



## Planning & Development Services

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## MEMORANDUM

TO: Historic Preservation Commission

FROM: Matt Halitsky, AICP  
Historic Preservation Planner

DATE: 22 June 2011

RE: Local Landmark Nomination – Masonic Temple

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The Masonic Temple Association is nominating the historic Masonic Temple, located at 215 North 10<sup>th</sup> Street, as a Local Historic Landmark.

This nomination complements the original 32 local landmarks designated last December. As a potential landmark, the owners have voluntarily agreed to notify the Historic Preservation Commission of proposed demolition or significant alteration at least 180 days prior to commencement. In addition, the Masonic Temple will be featured in future editions of the *Shaping Boise* booklet. A bronze landmark plaque will also be provided.

### Analysis and Findings

Pursuant to Section 2-18-08(A) of Boise City Code; buildings, sites, structures or objects proposed as local landmarks must meet one or more of the criteria required under Section 2-18-07(A), criteria for designation of a historic district. These criteria follow closely the national standards set forth for the National Register of Historic Places, and read, in part:

#### *A. Criteria for Designation*

*The buildings, sites, structures and objects of an historic district (or landmark) shall meet one of the following three (3) criteria:*

#### *1. Historical or Cultural Importance:*

- a. Has significant character, interest or value, as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the city, state or nation; or is associated with the life of a person*

- significant in the past; or*
- b. Is the site of an historic event with a significant effect upon society; or*
  - c. Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social, educational or historic heritage of the community; or*
  - d. By being part of or related to a street, square, park or other distinctive area, should be developed or preserved according to a plan based on historic, cultural or architectural motif; or*
  - e. Owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristic, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community or city; or*
2. *Architectural Importance*
- a. Portrays the environment in an era of history characterized by a distinctive architectural style; or*
  - b. Embodies those distinguishing characteristics of an architectural-type or engineering specimen; or*
  - c. Is the work of a designer, architect or craftsman whose individual work has significantly influenced the development of the city, state or nation; or*
  - d. Contains elements of design, detail, materials or craftsmanship which represent a significant innovation; or*
3. *Archaeological Importance:*
- a. Has yielded or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.*
  - b. Contains or is likely to contain physical remains, such as fossils, relics, monuments, art or symbols, of past human life and activities.*

The Masonic Temple is nominated under criteria 1 and 2 above. The building possesses a significant degree of historical and cultural importance as the longstanding meeting place of the Boise Masons. Furthermore, the structure itself is an excellent example of the renaissance revival style, exhibiting a high degree of detail and craftsmanship.

Staff recommends that the Historic Preservation Commission forward the attached nomination to City Council, with a recommendation to accept the nomination of the Masonic Temple as a Local Historic Landmark.

# City of Boise

## Local Historic Landmark Designation Nomination Form

To nominate a site, building, structure or object for designation as a Local Historic Landmark, please complete this form and submit it along with the required materials. Use this convenient checklist to make sure that you have included:

- ☒ Landmark Designation Nomination Form, dated
- ☒ Owner consent form, with the notarized signature of each owner
- ☒ Photographs

Attach a minimum of two photos of building elevations, including close-ups of significant features.

Photographs may be color or black and white.

Digital images or 35mm photographs are accepted.

Prints (digital or 35mm) must be at least 3x5

Electronic files of digital images may be submitted instead of prints. Images must be in .JPG or .GIF format at 300 dpi, files no larger than 2MB per image. The file name must include the name of the property and an image number.

A photo log must be included for both digital and 35mm images.

### NOMINATION FORM PREPARED BY :

Name Daniel Gardiner

Address 2018 N 8th Street #D

City Boise

State Idaho

Zip Code 83702

Phone 208.230.1898

Email ridingthegoat@gmail.com

Date Jun 20, 2011

### PROPERTY NAME

Historic Name Masonic Temple

Current Name

### PROPERTY LOCATION

Address 215 N 10th Street

Legal Description

Twnshp 3N

Range 2E

Section 10

1/4

1/4

1/4

1/4

Lot

Block

Subdivision

PROPERTY TYPE/OWNERSHIP	
Property Type	Building
Ownership	Private

Ownership Private

## Present Owner(s)

*Attach Owner's Consent Form, signed by each owner, with signatures notarized*

**Name** Brian Reczek - Temple Association President

Address 1614 S. Rupert

City State 

Zip Code

Phone 208.371.5976

Email [versatility@gmail.com](mailto:versatility@gmail.com)

Date Jun 20, 2011

## PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

Construction Date

Architect

## Builder

### Architectural Style

**Architectural Description:** Use the space below for a brief architectural description of the building/structure. Start with style, size and use. Continue with plan (or shape), materials (roof, walls, foundation). Be sure to describe the primary facade (street facing) and the secondary facades (side and rear facing). Follow up with details of specific features (windows, doors, porches, chimneys, etc.). Don't forget to mention ornamentation and details, alterations and additions. Make note of the condition and be sure to describe the building's relationship to the site, the street, and adjacent building. Finally, include information about landscaping features.

**Description:**

See attached.

## HISTORICAL SIGNIFIANCE

*Please read carefully. In order to designate site, building, structure or object as a Boise Historic Landmark, it should be 50 years old and retain its historic integrity. Nominations for landmarks less than 50 years old will be considered if shown to have exceptional significance. Only one of the following criteria is required for eligibility to the designation, but please check all that apply.*

The property described in this nomination is significant because it

- ☒ possesses special historic, architectural, cultural, political, social or archaeological significance as part of Boise's heritage.
- ☒ represents distinctive characteristics of a type, period, construction method, or use of materials.
- ☒ represents the work of a notable designer, architect or builder.
- ☐ is associated with a person who has made significant historical contributions on a local, state or national level.
- ☐ is the only one or few remaining example(s) of an architectural style or use, or is representative of a historic life style.
- ☐ has a unique location, natural setting or physical characteristics or represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, ethnic or other social community, or the City of Boise.
- ☐ incorporates elements that help preserve and protect an historic place or area of interest in the City of Boise.
- ☐ is already listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

**Statement of Historical Significance:** *Briefly describe the historical significance of the property. Include important dates, associated people and events, any information that will help tell the story and support the Landmark designation.*

**Statement:**

See attached.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is no handwriting or other markings on the paper.

Interview with custodian, 2008.



## Boise City Local Landmark Program Release and Agreement Form

The undersigned owner(s) hereby agrees that the property described herein be considered for local historic landmark designation, pursuant to the Boise City Code, Section 2-18-08.

I understand that upon designation, I or my successors will be required to notify Historic Preservation Commission at the Planning and Development Services department for the City of Boise 180 days prior to:

- a. Demolition, material alteration, remodeling or removal of the landmark. (Section 2-18-08 C)
- b. The waiting period may be waived or reduced by the Historic Preservation Commission upon approval of changes pursuant to Section 2-18-13.

The Historic Preservation Commission shall be under the time constraints and other requirements as outlined in Title 2 Chapter 18 of the Boise City Code.

Additionally, we authorize the City to utilize images and historic information of the property in publications for landmark promotion within the City of Boise.

215 N. 10<sup>th</sup> Street Boise, ID 83702  
Property Address

B. R. [Signature], President Masonic Temple Assoc.  
Signature - Owner

May 4<sup>th</sup> 2011  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature - Second Owner

**June 20, 2011**

## **PROPERTY DESCRIPTION**

### **Masonic Hall**

#### **First Phase Structure**

**DATE:** 1905 - 1907

**ARCHITECT:** Ross Cartee

**BUILDER:** Larson & Carter

#### **Second Phase Structure**

**DATE:** 1920 -1921

**ARCHITECT:** Wayland & Fennell

**BUILDER:** Carl Prouty

**STYLE:** Renaissance Revival

**STYLE:** The completed structure as it exists now is done in the Renaissance Revival style, characterized by the use of classical orders, round arches, and symmetrical composition.

The Masonic Temple building is roughly cube-shaped, and has a smooth stone form. Buildings of this style lean toward squared shapes. It has a balanced, symmetrical façade. The main entranceway to the second floor is centrally located, and the second floor is separated from the first and from the roofline by a course of sandstone. This neo-classical style is inspired by 16<sup>th</sup>-century Italian architecture, and is usually found in large public buildings.

**SIZE:** The original dimensions of the structure, as developed in 1905-1907, was roughly 51 x 105 feet, and was erected next to the Empire Building, and it consisted of two stories and a basement.

In 1920, after the ground was cleared, including the removal of a residential home on the remaining lot space on the corner, further excavation of 71 x 105 x 9 feet was ordered, bringing the building size to roughly 122 feet on Tenth Street x 105 feet on Bannock Street in total.

**USE:** The ground floor is occupied by commercial tenants, which lease space from the Masonic Temple Association.

When the second and final phase of building was entered upon in 1920, the initial tenant to occupy the entire ground floor and basement space was the King Motor Company, "... a sales and service shop for Oldsmobile cars and trucks and will be one of the finest equipped in



the northwest. It will have a large repair parts department and a service shop," as quoted in the Idaho Daily Statesman, with a five-year lease.

Present tenants include an art gallery, a clinic, a hair salon, and a café.

The entire second story is given over to fraternal purposes, with two large lodge rooms, a dining area, parlor, etc.

**PLAN/SHAPE:** The building is divided on the ground floor into several different retail spaces as tenants move in or out. The number and size of rooms change with each remodel to suit tenant needs. Outside doors lead up a large set of stairs to the lodge rooms.

The second floor is entirely used by fraternal organizations related to Freemasonry. It consists of a large meeting hall for the lodge, which is 57 x 65 feet, with ceilings nearing 25 feet high, and an invisible balcony level; another, smaller lodge meeting room; a large cloak room; an office and adjacent board room; men and women's bathrooms (and a small sitting room in the ladies'); a commercial kitchen and serving area; and a spacious dining room that seats 250, which was the location of the original lodge room in the first superstructure; a small library area; and a parlor. An elevator was added in the late 1950's.

The partial third floor consists of multiple storage rooms, a spacious open room with a large amount of lockers, and an old apartment that was formerly used by the live-in custodian of the building, which consists of a main room, a private room on one side, and on the other side a full kitchen, with an attached bathroom.

The basement resembles an old parking garage under the northeast corner, but is not connected to the original basement next to the Empire Building. A large 1920s swamp cooler and two boilers are in the basement, and the basement is otherwise unused.

At present, roughly 57% of the usage is for non-profit fraternal groups, and 43% is for commercial tenants.

**MATERIALS (Roof, Walls, Foundation):** The foundation is of concrete, as is the majority of the structure. Sidewalk elevators were installed to grant access to the concrete basement.

The exterior walls of the building feature ornamental brickwork on the 10<sup>th</sup> Street and Bannock Street sides, painted brickwork on the backside, and buff colored bricks on the Empire Building side alleyway.

A handful of immense steel trusses support the ceiling over the enormous meeting room on the northeast corner.

**PRIMARY FAÇADE:** The building is made up of brick, reinforced concrete, and steel, and is trimmed with locally quarried sandstone.

L.W. King's shop originally had a beautiful window banding above the plate glass as a decorative element. The period decorative windows were boarded over long ago, and presently large awnings exist in their place.

The brick that makes up the second floor is divided from the first by a sandstone band. Above the perceived second story is another course of sandstone, as the building was originally intended to have further stories, and the Renaissance Revival style called for a visually distinct stone band separating one floor from another.

Although the front of the building gives the impression that it is only two stories, owing to the oversized windows, there actually exists a partial third story behind the sandstone and false brick top. This third floor has several storage rooms and a large locker room, and also formerly housed the building custodian in a studio apartment.

A standalone room (acting as a wheelhouse for the Otis elevator that was added in the 1950's) was added above the dining room, and is visibly incongruent with the rest of the symmetrical form when seen from a distance.

**SECONDARY FAÇADE – SIDE AND REAR FACING:** The rear of the building is made up of regular brickwork, except where interrupted by a portion of the building that extends outside the line of the original structure on the ground floor. The irregular portion of the backside is painted white, while the remaining  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the rear of the building is painted red. At one time, probably during the 1980's, a large advertisement for a bank appeared on the upper left quadrant of the rear of the building.

The side of the building which borders on the Empire Building is an alley, and consists of beautiful buff colored bricks that are sympathetic in color to the neighboring structure. The wall is remarkably straight, and the bricklayers displayed remarkable skill in aligning them.

**DETAILS OF SPECIFIC FEATURES – ENTRYWAY:** The ground floor entrance to the upstairs lodge rooms is done in the Doric style, accurately featuring a pediment, entablature, and columns, all in local sandstone. The entablature as it now exists has the words "MASONIC TEMPLE" placed between the cornice and architrave, on the frieze. The triglyphs are still visible on the sides, with their beautiful guttae, but the metopes, or blank spaces between the triglyphs, are not.

**DETAILS OF SPECIFIC FEATURES – SECOND STORY FAÇADE:** The second story brickwork, in keeping with the Renaissance Revival style, features an arcade of arches. The arches and their accompanying windows in the center of the façade are recessed, in contrast to the ends of the

building. In the center recessions, pilasters break up the monotony of the order and symmetry. The northwest corner arcades (and all of the Bannock side) are filled in with an ornamental brick frame, owing to the location of the large lodge room behind them.

**ORNAMENTATION AND DETAILS – PORCH MOSAIC:** In between the columns that lead to the upper interior floor is a beautiful inlaid tile mosaic, which bears a similarity to the tiles in front of the old Idaho Statesman newspaper building on 6<sup>th</sup> Street. The Square & Compasses, the recognized emblem of the Masonic Fraternity, are inlaid in the tile-work. The tiles continue into the interior entranceway, between two sets of large wooden doors, and up through the stairwell, which has an ornamental marble base molding.

**ORNAMENTATIONS AND DETAILS – INTERIOR:** The interior of the second story is completed in the Greek Revival style. Original doorways have lintels with Egg-and-Dart work, which was considered part of the interior furnishing style of Greek Revival.

The Egg-and-Dart woodwork is carried on in the mahogany decorative features in the enormous Blue Room. The Blue Room has an immense line of columns spanning the length, with an accurate entablature and coved ceiling. Furniture in the Blue Room was commissioned of the Henderson & Ames company, and is of solid mahogany at a cost of \$12,500 in 1920's prices.

Between the columns are decorative medallions. The columns were specifically built with vents running up the length of the tubes to help evacuate and circulate the air. In front of the columns are many benches set up in two rows. The benches are on risers, which allow heat to radiate discretely from the pipes under them.

All of the ceiling, entablature, and other decorative elements that are not the matching mahogany wood are hand crafted out of lath and plaster. They are generally assumed by visitors to be carved wood, but this is not the case. They are entirely sculpted plaster.

The original carpet was chenille wool imported from Scotland at a cost of \$5000.

The Red Room, the other fraternal meeting room, now features wood paneling around the entire space, but did not originally. The interesting feature in this room is an arched canopy over the presiding officer's station.

The dining room and parlor feature beautiful floor tiles, of a size no longer made. They are a zig zag pattern of red and tan, nine inch tiles, and bordered with black.

**ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS:** The most significant changes are the 1920 expansion, and the installation of the Otis Elevator in the 1950's, the covering of the decorative glass on the first floor, and the addition of awnings. Several minor remodels of the interior of the second floor

have occurred, to bring the building up to modern safety standards, including the addition of a second set of stairs to the third floor, and another set of internal emergency stairs that reach the first floor to exit at ground level. The addition of these stairs necessitated removal of some storage lockers on the second floor to another room, and removing a partitioned wall in the parlor for the same. New boilers were installed probably in the 1960's.

Tenant spaces have had cosmetic remodels frequently.

**CONDITION OF BUILDING:** Overall, the building is in great shape. It was built with the intention of being a couple of stories taller than it is at present, and so it is extremely sound, especially for the period of its construction.

**RELATIONSHIP TO SITE/STREET/ADJACENT BUILDINGS:** The Masonic Temple building fits in very well with the Boise downtown center. Also on its block is the Empire Building, which features an entranceway done in the Classical Order, and the attached Bank and its own columns, and a large parking lot in back. Across 10<sup>th</sup> Street from it is a retail building done in the Egyptian Revival style, which was popular at the time this fraternal hall was constructed, and in fact the exterior of that building is presently painted in colors that resemble the original interior colors of the second story of the Masonic Temple.

**LANDSCAPING FEATURES:** At present, nothing of note, although plans are underway to remodel the sidewalk and make the streetscape more pedestrian friendly.

**June 20, 2011**

## **HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE**

The property described in this nomination is significant because it:

- ✓ possesses special historic, architectural, cultural, social or archaeological significance as part of Boise's heritage.
- ✓ represents distinctive characteristics of a type, period, construction method, or use of materials.
- ✓ represents the work of a notable designer, architect, or builder.

Statement of Historical Significance:

The Masons of Boise were present among the original founders of the town-site. Unlike Idaho City, which was a rough and dangerous town, full of transient miners and those looking to avoid fighting in the American Civil War, then ongoing in "the States," Boise was founded with the intention of being family-friendly. Institutions that were seen as having a "civilizing" influence on the uncultured masses were encouraged, and the Masons quickly began meeting.

The first meeting place was on 7<sup>th</sup> and Idaho, in an adobe hut operated by Franklin Breneman Smith as the first private school in 1864, and they subsequently began meeting the next year on 6<sup>th</sup> and Main in a couple of structures – first in a wooden structure above a stable, and later in a brick building. The last building in use prior to construction of the present lodge meeting hall in this Nomination Form was sold to the Salvation Army, and used by them through at least the 1970's. It was eventually painted white, with red trim, and at present is painted in reverse: red, with white trim; the Flatbread Pita Company occupy the bottom floor, and the SIG group occupy the second.

The present meeting hall on 10<sup>th</sup> and Bannock was used extensively by the community in its early years, with many dances and fundraisers being held there, fairs and funerals, and even civic elections being conducted within. One quaint event, designed to raise money to help fund the building construction, featured a bazaar; one of the attractions at the bazaar, other than a Country Faire, featured, among others, a famous palm reader: "Queen Grizzella, famous for the accuracy with which she deciphers characters and reads the future..."

In the last 5 years, Freemasonry as a fraternity, and especially in the Boise community, has begun to thrive again. This has resulted in an increase in the amount of usage the fraternal space has not seen since the 1960's. Virtually every week night (and many weekends), excepting the summer months of July and August, are meetings held upstairs.

The interior of the upstairs is wholly unlike any other interior space in Boise. It is not well-known by the average passerby that there exists a room of such spacious proportions inside, or that it is available for tours.

As a fraternity, Freemasonry is the world's oldest and largest "secret society." The modern model of lodges having been instituted June 24, 1717 in London, the origins of lodges stretch back much further. The earliest minutes of meetings still in existence are from 1598 in Scotland. The earliest legendary document connected to the fraternity is the Regius Manuscript, which dates to 1390, and contains words and phrases still used in present modern-day Masonic rituals. The fraternity has been said to take good men and make them better. It has also been said that it is, "A system of morality, veiled in allegory, and illustrated with symbols." The system of morality is that of Virtue Ethics, the ancient Greek system revived in the Age of Reason and the subsequent Enlightenment Era. The allegory involves the life of all mankind through a fictional story of the building of King Solomon's Temple. The symbols tend to be the working tools of the building trade, which are moralized upon.

Supposedly the basement in the original 1906 part was an ammo dump or something similar in WWI, a story heard from a previous custodian of the building. There are still blast doors down there which support that idea.



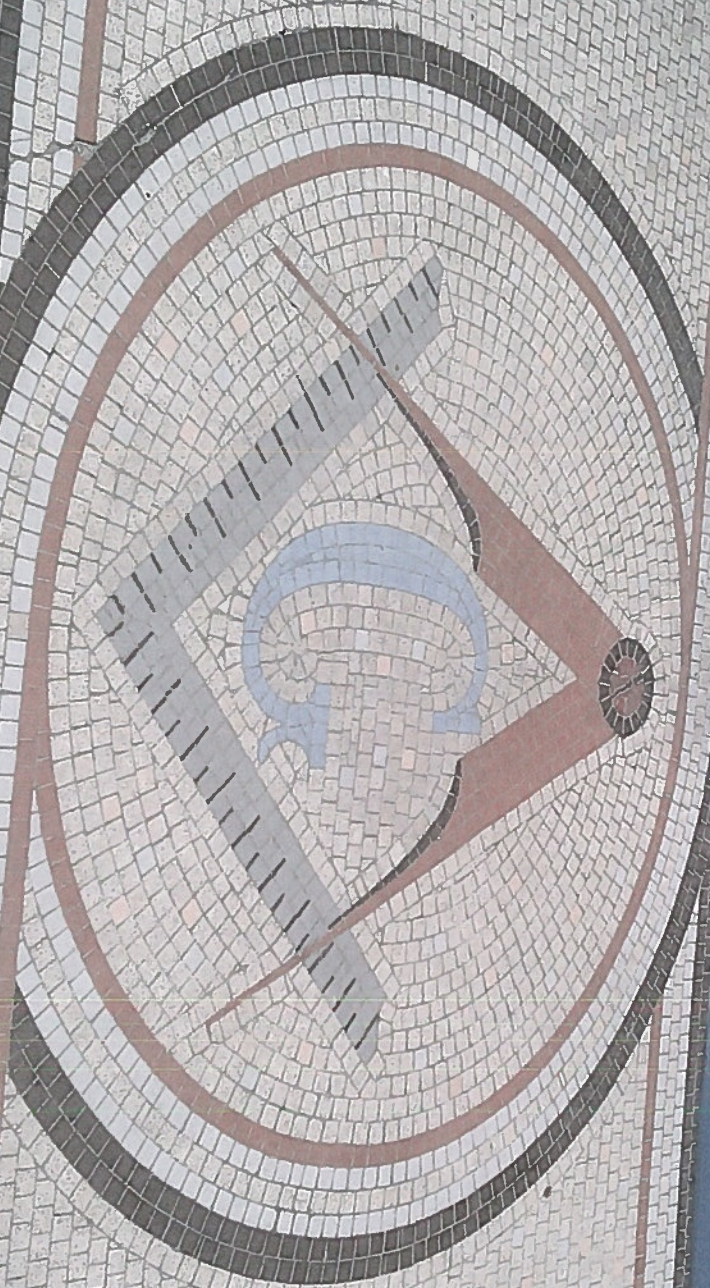
MASONIC TEMPLE





Idaho Grand Lodge website:  
[www.idahoaf.am](http://www.idahoaf.am)

Masonic Temple Association  
(208) 343-0721







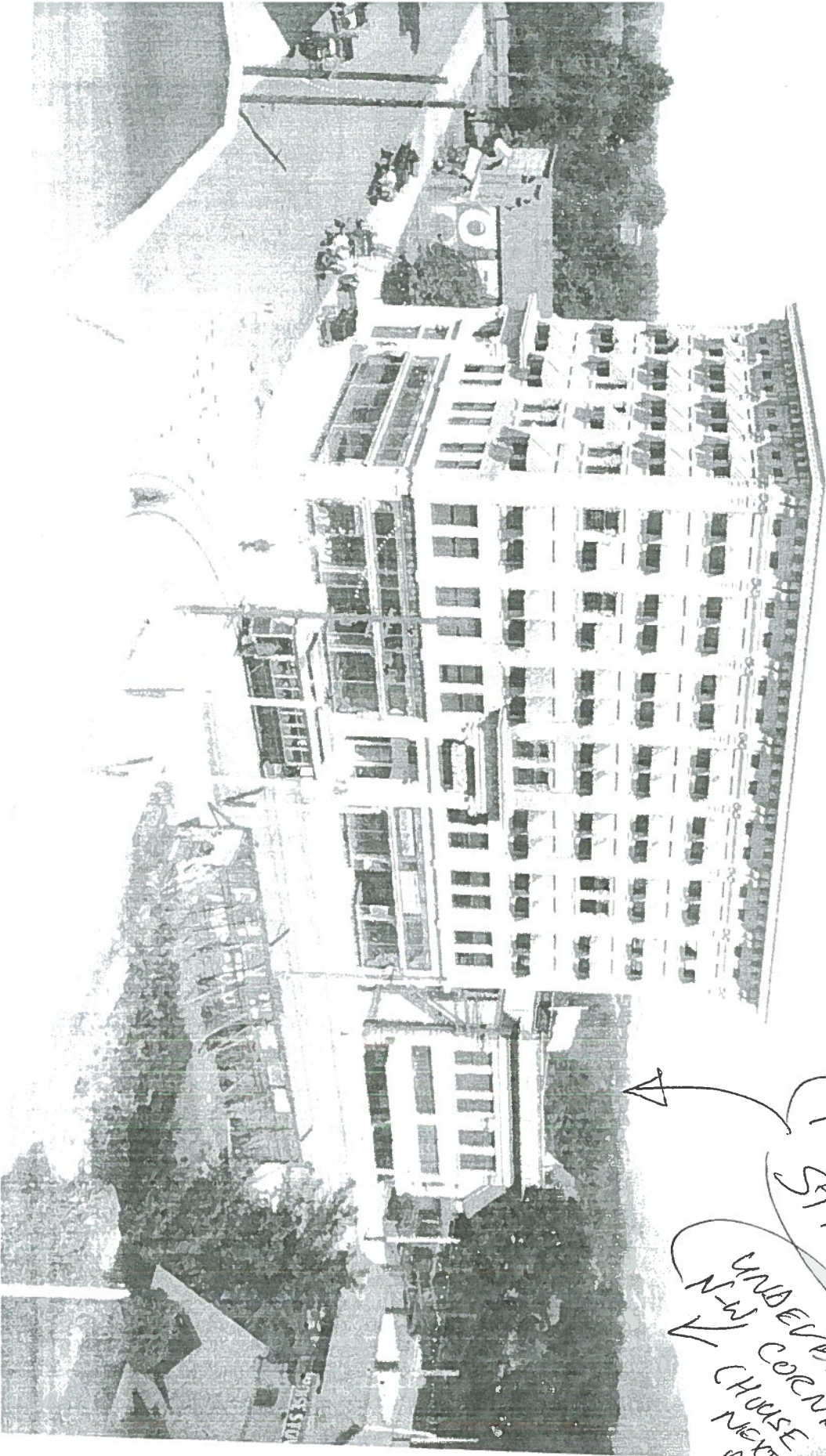
DON'T  
FORGET  
THE TILED  
ENTRANCEWAY  
SAC



DON'T FORGET "BUFF" COLORED  
BRICKS IN ALLEYWAY



TDAM  
STATE HISTORICAL  
SOC # 61-95.5



1906  
STRUCTURE  
UNDEVELOPED  
N-W CORNER  
(HOUSE  
NEXT DOOR)



- VIEWS

DISTRICT,  
FROM  
PITOL

1906 STRUCTURE  
#62-20.02





## CLOSE-UPS IN NEW MASONIC TEMPLE

### FIRST PICTURES OF KIND PUBLISHED

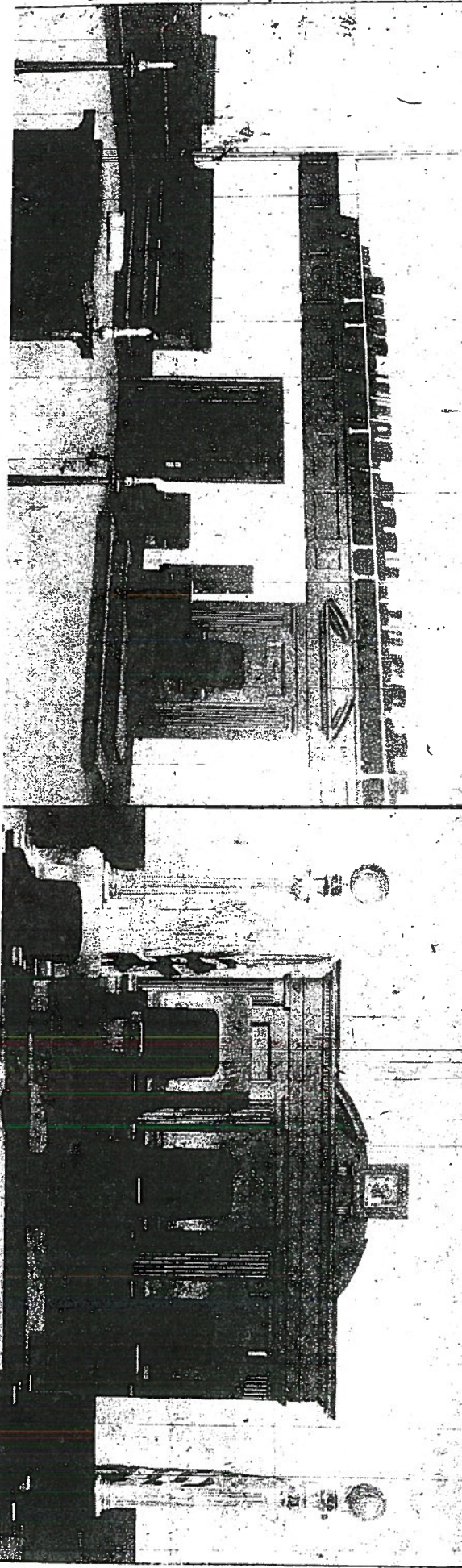
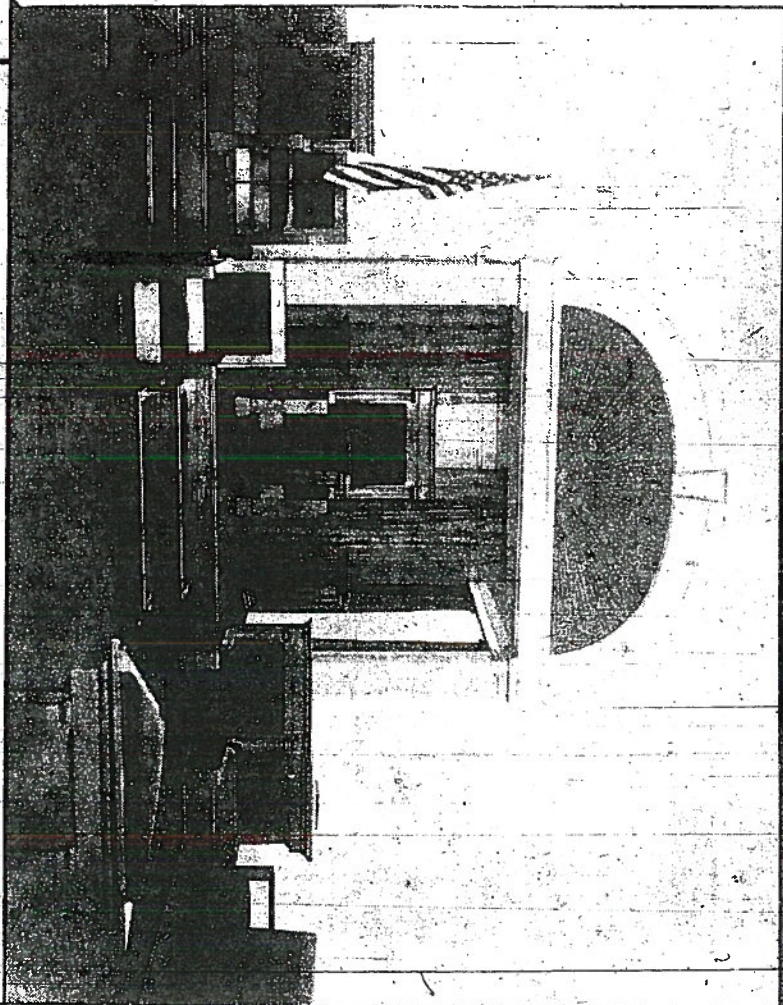
**M**ASON-Set Boise and vicinity are justifiably proud of their new temple just completed and dedicated on the corner of Banwick and Tenth streets in this city. It was formally dedicated May 23 with impressive ceremonies and since that time has been to full use.

This building represents an investment of \$150,000. Of this amount \$35,000 was paid by Boise lodge No. 2 for the old Masonic building and grounds; \$120,000 represents the cost of the furnishings and fixtures. The ground floor is given over entirely to business with Masons will utilize the entire second floor for their purposes.

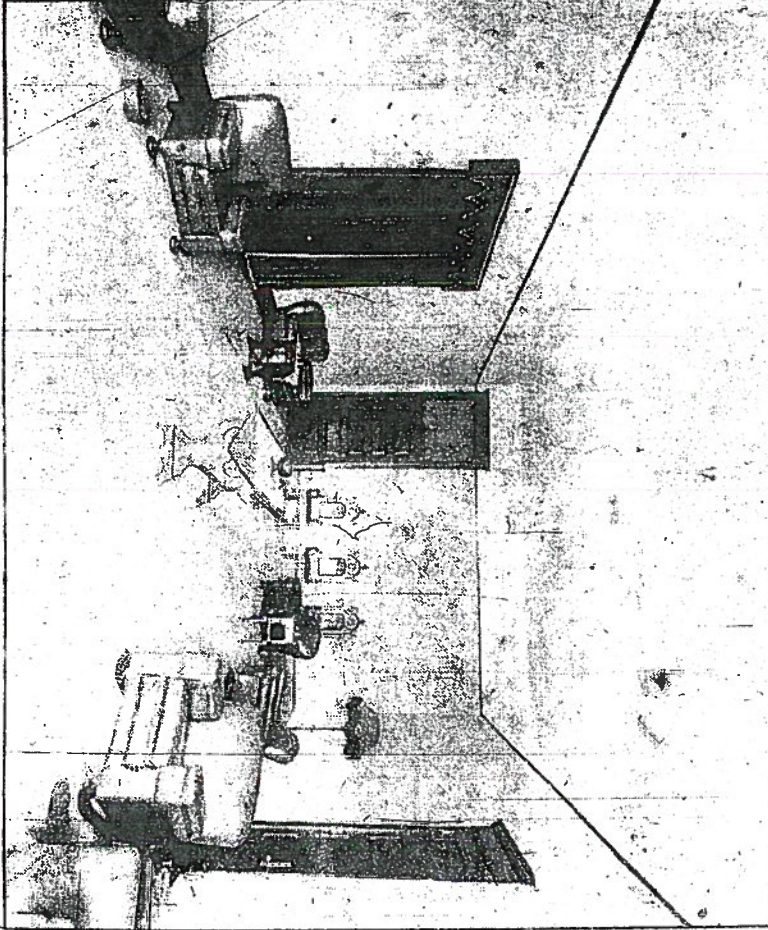
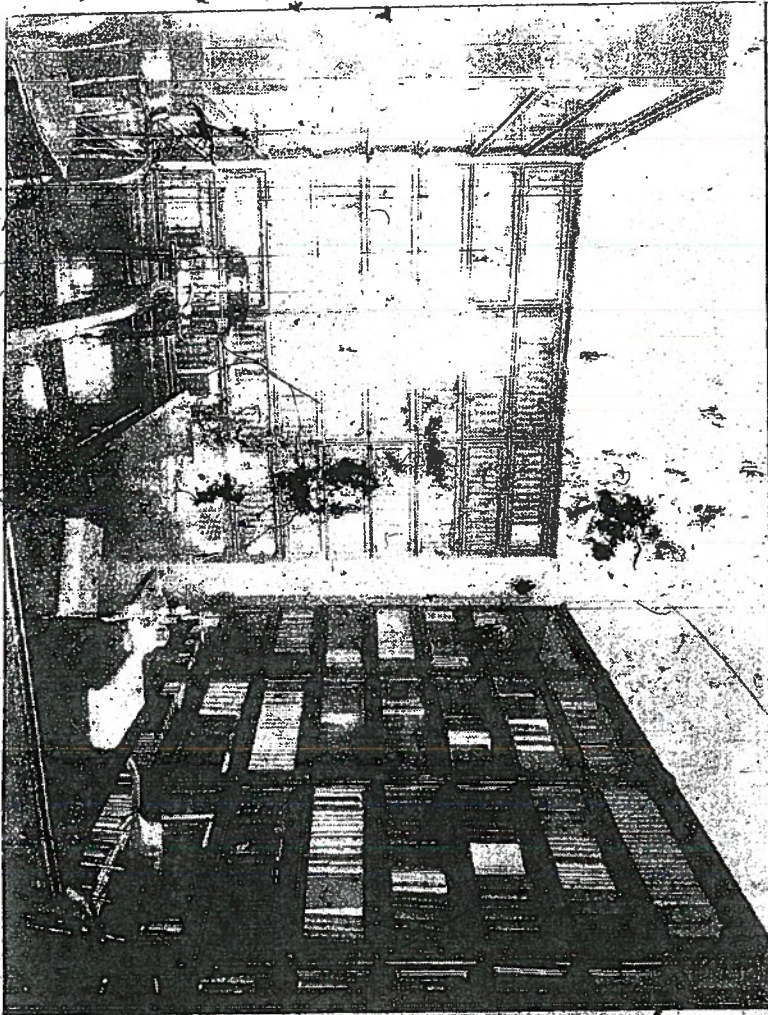
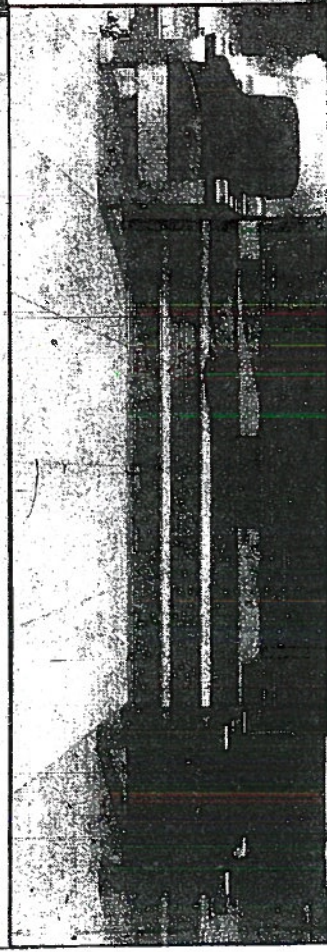
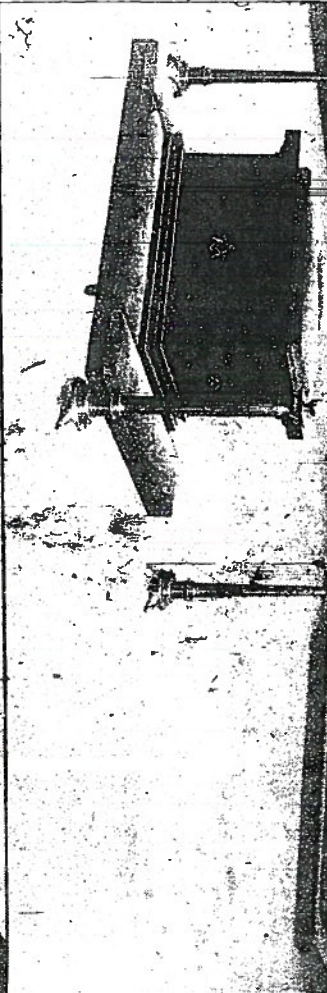
In addition to the "Blue Lodge" room and the "Chapter" room with the "Sole" rooms and over all, there is a fine dining room capable of accommodating 250 breakfasters, a model kitchen and serving room, a ladies' parlor for the accommodation of the O. E. S. and their friends, a commodious smoking room, well supplied with big leather chairs, a well equipped library and reading room, quarters for the grand secretary, a large and well equipped coat room, and on the third floor, a grand looking room for the accommodation of the Idaho Commandery, Chapter, Officers, visiting rooms, committee rooms and all other essential are included. The lighting, heating and ventilating systems are considered the last word in these lines.

This fine lodge home was built by the Masonic Temple association, incorporated under the laws of Idaho, and composed of Idaho lodge No. 1, A. F. & A. M.; Boise lodge No. 2, A. F. & A. M.; Oriental lodge No. 60, A. F. & A. M.; Idaho Commandery No. 1, Knights Templar and Chapter No. 3, Royal Arch Masons. These organizations are represented by Curtis F. Pike, William H. Fier, George C. Balin, Raymond E. Eyrich and Charles F. Kitchensley, who constitute the board of directors and who had charge of the erection of the temple. J. G. Weller is secretary of this board. Carl F. Fier was the contractor and so well pleased were the directors with his work that on behalf of the association they presented him with a gold watch in open lodge.

The furnishings and equipment are especially rich and pleasing. In the main room the prevailing colors are blue and white toned with the national masonry tint of the furniture and the deep green of the upholstery. In the "Chapter" room the prevailing colors are red and white, modified by the masonry tint of the furniture and the delicate tints of the arch in the front.







No. 1—View in main lodge room showing the altar in the center, the station of the senior warden in the west and a portion of the balcony. No. 2—Corner of the library in the Masonic temple, an institu-

tion that has a valuable collection of books. No. 3—View in the chapter room looking toward the platform. This room with its mahogany furniture and deep red carpets and furnishings is considered a gem of its kind. No. 4—Station of the worshipful

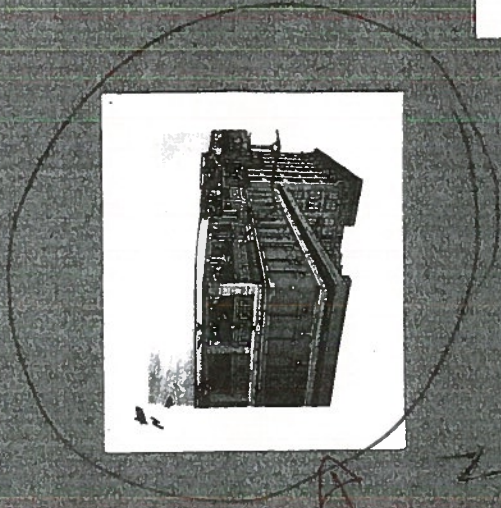
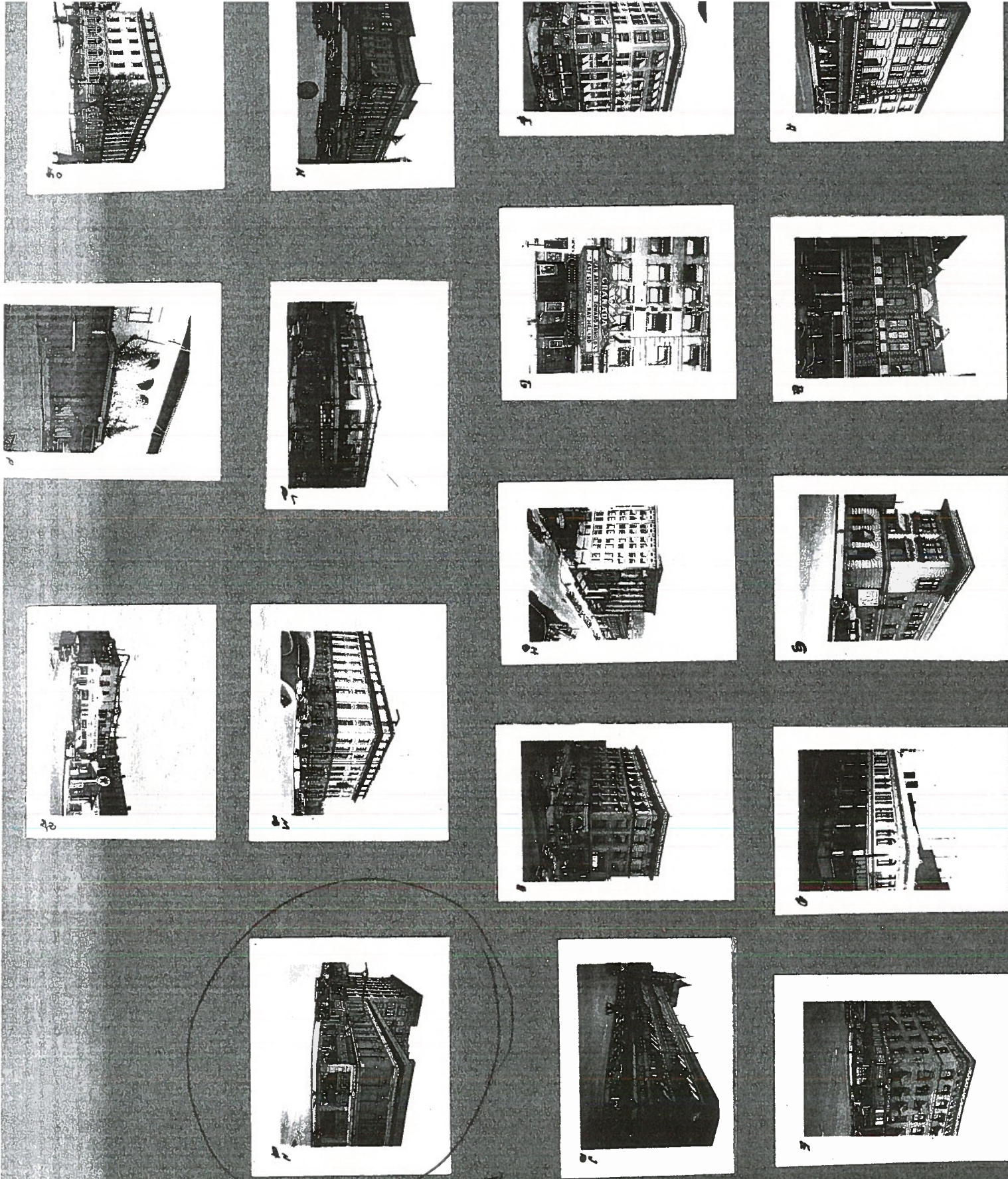
master in the east of the "Blue Lodge" room. This is one of the striking features in a Masonic lodge room which, for beauty, is thought to equal anything in the entire

northwest. No. 5—Lounging room connecting with the dining room on one side and the library on the other and intended to add to the social pleasure and the comfort of the brethren.

Photos by Johnson & Son, Boise, Idaho.

ORIGINAL PARLOR A





2

#61-14382 1920 STRUCTURE







