

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

NOMINATION: (Lava Rock Structures in South Central Idaho TR)

SITE NAME: Hunt, Daniel A., House

SITE NUMBER: 20

LOCATION: ^{SW} Approximately four miles south and west^{vic} of Dietrich, Idaho

OWNER'S NAME AND ADDRESS: James L. Meservy
Richfield ID 83324

QUADRANGLE AND SCALE: Shoshone SE, 7.5 minute

ACREAGE: less than one

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

The nomination includes the Daniel A. Hunt House and the property on which it stands, the NE 1/4, NE 1/4, NE 1/4, SE 1/4, SE 1/4 of Section 27, T6S, R18E. Legal description on file at Lincoln County Courthouse, Shoshone, Idaho

UTM(S): 11/720990/4749540

DATE OR PERIOD: c. 1910

ARCHITECT OR BUILDER: unknown

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE: architecture

EVALUATED LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE: local

CONDITION: excellent, altered, original site

DESCRIPTION:

This one-story house with basement is approximately 30 by 40 feet. It has a shingled roof with flared, close boxed eaves, and with metal flashing ending with a ball. Shingles painted white are in the gable walls above the one-story stone walls. An nearly-full length outset porch with a shingled hipped roof is across the front gable wall. Four battered, full-height, symetrically-placed piers of flat stones with rounded edges support the roof of the wooden-floored, unwallled porch. About at the height of the door on the inner side of each pier flanking the centered entrance is a flat stone that appears to have formed the base for a free-standing arch above the entrance. A centered stoop with concrete steps and low stone side walls extend from the porch. The house abounds in detail. The stones themselves appear to have been carefully selected for their texture and appearance. The quoins on the house corners and on the chimney, and the stones around the doors and windows are unusually dark and so fine grained and dense in appearance that they could be mistaken for granite. All have been skillfully shaped. Large, flat, roughly triangular stones lighter in color are used for the sides of the stoop, and a still lighter and more scoracious stone is used for the rubble walls. The sand-colored untooled mortar in the walls is almost flush with the surface of the small stones with rounded faces.

On the right wall, offset to the left, is a partially outset high stone chimney that intersects the eaves. The chimney narrows just below the eaves, then flares

outward at its top. A centered front door is set almost at the inside of the wall. A stone arch, two stones wide, curves upward and outward above the inset door. Two fixed, nine-pane windows flank the door. They have flush concrete lintels with upward angling ends inset into the stone six to eight inches on each end. All of the windows in the house have sloping outset sills of dense, dark stones with their upper surfaces coated with mortar. Windows are placed about four inches into the wall opening. Single two-paned double-hung sash windows on the north and south walls have relieving arches above them. The window heads are horizontal, with an inset stone section filling the space below the relieving arch. Offset to the right of the north wall is a pair of windows with relieving arches connected above them. They are separated by a decorative stone jamb two stones in width. Blind half-circle arches are in the porch foundation walls on each side of the steps and on each end. An outset arch with a large keystone is above each horizontal two-paned basement window. The mortar in the arches above the windows and door, on the walls sheltered by the porch, and on the porch piers has been tooled to produce a narrow beaded line. The beading has been painted only on the large doorway arch, on the porch piers, and on the arches above the main-floor windows. There have been interior alterations but the original ceiling-high living room fireplace is intact. The fireplace has an outset stone hearth. A divided mantel is formed by wide, flat rounded stones supported by two tapering round stone columns. On each side above the rounded shelves are oval niches outlined with outset stone arches with large keystones. Centered below the shelves is a shallow, arched opening to the firebox with a large, outset keystone that forms the base for a free-standing round column that supports a large, centered rectangular stone shelf higher than the two round shelves. Above the centered rectangular shelf is a centered, three-quarter, circular outset arch. It too has an exaggerated keystone. The arches, shelves, and columns are of dense, dark stones while the rest of the stones are lighter and more scoracious, except in the upper inset circle, where very dark scoracious stones are placed around a round central stone set in a wide white-painted mortar circle to give a flower effect. The joints in the fireplace are tight and slightly inset. The house is extended at the rear by a full cinder-block addition about 31 feet long. Its gable roof is lower than that of the original house.

SIGNIFICANCE:

This house is architecturally significant as an example of Colonial Revival style architecture and as an example of lava rock craftsmanship. Its style is a transitional one that retains the close, flared, enclosed eaves and the steeply pitched roof of an earlier era, but the gable front with a centered porch is moving toward the bungalow style. The house is a jewel-like composition executed in stones of selected sizes, shapes, colors, and textures, tied together through skilled artisanship and fine detail. The extraordinary fireplace is without parallel, a tour de force in lava rock. It is almost as if the highly-skilled unknown mason used the house to demonstrate his skills. For example, there are six variations of arches on the exterior. The craftsmanship in this nomination is unique, and it is not possible to attribute it to a known mason. The house was built for Daniel A. Hunt, who was a 1909 entryman on a farm near Dietrich. Since many earlier settlers left the area after it was realized that the tract was over-settled for the amount of water available, there are few oral sources of information. A former neighbor who came to the tract in 1916 states that the house was already there when his

family arrived. The present owner of the house remembers admiring it as a small child when his family passed it by wagon in the 1920's because he could see green houseplants and a canary in a cage through the front windows, a degree of elegance impossible for him to imagine in the family's small, frame prove-up house.

Fortunately, the cinder block addition on the rear of the house is unobtrusive and does not detract significantly from the house's appearance.

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES:

James Meservey, interview with Marian Posey-Ploss, Dietrich vicinity, Idaho, Summers of 1978 and 1979.

Weiss, Dave, interview with Marian Posey-Ploss, Dietrich, Idaho, Fall, 1979.

Records of the Security Title Company, Gooding, Idaho.