

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

NOMINATION: Historic Resources of Challis (Partial Inventory: Architectural Properties)

SITE NAME: I.O.O.F. Hall SITE # 21

LOCATION: Main Avenue, Challis, Idaho

OWNER'S NAME AND ADDRESS: I.O.O.F. Lodge, c/o John Rovetto, Treasurer, Clayton, Idaho 83227

QUADRANGLE AND SCALE: Challis, 15 minute ACREAGE: less than one

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION: The nomination includes the I.O.O.F. Hall and the property on which it stands, block 27, lot 6, T-910, Challis, Idaho

UTM(S): 11/7,19,950/49,31,450

DATE OR PERIOD: 1880's or 1890's, 1896 EVALUATED LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE: Local

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE: architecture

good condition altered original site

DESCRIPTION:

The two-story I.O.O.F. Hall was constructed for the local Lodge, number 21, in at least three sections. The original gable section was one half of the present building and was standing in Challis by 1894, when The Silver Messenger began publication. The second half of the building, an identical gabled section, was added alongside the first in 1896. Finally, sometime before 1930, James and Clyde Wilkinson extended the roof upward to form one truncated gable. The original two gables are still apparent on the facade as raised decoration.

The I.O.O.F. Hall today has an upper story of one-over-one double-hung sash windows with classically molded window heads. Queen Anne-style woodwork fans out on the matching gables above the letters "IOOF." The lower story has unfortunately had 1970's board-and-batten applied to it, and new single-pane windows have been added. The three other walls preserve most of their original texture and fenestration. There is a covered stairway to the second story in the rear. The foundation is random rubble.

SIGNIFICANCE:

The I.O.O.F. Hall is the only Main Avenue building with a trace of Queen Anne decoration. The hall is historically significant for its central position in the development of the town, and the building is nominated in spite of its many alterations because of its social importance. It is apparent from reports in The Silver Messenger that the town organizers (or rustlers, to use period language) were nearly all Odd Fellows. Moreover, every manner of event—not just I.O.O.F. events—was hosted in the I.O.O.F. Hall. Frequent dances, Christmas parties, exhibitions, meetings of other fraternities and organizations: in fact, every public meeting short of school classes and church services occurred at the hall. The I.O.O.F. still owns the building.