

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

NOMINATION: (TOURTELLOTTE AND HUMMEL ARCHITECTURE ~~IN IDAHO~~ TR)

✓ SITE NAME: Lewiston City Hall SITE NUMBER: 61

✓ LOCATION: 207 ^{3rd.} ~~Third Street~~, Lewiston, Nez Perce County (069), Idaho 83501

OWNER'S NAME AND ADDRESS:

City of Lewiston
P. O. Box 617
Lewiston, ID 83501

QUADRANGLE AND SCALE: Clarkston, 7.5 minute ACREAGE: less than one

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

The nomination includes the Lewiston City Hall and the property on which it stands, lots 6 and 9, block 15, Lewiston Townsite. Legal description on file at the Nez Perce County Courthouse, Lewiston, Idaho.

UTM(S): 11/4,97,790/51,40,760

DATE OR PERIOD: 1909

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE: Architecture

EVALUATED LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE: Local

CONDITION: good altered original site

DESCRIPTION:

The old Lewiston City Hall is a compact forty-two-by-eighty-five-foot commercial building with two shades of finish brick used on the street side. Two large bays are marked out on the facade by large corner pilasters and a narrower central pilaster, rendered in the rosy orange brick which is the prevailing material. The bays are spanned below the parapet by a small, stepped metal cornice, below which corbel tables comprised of stepped brick brackets in the contrasting color cross each bay. Small rectangular panels of the paler brick are recessed in the face of each pilaster at a level with the corbel table, immediately above a stepped and outset double string course which forms a sort of capital in the red brick surface. Each bay contains on the upper story a pair of double-hung sash windows, linked by common notch-sided or denticulated surrounds in pale brick. The windows rest on denticulated lintels, continuous within each bay, formed by a single ^(string course) strug course and again in contrasting brick. Below the sill in each bay is a slightly recessed cross-bay panel of pale brick, framed as are all of these elements with the darker material.

The bays at street level consists of a wooden front at either side of the central pilaster. In the left bay, the fabric of the 1909 design is largely intact. This bay contains a double display windows at left: two large plate glass lights with

two shallow mezzanine lights (now filled) above them, and below them a wooden base with a single lateral coffer formed by molding strips and a series of small scroll--sawn brackets under the sill. To the right of the windows, still within the left bay, is a recessed entry as in the original plan. A modern glass and steel double door has been installed in it.

The right bay has a similar configuration and early materials but represents a remodeling probably undertaken during the 1920s when, according to the City of Lewiston, the Fire Department headquarters to the right of the original structure were added. The original right bay had contained, at left, a strip of mezzanine lights over a display window and coffered base, and at right a broad vehicle access door. With garage space no longer required within the original building, the right bay was remodeled to enclose office space. The existing window and base panel were matched to the right, and a transomed pedestrian access door was installed at extreme right.

The single-story fire hall on the north, while not part of the Tourtellotte and Company design, is an extremely intelligent and cohesive addition. Like the original structure, it contains two parapeted bays demarcated by corner and central pilasters. It also used the same dark/light color scheme in the brickwork: panels of the contrasting material are set between the pilasters at a level with those above the first floor of the main building.

SIGNIFICANCE:

The Lewiston City Hall is architecturally significant as a handsome but markedly modest civic building designed in a simple style to meet the specifications of a frugal city administration. It is also significant as evidence of the firm's relatively brief presence in Lewiston, the largest city in North Idaho, and as a good example of the design work of Lewiston office manager Ralph Loring.

In the summer of 1909 the city of Lewiston called for architectural bids for a new city hall and jail. The city specified it wanted "nothing fancy" and that only bids below \$13,000 would be considered.¹ Plans were submitted by Tourtellotte and Company, E. T. Epling, and W. S. Jennings. The Tourtellotte estimate was \$12,500. The architects' fees, a dollar-minded Tribune reported, were \$295. The Tourtellotte and Company bid was reportedly accepted in August. Late in that month there was "some discussion over the lack of size and impressiveness of the planned building."² Construction went forward under contractor Fred Sheehy. Final reported cost of the building was \$13,000. It included a basement jail, first-floor city offices, and second-floor council chambers.

The modest masonry facade is unusual among city buildings in Idaho towns of any size, which usually aimed at being impressive. For example, Tourtellotte and Company's 1906 Caldwell City Hall was a small but fiery Italianesque eclectic production, set in the middle of an intersection in a direct line with the entrance to the railway station. The Lewiston example, on its side street, is the appropriate image of a fiscally very cautious city. The unobtrusive elegance of the brick masonry and its classicizing character are also very good examples of the talents of Ralph Loring. (See also sites 48 and 69).

1. Lewiston Tribune, July 17, 1909, p. 8, c. 4.
2. Lewiston Tribune, August 31, 1909, p. 2, c. 5.

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES:

Lewiston Tribune, July 17, 1909, p. 8, c. 4; August 3, 1909, p. 8, c. 3; August 10, 1909, p. 6, c. 1; September 5, 1909 (sketch); December 29, 1909, p. 8, c. 3.

Boise, Idaho. Idaho State Historical Society. "Old City Hall." Fact sheet prepared by the City of Lewiston.