

# IDAHO STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## REFERENCE SERIES

GEORGE LAIRD SHOUP  
June 15, 1836-December 21, 1904

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Originally from Kittanning, Pennsylvania, George L. Shoup became a stockraiser in Galesburg, Illinois, before joining the gold rush to Pike's Peak in 1859. He became a merchant in Denver and saw military service with the Colorado volunteers during the Civil War. His cavalry unit, in fact, was engaged in John M. Chivington's massacre of Black Kettle's village at Sand Creek on November 29, 1864. That same year, Shoup had served as a member of Colorado's constitutional convention.

Moving northwest in 1866, he opened stores in Virginia City, Montana, and in Salmon, Idaho. In 1867, he settled permanently in Salmon, where he kept up a large cattle business along with his mercantile pursuits. Continuing his political career, he served as one of the original Lemhi County commissioners in 1869.

Following that, he was chosen Lemhi County superintendent of schools in 1872, and elected twice to the legislature--to the House of Representatives in 1874 and to the Council in 1878. A delegate to the Republican national convention in 1880, he served on the Republican national committee from 1880 to 1884, and again in 1888. He went to great personal effort to publicize Idaho, and arranged at his own expense an Idaho exhibit at the New Orleans exposition of 1884 and 1885. Offered the Republican nomination for Congress in 1886, he declined. But when his Idaho associates wanted him to become governor in 1889, he assented.

As governor, he arranged for the Idaho constitutional convention to assemble, July 4 to August 6, 1889. Then he worked effectively to get Idaho admitted as a state. He consented to serve briefly in 1890 as Idaho's first state governor prior to his election to the United States Senate, December 18. There he served two terms, although he lost political influence in Idaho after he chose not to become a Silver Republican in 1896. (His McKinley Republican faction, which also favored silver in Idaho, managed to elect only one member in the entire legislature that year.) Yet after the silver fight had ended, he became one of the two Idaho leaders honored in Statuary Hall in the national capitol. Senator Borah is the other.

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