

Independent Order of Odd Fellows Building  
526 Market Street  
San Diego, San Diego County  
California

HABS No. CAL-429

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PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
Western Office, Division of Design and Construction  
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PHOTOGRAPH-DATA BOOK REPORT  
HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

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INDEPENDENT ORDER OF ODD FELLOWS BUILDING

San Diego, San Diego County, California

ADDRESS: 526 Market Street, San Diego, California  
OWNER: Odd Fellows Hall Association  
USE: Commercial and Fraternal Meeting Hall

HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

Fraternal building of Classic Revival design built in 1882 and typical of such semi-monumental buildings of that era financially supported by street floor commercial establishments in the downtown business districts of American cities.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Notes taken from the minutes of early meetings of the San Diego Lodge #35, F & A.M., and Odd Fellows Lodge #153 furnish interesting information on the planning, construction and disposition of this building. Minutes of August 17, 1872, "A committee was appointed to secure a building lot for a Masonic Temple".

Apparently the lot at the corner of 6th and H (Market Street) was bought and the building project was handled by the Masonic Hall Building Association, which was created to handle the building problem. Payne and (Wm.) Lacy, Architects prepared the plans.

In John Waldo Thompson's Memoirs he mentions some of the problems encountered at that time: p. 115 -- "The Masons and Odd Fellows owned the corner of 6th & H Streets, where the basement had been excavated for some time."; p. 120 -- "The Masonic Hall was under

construction this summer (no date)---"There was considerable confusion all the time trying to work in inferior material, brick principally, slighting the specifications, etc. So when the building was finished there was a bad controversy. The contractor claiming extra pay for changes in the specifications and the association claiming damages for non fulfillment of contract." Apparently that matter was settled by court action as the article goes on to mention that the trouble was settled by arbitration. Three arbitrators were appointed by the judge of the Superior Court (unnamed), but the other two were G. M. B. McDonald and John Wolfskill of Escondido.

From County Clerk records, San Diego -- Arbitration proceedings October 1882, between William Lewellyn (plaintiff) and the Masonic Building Association (defendant) the three arbitrators were: Hon. William T. McNealy, G.M.B. McDonald and John Wolfskill.

Highlights from minutes of I.O.O.F. Lodge #153 (Odd Fellows): Lodge instituted on March 23, 1869, by D.D.G.M. Wilshimer and staff from Los Angeles, 44 members agree to sign the by-laws which shall be adopted. John R. Porter was elected Noble Grand; Saturday, August 27, 1881 -- Resolution to lease the proposed hall of the Masonic Building Association for 5 years at \$50.00 per month - carried; Saturday, September 17, 1881 - A committee was appointed to consult with the architect of Masonic Building Association, which organization was building the hall, to suggest alterations in the plans of the new hall that they deem necessary; Saturday, January 7, 1882 - Trustees reported \$550.00 invested in stock in the Masonic Building Association; Saturday, January 21, 1882 - Invitation from the Masonic Building Association to attend laying of the corner stone of the new building now being erected by the Masonic Building Association,

March 8, 1882 - San Diego Union - The extensive ceremonies included a parade to band music, the two lodges as principals and other organizations and many dignitaries participating. At the site of the building, Mr. James M. Pierce, President of the Masonic Building Association, declared all in readiness and Mr. W. W. Bowers, Past Master of the San Diego Lodge #35, officiated. The corner stone of the New Temple laid by the Grand Lodge, F. & A.M. The corner stone was laid with mementos in cavity below it at the northeast corner of the edifice.

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March 4, 1911 "Senior Warden Hackett reports that he had sold all of the stock in the Odd Fellows Hall Association (formerly Masonic Bldg. Assn.)---; and the Treasurer was authorized to turn over the stock certificates on receipt of the purchase price."

Captain George Horation Derby (CAL-430), humorist author of "Phoenixiana" (1855) and "The Squibob Papers" under the pen names of John Phoenix and John Squibob, respectively, was Secretary and acting Master of San Diego Lodge #35, F. & A.M. when that Lodge received its charter in 1853; and the minutes of the Lodge during his tenure as Secretary reflect his native humor, which has earned him historical significance as "Others Considered" under Theme XX, "The Arts and Sciences", sub-Theme C - "Literature, Drama and Music", under the National survey of Historic Sites and Buildings, conducted by the United States Department of Interior, National Park Service.

#### REFERENCES

1. Notes from early records and historical files, San Diego Lodge #35, F. & A.M., by courtesy of Mr. Orin M. Zink, Historian.
2. Memoirs by John Waldo Thompson, p. 115, p. 120.
3. Notes from early minutes of the Odd Fellows Lodge #153, by courtesy of Mr. R. R. Rabe, Secretary, Odd Fellows Lodge #153, San Diego, California.
4. Records, San Diego County Clerk with reference to arbitration proceedings in Superior Court records of 1882.
5. San Diego Union historical files, by courtesy of Mr. Jerry MacMullen, Director, Serra Museum, San Diego, California.

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## ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

## EXTERIOR

The building, built of brick brought from San Francisco for the purpose, was constructed in a pseudo Italian Renaissance style adapted to commercial buildings of its day. The two-story facades consisted of a first story Doric order with cast iron base and pilasters (housing structural columns) and the entablature. Each bay, typically, has intermediate pipe columns supporting the lintel on the Market Street side and one pipe column in the first bay from Market Street on Sixth Avenue. The second story is finished in plaster formed on a 16" brick wall to represent a second order with a base to the moulding at the sill line of the second story windows. The arched head windows are carried at the spring line on three quarter engaged columns to the sill of same windows. The entire window is surmounted by a classic type pediment carried on brackets. The first story pilaster piers are continued on the second story as quoined pilasters up to the main cornice of the building, and surmounted by a balustrade parapet of piers and plain balusters which screen the low pitched roof. The main cornice is of sheet metal. A balcony with ornamental iron railing is located at second floor level of central bay on Market Street which is accented by coupled fluted pilasters and a segmental pediment breaking above cornice. The tympanum of this segmental pediment has been blanked off, apparently to conceal inscriptions or other devices of original owners.

Overall Dimensions: The overall length along Market Street is approximately 100'. The overall width along Sixth Avenue is approximately 76'.

Foundation and Basement: The basement extends under the sidewalks a distance of about 14'-9" with about 8'-0" head room. There are four sidewalk entries: two lift metal traffic doors on Market Street, one lift wood door with stairs (fenced, from sidewalk) and an elevator with a lift metal traffic door on Sixth Avenue.

In the basement the exterior wall from the building above is carried on a continuous 1'-6" brick wall, penetrated by doorways of varying widths with flat structural arch lintels. These doors give access to the basements of the five stores that front on Market Street and the one basement entered from Sixth Avenue

which has two doors. These doors connect the basements with the under-sidewalk area which is common to all of them. There is no basement under the north twelve and one half<sup>ft</sup> of the building.

The inner northwest corner of the building on the first floor only is occupied by four toilet rooms about twelve and one half feet by fourteen feet with a fifth toilet adjacent under the two story added structure. All of these floors in the twelve and one half foot addition are on concrete slab at grade with no basement. There is, however, a wood floor of 6" wide T&G flooring over the concrete slab in the first floor of the two story portion which was added in 1905. On the second floor above the first floor toilets in the northwest corner there is a small toilet, otherwise leaving this one story portion open to the sky.

Doorways and Storefronts: The present entrance doorway to the second floor stair is made up of a pair of stainless steel covered glazed doors 6'-0" x 8'-0" x 2" (new - 1956) with two fixed transoms up to the entablature. There are heavy wooden jambs clad with the same metal trim.

Entrances to the rentals and stores seem to have been considerably modified but in general are built of wood. The doors usually 8'-0" high with one undivided glazed panel above the lock rail and one un moulded wood panel below. Typically, there is a bulk-head and plain glass show window on one or both sides of the door with identification signs in the upper transome area.

Windows: The second floor windows are round head double-hung about 3'-6" x 5'-9" x 1-3/4", two light two high, surrounded on the exterior down to the spring line with a moulded plaster treatment and surmounted by a free pediment carried on 2 brackets in plaster work. There are six of these windows on the Market Street elevation with a wrought iron balcony at the fourth window from the corner; and five windows on the Sixth Street elevation with a wrought iron balcony (fire escape) and a counter balanced stair serving the second and third windows (emergency exits) from the corner - one from each large meeting room.

Roof: The roof is semi-flat composition with an east-west ridge. The original building roof has a low point and interior downspout at the northeast corner and at the southwest corner. The addition

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also is a composition roof separated by the original parapet and at a few feet lower level. The roof framing consists of 2" x 8" rafters at 32" centers, sloping down from an east-west ridge (8'-3" above the second floor ceiling) to the north and south walls. These rafters carry the roof sheathing. At 4'-0" above the second floor ceiling are doubled 2' x 8" bottom chord members parallel to the rafters and trussed to them with diagonal members. The rafters chords and ceiling joists are full dimension stock. There is a roof hatch adjacent to the ceiling hatch which is reached from the second floor stairway hall. In addition to the rafter trussing there is trussing longitudinal to the building, parallel to the ridge at approximately mid-span of the rafters.

## INTERIOR

### Floor Plans:

The first floor plan is so arranged that the stairway to the two lodge halls on the second floor is adjacent to the west wall of the building with double doors opening from Market Street to a small landing at the foot of the stairs.

The plan of the ground (first) floor is divided into seven rental spaces. The five entering from Market Street vary somewhat in width. The more westerly three are about sixty three and one half feet deep and the two most easterly are about thirty three feet deep. The two entering from Sixth Avenue are about thirty feet and twelve feet in width and forty feet and thirty five feet in depth respectively. These dimensions include a small (3'-0" approximately) "L" shaped hall that connects the three spaces with the toilets on the north side of the building. The twelve foot space (in 1905 addition) connects directly with the toilet rooms. There are two ground floor toilets in connection with the most westerly space; one under the main stairs and one in the one story structure at the northwest corner of the building. From the west wall of the building spaces one and three have stairs and space four has a ladder to their respective basements.

The second floor was originally planned to accommodate the Masonic Lodge #35 of San Diego, California, and the Odd Fellows Lodge #153 of San Diego, California. There are two large halls served by a

common stairway with a kitchen (over stair) and two toilet rooms at the head of the stairway. The meeting hall for the Odd Fellows at the Market Street side is about twenty nine and one half feet wide by fifty seven and one half feet long and separated by a double longitudinal wall from the Masonic meeting hall which was about thirty feet wide by about sixty feet long. Each meeting hall has an ante room and the Masons had an additional toilet at the northwest corner of the building. Also, there is a locker room twelve feet by eighty five feet, approximately, added in 1905.

Stairway: The main stairway to the second floor from Market Street is seven feet wide with an entryway at the bottom, sixteen risers to a landing at mid-height and sixteen more risers to the top. The risers and treads are of wood. At either side is a raised panel wood wainscot and hand rail. The easterly hand rail is received by a rather massive newel post of wood and in the form of a truncated polygonal pyramid with a turned cap and returns to the kitchen wall as an open stair well banister. The other stairs mentioned are simple wood stairs. A wood ladder and a side walk stair (the latter is stock metal) all are from ground floor level to the basement. The exterior fire escape previously mentioned is of metal, stock type (counterbalanced).

Flooring: The flooring on the first floor is of 1x6 T&G (not hardwood) on wood sub-flooring, except in the twelve and one half foot addition which seems to be a similar wood flooring over concrete slab (about 12 inches above). The first and second floors of the original structure are carried on 2" x 12" joists; the first floor joists are spaced at 16" o.c.

Wall and Ceiling Finish: The typical wall finish is plaster throughout except for the toilets and the two adjacent rooms on the second floor which have in addition a tile wainscot. In the lodge meeting halls there is a 4'-3" high wainscot (rather ingeniously finished with oak graining). The wainscot cap, which is a heavy moulding, receives vertical boards about 4" in width which extend up from the 6" wood base. A platform, the same height as the base, extends out from the wall about four feet from the sides and six feet from the east wall of the meeting halls, in the riser of which are about five grilles per side serving as air passages from ducts in the walls which extend through the parapet.

Ceilings on the first floor are plastered plain about sixteen feet high. Ceilings on the second floor are plastered plain except in the meeting halls which have a deep cove above an ornamental plaster cornice. There is one large octagonal skylight in each meeting room and three ceiling vents to roof louvers in other rooms, (south ante room, foyer, vestibule). In the southerly meeting room there is a new acoustic ceiling and flush lighting.

Doors: The entrance doors to the main stair were new in about 1956. They are a pair of wood doors, each with a single glazed panel, a low flush panel and with two fixed transoms, one above the other. The entire assembly is sheathed on the exterior with stainless steel. The doors are fitted with panic hardware. Doors on second floor from kitchen to southerly meeting hall are multiple 3'-6" x 8'-0" x 2" with six raised panels, three above and three below the lock rail. The panel mould is one by two and one half inches. There is a two inch transom bar and a wood transom 3'-10" high which repeats the door panels below. In the northerly meeting room, separating the ante room from it, are similar doors to those just described except that there is no transom and they are twelve feet high. The remaining doors on the second floor usually are similar in detail but are 3'-0" x 8'-0" x 2" four panel with 10" bottom rail 7-3/4" lock rail and 7-3/4" stiles and rails.

Trim: The typical door and window trim is heavily moulded 7-3/4" wide and 2" deep.

Prepared by,

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September 1963

APPROVED:

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*2/20/69*