

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

NOMINATION: Historic Resources of Paris (Partial Inventory: Architecture)
 SITE NAME: John Sutton house (Paris, Idaho) SITE # 13
 LOCATION: 140 Main Street, Paris, Idaho
 OWNER'S NAME AND ADDRESS: Craig L. Palmer, Paris, ID 83261
 QUADRANGLE AND SCALE: Paris, 7.5 minute ACREAGE: less than one acre
 VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION: Nomination includes former Sutton house and property on which it stands: T-2121, fraction of lots 9 and 10, block 18, Paris, ID
 UTM(S): 12/4, 66, 945/46, 74, 510
 DATE OR PERIOD: 1880's EVALUATED LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE: local
 AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE: architecture

DESCRIPTION: Poor condition unaltered original site

The former Sutton residence is a one-and-a-half story, shiplap-sided frame building with an I-house profile. Its gables are side-facing, its long side and outset entry porch are parallel to the street. The porch rests like the body of the house on a rough stone foundation. It supports a hip-and-ridge roof on four posts and, shelters a pair of doors in the east wall, one just left and just right of center. Sash windows are on either side of this pair of doors. Centered above the central bay of the porch is a front-facing secondary gable; a door opening onto a no-longer extant balcony is set into it. There are two windows downstairs and one upstairs in the south end of the house; one left of center window downstairs, and one gable window to the north. Centered in back, its ridgebeam perpendicular to that of the house, is a one-story square cabin form. A frame woodshed is set into the left rear intersection of main block and ell. There are two interior chimneys, close together in the middle of the ridgebeam.

The house is distinguished by unusual decoration. None of it appears to be lathe-turned. Tabs of wood in alternating short lengths, reminiscent of a corbel table, are set under the eaves and substitute for bargeboards and apron ornament in the gables. Spear-ended "purlins" emerge near the gable ends, braced by small angular brackets. The porch brackets, which on the central bay join in a wide arch under the slight elevation of the balcony roof, are flat members decorated with a few simple scroll-sawn curves. The infilling of the arch, similarly, is with a range of short boards with exposed curved ends. Their tops are overlaid with a toothed strip.

SIGNIFICANCE:

The Sutton house is architecturally significant as a variation on the I-house, rare in Paris, and for its unique and distinctly handmade ornament. In basic plan, this house conforms to the I-house type, a form found throughout Idaho, but noticeably concentrated in areas of Mormon settlement. The existence of the two front doors and double central chimney is also uncommon in Paris, but corresponds without difficulty to Midwestern versions of the type. As such, the arrangement of doors cannot be construed as evidence of a polygamous household, although Sutton was a polygamist. The pleasing complication of the front-facing gable further enhances the verticality and bilateral symmetry of the facade. This residence shared its lot with the Sutton blacksmith shop in the 1880's and 90's. The quiet formality of the weathered undereave courses and gently flattened porch arch grace Main Street and would have made this house an early downtown showpiece.