

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

NOMINATION: Historic Resources of Paris (Partial Inventory: Architecture)SITE NAME: Thomas Smedley house (Paris, ID) SITE # 10LOCATION: North side of East First Street North near North Second East, Paris, IDOWNER'S NAME AND ADDRESS: Ida B. Smedley Estate, c/o Lillian Beck, Paris, IDQUADRANGLE AND SCALE: Paris, 7.5 minute ACREAGE: less than one acreVERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION: Nomination includes the former Smedley house and property on which it stands: T-2113, Fraction of lot 3, block 6, Paris Original Townsite.UTM(S): 12/4, 67, 395/46, 75, 105DATE OR PERIOD: 1870's, 1880, 1930's EVALUATED LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE: LocalAREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE: architecture

DESCRIPTION: Fair condition altered original site

The former Smedley house faces south on East First North Street. It is comprised of three main sections which form, in terms of enclosed space, a U-shaped plan. To the left is a rectangular frame cabin of ample proportions, probably with a sleeping loft, its gabled end facing the street. In the center is a lower-pitched lateral wing, with a shed-roofed brick lean-to in the back and shed-roofed porch, supported on square-based posts, in the front. On the right is another front-facing gabled form, its ridgebeam again higher than that of the central section. It is less deep than the gabled section to the right; a shed-roofed rear room takes up the difference in depth.

The left and central sections are lap-sided, the right is clapboarded. The central section has 12-light sash windows in plain plank frames. The left section has lost its glazing but retains molded outset window heads on tall frames, two on the front and three on the west. Central and left sections have corbelled brick chimneys, the right a plain. The central section has, behind its porch, a facade disposed in the typical hall-and-parlor manner, with a centered door and flanking windows; its interior chimney would be in the end interior position, were the ridgebeam not extended to join the west roof slope of the right section. The left section has doors in positions that would be idiosyncratic had it been built first: one in its short east exterior wall, so that it can be entered from the porch, and one entered in the rear wall. The east wing, similarly, has one entrance from the porch and two in the east wall. All of these differing characteristics of form, material and openings among the three sections of the Smedley house are consistent with the report of an oral source that the central section was built first, the left section second, and the right third.

The house is presently vacant and in disrepair, but it appears stable.

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Thomas Smedley house

SIGNIFICANCE:

The Smedley house is architecturally significant as a good illustration of the additive approach to house composition which characterized much of Paris' historic building and as an example of the increasing refinement of the component folk forms. The son of the builder indicates that the house was built in three stages: the central hall-and-parlor section, the left wing and then the right wing. The Smedley family arrived in Paris in 1873 and it is likely that the center cabin was their original house, being of similar siding and scale to other early frame cabins in town. There is a newspaper reference to construction of a Smedley house in 1880 which does not specify a new building or improvements to an old one. Since the paper did not seem to be reporting the building of cabins, the allusion was probably to the left wing, and perhaps to the joining element of the simple but stylish porch. The left side is neatly framed and molded and is of enough height to provide an attic loft. As for the right side ell, it does not appear on the 1929 Sanborn Fire Insurance map. The low pitch of the roof and clapboard siding found on this portion would support a substantially later date for this addition.

It is curious that Smedley, the brickmaker, built his house primarily in frame. The market in town for fired brick was beginning to open up in the mid-1880's, but the medium never surpassed wood as the favored building material.