around are some thirty-five feet above the ground, and everyone engaged thereon appears to work with a determined will to accomplish the labors assigned him" ³

In addition to the immediate work on the temple, men were spread over much of Southern Utah and Northern Arizona to produce materials and supplies necessary for the project. Andres Karl Larson, local historian of the Dixie Region, writes: "The Temple crew was a large one. There were men working at the Navaho sandstone quarry north of St. George and rock dressers at the Temple site. There were roadbuilding crews, particularly to the sawmills on Mount Trumbull, eighty miles southeast of St. George near the depths of Toroweap, a part of the Grand Canyon of the Colorado. Water haulers supplied from the infrequent springs on the Arizona Strip, kept the lumber teams traveling between St. George and the sawmills. At the mills themselves, crews under Robert Gardner were busy getting out the million feet of lumber that went into the floors, joists, studding, pillars, window frames, doors, steps and stairways, and baseboards. From Pipe Springs, under Anson P. Winsor's management, came beef, cheese, and butter from the church herd to help feed the Temple workers. A church bakery at St. George, operated by Joseph Oxborrow and Charles Bennett, produced bread and cakes. People from all parts of the Southern Mission as far north as Beaver, east to Long Valley, and west to Panaca paid their tithing and Temple donations in kind. These were gathered to the tentral Tithing Office at St. George and there dispensed in exchange for the scrip the workers received for their labor on the Temple?"⁴

By the end of 1876 the temple was sufficiently completed to begin use of the basement where the baptismal font was located and the sealing rooms in the east tower. These areas were dedicated on January 1, 1877. Brigham Young, who had less than eight months to live, participated in the ceremonies although he was unable to walk comfortably and was carried in an arm chair. A second dedication took place three months later when the April Conference of the Chruch was held in St. George.

Since its construction one hundred years ago the St. George Temple has stood as an important landmark to residents and travelers in Southern Utah. Andrew Karl Larson describes its landmark status in the following manner: "No one could keep his eyes off the Temple, regardless of the direction from which he approached the city. It burst into view the moment a traveler topped the ridge entering St. George from the east; the same was true from north, west, or south. Far away to the southeast, twenty-five miles distant, from the steep dugway that tortuously crawled down the CONTINUATION SHEET

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Hurricane Fault, the Temple could easily be seen; or if a pioneer came from the cattle ranges of the Arizona Strip out south, he locked his gaze on the white landmark resting in its stark setting of gray, blue, black, and vermilion hills--to him a symbol of life everlasting. A proud lodestar, bound to evoke questions from everyone who tarried in the colorful desert over which it stood guard."

In 1871, when the St. George Tabernacle was nearly completed, it was decided that the St. George Public Works would commence construction of a temple. Several experienced craftsmen who had helped build the Kirtland, Ohio, and Nauvoo, Illinois, temples had settled in St. George and were called upon to put their skills to use on the St. George Temple. The first Mormon temple completed in Utah, the St. George Temple has the strongest architectural link with the two earlier Mormon temples, particularly the Nauvoo Temple, in the East. Plans for the temple were prepared by Truman O. Angell, Utah's first architect (he was in the first wagon train to arrive in the Valley of the Great Salt Lake on July 24, 1847) and official Church Architect. Angell designed a building which has been described as "Castellated Gothic" and "English Norman." 5

Of the four old Mormon temples in Utah, only the St. George Temple has a single attenuated tower and a whitewashed finish. In its fortified or bastion-like appearance, however, the St. George Temple resembles the others.

The temple was made entirely of indigenous materials with the exception of the twelve cast iron oxen and baptismal font which were cast in Salt Lake City and hauled 318 miles to St. George by ox team. The foundation was made of black lava rock and coated with lime mortar. The superstructure was red sandstone, roughly dressed to accept a plaster coating and white stucco finish. The temple measured 141 feet 8 inches long, 93 feet 4 inches wide, 84 feet to the square and 175 feet to the top of the vane of the tower. Miles Romney, a master craftsman who was instrumental in building the St. George Tabernacle, was general superintendent of construction. President Brigham Young also spent his winters in St. George to both aid his health and assist in the progress of the work.

Since there was no water system in St. George at the time, a cistern and ditch were built to convey water to a 30 foot high stone water tank, designed to match the tmeple. The water was used to fill the baptistry. The water tower is no longer extant.

¹Nels Anderson, <u>Desert Saints:</u> The Mormon Frontier in Utah, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1942. Page 296.

²Leonard J. Arrington, <u>Great Basin Kingdon: An Economic History of the</u> <u>Latter-day Saints 1830-1890</u>, <u>Cambridge</u>, <u>Massachusetts: Harvard University</u> <u>Press, 1958. Page 340.</u>

³Deseret News, December 10, 1974, Page 2.

⁴A. Karl Larson, <u>Erastus Snow: The Life of a Missionary and Pioneer for</u> <u>the Early Mormon Church</u>, Salt Lake City, UT: University of Utah Press, 1971. Page 473.

⁵The Public Works Program. Page 479.

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James E. Talmadge, <u>House of the Lord</u>, Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft Publishers, 1962.

N. B. Lundwall, <u>Temples of the Most High</u>, Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft Publishers, 1956.