

COLORADO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

COLORADO STATE REGISTER OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES NOMINATION FORM

SECTION I

Name of Property

Historic Name Braden & Griffith Block

Other Names Price Pioneer Museum

Address of Property

address not for publication

Street Address 100 East Front Street

City Florence County Fremont Zip 81226

Present Owner of Property

(for multiple ownership, list the names and addresses of each owner on one or more continuation sheets)

Name City of Florence

Address 300 West Main Street Phone 719-784-4848

City Florence State Colorado Zip 81226

Owner Consent for Nomination

(attach signed consent from each owner of property - see attached form)

Preparer of Nomination

Name James C. Maxon Date October 10, 2001

Organization _____

Address 511 Forest Avenue Phone 719-275-1564

City Canon City State Colorado Zip 81212

<p>FOR OFFICIAL USE:</p> <p>_____ Nomination Received</p> <p><u>2/2002</u> Review Board Recommendation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approval <input type="checkbox"/> Denial</p>	<p>Site Number <u>5FN597</u></p> <p>Senate # <u>4</u> House # <u>44</u></p> <p><u>3/13/2002</u> CHS Board State Register Listing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Denied</p>
<p>Certification of Listing: President, Colorado Historical Society Date _____</p>	

COLORADO STATE REGISTER OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES

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SECTION II

Local Historic Designation

Has the property received local historic designation?

no

yes --- individually designated designated as part of a historic district

Date designated _____

Designated by _____ (Name of municipality or county)

Use of Property

Historic Commercial; Fraternal hall

Current Museum

Original Owner Syl Braden and Phillip Griffith

Source of Information Oil Refiner (newspaper) articles from January – June 1894

Year of Construction 1894

Source of Information Oil Refiner articles from January – June 1894; on building

Architect, Builder, Engineer, Artist or Designer Architect - unknown; Builders: Hunt & Smith

Source of Information Oil Refiner, 18 January 1894

Locational Status

Original location of structure(s)

Structure(s) moved to current location

Date of move _____

SECTION III

Description and Alterations

(describe the current and original appearance of the property and any alterations on one or more continuation sheets)

COLORADO STATE REGISTER OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES

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SECTION IV

Significance of Property

Nomination Criteria

- A** - property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to history
- B** - property is connected with persons significant in history
- C** - property has distinctive characteristics of a type, period, method of construction or artisan
- D** - property is of geographic importance
- E** - property contains the possibility of important discoveries related to prehistory or history

Areas of Significance

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Economics | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Archaeology –
prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Law |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Archaeology –
historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment/
Recreation | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Ethnic Heritage | <input type="checkbox"/> Military |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Exploration/
Settlement | <input type="checkbox"/> Performing Arts |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Geography/
Community Identity | <input type="checkbox"/> Politics/
Government |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community
Planning and
Development | <input type="checkbox"/> Health/Medicine | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Social History |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation |

Significance Statement

(explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

Bibliography

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

SECTION V

Locational Information

Lot(s) 8 Block 4 Addition Colorado Coal & Iron Co.

USGS Topographic Quad Map Florence

Verbal Boundary Description of Nominated Property

(describe the boundaries of the nominated property on a continuation sheet)

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SECTION VI

Photograph Log for Black and White Photographs

(prepare a photograph log on one or more continuation sheets)

SECTION VII

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS TO ACCOMPANY NOMINATION

Owner Consent Form

Black and White Photographs

Color Slides

Sketch Map(s)

Photocopy of USGS Map Section

Optional Materials

For Office Use Only

Property Type: building(s) district site structure object area

Architectural Style/Engineering Type: Late 19th Century Commercial

Period of Significance: 1894

Level of Significance: Local State National

Acreage less than one

P.M. 6th Township 19S Range 69W Section 16 Quarter Sections SW SE SE SW

UTM Reference: Zone 13 Easting 489730 Northing 4248760

Site Elevation: 5190 feet

Property Name Braden & Griffith Block

DESCRIPTION and ALTERATIONS

Constructed in 1894, the Braden & Griffith Block is a two-story stone commercial building with a rectangular plan, flat roof, and an oblique corner entrance. Situated on the southeast corner of Front Street and South Pikes Peak Avenue in Florence, the building is a short block north of the former Denver & Rio Grande Western Depot, and a block south of Main Street. A concrete sidewalk runs along the north and west elevations separating the building from the streets. The building with its full basement has served as a museum since 1964, and the fenced yard on the south side of the building contains large objects from the collections, including a small building (an historic, stacked lumber jail moved to the site). A one-story, flat-roofed brick annex immediately east of the building was constructed after the museum was established. Neither the fenced yard with its collection of artifacts, nor the annex is included within the boundaries of the nominated parcel.

The Braden & Griffith Block is a 25-by-50-foot building with the long axis oriented north and south and an oblique-angled entry at the northwest corner. The walls are evenly coursed, quarry faced, cream-colored sandstone ashlar. Smooth faced stone ashlar accents the building utilized as quoining and as continuous lintel and sill coursing. This smooth ashlar also frames the entrance and storefront bays. The quarry faced sandstone walls on the north and west elevations rise up to form a parapet wall with a simple corbelled stone cornice that was recently stuccoed.

A small concrete stoop marks the entrance, a multi-light wood frame door preceded by a screen door. The entrance bay is infilled with red brick laid in a stretcher bond. A carved wooden sign that states "Price Pioneer Museum" is inset into the brick above the door. Surmounting the entrance bay is a stone lintel with a decorative crown chiseled with two rosettes flanking "1894." Centered directly above the entrance bay is a window. This window, like the other second-story windows on the north and west elevations, is a tall, narrow, wood frame, double hung sash of one-over-one surmounted by a transom light.

The north elevation facing Front Street has two large storefront bays that have been filled in with red brick and a multi-light window unit. Like the entrance bay, the brick is laid in a stretcher bond. Each window unit consists of three 8-light fixed sashes surmounted by a paired 2-light transom. On the second story above the two storefronts are three evenly spaced windows.

The storefront bay of the west elevation (facing Pikes Peak Avenue) received the same treatment of brick infill with a multi-light window unit. The smooth ashlar that frames the storefront continues upward, framing a second-story window centered directly above the storefront. Four more evenly spaced, second-story windows punctuate the expanse of the west wall. Another entrance is toward the rear of the building near the southwest corner. The recessed paneled wood door is preceded by a storm door and surmounted by a transom light. Between the storefront bay and this other entrance is the stairwell that descends from the sidewalk to a basement service entrance. The door surmounted by a transom is original. An elongated shed roof canopy supported by poles covers this stairway.

There are no door or window openings on the east elevation. With its corner location, it was probably anticipated that at some point another building would abut this one on the east. The 1900 Sanborn map shows a small building adjacent to the Braden & Griffith Block, but it is not present on the 1906 map. The one-story annex was constructed after 1964 and the expanse of stone wall not obscured by the annex has been covered with stucco.

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The rear (south) wall was also covered with stucco, obscuring the stone construction. There is a rear entrance at the southeast corner, and its door and transom appear to be original. A double hung sash 1/1 window and a solid door surmounted by a transom punctuate the upper floor. A metal staircase with a pole railing provides access to the second story entrance that now serves as a fire escape.

The interior of the building retains fragments of the original construction, primarily in the woodwork surrounding windows and doors. The interior walls on all levels are plastered and painted. The basement floor is concrete, while the second and third floors are wood and apparently original. The basement and first floor have dropped ceilings of hardboard or painted plywood panels. The second floor has dropped ceilings of acoustical tile. Whether original ceilings exist under the later ceilings is not known. Access to the basement and second floor is along the interior south wall of the building. The stairway to the basement descends from the southeast corner of the first floor to a landing at the west wall. A short flight of stairs continues along the west wall to the basement level. A steep straight single flight of stairs ascends to the second floor from the southwest corner of the ground floor. Currently all three levels of the building are used for the display and storage of the museum's collections.

The general condition of the building appears to be sound with no roof leaks or obvious settling. Portions of the exterior masonry walls need repointing.

The building has undergone some alterations over the years. The most obvious is the brick infill of the entrance bay and the flanking window bays. It is not known when this change was done. Consensus of the museum board members (long time residents) and Olive Tripp (the current museum board president and long time Eagles Lodge member) is that the work was done prior to the Eagles purchase of the building in 1945, probably in the late 1930's. As no historic photos have come to light, the original configuration of the bays is not currently known.

The other obvious alteration is the museum annex that abuts the building on the east. (Although not included in the nomination, it is important to document this addition.) Built sometime after the museum was established in 1964, this one-story, flat roof construction fills the space between the Braden & Griffith Block and another historic building further east. It has a concrete slab floor and utilizes the existing walls of the adjoining buildings on the east and west. The north facade consists of three light colored brick pilasters framing two red brick veneer walls. The brick is laid in a stretcher bond with thin mortar joints. The south (back) wall is concrete masonry unit (CMU) construction with a metal paneled overhead garage door that facilitates moving large objects in the collection, such as buggies and hose carts. The metal roof trusses rest on concrete block piers that abut the walls of the two historic buildings on either side. A passageway was cut through the east wall of the Braden & Griffith building to allow visitor access into the annex.

In 1945, the Eagles installed a steel I-beam supported by three steel posts to shore up the second floor for dances. The beam is centered along the long axis of the building, and is painted to match the walls and ceiling of the first floor. The canopy over the basement stairwell on the west wall was constructed sometime after 1978. (Photographs in the Preservation Office narrow the date of this alteration even further, as the canopy is not present in a 1981 photo, but is in place in a 1992 photograph.)

Aluminum storm windows have been added to the second story windows. Discussions with Museum board members indicate that stucco was applied to the south wall in 1998, the east wall in 1999, and the decorative cornice in 2000. Despite these alterations, the building still conveys its method and period of construction.

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Site plan

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Basement and Second level floor plans

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SIGNIFICANCE STATEMENT

The 1894 Braden & Griffith Block meets criterion C for its architectural significance as it illustrates a period and method of construction. This two-story masonry building is typical of the commercial block buildings constructed during the boom that Florence experienced at the turn of the 19th-20th century. The building is constructed of sandstone and while the use of this material is not unusual (sandstone was used for contrasting accents and occasionally for a whole facade), the Braden & Griffith Block is the only extant commercial building in Florence constructed entirely of sandstone.

Prominent sandstone bluffs border several sections of the Arkansas River in the vicinity of Florence and Canon City; in addition, marble, granite and alabaster deposits are nearby (*Canon City Daily Record* 3/21/1891, 2/18/1939; *Semi Weekly Clipper* 7/2/1897; *Western Architecture and Building News* 1890, p.48). Several quarries were operating by the early 1890s. Of interest were the sandstone quarries, which included the one at the Colorado State Prison, the Harding Quarry at the mouth of the Royal Gorge, and the quarries in the Coal Creek and Rockvale area. A quick survey of buildings constructed at this time in Florence and nearby Canon City suggest that sandstone was extensively used as decorative material for lintels, sills, surrounds, etc. For example, a June 15th 1911 article in the *Canon City Daily Record* reported that "Coal Creek stone is being used for the window sills, balustrades, and other places of like nature, in the new [Canon City] Elks Lodge building." The 1906 Chamber of Commerce Book shows several buildings of brick construction with what appears to be sandstone decorative elements. The Baptist Church, the Presbyterian Church, and the Canon City Library (all within Canon City's National Register listed historic district) have sandstone elements incorporated into their masonry construction. Occasionally the use of sandstone went beyond detailing, as there are a few buildings where the entire façade was constructed of sandstone. Several buildings in Canon City's historic district have sandstone facades, including the Acme Block (720-722 Main), the Felter Building (518-520 Main), and the Reynolds Bank Building on the southwest corner of 4th and Main. In Florence, only the 1895 Vannest building on Main Street has a sandstone facade. The buildings in Canon City made more use of the nearby red sandstone, while the buildings in Florence used the cream-colored sandstone, probably from the Coal Creek/Rockvale quarries. A driving survey of each street in Florence, including the alleys in the business area, indicates that brick is the material of choice and that the Braden & Griffith Block is the only extant commercial building constructed entirely of sandstone.

Historical Background

The history of the Braden & Griffith Block parallels the history and changing fortunes of Florence. The construction of the building reflected the enthusiasm and optimism that prevailed in Florence in 1893-1894.

The Arkansas River Valley in the vicinity of Florence, some 30 miles west of Pueblo, attracted settlers in 1860, even as the Colorado Gold Rush was beginning. The relatively lush riverine environment and mild climate were lures, but vast coal deposits were quickly located near present day Florence. Then oil seeps were discovered on 4 Mile Creek a few miles to the west in 1862 (*Canon City Daily Record* 9/6/1972). The Denver and Rio Grande Railroad (D&RG) reached Pueblo from Denver in 1872, and immediately became interested in the coal fields as a source of quality locomotive fuel. The D&RG hastily extended its narrow gauge line to the coal fields in October 1872. The D&RG purchased land and platted the company town of Labran just east of present day Florence. James McCandless, an enterprising settler who arrived in the area the year before, countered with a town plat on his own land.

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Named for his daughter Florence, MacCandless' town would become the core of the current community (*Canon City Daily Record* 9/6/1972). McCandless and his family would remain prominent and influential members of Florence for much of the early part of the 20th Century.

Following the "War" in 1878 between the rival D&RG and the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad (AT&SF) to gain control of a route through the Royal Gorge; the AT&SF built a branch from Pueblo to Florence. This also was to tap the coal fields south of Florence (Cafky 1988; Beebe & Clegg 1962:271-4). By 1881, the oil wells were producing significant amounts of oil near Florence. Growth continued, and the Town of Florence was incorporated in September 1887 (*Canon City Daily Record* 9/6/1972). Florence reached a population of one thousand in 1890 (Wilkins 1995:16) and more good fortune was on the way. By 1891, the Cripple Creek area a few miles to the north emerged as the major gold producing camp in Colorado. James McCandless and several other Florence entrepreneurs persuaded David Moffat to provide backing for a narrow gauge railroad that would connect the Cripple Creek gold fields with the D&RG mainline in Florence. The D&RG would provide support in construction and equipment. The newly incorporated Florence & Cripple Creek Railroad (F&CC) began construction in December 1893 (Wilkins 1995:33-7).

At the beginning of 1894, Florence did not share the mood of Colorado, or the rest of the nation resulting from the financial crisis of 1893. Florence had the most important fuel resources of the time, now heavily producing coal and oil. The oil fields peaked at 824,00 barrels in 1892 (Scamehorn 1979:213), and were second only to the original Pennsylvania fields. Florence was poised to tap the Cripple Creek gold lodes. The introduction to Florence in the 1894 Colorado Business Directory describes in glowing terms the opportunities in Florence.

Florence can be justly called the Oil Center of Colorado and the West as its 75 producing wells seem in exhaustible [sic]-- supplying as they do the United, the Rocky Mountain and Florence Oil Refining companies with the crude material which is refined at the home refineries, furnishing a high test illuminating oil and lubricants -- as well as the popular Lightning Axle Grease made by the Florence Oil & Refining Co. Florence is also the central point for numerous coal fields -- besides being on the lines of the Denver & Rio Grande, and Santa Fe railways, it is now the connecting link between the balance of the State and the greatest gold producing camp of the United States, Cripple Creek -- as the reduction works erected at this point for the treatment of Cripple Creek ores will furnish employment for a large number of workers. Among the improvements in the last 6 months are an Electric Street Railway, Race Course, Jockey Club, and a new system of Water Works, besides numerous brick buildings. -- the population which has nearly doubled in the past ninety days giving a census of about 4,000 in the city proper with about 4,000 more from tributary sources making this favored town their headquarters for supplies and materials. -- Before closing this brief article which is hardly sufficient to do this subject justice, mention should be made of the great bituminous coal fields which are now connected with Florence by 4 branch railroads. -- These fields are now producing between 4 and 5 thousand tons of coal per day to the trade, thereby supporting 6-8 thousand people.

Besides McCandless and his colleagues, other businessmen were active on a smaller scale in Florence. Syl Braden operated one of several saloons on Main Street by 1890 (*Florence Daily Citizen* 7/12/26). He and Phillip Griffith are listed as partners in a saloon in the 1894 business directory. Details of their partnership aren't known, but they would build the structure that is the subject of this nomination. The overall plan for the substantial two-story building is not known, but certainly the main

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floor would house a saloon. Situated on the corner of Front Street, and Pike's Peak Ave., and less than a block from the combination D&RG and F&CC Depot, the building was at the hub of Florence commerce.

The Oil Refiner newspaper documented the progress of the Braden & Griffith Block, as the building would be first known:

January 11, 1894 --- "Braden and Griffith are excavating for their Front Street Block."

January 18, 1894 --- "Bids were opened Monday morning for the construction of Braden and Griffith's Block, Hunt and Smith being the successful bidders. The Block is to be situated on the corner of Front Street, and Pike's Peak Ave., will be 25 x 50 feet, and will be built of Coal Creek yellow sandstone. Work was begun today."

February 17, 1894 --- "The foundation walls of the Braden & Griffith Block were completed Wednesday, and work is in progress on the superstructure."

March 8, 1894 --- "The corner stone of the Braden & Griffith Block was laid this afternoon. A copy of the *Refiner Journal* with other papers were put in the opening left for the purpose."

Unfortunately the May 1894 editions of the weekly *Oil Refiner* newspaper that would have documented the completion of the building are missing. The last entry relating to construction is June 20, 1894 with the notice that "Mssrs. Braden & Griffith will lay a flagging sidewalk around their Block at the corner of Front Street and Pike's Peak Ave."

Several other blocks were constructed during the 1894-1895 period, including the 1894 Vannest building on Main Street. The Braden & Griffith Block stands out from other commercial buildings of the period, as it is entirely of sandstone construction. Typically, commercial structures were brick, with occasionally sandstone decorative elements.

Interestingly, the 1895 Sanborn Florence Map shows the Braden & Griffith building as vacant. The *Oil Refiner* of August 25, 1895 mentions that the Florence clothier S. Seiss was moving his stock out of the Braden & Griffith Block, and into the McCandless Block. It is not clear whether he had retailed from the building, or simply used it for storage. The Colorado Business Directories for 1895-1901 show Braden as a saloon operator with several different partners (not Griffith). The 1900 Florence Sanborn Map shows the building as a saloon. Unfortunately the directories do not list addresses for businesses in Florence. Although a Wm. Glasson advertised in directories of this period as having a saloon near the railroad depot (1894), it is reasonable to assume that Braden and his associates were using the Griffith building. The 1900 Sanborn map shows 3 other saloons near the depot.

The *Oil Refiner* of February 26, 1897 noted that "Phil Griffith is making preparations to erect another stone and brick block on Front Street, 50 by 100 feet. It will join the Braden & Griffith Block." This building was not constructed. The 1901 Special 20th Century Edition of the *Oil Refiner* (February 4, 1901) has a prominent advertisement for the Braden & Tribble Saloon.

By this time several ore reduction mills were in full operation, processing ore from the Cripple Creek mines. The population had grown to 3,728 by 1900. The F&CC showed a profit in hauling the Cripple Creek ore to Florence, and transporting supplies and passengers back to the mines. The opening of

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the Portland Cement Plant on the Arkansas River a few miles downstream in 1897, added another important asset to Florence's economy (*Canon City Daily Record* 10/30/1972). Yet even as the F&CC prospered, competition for the railroad and Florence itself grew. The standard gauge Midland Terminal Railroad connected the Cripple Creek District with the mainline of the Colorado Midland Railroad shortly after the F&CC reached Cripple Creek (McFarland 1980:32-37). A third railroad, the Colorado Springs and Cripple Creek District Railroad (also a standard gauge), reached Cripple Creek directly from Colorado Springs in 1901. These standard gauge railroads were owned or under control of the newly formed Colorado & Southern Railroad (McFarland 1980:65-68). Much of the ore processing and general freight and passenger traffic shifted to Colorado Springs. Florence in a very real way found its fortunes controlled by the competition between the Colorado & Southern/Santa Fe and the D&RG empires.

The 1902 Colorado Business Directory no longer lists Syl Braden as a saloon keeper. Interestingly, Phil Griffith is listed in the 1902 and subsequent Florence City Directories with the occupation of "Oil Producer." Apparently from this time until 1925, the building was owned only by Griffith, and finally by his widow. After 1902 it was apparently let out for a variety of business ventures. In 1902, E. R. Millar first appears in the Colorado Business Directory (p. 534) as owner of a transfer business, in later years expanding to include fuel, feed, and storage to his services. In the December 22, 1903 edition of the *Florence Citizen*, he advertised Christmas Trees for sale. The 1905-06 Florence City Directory (p.19), shows Millar definitely in the building. The 1906 Florence Sanborn Map confirms the use of the building as a hay and feed business.

For the next few years the building housed fuel, hay, feed, transfer and storage businesses by several proprietors. Probably Brown & Son, and then Wm. Campbell operated these businesses. The 1912 Florence Sanborn Map shows the building as vacant. Directories are not available for every year. The Florence section of the 1918 Canon City Directory, shows Wm. Campbell running a feed, grain, and transfer business in the building (p. 165).

In 1912, when the building is shown as vacant, Florence suffered a significant setback in its economy. From its beginning, the F&CC was plagued with washouts of its line in the confines of Phantom Canyon north of Florence. A particularly serious flood in July 1912 spelled the end of through operations for the railroad. Faced with the expense of extensive rebuilding and declining revenues, the railroad elected not to rebuild. The company dissolved in 1915 (Wilkins 1995:56-8).

Yet another flood would erode Florence's economy. The June 6th 1921 flood of the Arkansas River and Fountain Creek that wreaked havoc in Pueblo also impacted Florence. Flood waters on the Arkansas washed out tracks of both the AT&SF and D&RG RR between Portland and Pueblo. The AT&SF, rather than rebuilding, arranged for joint track use with the D&RG when the D&RG restored its line. As part of the agreement, the AT&SF agreed to stop its passenger service between Pueblo, Florence, and Canon City. Florence had passenger service with three railroads in 1912, by 1921 only the D&RG supplied the service.(Cafky 1988).

In the 1922 Colorado Business Directory (p. 522), JJ Slevin advertised that he had succeeded Wm Campbell as proprietor of the feed, grain, coal, baggage, and transfer business housed in the building. In 1925, Griffith's widow sold the building to Alva Smith of Colorado Springs. The February 5th 1925 *Florence Citizen* article described Smith as "one of the largest individual holders of Florence property" and continued with Smith assuring prospective tenants that the building would be desirable for "most any kind of business." The article also mentioned that in addition to Slevin, Ed Gamfield had also operated an auto repair business in the building before its sale. Gamfield doesn't appear in the extant

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directories. His occupancy of the building was probably short lived. Slevin, in keeping with the times, gave up the fuel and feed business, and in the 1929-30 Canon City Directory (p.244), he is listed as the Chrysler Automobile dealer for Florence.

It is not certain who Smith's new commercial tenants were, but the 1925, 1927-28, 1929-30, and 1931-32 Canon City Business Directories (Florence Section) show the building as the Eagles Club House. The Florence Aerie No. 169 was founded July 28, 1901. Early city directories show the Eagles meeting in various other buildings, including the 1914 Orecchio Block located across the street. As a complete run of the various directories is not available, it is not known how long after 1932 the Eagles continued to use the building, but the 1937 Canon City Business Directory (Florence Section) shows the Eagles meeting at 125 1/2 E. Main Street. The 1927-28 Canon City Business Directory (pp. 237, 252) lists two disparate businesses that might have been in the building at this time. William Hein Plumbing and the P.P.O.O. Café are both shown located on the corner of Front Street and Pike's Peak Avenue. The cafe would seem to match best with the Eagle Club. Without specific addresses it is not certain which, if either, business was in the building. Neither of the businesses is listed in the 1931-32, or subsequent directories.

By 1930 Florence was feeling the effects of the Great Depression. Oil production increased dramatically in the 1920s, but drilling for new wells ceased in 1930. By 1936 the refining and cracking plants in Florence stopped operation (*Canon City Daily Record* 9/6/1972). The 1930 population was 2,475 (down from the 4,000 people at the turn of the century). The 1933 Colorado State Business Directory describes Florence (p. 592) emphasizing truck farming, dairying, and poultry raising, even though oil, coal, smelting, and cement are still listed.

It is not certain how long Alva Smith retained ownership of the building. Velma (Toni) Price, cofounder of the Price Pioneer Museum, recalls that the building functioned for one to two years as a youth center operated by the local Catholic Church in the late 1930's. It probably was at this time that the original storefront windows and entry bay were changed to their present form. Other members of the Price Pioneer Museum board, who are long time or life long residents of Florence, remember that the building served as the draft/induction center for Florence during World War II.

The Eagles Aerie No. 169 bought the building for a permanent Lodge Hall in 1945 (unidentified 1947 newspaper article in Eagles Lodge scrapbook). In addition to the meeting rooms, the Eagles operated a bar on the main floor.

In 1964, Charles(Chopper) and Velma (Toni) Price established the Pioneer Museum (now the Price Pioneer Museum). A group of interested citizens each contributed \$100 to purchase the building for \$1500. It was then deeded to the City of Florence. It is administered by a board of directors with a mission to preserve and interpret the history of Florence and Fremont County.

The population and economy of Florence remained static during the years following World War II. The establishment of several new state and federal prisons in the Florence/Canon City area in recent years has stimulated some growth in both Florence's population and economy. The Braden & Griffith Block, in its current role as the Price Pioneer Museum, continues to play an important role in Florence, as it has during its 107-year existence.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Colorado State Business Directories. Various publishers. 1894-99, 1900-17, 1920, 1922, 1923, 1925, 1933, 1935, 1941. (on file at Stephen H. Hart Library, Colorado Historical Society, Denver)

Eagle Lodge Scrapbook, Aerie #169, Florence

Florence Citizen 12/22/1903, 2/5/1926, 7/12/1926.

"Florence and its Environs." The Florence Chamber of Commerce, 1906.

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Fremont County,Colorado Directory 1934-35. Canon City Public Library, Canon City.

McFarland,Edward. *The Colorado Midland Guide and Data Book*. Golden,Colorado: Railroad Museum, 1980.

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Oil Refiner (Florence) 1/11/1894, 1/18/1894, 2/17/1894 3/8/1894, 6/20/1894, 2/26/1897, 2/4/1901.

Price, Velma (Toni). Personal communication, 2001.

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Tripp, Olive. Personal communication, 2001.

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Wilkins, Tivis E. *A History of the Florence and Cripple Creek and Golden Circle Railroads*. Golden: Colorado Railroad Museum, 1995.

Western Architecture and Building News. Vol. 2 & 3 (1890).

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GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The north sixty feet (60') of Lot 8, Block 4, Colorado Coal and Iron Company's Addition to the Town of Florence.

(plat map)

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PHOTOGRAPH LOG

The following information pertains to all photographs:

Name of Property: Braden & Griffith Block
Location: 100 East Front Street, Florence, Fremont County
Photographer: James C. Maxon
Date of Photographs: September 2001
Negatives: Price Pioneer Museum, 100 East Front Street, Florence

Photo No. Photographic Information

- 1 North façade; looking S
- 2 West façade; looking SE
- 3 Front Street elevation with 1914 Orrechio Block in background; looking SW
- 4 North and West facades; looking SE
- 5 South wall; looking NE
- 6 Southwest corner; looking NE
- 7 North face, historic D&RGW Depot in background; looking S
- 8 Detail of main entry showing infill; looking SE
- 9 Rear (south) wall of Annex—not part of nomination; looking NE
- 10 Courtyard with Jail building—not part of nomination; looking SE
- 11 Detail of southwest corner entrance; looking E
- 12 Stairwell on west façade leading to basement entrance; looking S
- 13 Interior – door of basement entry; looking W
- 14 Interior – main floor; looking N
- 15 Interior – main floor looking east through doorway into Annex
- 16 Interior of Annex—not part of nomination; looking N
- 17 Interior of Annex showing original masonry of east wall; looking W
- 18 Interior – basement; looking N
- 19 Interior – second floor exhibit space
- 20 Interior – second floor with original transomed windows; looking N
- 21 Pikes Peak Avenue looking north with building on right

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Section VII**

Property Name Braden & Griffith Block

USGS TOPOGRAPHIC MAP

Canon City Quadrangle

Florence Quadrangle