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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

OCT 25 1993

NATIONAL REGISTER

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Sigma Alpha Epsilon Fraternity House

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Location

street & number 920 Deakin Street

N/A not for publication

city or town Moscow

N/A vicinity

state Idaho code ID county Latah

code 057

zip code 83843

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide X locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official

Date

6 OCT 1993

John R. Hill, State Historic Preservation Officer  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

### 4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.

See continuation sheet

determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:)

entered in the  
National Register

Maury Mrs. Lapsley

12/2/93

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

Property Name Sigma Alpha Epsilon Fraternity House

County and State Latah County, Idaho

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**5. Classification**

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	No. of Resources within Property	
		contributing	noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<u>1</u>	<u>    </u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u> structures
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u> objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: \_\_\_\_\_ No. of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

\_\_\_\_\_ n/a \_\_\_\_\_

**6. Functions or Use**

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions.)

Cat: EDUCATION Sub: Education-related building (fraternity)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions.)

Cat: EDUCATION Sub: Education-related building (fraternity)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions.)

Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals/

Colonial Revival

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Materials (Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation concrete

walls Brick

Wood

roof Wood/shingle

other n/a

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Property Name Sigma Alpha Epsilon Fraternity House

County and State Latah County, Idaho

**8. Statement of Significance**

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture

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Period of Significance

1932

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Significant Dates

1932

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Cultural Affiliation

n/a

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Significant Person

n/a

Architect/Builder

Carpenter, Charles I.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Property Name Sigma Alpha Epsilon Fraternity House

County and State Latah County, Idaho

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
  - Other State agency
  - Federal agency
  - Local government
  - University
  - Other
- Specify repository:  
University of Idaho

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreeage of property Less than one acre

UTM References

1	<u>1/1</u>	<u>4/9/9/5/7/0</u>	<u>5/1/7/4/5/2/0</u>	3	<u>/ /</u>	<u>/ / / / / /</u>	<u>/ / / / / /</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u>/ /</u>	<u>/ / / / / /</u>	<u>/ / / / / /</u>	4	<u>/ /</u>	<u>/ / / / / /</u>	<u>/ / / / / /</u>

\_\_\_ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Nancy F. Renk date August 10, 1993  
 organization \_\_\_\_\_ telephone (208) 263-7697  
 street & number 8500 Sunnyside Road state Idaho zip code 83864  
 city or town Sandpoint

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

**Property Owner**

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name \_\_\_\_\_  
 street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
 city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

United States Department of the Interior  
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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1 Name of Property Sigma Alpha Epsilon Fraternity House  
County and State Latah County, Idaho

The Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity house, located on the eastern edge of the University of Idaho campus, retains a high degree of integrity in its setting, exterior design, and interior room configuration. While the neighborhood has changed over the years as the University has expanded, the SAE property has retained its large lot landscaped by grass, shrubs, and trees. The exterior of the house has been altered only slightly in more than sixty years, exhibiting insignificant modifications in upper deck railings and a few windows. The interior has been remodeled more than once as the fraternity worked to meet the changing needs of its student residents, but despite the alterations, the room configuration remains essentially unchanged. Thus, after more than sixty years of continuous use as a university fraternity residence, the SAE house retains its integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

The SAE house is set diagonally on its large corner lot, facing the intersection of Deakin and Sweet streets. Because the lot drops considerably from front to rear, the full height of the basement is exposed at the rear and sides of the building but not on the facade. An asphalt driveway provides access for delivery vans and student parking at the rear. A narrower semicircular drive crosses the lot in front of the house. Landscaping in the front includes shrubs, large spruce and birch trees, and a lawn crossed by a concrete walkway leading from the corner to the front door.

The Sigma Alpha Epsilon house stands two and a half stories above a full basement. A narrow gabled ell stands full height at the center rear, while a flat-roofed two-story ell extends at each end. The main facade is divided into five bays, while each side ell is divided into three bays. Facade and side walls are veneered in dark red, wire-raked brick, while the rear walls use common red brick with a smooth finish. Bricks are set in an English bond on front and side walls and common bond at rear.

The facade features a symmetrical design whose primary focus is the recessed center entry. The six-panel wooden door with long strap iron hinges is flanked by sidelights and topped with a leaded fan window; original leaded sidelights have been replaced with single pane lights. The doorway is framed by wooden pilasters and panels, and two slender columns are set into the interior corners. Wooden pilasters also frame the exterior side of the entry, and wooden molding with a keystone motif borders the elliptical arch above the entry. A concrete deck with metal balustrade and railing spans the facade.

Facade windows are set singly, two on either side of the center entry. The same pattern is repeated on the second story, with a smaller one-over-one window set in the bay above the door. The eight-over-one double hung sash windows are set into simple openings with brick sills and soldier course lintels. Each window is trimmed with single panel wooden shutters, anchored to the wall in an open position. Three gabled dormers break the roof on the facade, each with a large arched light over a lower sash; these originally were nine-over-six single sash windows. Wooden pilasters flank the window in each dormer.

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Section number 7 Page 2 Name of Property Sigma Alpha Epsilon Fraternity House  
County and State Latah County, Idaho

A gambrel roof, covered with stained wooden shingles, tops the central portion of the SAE house. Gable ends are marked by eave returns and large brick chimneys. Shallow, boxed eaves top a wide wooden cornice composed of simple moldings and two rows of dentils.

The sleeping porches at each end of the house form an important design element, distinguished from the main structure by their facade setback, frame construction above the basement level, and flat roofs. A center door provides access to each ell on the facade. The lower walls on each story contain wooden panels, either plain or marked with a raised diamond pattern of pairs of intersecting lines. The upper walls are solid windows, with large nine-light fixed windows filling the facade and rear, and similar windows flanked by three-light casements filling the end walls. The cornice repeats the same pattern found in the main structure. The flat roof is encircled with a low metal balustrade and railing, replacing the original balustrade whose elements provided a variation on the pattern found in the wooden panels below. Access to the roof top decks is through windows on the top floor.

The interior space of the SAE house is divided by function: food, recreation, service, and storage in the basement; primarily social areas on the first story; and study and sleeping areas on the second and third stories. The large dining room in the east end of the basement is altered only slightly, retaining its original brick walls, large multipaned windows, and plaster ceiling. The commercial kitchen, with its stainless steel fixtures, probably has been remodeled at least once but retains its original wooden cabinets. The pool room is walled in its original knotty pine paneling but was remodeled c. 1960s to include carpeted "conversation pits" at one end. Other areas in the basement house a weight room, furnace room, and storage facilities.

The first floor has two large social rooms flanking the entry hall and stairwell. The remodeled entry features 4x8 sheets of dark stained paneling, acoustical tile ceiling, and linoleum flooring. The original multipaned french doors lead from the entry into each room. The stairwell in the center of the house, designed to be fireproof, still has metal stair framework, terrazzo treads, metal balustrade, and oak railing.

The western space, known as the formal room, has been remodeled at least once. A photograph of the original fireplace shows what appears to be a simple tile border surrounding the fireplace opening in the plaster wall, with a shallow arched niche set into the wall above the mantle. This has been replaced with a flagstone fireplace with raised hearth and shallow stone mantle, flanked by a trophy case and cabinets. Both the western and eastern walls have been covered with 4x8 sheets of dark stained paneling, but the other two walls retain the original plaster. The original smooth plaster ceiling now has a heavy texture, and the original parquet flooring is covered with wall-to-wall carpeting. The large windows are unaltered, trimmed with a sill only. Recessed radiators are set beneath each window.

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County and State Latah County, Idaho

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The informal room to the east of the entry has been altered very little. It is paneled in knotty pine with a medium stain. The original fireplace has a brick surround, topped with a wooden mantle decorated with dentils below. Windows and radiators are treated the same as in the formal room. The floor in this eastern room was replaced in 1983-1984, and it is now covered with wall-to-wall carpeting.

The enclosed porch room at the east end has retained its original function as a study room, along with its original fireplace and windows. The western room, however, has been converted into sleeping and study quarters, retaining its original windows.

The SAE house was designed to have all residents sleep in communal rooms, and this practice continues to the present. Sleeping porches on either end of the second story house more than half of the men in bunk beds, while the remainder sleep in a large room on the third floor. Other rooms on both floors are smaller study rooms, remodeled in 1978 to include built-in closets, desks, and day bunks. While the plaster walls appear original, the acoustical tile ceilings and carpeting are newer touches. The large bathrooms on each floor were remodeled most recently in 1978 with new tiling, sinks, and a sauna added to the third floor.

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County and State Latah County, Idaho

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The Sigma Alpha Epsilon house in Moscow is architecturally significant on a local level as a good example of an essentially unaltered fraternity house at the University of Idaho. The building gains further significance as an example of Colonial Revival architecture -- one of two dominant styles applied to fraternal and sororal buildings during this period. Finally, the SAE house is significant as an example of group housing designed to promote strong fraternal bonds through communal dining and sleeping facilities.

The University of Idaho opened its doors in October 1892, with just two faculty members and forty students. The school provided no student housing at first, and all students lived in Moscow in rented rooms and apartments. This situation worked well for male students, but parents of female scholars worried about their daughters' safety in such unsupervised living. University regents responded to these concerns by constructing the first women's dormitory, Ridenbaugh Hall, in 1902. Men's dorms followed at a later date.

The fraternity and sorority system, popular at campuses across the United States, offered students an alternative to dorm and apartment living. Fraternities started at the University of Idaho in 1898 with Kappa Phi Alpha, a local organization that affiliated with a national fraternity, Phi Delta Theta, in 1908. The local chapter of Kappa Sigma, organized in 1905, was the first national organization on campus. Kappa Sigma built its own fraternity house in 1916, the first such building in Idaho. The building still stands, one block west of the Sigma Alpha Epsilon house.

Zeta Chi Alpha fraternity received official University of Idaho faculty sanction in December 1916, just before Christmas break. The fifteen young men who made up the charter membership and pledges took up residence in January in a home used formerly by the Gamma Phi Beta fraternity. This building served as living quarters for the fraternity until construction of the new building in 1932. The group remained a local organization until November 1919 when it was officially installed as the Idaho Alpha of the Sigma Alpha Epsilon national fraternity.

SAE began planning a new building c. 1931, purchasing property on the corner of Sweet and Deakin from John Gavin. Architect Charles I. Carpenter of Spokane had completed blueprints by early 1932 when the fraternity announced its plans to erect a new house to accommodate forty-five members. Work began in the spring. Contractors completed the excavation and poured footings by late May, laid the brick walls during the next two months, and finished the roof before the end of July. Workmen kept on schedule, allowing fraternity members to move into their new quarters before the start of the school year in September 1932.



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County and State Latah County, Idaho

At the time of construction in 1932, Sigma Alpha Epsilon was one of twelve fraternities on the University of Idaho campus, complemented by eight sororities. The group houses of these organizations helped cover a critical shortage of rooms, housing nearly twice the number of students as campus dormitories. Today, nineteen fraternities and sororities maintain houses in the traditional Greek area to the east of campus along Deakin and Elm streets between Sweet and 6th. Several others have newer houses along Nez Perce Drive to the south of campus, in the Greek area developed by the University in the late 1950s. Of the nineteen houses in the original fraternity and sorority neighborhood, fifteen date from 1916-1932, while the others are post-1950 in construction. Six of the fifteen older homes remain essentially unaltered on the exterior with no apparent additions or alterations in windows or siding.

The most common architectural style for Greek houses at the University of Idaho was Tudor Revival, with Neoclassical and Colonial Revival also proving popular. The SAE house conveys a Dutch Colonial profile through the use of a side-facing gambrel roof -- the only gambrel roof design represented in the Greek neighborhood. Representative of this style are the symmetrical facade, gambrel roof with classical cornice, matching gable end chimneys, and central door with fan light and pilasters.

On the interior, the Sigma Alpha Epsilon house followed the communal living design used in all but one (Kappa Sigma) of the fraternities at the University of Idaho in 1932. The second and third floors contained fourteen study rooms, each designed to accommodate three men. Furnishings consisted of a daybed, study table, and built-in closets. Sleeping was confined to the large sleeping porches at either end of the second floor, and to two large rooms on the third floor. An additional smaller room on the top floor was reserved as an infirmary for sick residents.

Five Greek social organizations, including Sigma Alpha Epsilon, built houses between 1931 and 1932, during the depths of the Depression. SAE funded the construction of its new residence through the sale of bonds, a practice made common at the University of Idaho more than ten years earlier. At that time the state legislature had no money to fund major building projects, so University officials raised money from Moscow businessmen who bonded the construction of Lindley Hall in 1920. Bondholders retained ownership until the University met its financial obligation. Forney Hall was built using the same creative financing techniques in 1924 and was followed by a number of other major projects in the 1930s and 1940s, all using money raised from the sale of bonds. SAE followed this precedent, and it is probable that the other Greek social groups building at the same time used the same method.

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Charles I. Carpenter, architect of the Sigma Alpha Epsilon house, came to Spokane c. 1912 where initially he worked for the Spokane school district as superintendent of buildings and grounds. By 1920 he was listed in the city directory as an architect, working in partnership with Karl G. Malmgren, former partner of well-known architect Kirkland K. Cutter. Malmgren and Carpenter remained partners for four years, and after 1924 Carpenter worked on his own. He designed a number of public buildings throughout his career, including courthouses, schools, city halls, and lodge buildings. At the time of his death in 1938, construction was underway on his last project, the high school in Moscow, Idaho.

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County and State Latah County, Idaho

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Previous documentation on file (NPS) - none

Primary location of additional data - University of Idaho

### Bibliographical References:

Gibbs, Rafe

*Beacon for Mountain and Plain: Story of the University of Idaho.* Caldwell, Idaho: Caxton Printers, Ltd., 1962.

Petersen, Keith C.

*This Crested Hill: An Illustrated History of the University of Idaho.* Moscow: University of Idaho Press, 1987.

Polk, R. L. and Co.

*Polk's Spokane City Directory.* Spokane: R. L. Polk and Co., 1920, 1924. On file, Spokane Public Library, Spokane, Washington.

*Gem of the Mountains.* University of Idaho annual. 1917-1920. On file, Special Collections, University of Idaho, Moscow, Idaho.

Sanborn Map Company.

Map of Moscow, Latah County, Idaho. New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1928, pp. 5, 6, 27. On file, Special Collections, University of Idaho, Moscow, Idaho.

"University of Idaho Building History." On file, Special Collections, University of Idaho, Moscow, Idaho.

*Daily Star-Mirror*, Moscow, Idaho. Newspaper available on microfilm, University of Idaho, Moscow.

23 March 1932, p. 1.

24 March 1932, p. 1.

19 May 1932, p. 6.

25 July 1932, p. 4.

15 September 1932, p. 1.

16 September 1932, p. 1.

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*Spokesman-Review*, Spokane, Washington. Obituary File, Eastern Washington State Historical Society, Spokane, Washington.

26 December 1938. "C. I. Carpenter, Architect, Dies."

*University Argonaut*, *Idaho Argonaut*, University of Idaho, Moscow, Idaho. Newspaper available on microfilm, University of Idaho Library, Moscow.

10 January 1917, p. 1.

28 February 1917, p. 3.

4 November 1919, p. 1.

23 February 1932, p. 1.

25 March 1932, p. 1.

22 April 1932, p. 3.

20 May 1932, p. 1.

20 September 1932, p. 1.

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### VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Tax 66 in SE/NE of Section 18, T39N, R5W, B.M.

### BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundaries encompass the large lot on which the Sigma Alpha Epsilon house stands. The property has been owned by the fraternity since 1931.



Sigma Alpha Epsilon House

Latah Co., Idaho

Nancy F. Renk

27 July 1993

Idaho Historical Society, Boise

Looking NW

Photo # 3





Σ

A

E



Sigma Alpha Epsilon House

Latah Co., Idaho

Nancy F. Renk

27 July 1993

Idaho Historical Society, Boise

Looking W at E end

Photo # 4



Sigma Alpha Epsilon House

Latah Co., Idaho

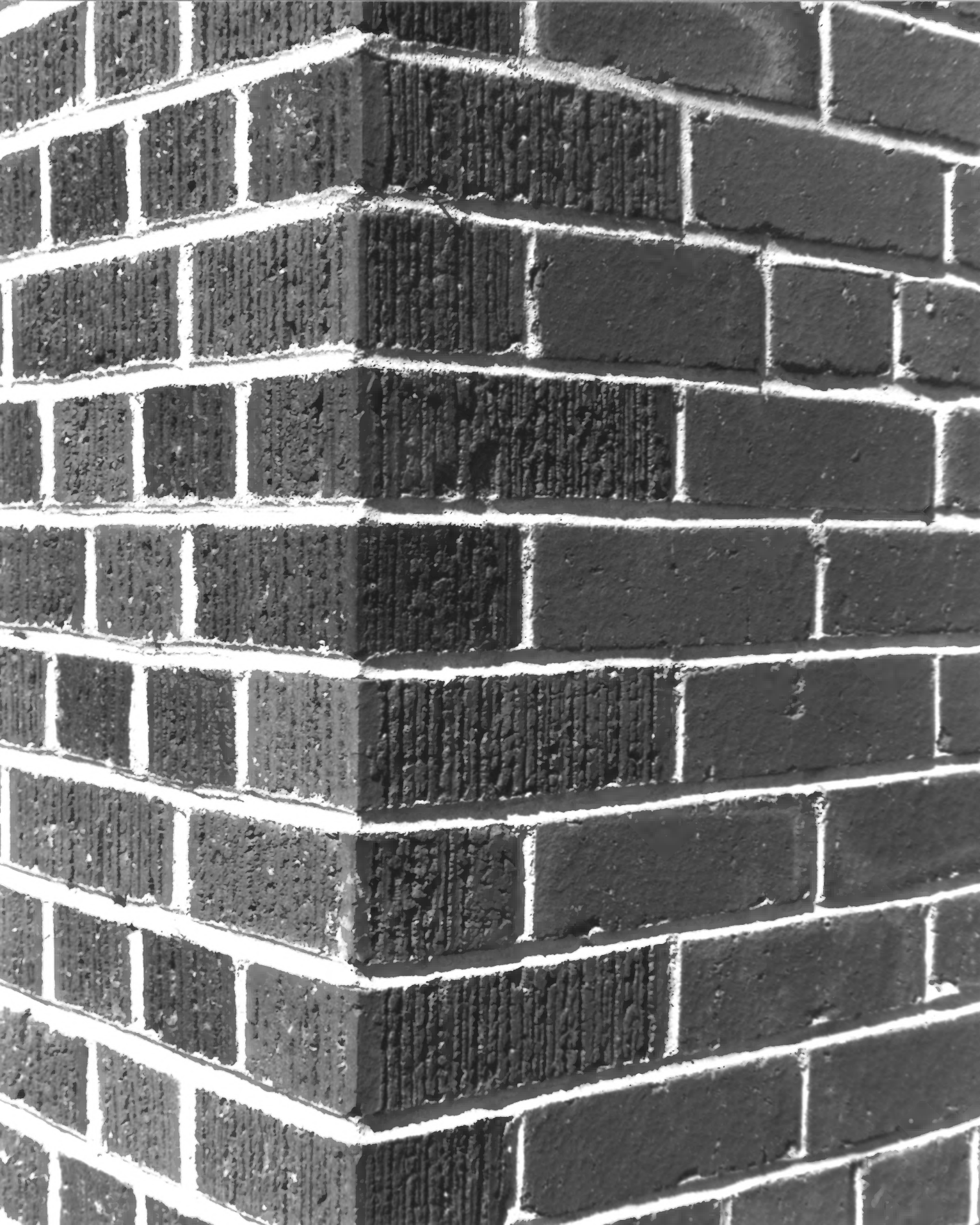
Nancy F. Renk

27 July 1993

Idaho Historical Society, Boise

Looking NE

Neg. # 11



Sigma Alpha Epsilon Fraternity House

Latah Co., Idaho

Nancy F. Renk

27 July 1993

Idaho Historical Society, Boise

Detail, NE corner

Photo # 15



Sigma Alpha Epsilon House

Latah Co., Idaho

Nancy F. Renk

27 July 1993

Idaho Historical Society, Boise

Detail of front entry, looking N

Photo # 18