

IDAHO STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY REFERENCE SERIES

NAMPA UNION PACIFIC DEPOT

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SIGNIFICANCE

By 1900, Nampa's old depot had been outmoded by the increasing business handled by the terminal, averaging \$25,000 per month. Nampa was the junction point on the Oregon Short Line (Union Pacific system) of the Idaho Northern and the Boise, Nampa, and Owyhee railroads. The Union Pacific announced that it would build "the finest depot on the line" at Nampa, at a cost of from \$30,000 to \$40,000.

F. W. Clarke of Omaha (headquarters of the Union Pacific) was the architect. Local contractors were C. J. Humphis and J. M. Bray.

The building was occupied on September 25, 1903. Since the construction of a new depot twenty years later, the older structure has been used for offices. It now is Canyon County Historical Society museum building.

PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Oregon Short Line depot at Nampa is a pressed brick and sandstone structure 113 feet 7 inches by 36 feet 10 inches. In style it is an interesting eclectic combination of Romanesque, Renaissance, and Baroque elements, with the latter dominating. A massive central block of French Renaissance form is flanked by two advancing Baroque bays that bulge dramatically forward. Dormers above these bays break the roof edge and end in ogee arches with ornate finials. Similar finials accent all roof points.

The building is sited at the end of Nampa's principal street, enhancing its Baroque quality; it is probably the outstanding example of Baroque Revival architecture in Idaho.

The Nampa depot has been reroofed with reddish asbestos shingles, replacing the original red tile, and in the process the top-most finials have been removed. Parts of the sandstone facade have been painted. Despite these alterations, the structure still retains unusually strong character, basically due to its powerful sculptural massing and forms.

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(This information has not been edited.)

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