United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Shirk, David L., Ranch
Name of Property
Lake County, Oregon
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 09000891 Date Listed: 11/4/2009

Property Name: Shirk, David L., Ranch

County: Lake State: Oregon

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

Signature of the Keeper

November 4, 2009
Date of Action

Amended Items in Nomination:

Section 3: Certification
The level of significance of the historic property is revised from local to state, since the historic Shirk Ranch has been identified as the only known operating horse ranch in southeastern Oregon. State level is also substantiated for the high number and the integrity level of the contributing resources that illustrate the property's significance under Criteria A and C.

Section 5: Classification
The resource count is revised to accurately reflect the number of contributing sites and objects. The total revised count of contributing resources is 18. The ruin/collapsed condition of the historic root cellar, barn, rocked shed, and old ranch house are considered contributing sites. The gravestone marker is considered a contributing object. The one noncontributing resource (building) remains the c. 1980 animal paddock.

The DOI, Bureau of Land Management and Oregon State Historic Preservation Office were notified of this amendment.

DISTRIBUTION:
National Register property file
Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

NPS Form 10-900 (Rev. 8/2002) OMB No. 1024-0018 (Expires 1-31-2009)

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

891

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 Shirk, David L., Ranch

Other names/site number

2. Location

street & number Guano Valley, Sec. 35, Township 38 S, Range 27 E, Willamette Meridian ☐ not for publication

city of town Adel ☒ vicinity

State Oregon code OR county Lake code 037 zip code 97630

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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.)

Robin L Burgess, Preservation Officer — September 24, 2009
Signature of certifying official — Date

Bureau of Land Management
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

[signature] — 6.10.09
Signature of certifying official/Deputy SHPO — Date

Oregon State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

Signature of the Keeper — Date of Action

✓ __ entered in the National Register
✓ See continuation sheet — [signature] — 11/4/09

__ determined eligible for the National Register
__ See continuation sheet

__ determined not eligible for the National Register

__ removed from the National Register

__ other (explain:)

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

___ private
___ public - Local
___ public - State
X public - Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

___ building(s)
X district
___ site
___ structure
___ object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Non-Contributing	
7	4	buildings
2	1	sites
5		structures
		objects
14	5	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

None

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: Single Building
AGRICULTURE / SUBSISTENCE:
Agricultural Outbuilding
Animal Facility
Storage
Agricultural Field
Irrigation Facility

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT / NOT IN USE

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

NO STYLE

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: STONE
walls: WOOD; STONE
roof: WOOD: Shingle; METAL
other:

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

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)

X 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.

X 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)

Property is:

___ A owed by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

___ B removed from its original location.

___ C a birthplace or grave.

___ D a cemetery.

___ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

___ F a commemorative property.

___ G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

AGRICULTURE

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1881 - 1914

Significant Dates

c. 1881, first period of construction

c. 1910, second period of construction

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

David L. Shirk, owner and builder

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (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:

X State Historic Preservation Office
X Other State agency
X Federal agency
___ Local government
___ University
___ Other
Name of repository: _____

Shirk Ranch
Name of Property

Lake Co., OR
County and State

10. Geographical Data

RECEIVED
JUL 08 2009
USDI - BLM
KLAMATH FALLS RA

Acreage of Property Approx. 14.5 acres

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	10	786966	4682044	3	10	787403	4681635
2	10	787403	4682044	4	10	786966	4681635

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 John Toso and Sherry Nelson, Bureau of Land Management Volunteers; Revised by Ian P. Johnson, Oregon SHPO staff

organization Bureau of Land Management, Lakeview Dist Office date 1 November 2008

street & number 1301 S. G Street telephone (541) 947-2177

city or town Lakeview state OR zip code 97630

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

name U.S. Bureau of Land Management

street & number 1301 South G Street telephone (541) 947-2177

city or town Lakeview state OR zip code 97603

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, PO Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

SUMMARY

The Shirk, David L., Ranch historic district is located on the south-eastern edge of Lake County, Oregon, southwest of Hart Mountain on lands administered by the United States Bureau of Land Management. The district includes a total of nineteen resources constructed between 1881 and 1914, fourteen contributing and five non-contributing, in three discontiguous areas encompassing approximately 14.5 acres. The now vacant 13.1-acre main ranch complex encompasses twelve contributing historic resources, including the main house, both bunk houses, wood shed, outhouse, chicken coop, water tower, blacksmith shop, both wells, and fencing and irrigation systems. The five non-contributing resources in the district are all located within the main ranch complex. The root cellar, barn, rocked shed, and old ranch house ruin are historic resources that no longer convey their significance due to deterioration. These buildings and structures maintain their relationship to the contributing resources and do not detract from the setting, feeling, or association of the larger district. The only non-contributing non-historic intrusion is the animal paddock, which is located at the far southern end of the main ranch complex. A contributing 1.3-acre historic dump and gravesite encompassing less than one acre are located west of the main ranch complex. Both the historic dump and the gravesite are individual resources defined by their own boundary. See site map, figure 4, and Section 10, verbal boundary description.

In 1881 the United States Government Land Office noted three small buildings on the property that came to be known as Shirk Ranch, including a residence and two outbuildings. David L. Shirk purchased the property in 1883 and built most of the ranch's still extant buildings and structures around 1910. A cattleman by trade, Shirk's main business at the ranch was said to be horses. In 1914 Shirk sold the ranch to pursue other opportunities. The Shirk Ranch is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places for its local significance under Criterion A for its association with late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century free-range ranching practices in southeastern Oregon. The property is also locally significant under Criterion C as an exceptionally intact example of a ranch facility. The period of significance is 1881 to 1914, which spans the period between the first documented settlement of the site through the end of Shirk's ownership when the ranch was fully developed.

The following descriptions of the buildings, structures, and sites at Shirk Ranch are primarily based on the work of Richard Kraushaar of the Department of Anthropology, University of Nevada, Reno, who prepared an inventory for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in 1993. Other resources include a description and quote for repairs and restoration by private contractor Gregg Olson in 1984; a cultural resource inventory completed by Fish and Wildlife Service staff in 1985; a Bureau of Land Management assessment written in 2001; and field observations of current conditions made by Oregon State Historic Preservation Office staff in October 2008.[1] See Section 9, Bibliography, for full citations.

[1] The building order and construction date of the buildings, structures, and sites on Shirk Ranch are disputed among the four reports. The estimated construction dates and determinations of eligibility were made by SHPO staff after an onsite examination of the resources.

SETTING

The Shirk Ranch is located on a dirt road in the remote and sparsely-populated high-desert of southeastern Lake County, in Guano Valley, Oregon in Section 35 of Township 38 south, Range 27 east, Willamette Meridian. See figures 1 through 3. Guano Valley is reached by driving east from Lakeview, Lake County's county seat, for a distance of 56 miles on State Highway 140. The ranch is located approximately twelve miles north from the highway on Bureau of Land Management Road #6106. The nearest population center is Adel, a small rural community located approximately twenty-two miles west of Shirk Ranch.

The hundreds of square miles of high-desert steppe and rimrock in this region are part of the Great Basin, an area extending across eastern Oregon, southern Idaho, and northern Nevada and California. The hills and ridges along the eastern side of Hart Mountain are drained by several creeks, including Guano Creek, which forms Shirk Lake located at the north end of Guano Valley. Along the western edge of Shirk Lake is a wetland. Shirk Ranch is located in this area, about 5,200 feet above sea level. Shirk Lake generally retains water, but it does dry occasionally, as is common with lakes in the broad basins of southeastern Oregon. Guano Lake, located at the southern end of the valley, is itself is a dry playa about six miles long. The climate of this vast and formidable land is semi-arid and the vegetation is primarily sage and native grasses, which in addition to cattle, supports herds of antelope and wild horses.

SHIRK RANCH

The ranch lies on the east side of a low ridge that gently slopes eastward toward the floor of Guano Valley. Grazing lands stretch for miles to the north, east, and south along the loam-soil floor of the valley. Shirk irrigated meadow grass to the east as evidenced by a line of sagebrush, ground disturbance, and the remnants of abandoned horse-drawn farm equipment. The main house and the majority of the buildings are clustered on a relatively flat and slightly elevated site. The fenced pastures, corrals, and the barn spread south and east from the main house down a gradual decline. The fencing system includes mostly heavily-weathered historic juniper-pole fencing, sometimes strengthened with barbed- or chicken wire. Historic fencing is often recognized by the entwined twisted trunks of mature sagebrush. Modern lengths are steel-post and barbed wire fence. A period gravesite and trash dump are located west of the main complex. These two resources are separated from the main complex by a braided dirt road and barbwire fence with through access provided by two steel cattle gates. A dam of earth and hand-placed local stone runs along the north and east side of the ranch complex, gradually building in height as it runs down the hill. The dam retains water from Guano Creek and an unnamed seasonal stream to the north of the ranch. The outlet for the reservoir channels water through the fenced pasture area into a pond just south and east of the main house. On the ranch property is a variety of abandoned equipment, including a sheep-rattle of wire and tin-cans left hanging on the front gate to the house; a winter-feed sled constructed of a buckboard, lined with tin, and set on runners likely forged at the ranch blacksmith shop; mangers fashioned from juniper poles; and pieces of a now-dismantled period windmill; among many other items that span the ranch's working history.

Buildings and structures on the site exhibit a variety of construction methods and materials from crude outbuildings assembled of local stone, juniper poles, and rough-cut board to the large main house constructed of milled lumber with hand-carved porch posts. Construction proceeded in at least two phases. The earlier

buildings were constructed around 1881 and include the old ranch house ruin, rocked shed, and a portion of the blacksmith shop. Of these, only the blacksmith shop retains its historic integrity. Only the fireplace remains of the old ranch house ruin, and the rocked shed has collapsed. The later, and more aggressive, surge of building occurred during Shirk's tenure between 1883 and 1914. These resources include the main house, water tower, root cellar, wood shed, chicken coop / animal shed, outhouse, barn, both bunkhouses and wells, and the irrigation and fencing systems. Most of the buildings date to about 1910. Continuity is apparent in this period. All the resources are rectangular, wood-frame, front-gabled buildings clad in horizontal weatherboard or vertical-wood plank and wood-shingle roofing, and appear to have been mostly built with store-bought hinges and round nails, and then painted. An examination of the remnant paint demonstrates that the main house was painted white while the other buildings were red. While well-constructed, neither the main house nor outbuildings convey a particular style or building tradition.

There have been few alterations to these buildings and structures, although several of the outbuildings are in poor condition or have collapsed. Collapsed buildings include the root cellar, barn, rocked shed, and old ranch-house ruin. Although deteriorated to the extent that they no longer convey their historic use and association, the collapsed structures maintain their original spatial relationship to still extant resources, and do not negatively impact the ranch's overall high integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, and feeling associated with settlement and ranching.

CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES, MAIN RANCH COMPLEX
Listed in clockwise order from the main house beginning with bunkhouse #1

Main House, contributing historic building

The main house at the Shirk Ranch is located toward the northern end of the ranch compound, facing south. The wood-frame, medium-pitch, gabled-roof, two-story, measures 30'4" wide (from west to east) and 44'3" long (from south to north). The building is a traditional "I-House" with a two story extension of similar size extending to the north. One-story single-room projections extend from either side of the north end of the building's long axis. The ranch house is set on a dry-laid stone perimeter foundation, and is clad with knot-free horizontal-drop siding faced-nailed 24" on center and roofed with replacement metal roofing. The structure's exterior siding is finished with wide (4 ½" -5 ½") trim and corner boards. Eaves are enclosed, fenestration is regular, and the windows are six-over-six, double-hung, wood sash, and trimmed with protruding sills and simple architraves. Paneled doors with divided lights are centered on the north, east, and west sides of the building. Three round clay-pipe chimney flues extend from the roof. Covered porches are located on each of the four longest walls. Porches on the west, south, and east walls are between 5' and 5'2" wide with chamfered posts. Shed roofs cover the east and west porches, and a hipped roof extend over the south porch. A more recent porch addition to the rear of the building (north), extends half the width of the building on that wall to provide for a kitchen. A sink is built into the porch and is gravity-fed by an exterior-mounted metal water tank perched on a platform supported by a juniper post to the east of the off-center kitchen porch door.

Like the exterior, the interior of the building is well-constructed and modestly appointed. Trim and window surrounds are simple, yet add an elegant touch to the building. Most doors are paneled, and some of the original hardware, including doorknobs and hinges, are still present. Vinyl flooring and carpeting are installed

over the hardwood floors in some rooms. The building is entered from the north through a paneled door with four large lights. The ground floor is organized around a central hallway and staircase set to the right of the entrance that separates the ground-floor bedrooms on either side. Each bedroom is clad in horizontal pine and has a single window opening onto the south porch and a paired window on the outside wall. The southeast bedroom has a small closet framed underneath the stairway. The rectangular living room is centered in the building. The walls and ceiling in this room are clad in pine, and vertical wainscoting covers the lower third of the walls. Imitation brick covers a small portion of the wall in the room's southwest corner. A flue collar is set in the ceiling above this location. Built-in cupboards are placed on the common wall with the kitchen beyond, and are accessible from either room. Located at the north end of the building, the kitchen includes a counter with a sink unit on the rear wall and additional shelves on the wall next to the living room. A small pantry is located off the west side of the kitchen and houses a propane refrigerator. A shower room with a metal stall is located to the east side of the kitchen.

A chamfered newel post supports the staircase banister and handrail leading to the second floor. The second floor has two smaller bedrooms located directly above the lower bedrooms. Each has two windows in the same location as those in the lower bedrooms, and includes a small closet with plain architraves and baseboards. A single large room is located above the first-floor living room / kitchen area. All rooms on the second floor are finished in 1" thick pine. The walls on the east and west sides are coved to match the roof-line. This room has three windows on each of the long walls and a single window in the gable end. A clay flue pipe extends through the ceiling at the northeast corner of the room and an opening for another flue is located at the southwest corner of the room. A wall at the northern third of the room appears to have been previously removed.

Modifications to the building over time include the expansion of the kitchen area to the rear, north side, of the building; addition of carpeting and vinyl floor coverings; and installation of imitation brick on the west wall of the living room. These alterations likely date to the building's use as a bunkhouse for ranch hands in the 1980s.

Bunkhouse #1, contributing historic building

Bunkhouse #1 is located just west of the main house within the main ranch compound, facing south. The building is a 12' x 18' rectangular-shaped medium-pitch front-gabled building clad in wood-shingle roofing and weathered horizontal drop siding set on a dry-laid native-rock foundation. The eaves are enclosed. The building is accessed by two centrally placed doors on either gabled end (north and south). Now missing, the south door had four vertical panels. The north, rear, door, still in place, has five horizontal panels. Both doors are 32" wide. What may have been an original four vertical-panel door now serves as a screen door and is hung from the right side of the entry jamb. Six-over-six sash mullioned windows with protruding sills and trimmed by 4 ½ " wide board are located to the right of the each doorway. The interior of the bunkhouse has 10" and 18" wide planking applied horizontally and 1" x 10" and 1" x 11" flooring running the long dimension of the building. Tongue-and-groove ceiling boards (1" x 5" dimension) have been blind-nailed to the ceiling joists. A 58" long wall extends from the west wall and appears to have been added at a later date, forming two unequal rooms. Inscriptions are penciled on the interior walls. One inscription reads "pup caught Aug 12, 1925 Birds have tore ears off."

Woodshed, contributing historic building

The woodshed was built next to the fence at the western edge of the main compound, oriented on a north-south axis. The "L" –shaped structure measures approximately 15' x 18' and has a dirt floor. The roof is an asymmetric gable and is topped by galvanized metal secured by screw nails with nylon washers. The exterior is clad in board-and-batten siding, generally 12" and 4," with two door openings facing east. An additional door (40" wide, "Z" braced vertical planks) is flanked by a boarded-over 28" x 27" window opening. Reused materials are found throughout, including 4" x 4", 2" x 6" and 1" x 11" dimensional lumber. A hand-forged latch is attached to the 30" -wide door on the east wall.

Outhouse, contributing historic building

Located within the main ranch complex, the north-facing outhouse is characterized by a gabled roof covered with sheet metal and weathered drop-siding applied in horizontal courses on the exterior walls. The wood-frame structure measures 5' deep by 6'4" wide. It has 2" x 4" vertical wall members and 2" x 4" rafters placed approximately 24" on center with 1" thick planking covering the rafters. A 26" wide door is framed within the north wall and is hung from hinges embossed with decorative scrollwork. The interior is painted in yellow enamel with portions covered with floral-patterned vinyl flooring. A 20" wide two-opening seat is framed along the long wall opposite the doorway and an 11" child's seat is built in at the right front corner. Gable ends are vented by screened half-circle cutouts and the rear wall has been covered with vertical galvanized tin. As is customary for this type of resource during the historic period, the Shirk Ranch outhouse was moved frequently on the site. This periodic relocation does not negatively impact the resource's eligibility.

Chicken Coop / Animal Shed, contributing historic building

Located to the north of the main house and facing south, the chicken coop / animal shed is a one-story, rectangular, two-room, wood-frame building with a dirt floor and shed roof, and measuring 28'1" x 9' 1." The building was built in two phases. The southern half is clad with vertical board-and-batten siding with a "Dutch-type" door topped by a two-pane window facing east. Pole roosts are suspended in the south half of the building and a wooden trough is in the northern section. The northern half makes extensive use of reclaimed lumber. A 30" -wide door opening is flanked by a pair of fixed six-over-six wood sash window segments measuring 30" -wide x 24" high. Board-and-batten on the southern interior wall of the northern section indicates that this space was the later addition.

Water Tower, contributing historic structure

Located approximately 65' northeast of the main house, the 16' x 16' water tower is an impressive two-story, hipped-roof structure that houses an 18' enclosed galvanized water tank on its second floor. The tower's ground floor is built of five 7" to 8" diameter poles, or "bents," sitting on floorboards on the ground. Between twelve and fourteen courses of 1" thick plank sheathing is nailed to the exterior side of the bents. Random, mortared, rubble stone is laid against these walls to a thickness of 20"-28". The 13' high platform is tied together at the top by horizontal log that is notched to accept each bent. Seven log joists rest on top of this, forming an approximately 9' -square sheathed platform upon which the water tank is placed. Eighteen

horizontal courses of drop siding once enclosed the framing around the water tank. Short (2'-6' long) lengths are pieced together over most of the east wall. Each story of the east wall has a doorway. The lower floor door has vertical boards, without battens, with "z"-bracing and strap hinges. The upper door is missing. Crude shelving made from scrap lumber is nailed to the south wall on the lower story, and large hooks located inside this space suggest that it was once used to store and prepare meat. Straw has been packed around the tank in the upper story, which is reached by a pole ladder. Various pump and windmill apparatus lie about on the ground on the east side of the water tower. Although parts of the water system are missing or deteriorated, it is clear that a no longer extant windmill drew water from the adjacent well and pumped it to the tower to create a complete gravity-fed water system for the ranch house. Although in deteriorating condition, the water tower retains sufficient integrity to convey its historic significance and is a contributing resource.

Blacksmith Shop, contributing historic building

The blacksmith shop is located approximately 150' southeast of the main house and is a rectangular one-story building of two unequal rooms with dirt floors. The shop is built with a central gabled portion 14'4" wide by 22'1" or 5" (depending on which wall). An early shed-roofed addition extends 8'6" from the south gable. A recent 19' long addition framed with modern lumber extends from the north gable. The exterior walls are clad in board-and-batten siding, and the roof is rusted-corrugated steel over the older south and middle sections of the building and newer "V" groove corrugated metal roofing with two inset translucent fiberglass panels over the northern shed-roofed addition. A wooden platform (6' x 9'6") made from re-used 2" x 6" rafters, 4" x 4" and 4" x 6" legs and 2" x 4" and 2" x 6" diagonal bracing is located at the southeast exterior wall.

The oldest part of the blacksmith shop is the center section of the building. It is framed using box construction and topped by ten pairs of rafters with 1" thick plank-skip sheeting. Four peeled poles are used as collar beams with 1" thick planks placed off-center as king posts. Short collar ties are nailed to the rafter near the apex of the roof. A 33" -wide door is set into the west wall and 11" high by 23" wide window opening is at the southeast wall near the corner. A pair of "Z" -braced board-and-batten doors are hung from either side of a 77" wide opening in the east wall. The southern wall of this section appears to have been removed with additional odd lengths of lumber and old rafters "scabbed" in for reinforcing. Battens have been removed from the north walls, apparently after the second addition was begun. Square nails are used throughout this section, suggesting it is one of the earliest buildings on the Shirk Ranch. Charring on the roof points to the building's use in blacksmithing. Many pieces of hardware from its most recent period of use remain in the building.

Main Well and Corral Well, contributing historic structures

Two wells are present on the ranch compound. Each is an individual contributing resource. The main well is located 5'-6' from east of the water tower and is enclosed in a plywood box measuring approximately 12' x 12' x 2'. The well is circular in form and it is constructed of mortared native stones. The water level is currently about 10' below ground level.

The second well is located at the southern edge of the corral, south of the main house. The corral well is located within a 26' x 28' wire enclosure. A wooden cover is on top of the well, which is rock-lined and appears

to have a diameter of 9'-10'. The sagebrush is very mature and intertwined with the wire fence, suggesting that the well and its enclosure are relatively old compared to other parts of the ranch.

Bunkhouse #2, contributing historic building

Bunkhouse #2 is located west of the main house, facing south. The building is a 22' x 17' rectangular-shaped resource that is similar in construction and materials to Bunkhouse #1. In contrast to the milled lumber used on bunkhouse #1, bunkhouse #2 is clad in 1" x 11" boards and 1" x 4" battens of rough-cut pine. The foundation is a relatively solid system of 2" x 6" floor joists set on rock piers at the center and perimeter of the building. The structure's south and east walls have 28" x 28" window openings (but no glass), and the north wall has one 23" x 18" window ventilating the westernmost of the two rooms. A subfloor of 1" x 7 ¾" planks is topped by 1" x 3 1/8" and 1" x 5/8" tongue-and-groove flooring and finished by 1" x 4" baseboards. A 57" x 100" wide porch or platforms is attached to the east wall of the building. The southwest corner of the building is partially collapsed, and approximately 60 percent of the roof shingles are missing.

The building has received many modifications over the years. One inch diameter pilot holes indicate the windows were a later addition, and the cutting away of the battens underneath the porch points to its later construction. The interior wall and ceiling use many stained and reused pieces with short lengths resulting in joints not nailed to supporting timbers. The lining of one of the ceilings with 1" x 5" tongue-and-groove boards, the clay chimney pipe extending through the ceiling, and the covering of interior surfaces with rolled asphalt roofing material to keep out drafts indicate its use as a bunkhouse. The building's original economical and windowless construction suggest an earlier role as a storage building with supplies being unloaded onto the porch before being carried through what appears to have been an originally wider doorway.

Fencing System, contributing historic structure

The Shirk Ranch has an estimated 2,000 feet of fencing. The fencing and corrals include a variety of construction techniques, including split rail, vertical posts, and modern steel-pole and barbed wire fence segments. This historic fencing uses locally acquired juniper poles; although scrap wood and barb wire are frequently incorporated into these segments to strengthen them. The fence lines are punctuated with gates at key points, allowing for movement between the several individually-fenced areas. Historic gates are fashioned from juniper poles and branches that are fitted together. Modern gates are usually nailed, dimensional or reused lumber. While the constant reuse of materials on the ranch make dating the fence system difficult, the presence of mature sagebrush indicate that several of the identified historic segments likely date to the period of Shirk's ownership or earlier.

Irrigation System, contributing historic structure

Like the fence system, the irrigation system is difficult to date definitively. The system is extensive and many features are intact; although, some structures have been recently modified and are therefore excluded from the nominated area. The most visible remnant of the intact historic irrigation system is the earthen dam that borders the ranch complex on the north and east sides. The dam begins as a low earthen berm north of the main house outside of the far north fence line and builds gradually to a height of approximately 8 feet as it

travels downhill to the east of the main house before turning east. Hand-placed stones on the south side of the dam re-enforce the structure. Mature juniper and willow grow from the tops and sides of the structure. The dam opens to a fenced pond south of the main house. A series of remnant head frames and ditches once channeled water through this area. The outlet is located at the far south end of the complex, and empties into a large channel on the other side of a dirt road, which is not within the nominated area.

NON-CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES, MAIN RANCH COMPLEX
Listed in order clockwise beginning with the root cellar, west of the main house

Root Cellar, non-contributing historic building

The root cellar lies within a 25' x 30' fenced-off area west of the main house and between bunkhouse #1 and the woodshed. The structure is approximately 15' x 11' (width) and rises between 3' and 4' above ground level. The excavated earthen walls are retained by random, dry-laid, masonry walls. These are toped by horizontal 1" planks that are covered with dirt. Shelves of 14" in width line the cellar's longest walls and a 34' x 58" "Z" braced wooden door is at the cellar's entry. The roof of the structure is collapsed, and in its present deteriorated state the resource no longer conveys its historic significance.

Barn, non-contributing historic building

The ruins of the barn are located approximately 550' southeast of the main house. As constructed, the barn was a front-gabled rectangular structure measuring 112' x 47' and supported by juniper posts and clad in vertical boards. Notched and mortise-and-tenon joinery were used to construct the building. Hardware on the site was likely produced at the ranch blacksmith shop. Of the original structure, some of the juniper posts are still in place and a remnant of the north wall remains. The barn is a non-contributing resource because the structure no longer conveys its historic significance in its collapsed condition.

Animal Paddock, non-contributing non-historic building

Constructed around 1980, the animal paddock is located at the southwest corner of the complex and is a non-contributing out-of-period resource. The irregularly-shaped building measures 14'6" wide and 36' long at the northern end. The western and eastern sides measure 29' and 32' respectively. Walls are built from 6" x 9" railroad ties set in the ground to which 2" x 6" full-dimension lumber is used to a height of 5' on the south, east, and west walls. Telephone poles are used for vertical framing members on its northern end where a gate presumably enclosed the interior space. A shed-type roof is built of 2" x 6" rafters spaced approximately 4' on center. Two translucent corrugated-fiberglass panels are set within the structure's galvanized "V" -groove roofing. More fiberglass panels are used to enclose the space between the top of the horizontal plank walls and eaves. Plated hexagonal and carriage bolts are used throughout to tie together the building's structure. A secondary wall parallels the paddock's west wall, forming a chute through which animals would pass. An attached raised platform allowed better viewing of the animals as they passed through the chute. The animal paddock's location on the far south end of the ranch complex mitigates its visual effect.

Rocked Shed, non-contributing historic building

The rocked shed is located on the southwestern edge of the ranch compound near the animal paddock. The wood-framed and stone structure is probably one of the oldest resources on the compound, based on the use of square nails and hole-in top and lap-soldered seam can fragments in patching holes in its roof. It was likely used as a chicken coop or for storage. The building is a non-contributing resource because its collapsed condition no longer conveys the resource's historic significance.

Old Ranch House, non-contributing historic site

The ruins on the presumed original ranch house are located approximately 200' west of the existing main house. The remnants of this structure consist of a deteriorated fireplace on what would have been the building's west wall. The fireplace is approximately 5' high x 8' wide x 4' deep at its base. Three large stone slabs enclose the hearth, which measure 40" wide x 40" high and 24" deep at the base. The original large rectangular stone lintel has fallen from its original location across the fireplace and broken in two.

Melted window-pane type glass and bits of burned china within the adjacent area suggest that fire may have been associated with the building's destruction. Little remains to conclusively establish the building's size. As was common for the time, it is likely that the foundation stone and any remaining lumber would have been reused elsewhere on the ranch. Square nails similar in size to those used in the roof of the rocked shed suggest that the building was constructed during the same time period. The building does not convey its historic significance in its ruined state.

CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES OUTSIDE MAIN RANCH COMPLEX

Historic Dump, contributing historic site

Southwest of the main complex is an extensive historic dump. The cultural material includes fence posts, domestic artifacts, machinery parts, complete tractor, steel barrels, metal cans, wagon pieces, automobile components, and fence material. The dates represented in this collection of items match the occupation and use of the ranch from initial settlement to the present. The historic use of the site merits its inclusion as a contributing resource.

Grave, contributing historic site

A sandstone headstone inscribed with the following epitaph: "Here lies Bill Vickers and J. Gruenke, Shot August 14, 1887" is located just west of the ranch complex on a knoll overlooking the valley and the ranch. While the circumstances of the men's death are a subject of debate and speculation, the men were killed and buried on the ranch during the period of significance and are thus associated with the property's historic importance. The headstone has been embedded in concrete to prevent its theft, but retains its original location, orientation, materials, and workmanship.

CONCLUSION

Although weathered by intense summer sun and fierce winter winds and snow, the David L. Shirk Ranch successfully relates the associations that make it historically significant. The remote location conveys a feeling and association with the western enterprise and the settlement of Lake County. On the ranch, the majority of the buildings, structures, and sites contribute to the overall integrity of the property and the resources retain their original materials and finishes. The wood, stone, and brick used in construction simultaneously relate the practices of importing building materials and taking advantage of those available at hand, and demonstrate the design and workmanship common to ranches of this period. Of the five non-contributing buildings and structures, four are collapsed resources that do not detract from the overall integrity of the district. Only the animal paddock has been added to the site since the end of the period of significance. The structure's location to the far southwest corner of the complex mitigates its visual impact. Among the many resources, the site's historic use as a working ranch is clearly evident in the spatial organization and design of the buildings, structures, and sites.

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Shirk, David L., Ranch historic district is located in southeast Lake County in Guano Valley, Oregon. The property is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places for its local significance under Criterion A for its association with late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century free-range ranching practices and Criterion C as an exceptionally intact example of a period ranch. The nominated district includes nineteen resources within three discontiguous areas encompassing approximately 14.5 acres, including a residence, outbuildings, grave site, historic dump, and irrigation and fencing systems. The ranch buildings and structures are in their original setting and location, and in many cases are unusually well-built and appointed for the time period. The property's period of significance begins in 1881 with the first recorded settlement at the site and ends when the ranch is fully developed in 1914.

David L. Shirk and his brother, William H. Shirk, became established as mid-level cattle ranchers in present-day Harney County in the late-nineteenth century after working as ranch hands in the mid-1880s. The Shirks were active participants in the settlement and development of the ranching industry in eastern Oregon, and became successful by employing the same stock and property management techniques used by larger operators. In the late- 1870s and early- 1880s, David L. Shirk began expanding his personal holdings in Lake County's Guano Valley. In 1883 Shirk purchased the subject property to serve as a horse ranch, developing most of the ranch's extant buildings and structures around 1910. He sold the property in 1914.

EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF LAKE COUNTY

Most of Lake County lies within the northern-most tip of the Great Basin, an inland drainage that includes much of southeast Deschutes County, Harney County, the state of Nevada, and parts of Utah and California. To the east in Malheur County is the Owyhee Uplands, a portion of the Snake River drainage. Oregon's high desert of juniper and sagebrush is isolated from the Pacific Coast and Great Plains regions by mountain ranges, distance, and a lack of navigable rivers. The desert's original human inhabitants, the Northern Paiute, made the best use of the area's scattered resources and seasonal lakes and streams by moving frequently to gather food. Historically, abundant bunchgrass supported a stable population of game animals, an essential source of sustenance for the small bands that inhabited the area. Although briefly explored in the early-nineteenth century by Euro-American explorers, trappers, military expeditions, and wagon trains, southeastern Oregon held little interest for Euro-American settlers in the first several decades of westward expansion as they traveled through on their way to the fertile agricultural lands of the Willamette Valley.[1]

During the later half of the century, several factors made eastern Oregon more inviting to would-be settlers. After the initial land rush, most of the best land in the Willamette Valley had already been claimed by first-generation settlers, forcing others to seek property elsewhere. Other incentives during this period include the discovery of gold in 1862 in Florence, Idaho, and then later in other areas in the Northwest; and government-

[1] Jeff LaLande, "High Desert History: Southeastern Oregon" 2005, Portland: Oregon Historical Society <http://www.ohs.org/education/oregonhistory/narratives/subtopic.cfm?subtopic_ID=451> (Accessed 6 December 2009); Phil F. Brogan, *East of the Cascades* (Portland: Binford & Mort, 1964), 81-83.

sponsored settlement and industry initiatives such as the Homestead Act, Mineral Land Act of 1866, Timber Culture Act of 1873, and the Desert Land Act of 1877. The forced removal of Native Americans from their traditional lands onto reservations also encouraged settlement. The high desert lacked the advantages of abundant rainfall and fertile soils farmers enjoyed in the Willamette Valley; however, the relatively mild climate, seemingly endless native grasses and white sage, available, if intermittent, water sources, and miles of open federal lands made the region ideal for free-range cattle, sheep, and horse ranching. Ready markets in the mining towns of Idaho, Nevada, and California, and a growing western population made such an enterprise profitable.[2] Local historian Herman Oliver notes that between 1870 and 1890 that there was an "almost a constant stream" of immigrants to the eastern portion of the state, and that "many brought livestock with them."[3]

By the mid-1870s, the livestock industry was booming in southeastern Oregon. This trend continued for several decades and spawned the development of new counties and towns. Prompted by demands for more local autonomy, Lake County was formed from Jackson and Wasco Counties by the Oregon State Legislature in 1875 with less than 1,000 residents within its 14,000 square miles. The county seat was Linksville, now Klamath Falls, in present -day Klamath County. Lakeview, Lake County's largest town and critical supply center for area ranchers, became the county seat in 1876. By 1878, Lakeview had hotels, stores, stables, blacksmiths, and a newspaper. Despite steady growth, southeastern Oregon and Lake County remained remote, and most of the region's economic ties were oriented toward more populated and established Northern California and Nevada. Reflecting this reality, every store in Lakeview had its own team to haul freight to and from Alturas, California, which was fifty miles to the south. The nearest railroad was ninety-five miles away, in Madeline Plains, California. The narrow gauge Nevada, California, and Oregon Railroad finally arrived from California to Lakeview in 1912, connecting the town to a mainline in Alturas.[4] The geographic isolation of the region meant that the area's many towns and ranching operations were largely self-sufficient well into the twentieth century. Residents often maintained gardens, orchards, and livestock, including poultry, for food and other by-products.

THE EARLY LIFE OF DAVID L. SHIRK

The Shirk Ranch reflects the relative prosperity David L. Shirk experienced later in his life, and his acquisition of the property and development of the ranch are the culmination of his experiences and the region's broad historic trends. Shirk's early life is therefore particularly relevant to the later development of the subject property.

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[2] LaLande, "High Desert History: Southeastern Oregon;" Herman Oliver, *Gold and Cattle Country*, edited by E. R Jackman (Portland: Binfords & Mort Publishers, 1962), 2 , 15, 41; Howard T. Lewis, *The Basic Industries of the Pacific Northwest* (Seattle: Lowman & Hanford Co, 1923), 27-29; Brogan, 85.

[3] Oliver, 41.

[4] Georgie Ellen Boydstun Stephenson, *The Growth of Lake County, Oregon* (Willsonville: Book Partners Inc., 1994), 29; Marie Kelleher, *Duhallow to Oregon, 1880 to 1960* (Kanturk Printers Ltd, nd.), 22, 27-28; Ward Tonsfeldt, "Historic Resource Survey, Lakeview, OR" (Lakeview: Town of Lakeview, 1989), 3; Brogan, 92.

David L. Shirk was born August 3, 1844 in Indiana and raised in Illinois. He was the oldest of nine children. He left the family farm for Idaho's gold and silver fields as a young man "to brave the dangers of the 'Great American Desert' in search of fortune." Working as a teamster, herder, and ranch hand, he traveled into the booming mining Owyhee Country in southwestern Idaho. Shirk began in the cattle industry by working Texas cattle drives destined for the region's mining towns. On his first drive, Shirk worked for Con Shea and George Miller at the receiving end of the first drive of Texas cattle to Oregon Territory in 1869. Shirk made two Texas drives himself with Miller in his late-twenties in 1871 and 1873, keeping diaries of his experiences.[5] Shirk arrived in Idaho just as the cattle industry became important in the region, and he eventually established his first operation, the Home Creek Ranch, in Catlow Valley, Harney County in the late 1880s.

Shirk's success as a businessman reflects the general growth of the livestock industry and the region. In the 1850s, ranchers drove cattle from western Oregon and California and points farther abroad to the booming mining operations in eastern British Columbia, Washington, Oregon, and Idaho. By the time of Shirk's arrival in the early 1870s, demand for imported cattle had largely peaked in the mining camps, and long drives from Texas, like those Shirk participated in, came to an end as local suppliers met demand and expanded.[6] Eastern Oregon's livestock industry began in the 1860s as stockmen moved their herds of sheep, cattle, and horses over the Cascades from western Oregon and California to expand their operations. Establishing a pattern that would be followed by others, Californian Andrew Clarno moved with his family to establish his first operation, the "Andrew Clarno Ranch," in 1866 in the John Day Hills. In the absence of local timber, Clarno imported much of his lumber and other construction materials from The Dalles, the closest shipping point. Clarno also brought his own cattle, 300 heifers from his home state, which multiplied quickly and were later sold in Portland. Like Clarno, other operators located their ranches in central Oregon along the Columbia River near established transportation routes and springs and streams where a supply of water and good native grasses could be found. Many settlers filing for their 160 acres under the Homestead Act did so with the expectation that the wide tracks of federal lands would be open to free-range grazing. Some ranchers quickly, and often illegally, expanded their homesteads by having family members and loyal employees file on adjacent lands, or abused other federal programs to increase their holdings. Successful operators endeavored not only to control as much land as possible, but also to secure an adequate supply of water. Many built their stock from the California and Western Oregon herds and drove their finished animals to Wenemucka Nevada. Other destinations included local markets in The Dalles and Portland Oregon. As early as 1868 animals were driven to Council Bluffs Cheyenne and other "good markets of the time" in herds of 5,000 or more. Even larger herds representing the stock of several ranchers originated from the Steen Mountains to the south.[7] As ranching spread into Oregon's southeast corner the practices of taking advantage of federal programs to secure land

[5] David Shirk, *The Cattle Drives of David Shirk from Texas to the Idaho Mines, 1871 and 1873,* edited by Marvin Schmitt (Portland: The Champoeg Press, 1956), V, 4, 66; Shirk composed his reminiscences for his family when he retired. His personal narrative is the only detailed account of the first beef cattle bonanza west of the Rocky Mountains, and his description of the trail to Texas is the only one known; Rankin Crow. *Rankin Crow and the Oregon* Country (Ironside: Rankin Crow, 1970), 21.

[6] Brogan, 84, 86; William A. Galbraith and E. William Anderson, "Grazing History of the Northwest" *Journal of Range Management* 24, no. 1 (Jan., 1971) : 8; J. Orin Oliphant, "The Cattle Herds and Ranches of the Oregon Country, 1860-1890" *Agricultural History* 21, no. 4 (Oct., 1947): 217-238, 220.

[7] Brogan, 102; Galbraith and Anderson, 7; Arthur A. Hart "Farm and Ranch Buildings East of the Cascades" in *Space Style and Structure: Buildings in Northwest America*, edited by Thomas Vaughn and Virginia Guest Ferriday (Portland: Oregon Historical Society, 1974), 242-244.

and importing stock and building supplies to the remote ranches continued; however, ranches in these areas generally looked south to California and Nevada for their markets, supplies, and in the case of larger operations, their financing.

Shirk arrived in the Catlow Valley in 1874 as an employee of Scotsman John Catlow. Catlow ran several thousand cattle in the area. The Catlow Valley is located in southwest Harney County, south of the town of Frenchglen. See figure 1. While in Catlow Valley, Shirk served as Catlow's superintendent until 1876 when Catlow sold his stock to the French-Glenn Company. By this time Shirk had learned the livestock business, and with his earnings established his first ranch in the valley on the western side of the Steens Mountains. Shirk would not purchase the subject property until much later when he expanded his operation. Shirk made his first filing on his Catlow Valley ranch on a preemption claim near a small stream he called "Home Creek," becoming the first settler there. In 1877, Shirk married Frances Crow, and the couple moved to Shirk's "Home Creek Ranch," which he named himself. See figure 7. His brother, William, settled nearby on the Three Mile Ranch with his wife, Hannah Rose Crow, Frances' sister.[8] Harney County historian George Francis Brimlow remarks that in the nineteenth century stockmen like Catlow and Shirk, "could equip his ranch for a few thousand dollars. Labor costs were low, and little money was expended as cattle drifted from Summer to Winter Ranges."[9] In his autobiography, Shirk himself describes ranching during this period as "simple in the extreme." As Shirk recalls, in the spring "cattle were driven in from outside ranges, calves branded, and all turned loose on the range again. The same course was observed in the fall, and that ended all care of the stock until the next year. Of course in the fall, the beef cattle were collected and driven to market, usually to Winnemucca, and then shipped to the markets of San Francisco."[10]

Using these simple practices, Shirk and his brother became more successful than Catlow. By 1884 the Shirks secured title to 1,240 acres using the Homestead Act, preemption, and the Desert and Timber Lands Acts; although contemporary reports claim that the Shirks controlled approximately 50,000 acres. While still considered "small fry" by Shirk's own admission, the Shirk brothers' operation was successful because they controlled key water resources – a benefit no doubt of Shirks' early arrival in the valley. As David Shirk noted, in southeastern Oregon's high desert "water rights were... deemed of prime importance, and every stream and spring was sought to be monopolized." Reflecting his success as a successful cattleman, Shirk replaced his small two-room juniper-log and sod house with a "sumptuous" one-and-a-half story Italianate-style home made of milled lumber.[11]

Despite the low initial investment, raising livestock in southeastern Oregon in the 1870s and early 1880s was a risky enterprise. Left unattended on the range, animals could be stolen, attacked by predators, or starve; however, the low overhead of running cattle on the range was thought to compensate for losses. Reflecting this practice, the ranches themselves were simple, usually including a dwelling for the owner and a few

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[8] Shirk, 115, 127-128; Francis George Brimlow, *Harney County Oregon and Its Range Lands* (Portland: Binfords & Mort Publishers, 1951), 167-168; *Crow*, 21.

[9] Brimlow, 76.

[10] Shirk, 126.

[11] Ibid, 116. 126, 131-132; Rankin, 27.

outbuildings and corrals for cow ponies and to raise food for immediate consumption.[12] However, it proved to be eastern Oregon's severe weather that was the gravest threat, which would eventually force changes in the ranching industry. At the time, it was a common belief that providing food and shelter for free-range animals over winter was unnecessary. Instead, cattle, sheep, and horses were allowed to roam free on federal range lands and expected to fend for themselves. Although the cattlemen in the northwest experienced a severe winter in 1847-1848, the yearlong open-range idea persisted. The notion persevered even after the winter of 1861-62 when losses were again high in the region. The devastating winter of 1889-90 resulted in such catastrophic losses, especially in recently populated eastern Oregon, that stockman grudgingly began raising hay and providing shelter for their animals, resulting in more well-developed ranches that included numerous buildings and fields for caring for animals and raising hay.[13]

In addition to the weather and other hazards of the open range, land competition peaked in the last part of the nineteenth century as cattlemen, sheep ranchers, and homesteaders fought for the best lands. All the region's residents were all dependent on free or low cost access to federal lands for their operations. As southeast Oregon became more populous, conflict was inevitable. Cattlemen generally considered the land 50 to 100 miles from their "home ranches" to be part of their grazing range, whether they had title to it or not. [14] Overtime, much of the area's free federal lands became dominated by a handful of powerful landholders. Historian William G. Robbins points out that during this time, "the range cattle industry in Southeastern Oregon operated in a Darwinian economic and ecological world, playing footloose and free with federal and state land laws, gaining a stranglehold on water rights, buying out smaller owners to expand their holdings when it was to their advantage, and keeping too many cattle on the ranges when the market was soft." [15] The enormous operations run by the "cattle kings" of the region included the partnerships of French and Glenn, Todhunter and Devine, Riley and Hardin, and Miller and Lux, who were notorious for their aggressive and often illegal tactics to acquire land and water rights.[16] In many cases, the capital and herds for these operations came from California, where state law had effectively ended open-range grazing in the state. One of Oregon's most legendary cattleman, Peter French, was backed by Dr. Hugh Glenn, known as the California's "wheat king," and his family heirs. By 1897 French's holdings included 130,000 acres, 30,000 head of cattle, and 3,000 horses and mules, among other assets.[17] A common tactic used to accumulate land was hiring dummy entry men to establish homestead claims. Those claims with the accompanying water rights would then be transferred to the control of the ever-expanding ranches. In other cases, intimidation was used to force smaller operators and individual settlers to sell their property. [18]

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[12] Galbraith and Anderson, 9.
[13] Galbraith and Anderson, 9.
[14] Peter K. Simpson, *The Community of Cattlemen: A Social History of the Cattle Industry in Southwestern Oregon, 1869-1912* (Moscow, ID: University of Idaho Press, 1987), 21.
[15] William G. Robbins, *Landscapes of Promise: The Oregon Story, 1800-1940* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1997), 161-162.
[16] Simpson, 21.
[17] Elizabeth Walton, "Pete French round Barn" National Register nomination (Salem: Oregon State Highway Division, Parks and Recreation Section, 1971), Section 8, page 1; The life and work of Peter French are well documented in several histories. See Giles French, *Cattle Country of Peter French* (Portland: Binfords and Mort, 1965).
[18] Galbraith and Anderson, 9.

Like many others, David Shirk and his brother were involved in a protracted land conflict in the mid 1880s. In his autobiography, Shirk claims that Pete French attempted to "freeze us out" by blocking access to key federal range lands. According to Shirk, French still harbored resentment against him for marrying Frances Crow, who French himself pined for when the two men were young. The conflict reached a peak in 1888 when David Shirk shot and killed one of French's employees. In Shirk's subsequent murder trail, French attempted to portray Shirk as a cattle baron who had killed an innocent settler. Shirk, however, was acquitted. Later, French himself was shot and killed over a land dispute by settler Ed Oliver in 1897. Drawing on popular resentment of French and the other "Cattle Kings," Oliver claimed that he had shot French in self defense, even though French was unarmed and walking away when killed. Oliver was acquitted.[19] Conflict over land was also at the heart of the Bannock War of 1878, the last major Native American armed resistance in the Pacific Northwest, and the sporadic conflicts in the area between sheep herders and cattlemen in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. Continued and sometimes deadly struggles over land eventually led to the end of the open range.[20]

ESTABLISHEMENT OF THE SHIRK RANCH AT GUANO VALLEY

David Shirk's conflict with French came as the Shirks began expanding their operation in the 1870s and 1880s. Shirk noted that in the 1880s "our stock had increased at such a rate that we began to realize that if we were to remain in the live stock business, it was absolutely necessary to increase our land holdings."[21] No doubt, the increasing number of competitors and settlers in southeastern Oregon gave the brothers a sense of urgency. The expansion of permanent settlement and farms in Western Oregon and throughout the Columbia Basin led to the decline of free-range ranching in these areas as federal lands were carved up under the Donation Land Claim Act and later the Homestead Act, into family farms. To be profitable, the cattle ranches needed free access to water and good forage, which required vast amounts of property in this desert region.[22] Between 1874 and 1884 Shirk acquired title to 1,240 acres in Lake County, but it was not until the early 1880s that he began acquiring lands in Guano Valley. Guano Valley is approximately 50 miles southwest of Shirk's Home Creek Ranch. The Shirks' land acquisitions were concentrated in sections 26, 27, and 35, where Guano Creek and other small streams feeding the valley's seasonal lakes are located.[23] Shirk, no doubt based on his experience in the Catlow Valley, sought to dominate the area water sources so key to a ranching operation's

[19] Simpson, 84.

[20] On September 12, 1872, a presidential order set aside the Malheur Indian Reservation in Eastern Oregon for the Northern Paiute. Settler encroachment on reservation lands led to the outbreak of the Bannock War in May 1878, causing the Paiute to abandon the Malheur Reservation and take refuge on Steens Mountain to the south of the Harney Basin. Ultimately, most Paiutes surrendered, and were interned at the Malheur Reservation. In November 1878, General Howard received orders to move about 543 Paiute and Bannock prisoners from the Malheur Reservation to the Yakima Reservation, in Washington, 350 miles (560 km) to the north. Other Paiutes and Bannocks were scattered about Eastern Oregon, northeastern California and northern Nevada. In his annual report in August 1879, Agent W. V. Rinehart, who had fought in the West under General Crook and held negative views of the native people, opined that the reservation should be discontinued, in part because the support for all agencies in Oregon was spread too thin to be effective. In October of that year, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs discontinued the agency.

[21] Shirk, 131.

[22] Olipahant, 221; Galbraith and Anderson, 10; Brimlow, 145.

[23] Sarah LeCompte, "Shirk Ranch Assessment" (Vale: Bureau of Land Management, Vale District, 2001), 1-2.

success. Shirk's autobiography implies that he acquired interests in other property within the region, although an accounting of the properties he held is not available.[24]

The subject property was first recorded in a General Land Office Survey in August 1881. At the time, the survey mapped a wagon road and a location for "Hill's house" in the northwest quarter of Section 35. The document remarks that "Hill has good dwelling house, stone barn and out building in NW ¼ of section." Although conjectural, the survey likely recorded the original ranch house, now identified as the "old ranch house ruin," rocked shed, and the older portion of the blacksmith shop, all dated to this period in various architectural studies. Shirk continued to use these buildings even as he expanded the facility around 1910. General Land Office records show patent from public domain to Taylor Alkire with a cash sale on March 10, 1884, and that Taylor acquired the SW ¼ of section on December 5, 1884. Lake County Clerk's records note that on August 24, 1914 that David Shirk purchased the land from Taylor Alkire for $750 with the sale first recorded with a Modoc County notary public on November 28, 1883, and recorded in Grant County (Book F, page 11) on April 7, 1884.[25] See figure 6.

In contrast to his operations in the Catlow Valley, Shirk's primary business at Guano Valley was horses, and he had a reputation for the "finest horseflesh" in the whole county.[26] Despite a shift in emphasis in Guano Valley, it is unlikely that Shirk gave up cattle ranching. For instance, Shirk's business envelopes featured lithographs of both a steer and a horse. See photograph 28. Horse raising was a key industry well into the twentieth century before the automobile and mechanized farm machinery were widely available. Early stock was taken from the herds of wild horses that originated from loose animals left by the Spanish in the U.S. Desert Southwest.[27] These animals could be "excellent horses when broken;" however, most ranchers preferred imported thoroughbreds. Despite myth and legend, true "Mustangs" were considered an unsuitable animal for work or breeding because of their slight frame and wild nature.[28] Making the best use of both, some ranchers used wild horses as breed mares, and imported well-bred stallions to build up their herds of "cow ponies."[29] Undesirable animals were often culled from the roaming herds. "Breeding up" was a common practice across the United States, and the goal of the technique was to quickly, and inexpensively, increase the "weight and substance" of a horse, while reducing the wild characteristics of true Mustangs. Historian Walker D. Wyman notes that in

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[24] To date, the various studies that have examined the history of the Shirk Ranch and the life of David L. Shirk have not been able to determine the extent of his holdings due to poor or incomplete period record keeping and changes in county boundaries.

[25] LeCompte, 2; At this time, it is unclear exactly how Shirk acquired the Guano Ranch property. The apparent discrepancy between the dates Alkire obtained the land and the date Shirk purchased it from him and the long period between Shirk's purchase and when it was recorded in Lake County is not unusual. Records from this time period are sometimes incomplete. Also, it was common for ranchers to obtain title or control of lands through dummy entrymen; although, Shirk distances himself from the "cattle barons" and their practices in his autobiography. A competing scenario for the chain of title is proponed by a 1985 United States Fish and Wildlife Service Report, see bibliography, that claims that the property was originally homesteaded by R.A. Turner in 1883 and that Shirk purchased the property in 1887. The account by the Bureau of Land Management seems to most closely follow the documentary evidence and is presented here in the text.

[26] Julie Pinger, "Cultural Resource Inventory: Sheldon National Wildlife Refuge, Hart Mountain National Antelope Refuge" (Portland: Region One, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, 1985), 57.

[27] Oliver, 126, 141; Tom L. McKnight, "The Feral Horse in Anglo-America" *Geographical Review*, 49, no. 4 (October 1959) : 506.

[28] Dabney Taylor, "The Wild Horse Myth," *Western Livestock Journal* 35, no. 45 (1957) : 82; Oliver, 144; Wyman, 107.

[29] Stephenson, 81; Brimlow, 77; Crow, 74; Taylor, 80.

Oregon ranchers mated Clydesdale sires and Mustang mares to produce a "short-set compact mount, with large bones and hairy legs, [that] possessed many admirable qualities" called the "Oregon Lummox." Other local breeds included the "Percheron Puddin Foot" from Montana and Dakota, Texas "Quarter Horse," and the Colorado "Ranger" among others.[30]

Like cattle, horses were raised and managed in a similar manner. Horses were summered on the open range, but were rounded up and branded in winter. Once old enough, young horses were taken off the range and broken and trained for use on the ranches or were sold.[31] Horse ranching in southeastern Oregon began in the 1880s in Malheur and Harney Counties, and later expanding into Lake, Crook, and Deschutes Counties.[32] Like cattle, horses raised on Oregon ranges were usually destined for local markets in the northwest and northern California, but were sold as far as Arizona. Area ranchers like George Burnt also raised horses for sale on his Last Chance Ranch in Nevada, now part of the Sheldon National Wildlife Refuge in Nevada.[33] Bigger than either Shirk or Burnt's operations, the "Horse King," William Walter Brown, ran 10,000 horses on a huge range in the area of Wagontire Mountain in the 1880s.[34]

When Shirk acquired the subject property in 1883 the small ranch already included a residence and two outbuildings, now identified as the old ranch house ruin, rocked shed, and blacksmith shop. Thorough investigations of the resources reveal that few improvements were made to the ranch in Guano Valley until around 1910 when it is estimated that the majority of the extant buildings were constructed. However, Shirk's acquisition of the ranch in 1883 corresponds with the development of horse ranching in the region. In October 1896, Shirk moved his family to a rented home in Berkeley, California, and later purchased a home at 1719 Hearst Avenue, Berkeley where his four children, Lawson, Olive, Lila, and Joseph, attended local schools. From his autobiography, it is presumed that Shirk himself returned to Guano Valley. It is not known if he was there year-round or only during the summer months with his family. It is also unclear how long he continued to own and maintain his Home Creek Ranch property, which he had until at least 1900. See figure 7. Upon returning to Guano Valley after settling his family, Shirk writes, "at once began improving the property to accommodate a large number of horses and mules," noting in his autobiography, that "these I raised myself, shipped to market... and sold them, and in this I did fairly well." According to Shirk, he annually transported and sold "two or three carloads of horses and mules" each fall in Berkeley.[35] Shirk no doubt benefited as demand for all horses, including wild horses, surged during the Boer War in South Africa, 1899 -1902. Historian Tom L. McKnight notes that "agents of the British government ranged widely over the western United States, Canada, and Mexico, purchasing cow ponies and range horses, tamed or not, for use as pack, draft, and cavalry animals."[36]

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[30] Walker D. Wyman, *The Wild Horse of the West* (Caldwell, ID: The Caxton Printers, Ltd, 1945), 101-107; Personal Communication, BLM Archeologist Bill Cannon to Ian Johnson, Oregon SHPO, October 200.
[31] Taylor, 82; Oliver, 144.
[32] Oliver, 141.
[33] Pinger, 26; Wyman, 102.
[34] Brogan, 122.
[35] Shirk, 144-145.
[36] McKnight, 514.

In contrast to larger operations in the region, Shirk's operation was a small, family affair. Before moving his family to California, the entire Shirk family did a large share of the ranch work. Shirk himself reports that "I and my family, including my wife and children, were almost constantly in the saddle, doing our own work and thus lessening expenses." Shirk also hired family and family friends to work for him throughout his career, and developed a close relationship with his employees whom he expected to be trustworthy and to work hard.[37] According to his own recollections, Shirk stated,

> I endeavored to secure as employees the better class of young men. I had constructed an elegant country home, and all were treated as equals. They ate their meals with me and my family, and in other respects were treated as equals. Upstairs, I fitted up a billiard room, placing therein a modern billiard table for their amusement during times of idleness and the long winter nights. I had a two-fold purpose in this. First, because I believe that every man is as good as any other man, provided he is honest, industrious and conducts himself as a self-respecting man, and also, because I sought by this means and by such methods to secure contentment and steadiness on the part of the men in my employ."[38]

It is unclear if Shirk is referring to his ranch in Guano Valley or Catlow Valley when speaking about the billiard room; however, the large second-floor rectangular room at the Guano Valley ranch is consistent with the description.

By the early-twentieth century, ranching in southeastern Oregon had changed significantly as the open range became settled. Always in competition with ranchers for land, the number of settlers peaked between 1900 and 1920, encouraged by the Enlarged Homestead Act of 1909 and Stock Raising Act of 1916. Many of these settlers "starved out" within a few years, leaving behind abandoned farms and towns by 1920. The population pressure created by these newcomers heightened tensions between settlers and ranchers, and limited the areas where operators could raise their stock. Another factor in the decline of open-range ranching and growing land competition between operators was the gradual depletion of natural forage and degradation of the land due to overgrazing. Competition between operators was fierce, and at times became deadly. The conflict between Anglo cattlemen and "foreign sheepmen," mostly Basque and eastern Europeans, climaxed in 1904-1905, resulting in the creation of forest reserves by the Federal government in 1906. In an effort to stop the violence and ensure fair distribution of grazing lands, the act allotted stock raisers specific tracts to graze their animals, effectively ending the practice of free-range ranching.[39]

Despite the changing industry, the Shirk family continued to live and work in Lake County. David Shirk's brother, W. H. Shirk sold his land and stock in 1900 and moved to Reno, Nevada, in February of the following year to educate his children. Later, he moved to Lakeview, Oregon, where he organized the First National Bank in 1905 and the Lake County Loan & Savings Bank in 1906. During this time, David Shirk continued in the ranching business; although, in 1914 he sold the Guano Valley Ranch to the partnership of Mitchell and

[37] In *Rankin Crow and the Oregon Country*, Rankin Crow mentions throughout the text that members of the Crow family and extended relatives worked for David Shirk.

[38] Shirk,132-133, 144;

[39] Lou Ann Speulda, Oregon's Architectural Development: A Historic Context, 1811-1940" (Salem: Oregon State Historic Preservation Office, 1989), 14-16; The decline of the open range is thoroughly documented by several volumes included in the bibliography of this document.

McDaniel of Cedarville, California. His brother, William, died suddenly of a heart attack a few years after the sale in 1918. Although in his mid-70s at the time, according to accounts by the *Lake County Examiner,* David Shirk remained active in the ranching business in Nevada, just over the Oregon border, and occasionally visited Oregon on business through 1919. In 1920, it was reported that Shirk leased the last of his holdings in the area to Wib Spaulding, to "take a well earned rest from the active business that he has led for so many years." The newspaper account added, "however, we expect to see him here occasionally." Shirk was 76. He died at the age of 83 in Berkeley, California in 1928, where he was a member of several local fraternal organizations. See Shirk's obituary, figure 8. It is unknown when Shirk's wife died, but she remained in Berkeley at least through 1934.[40] Shirk's children continued in the ranching business. His daughter, Olive, known as one of the best "horsemen" in the area and a "tough ranch lady," leased the Shirk Ranch with her husband, Zetus Spaulding, from the Bank of Willows, California, which had acquired it in foreclosure from the Mitchell and McDaniel Partnership. The ranch became part of the Hart Mountain National Wildlife Refuge in 1942. Shirk's daughter and husband lived and worked on the ranch until Zetus' death in 1945.[41] The ranch was leased to various interests through the 1980s, but has been vacant since that time.

THE SHIRK RANCH AS A PROPERTY TYPE

Ranches, large and small, were once common in southeastern Oregon, and those still extant resources are important cultural resources. In his evaluation of the historic and cultural resources of Lake County, historian Stephen Dow Beckham noted in 1982 that "the most common theme appearing in Lake County's inventory [of historic buildings] is 'agriculture: stock raising.' The medley of barns corrals, sheds, bunkhouses and related structures testifies to the importance and long term role of the raising of livestock in the development of Lake County."[42] Indeed, historian Lou Ann Speulda remarks that resources associated with the livestock industry and the settling of the region are an "extremely important" link to this pivotal period.[43]

The ranches that dot southeast Oregon and Lake County reflect the environmental and economic trends that shaped the development of the region. In southeast Oregon, the lack of arable land, water sources, and building materials, as well as the region's geographic isolation influenced where settlers lived, their occupation, and where and how they built their homes and businesses. In contrast to the fertile Willamette Valley, southeast Oregon's natural resources were few: abundant native grasses and large expanses of space. These two advantages coupled with federal settlement inducements, encouraged the expansion of stock ranging in the area. In order to overcome a lack of water and isolation, ranch operators located near sources of water where they could be self-sufficient. A 1985 United States Fish and Wildlife Service report concerning historic resources in the Hart Mountain National Antelope Refuge and nearby Sheldon Wildlife Refuge in Nevada notes

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[40] *Lake County Examiner*, Lakeview, OR, 5 September 1918; *Surprise Valley Record,* "Sudden Death of W. H. Shirk," Cedarville, CA, 11 September 1918; *Surprise Valley Record*, 21 March 1917, 19 November 1919, 27 April 1920.

[41] Don Robinson, Robinson Ranch, Big Valley, Oregon, Interviewer unknown, 3 June 1997.

[42] Beckham, Stephan Dow, "Lake County Historic Sites and Buildings Inventory" (Eugene: Heritage Research Associates, 1982), 2.

[43] Speulda, 42.

that the widely dispersed ranches of the region were "almost always" established around a source of water near natural meadows, or where irrigation could be used to grow native hay for livestock.[44]

Geographic isolation also limited the types of buildings settlers could construct. The Fish and Wildlife report states, "in a region of long distances and fairly primitive transportation, the cost of manufactured building materials, such as milled lumber or brick tended to be prohibitive."[45] Locally available building materials were used well into the twentieth century and included undressed dry-laid stone for exterior walls and foundations and whole juniper poles for building support. Fences were constructed of whole-log juniper posts, woven brush, and even tumbleweed. Finished materials, such as nails and milled lumber, were imported into the region. Reflecting the limited resources, most ranches, "regardless of location, age, ethnic origins of its owner, or type of livestock," were simple and had less than eight functional buildings, including a main house and assortment of sheds, corrals, and other outbuildings. Most ranch buildings were rectangular in shape with a shallow-pitched gable or shed roof. Materials from older buildings were often incorporated into new construction.[46]

The Shirk Ranch exemplifies important regional trends in its location, physical integrity, and history. The Shirk Ranch is positioned such that it takes the best advantage of the available natural resources. The ranch is located in a geographically-isolated region in an area of good rangeland in Guano Valley. Shirk and his predecessors were no doubt attracted to the site by the two key environmental factors in stock raising: water and feed. In the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries Shirk acquired large tracts of land centering on local streams and Shirk Lake. At Shirk Ranch, Shirk constructed an earthen dam along the northern portion of the main ranch complex to control and retain water. A water tower, now collapsed, and two wells speak to the importance of water in this desert environment, and to the effort involved in securing and storing water for year-round use. Water stored behind the dam and in the water tower was used domestically, but also to irrigate the fenced fields south of the main house. The ranch's proximity to Shirk Lake also allowed for native hay to be grown and harvested at the lake's edge to provide for winter feed – a recognized necessity after the severe winter of 1880-1881. In his own autobiography, Shirk remarked on this necessity stating, "prudence required preparations for winter." It is presumable that the ranch's few property owners ran their livestock over a large area; however, it is Shirk who left his name to two local landmarks. In addition to the nearby lake that bears his name, a rocky outcrop three miles to the west called "Shirk Ridge" speaks to the extent of Shirk's informal holdings and the vast amount of land needed for a successful livestock operation.

The Shirk Ranch's early buildings, including the old ranch house ruin, rocked shed, and blacksmith shop are characteristic of the small family-ranches of the County's early-settlement period. The property was originally homesteaded during the initial settlement of Lake County in the early 1880s by the Hill family. Like so many other ranches, this operation consisted of a few rudimentary buildings constructed of local materials, such as juniper and stone. Of the three resources from this period, only the blacksmith shop maintains its historic integrity; although the ruins of the old ranch house and rocked shed are still present and communicate the

[44] Pinger, 8.
[45] Ibid, 12.
[46] Hart, 243-45, 253; Pinger, 10, 12, 13.

original plan of the site. During this period extensive outbuildings were not needed because cattle and other animals were left on the range year-round and were not provided forage or shelter during winter.

Shirk's occupation of the ranch reflects more permanent settlement and a shift in stock raising practices toward providing food and shelter for animals during the cold winter months. As it exists today, the ranch includes a number of buildings constructed by Shirk to support a fully-functional and self-contained agricultural facility. Presumably due to the scarcity of building resources, Shirk did not remove the pre-existing structures and, in the case of the blacksmith shop, expanded the building. Buildings from the newer period are arranged such that the domestic needs including, food, water, living space, etc. are located around the main house in a rectangular pattern, while the barn and corrals are located away from the house. In addition to the family's living quarters and accompanying outhouse, the ranch included two bunk houses for the many hired hands needed to run the operation, a chicken coop to provide eggs and meat for the occupants, a woodshed for heating fuel, and a root cellar for storing food. Given the large hooks found in the first floor of the water tower, it is likely that meat was stored in this area where the large volume of water would have kept the space relatively cool. One can also presume that garden vegetables were grown in the level area north of the house. Ranching operations were supported by a number of outbuildings, including a barn where animals, tack, and winter feed could be stored. The blacksmith shop was a necessity to the ranch's operation for the manufacture and repair of equipment and hardware. The now-collapsed barn still retains some of its hand-forged hardware, and a feed sled with custom runners and fittings lies just north of the blacksmith shop. The fencing system exhibits a variety of building techniques and utilizes materials, as was common on area ranches. Juniper is the most-widely used material. Fences consist of vertical whole-log juniper posts and branches and logs stacked and fitted between them to form the fence. Although often used in southeastern Oregon, rock cribs for fencing were unnecessary because posts were more easily driven into the valley's loamy soil.[47] Often wire, bits of dimensional lumber, and mature living sagebrush strengthen the lengths. Juniper poles are also used as supporting members for a number of structures, including the rocked shed, barn, and root cellar. As was common throughout the area, the recycling of building materials from older structures to create new constructions is evident throughout the many outbuildings. What few items that could not be used were taken to the historic dump, just southwest of the main ranch complex. The dump is located downwind and downstream, away from the house and the ranch's water source.

Although typical in its location and operation, the Shirk Ranch is in many ways better constructed than comparable properties, reflecting Shirk's success over his long career. A good measure of Shirk's business acumen is the number of buildings on the property: nineteen historic resources compared to the eight common for most ranches. Perhaps the best example of Shirk's success and the architectural significance of the ranch is the simple, yet finely appointed, main house. Constructed entirely of imported milled dimensional lumber and hardware, the residence was clad in shiplap and painted white. The outhouse and water tower were also clad in shiplap siding. The main house included a generous four bedrooms with closets, a kitchen, and two large family rooms - one on each floor. The roofs of the two large exterior porches were supported by chamfered posts as well, showing intention and care in the construction of the building not common for more utilitarian structures. The interior was finished with plaster, simple trim and moldings, paneled doors, and the interior stair

[47] Hart, 253.

featured a well-crafted square newel post. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service noted in a 1985 report that these buildings represented a much higher quality of construction than commonly found in the region.[48] While much simpler in their construction, the two bunk houses, also known as line houses, reflect a higher quality of construction as well. Both are examples of "single pen" buildings, one front gabled, the other side gabled. The buildings are single-wall construction, and include ceilings, subfloors, and windows with simple trim. Like the other outbuildings, the bunk houses were painted red to contrast with the main house. While the lumber used in constructing the main house and bunkhouses cannot be sourced, the red-and-pink stone used for the water tower, wells, and other buildings on the site can be traced to sandstone quarry in Nevada, just southeast of the Sheldon National Wildlife Refuge.[49] Shirk's use of imported stone and milled lumber and hardware demonstrate his wealth, and differentiate this property from others constructed of local materials.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

In his 1982 study, historian Stephen Dow Beckham identifies 374 historic resources in Lake County on private property, including many houses, barns, and outbuildings. Less numerous are water towers and wells (9), blacksmith shops (8), corrals (6), markers (5), middens and garbage piles (3), and chicken houses and dams (2 each).[50] By comparison, Shirk Ranch's nineteen resources include all of Beckham's identified property types in a single district, thoroughly illustrating the many components and functions of an operating livestock operation as well as Shirk's individual wealth. Similarly, a 1985 report by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service identifies several historic ranches in the Hart Mountain National Antelope Refuge and the nearby Sheldon National Wildlife Refuge. Compared with those identified, the Shirk Ranch is both one the largest and best-equipped and -constructed facilities. The Shirk Ranch is also the only Oregon ranch identified by the author as individually eligible for the National Register. Several comparative ranches are listed in the National Register of Historic Places in southeastern Oregon. When compared to these, the Shirk Ranch is differentiated by being the only identified operating horse ranch, as well as by the extent, integrity, and quality of the buildings included in the district.

There are five notable listed ranch properties remaining in southeastern Oregon, in southeast Deschutes, Lake, Harney, and Malheur counties that have a comparable number and type of resources and history to the Shirk Ranch. The Ed Eskelin Ranch Complex in Silver Lake, Lake County is listed under Criterion A and C under agriculture, ethnic heritance, and architecture between 1935-1945. This property is different from Shirk ranch in that it dates from a much later period. The property also has fewer contributing properties, including only a house, barn, granary, privy, garage, and well. Unlike the finely appointed purpose-built home Shirk constructed for himself, the residence at the Eskelin Ranch is a converted school.[51]

Perhaps the most notable comparative resources are Peter French's P Ranch, Frenchglen, Harney County, (1872) and the Sod House Ranch, Narrows, Harney County (1877). Both are on the Malheur National Wildlife

[48] Pinger, 15.
[49] Ibid, 11. 14.
[50] Beckham, "Lake County Historic Sites and Buildings Inventory," 3-4; Beckham notes in the text that his 1982 study may not be exhaustive.
[51] Jill A. Chapel, "Eskelin, Ed, Ranch" National Register nomination (Portland: Heritage Research Associates Inc., 1990).

Refuge. The P ranch is listed under Criterion A, and the Sod House Ranch under Criterion A and C. The P Ranch was the headquarters of the French-Glenn cattle empire; however, the only remaining buildings of the original twenty-one resources are a beef wheel, fences, and a large barn. The Sod House Ranch to the north of the P Ranch was utilized by Peter French as a sub-headquarters. The Sod House Ranch has eight remaining buildings including a homestead house, workshop, carriage shed, granary, hide shed, bunkhouse, stone cellar, and a large barn. Comparatively, the Shirk Ranch has more buildings developed over a longer period of time than either property, and is associated with horse ranching instead of cattle. Although the Sod House Ranch has a similar number and type of buildings, the high-quality construction at Shirk Ranch differentiates the two properties.[52]

Riddle Ranch in Frenchglen, Harney County has a total of ten contributing buildings, including a house, cooler bunkhouse, storage building and tack room, barn, chicken house, and bathhouse. However, the main house has been lost, destroyed by fire in 1994. This family cattle ranch was founded as a homestead, and is listed under Criterion A and C for its association with cattle ranching, exploration, and as an example of period architecture between 1900 and 1920. By comparison, the Shirk Ranch property represents a greater period of time spanning from the late-nineteenth century through 1914, includes a greater number of buildings, and was primarily utilized as a horse ranch.[53]

The final comparative National Register-listed property is the Hart, Moses and May, Stone House and Ranch Complex in the Westfall area, Malheur County. The ranch is listed under Criterion A and C for its association with agriculture and period architecture between 1898 and 1950. Although several structures are on the property, only the single stone house retains its historic integrity. By comparison, the Shirk Ranch has many more contributing period facilities that more fully communicate the history and significance of the ranching industry in southeastern Oregon.[54]

CONCLUSION

The David L. Shirk Ranch historic district is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its association with late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century ranching operations in Lake County, and under Criterion C for the collective architectural significance of its thirteen buildings, structures, and sites. Although the great ranching empires have been replaced by small operations or consumed by federal lands and wildlife refuges, ranching continues to be an important economic factor in Lake County and cattle still graze and wild horses yet roam in Guano Valley. The Shirk Ranch is an important historic resource that is related to the development of this industry, and the property has a special place in local and regional history. Compared to similar resources in eastern Oregon, the Shirk Ranch has a high level of integrity. The setting remains almost unchanged from the period of significance, and the buildings retain their original historic materials and relationship to one another. As a collection, the resources communicate the feeling and

[52] Richard B. Gritman, "Sod House Ranch" National Register nomination (Portland: United States Fish and Wildlife Service, 1975); Ibid, "P Ranch and Landmark" National Register nomination (Portland: United States Fish and Wildlife Service, 1976).

[53] Stephen Dow Beckham, "Riddle Ranch" National Register nomination (Portland: Bureau of Land Management, 1991).

[54] James T. Post, "Hart, Moses and May, Stone House and Ranch Complex" National Register nomination (Westfall: Written by property owner, 2001).

association of a historic ranch and demonstrate the materials and workmanship common to this type of resource. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service summarized the significance of the ranch saying, the ranch "...represents an important era in the history of southeastern Oregon and the west. The buildings are associated features, all more or less intact, possess integrity of materials and location. Because the site has been in continual operation as a working ranch since its establishment it also reflects a continuum of ranching history from early settlement of the area to present.... The ranch itself is an excellent example of late-nineteenth and turn-of-the-century rural building types."[55]

[55] Richard Kraushaar, "Inventory and Preliminary Evaluation of Historic Resources, Shirk Ranch, Lake County, Oregon," Research Report 93-2 (Reno: University of Nevada, Department of Anthropology, 1993), 1.

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nominated area includes approximately 14.5 acres in Section 35 of Township 38 south, Range 27 east, Willamette Meridian, Guano Valley that encompass a total of nineteen resources, fourteen contributing and five non-contributing, in three discontiguous areas. Each area is enclosed in its own defined boundary. See site plan, figure 4, and accompanying USGS map, Guano Lake quadrangle.

The 13.1-acre main ranch complex includes twelve contributing properties, including the main house, both bunk houses, woodshed, outhouse, chicken coop, water tower, blacksmith shop, both wells, and fencing and irrigation systems. The five non-contributing resources in the district are also all located within the main ranch complex and include the root cellar, barn, animal paddock, rocked shed, and old ranch house ruin.

The boundary of the main ranch complex begins at a point located on the northeast corner of the intersection formed by Bureau of Land Management Road #6106 and the unnamed road running from east to west to the historic dump and gravesite. The boundary proceeds north from this point and follows the contours of the road for approximately 500 feet. The boundary then turns east, running 223 feet, and proceeding toward the beginning of the earthen dam. The boundary then turns southeast to follow the contour of the north side of the earthen dam for a distance of 767 feet, and then turns south to follow the irregular line of the fence for 726 feet. The boundary then abruptly turns west to follow the fence line for 100 feet, and then turns south for 85 feet, and once more turns west for 240 feet. Following the contour of an unnamed road just west of the western fence line, the boundary runs north for 751 feet, and then turns west following the contour of the north side of the road for 169 feet to the point of beginning.

Two contributing historic sites are located outside the main ranch complex. These include a historic grave to the northwest and a historic dump to the southwest. The gravesite is located approximately 980 feet northwest of the main ranch complex on a small knoll. The boundary of the gravesite encloses less than one acre, and is defined as a 10-foot radius, forming a square, from the center point of the grave marker itself. The starting point of the 1.3-acre historic dump is arrived at by traveling west 100 feet from the beginning point of the main ranch complex boundary, and then proceeding south along another road for approximately 369 feet to the southeastern corner of the historic dump. From this point, the boundary follows the extent of visible surface features, running 124 feet in a generally northerly direction, then southwest for 565 feet, then south for 70 feet, and then northeast following the contour of the road for 568 feet to the point of beginning.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary includes the buildings, structures, and sites that are historically part of the Shirk Ranch during the period of significance and that maintain their historic integrity. All three nominated areas lie in relatively close proximity to one another. Excluded are the surrounding rangelands that lack sufficient material culture for inclusion in the district and the altered portions of the irrigation system located north and east of the earthen dam that do not maintain their historic integrity. The boundary of the main ranch complex is defined by the historic fence lines, area roads, and the extent of contributing historic resources. Individual boundaries for the historic dump and gravesite are defined by the extent of surface features and artifacts.

PHOTOGRAPHS

Address: Shirk Ranch, Lake County, Oregon
Photographer: John Toso, 1660 Parker St., Ashland, OR 97520
Date: November 2004, October 2007
Ink and Paper: Resin-coated paper and archival black and white film processing
Location of Negatives: Negatives held by photographer

1 of 31: Exterior: Overview of Shirk Ranch, facing southeast, 2007

2 of 31: Exterior: Ranch house, south façade (front), facing north, 2004

3 of 31: Exterior: Ranch house, north façade (back), facing south, 2004

4 of 31: Exterior: Ranch house, east façade, facing west, 2004

5 of 31: Exterior: Ranch house, west façade, facing east, 2004

6 of 31: Exterior: Bunkhouse #1, south and east facades, facing northwest, 2004

7 of 31: Exterior: Bunkhouse #2, south and east facades, facing northwest, 2004

8 of 31: Exterior: Old ranch house fireplace (ruin), facing northwest, 2007

9 of 31: Exterior: Root cellar, east side, facing west, 2004

10 of 31: Exterior: Woodshed, north and east facades, facing southwest, 2004

11 of 31: Exterior: Outhouse, south and east facades, facing northwest, 2004

12 of 31: Exterior: Chicken coop, east façade, facing west, 2004

13 of 31: Exterior: Well, south and east sides, facing northwest, 2004

14 of 31: Exterior: Water tower, south and east facades, facing north, 2004

15 of 31: Exterior: Water tower, south and east facades, facing north, 2007

16 of 31: Exterior: Blacksmith shop, east façade, facing west, 2004

17 of 31: Exterior: Fencing, facing east, 2007

18 of 31: Exterior: Rocked shed, south façade, facing northeast, 2007

19 of 31: Exterior: Animal paddock, south and west facades, facing northeast, 2007

20 of 31: Exterior: Dumpsite, facing north, 2004

21 of 31: Exterior: Gravesite, facing north, 2004

22 of 31: Interior Main Ranch House: Stairwell, facing north, 2004

23 of 31: Interior Main Ranch House: Billiard room, facing north, 2004

24 of 31: Interior Main Ranch House: Upstairs bedroom, facing southwest, 2004

25 of 31: Interior Main Ranch House: Downstairs bedroom, facing northeast, 2004

26 of 31: Interior Main Ranch House: Kitchen/shower, facing northeast, 2004

27 of 31: Interior Main Ranch House: Living room, facing north, 2004

28 of 31: Reproduction: Design used as corner card for David Shirk's envelopes and photographic portrait of David Lawson Shirk, age 28 years, by Carleton E. Watkins Studio, San Francisco, California

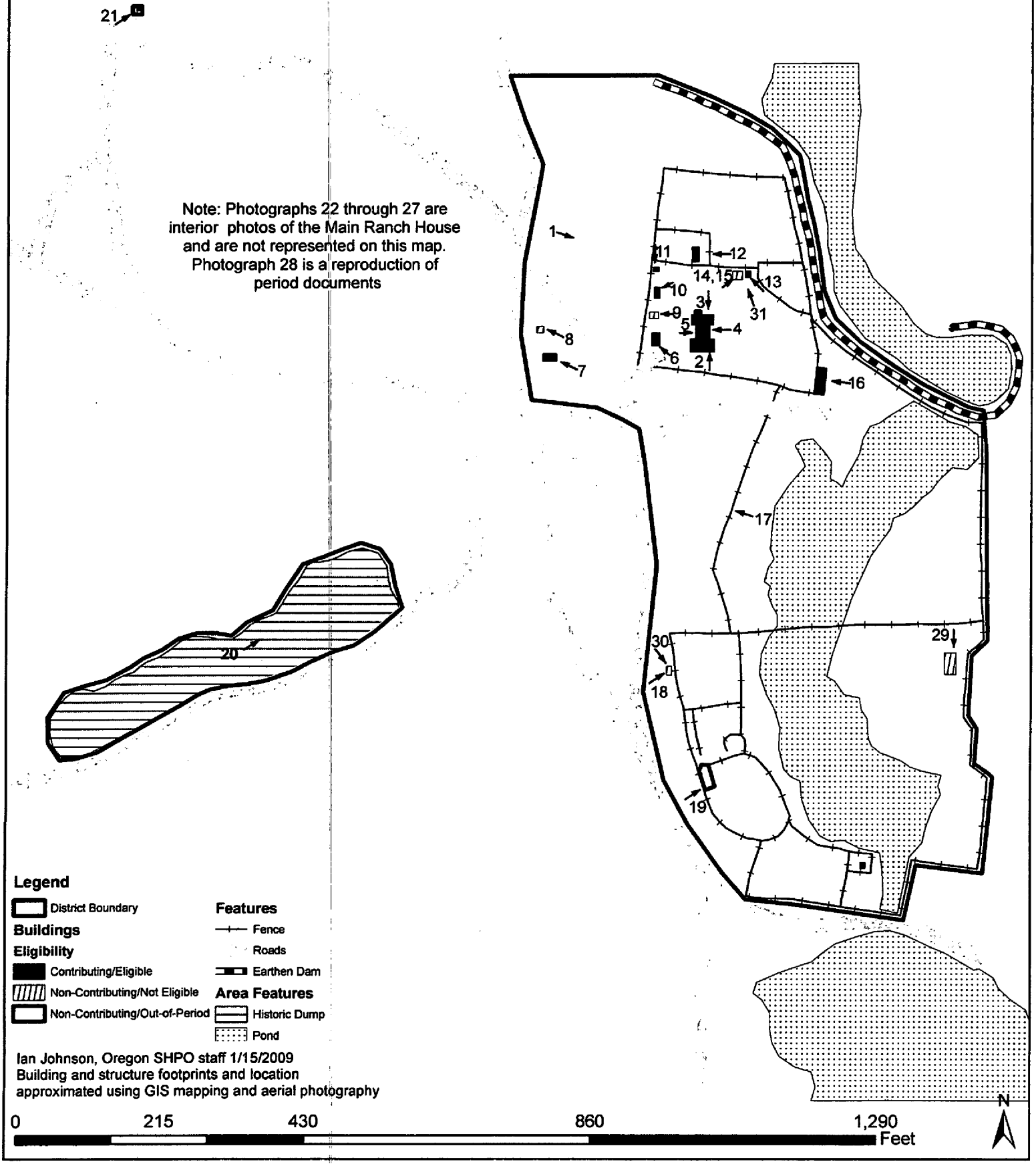
Schmitt, Martin L., editor. *The Cattle Drives of David Shirk: From Texas to the Idaho Mines, 1871 and 1873.* Portland: The Champoeg Press, 1956.

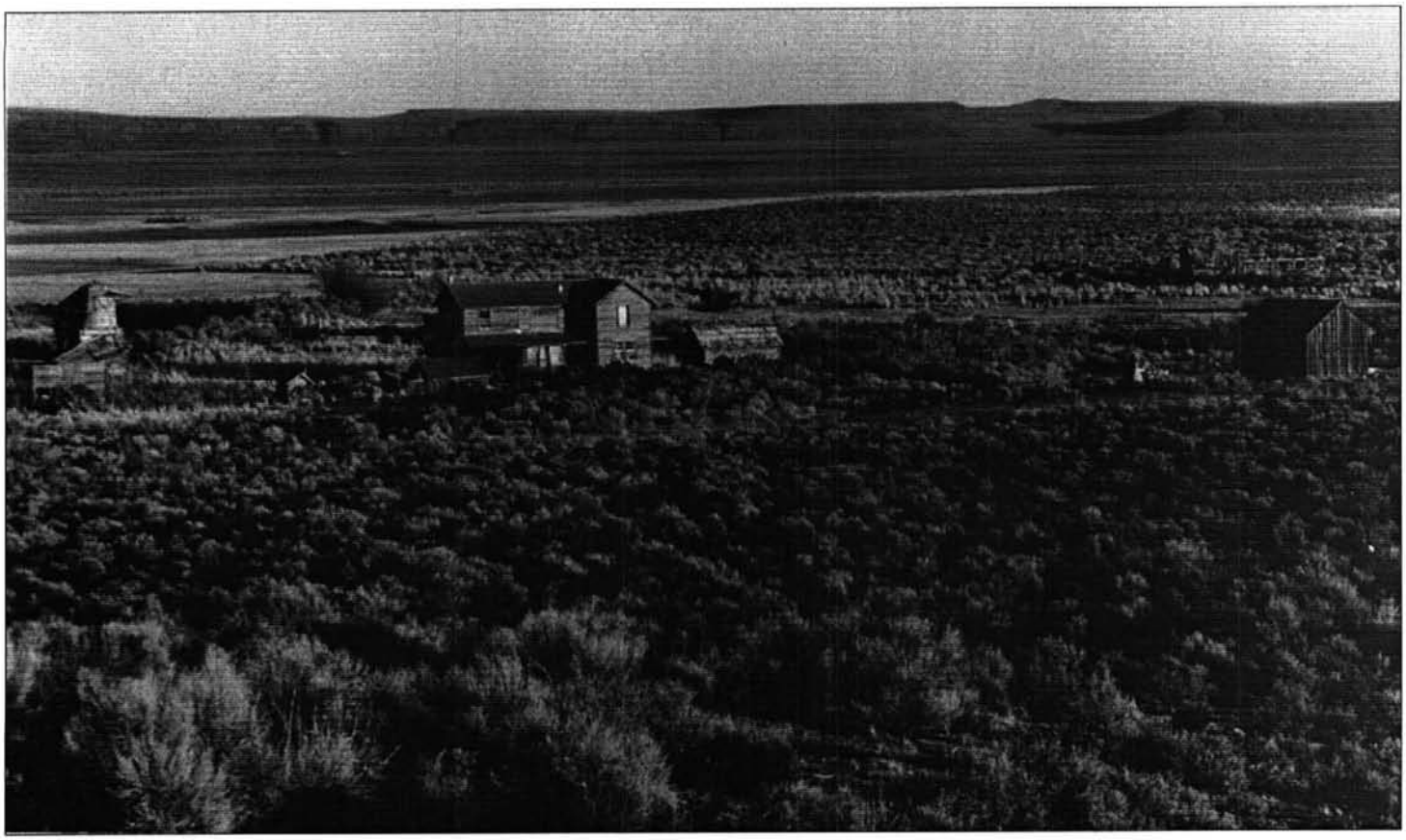
29 of 31: Reproduction: Barn, facing south, date unknown, Bureau of Land Management, Lakeview, Oregon

30 of 31: Reproduction: Rock shed, facing southeast, date unknown, Bureau of Land Management, Lakeview, Oregon

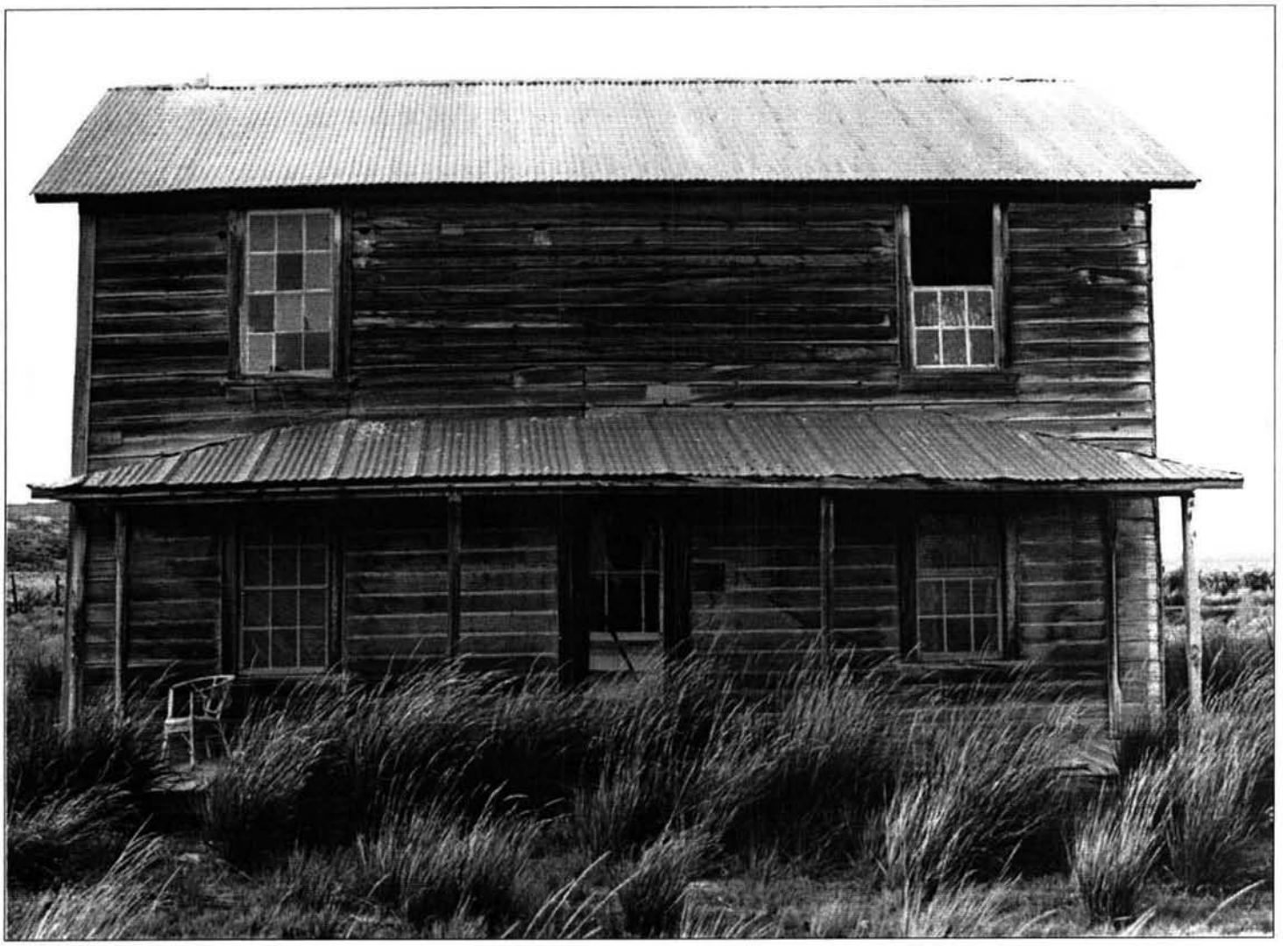
31 of 31: Reproduction: Well, facing northwest, date unknown, Bureau of Land Management, Lakeview, Oregon

Photograph Location Sheet
Photographs, Page 3
Shirk Ranch, Lake Co., OR





1 of 31: Exterior: Overview of Shirk Ranch, facing southeast, 2007

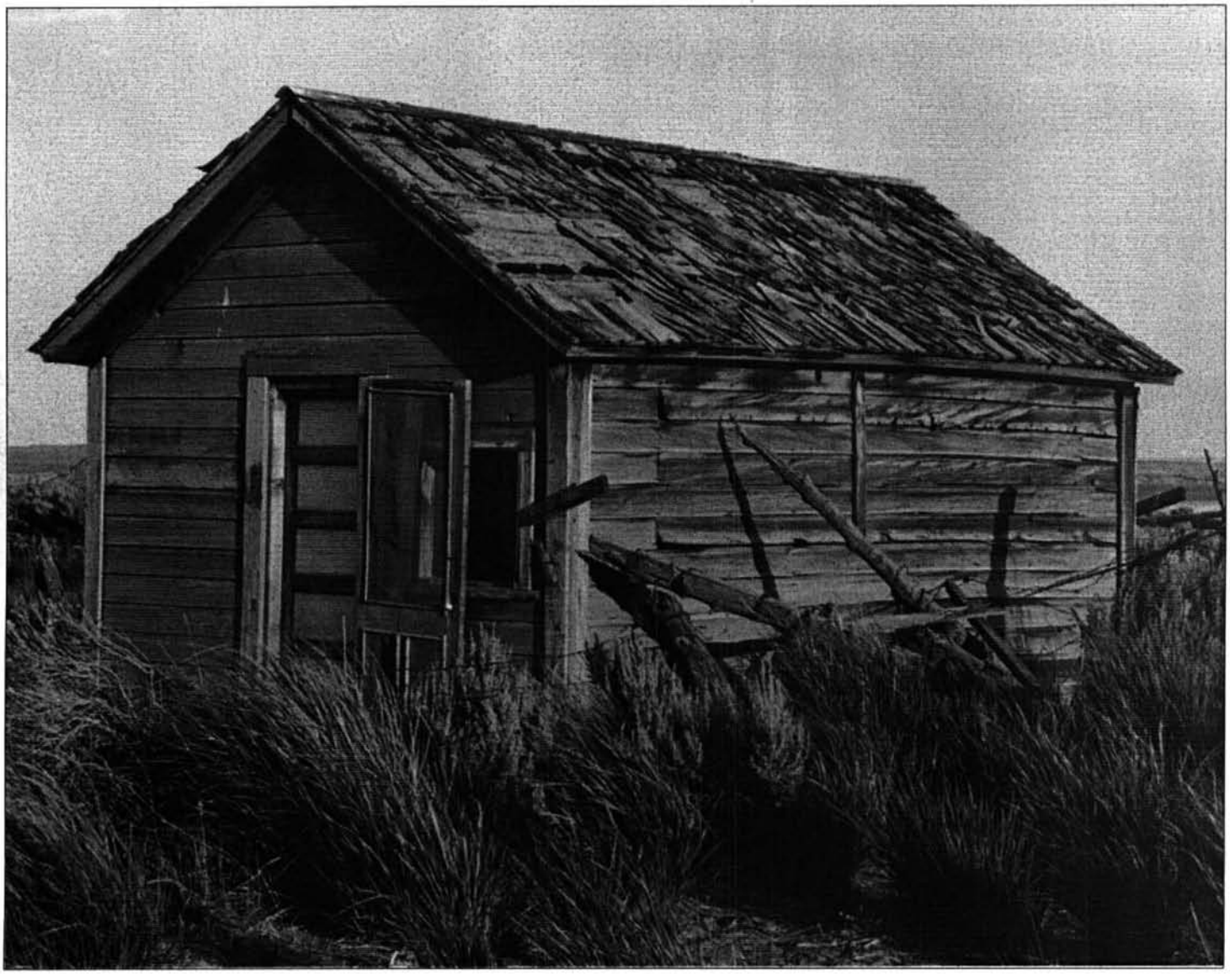


2 of 31: Exterior: Ranch house, south façade (front), facing north, 2004

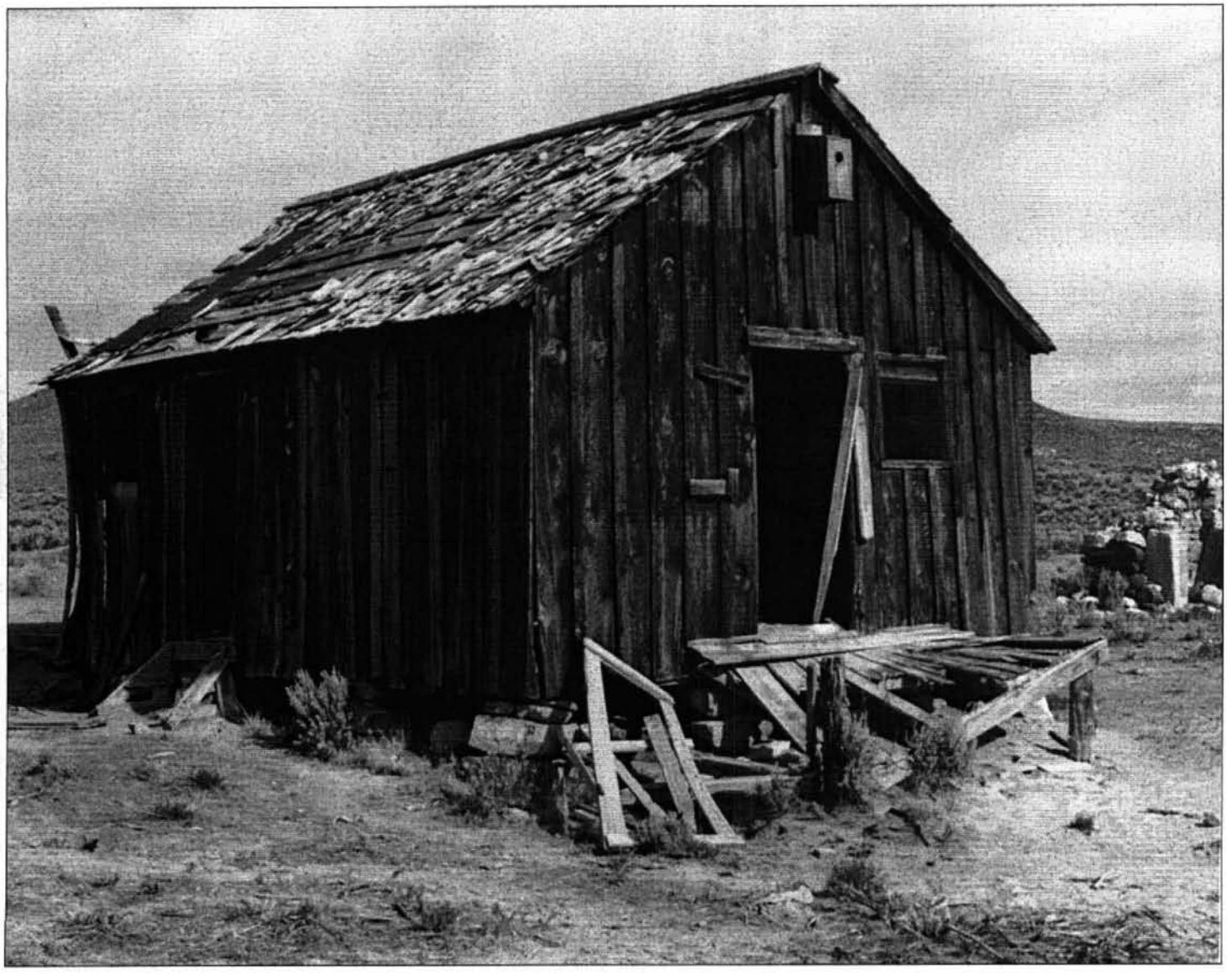
3 of 31: Exterior: Ranch house, north façade (back), facing south, 2004

4 of 31: Exterior: Ranch house, east façade, facing west, 2004

5 of 31: Exterior: Ranch house, west façade, facing east, 2004



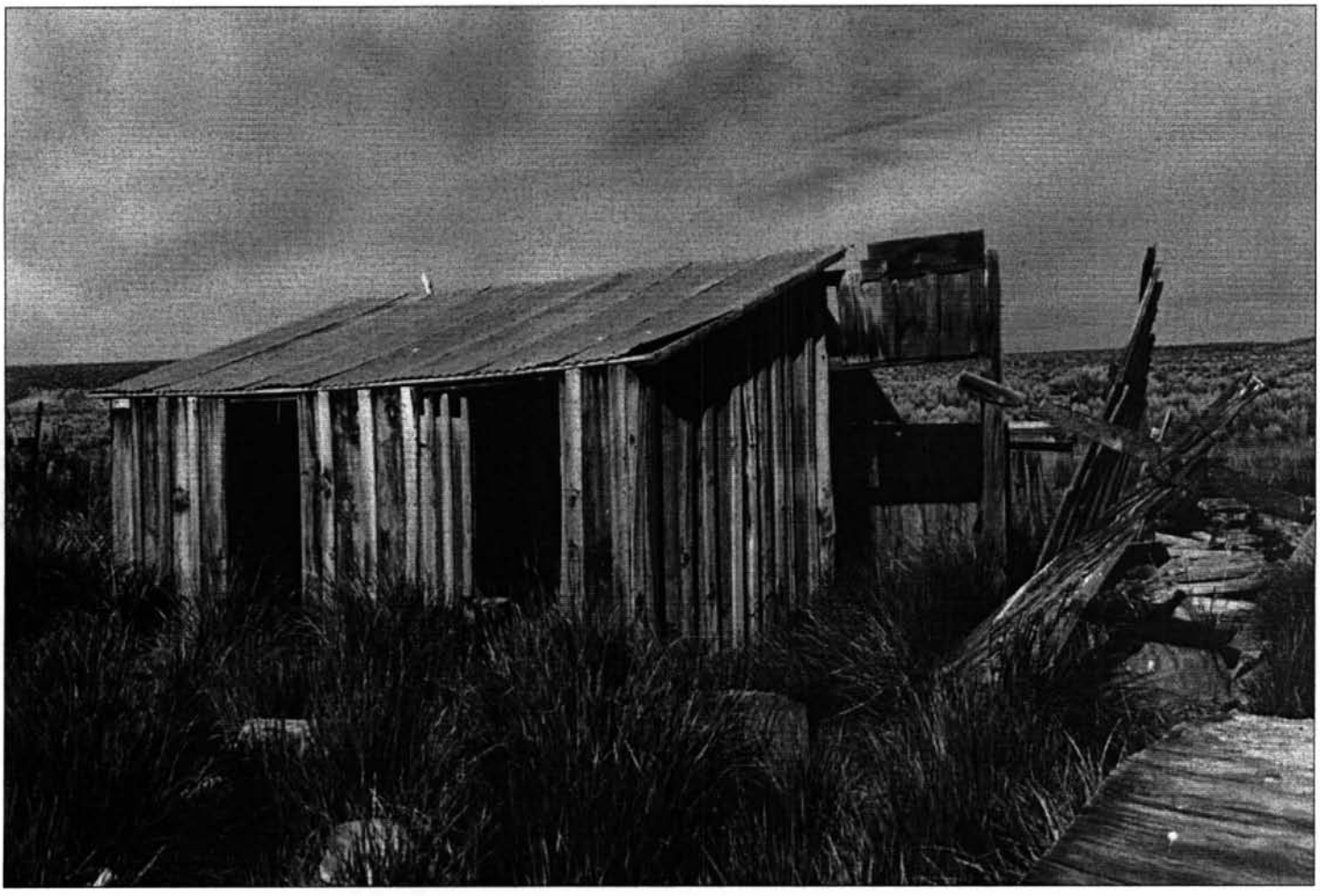
6 of 31: Exterior: Bunkhouse #1, south and east facades, facing northwest, 2004



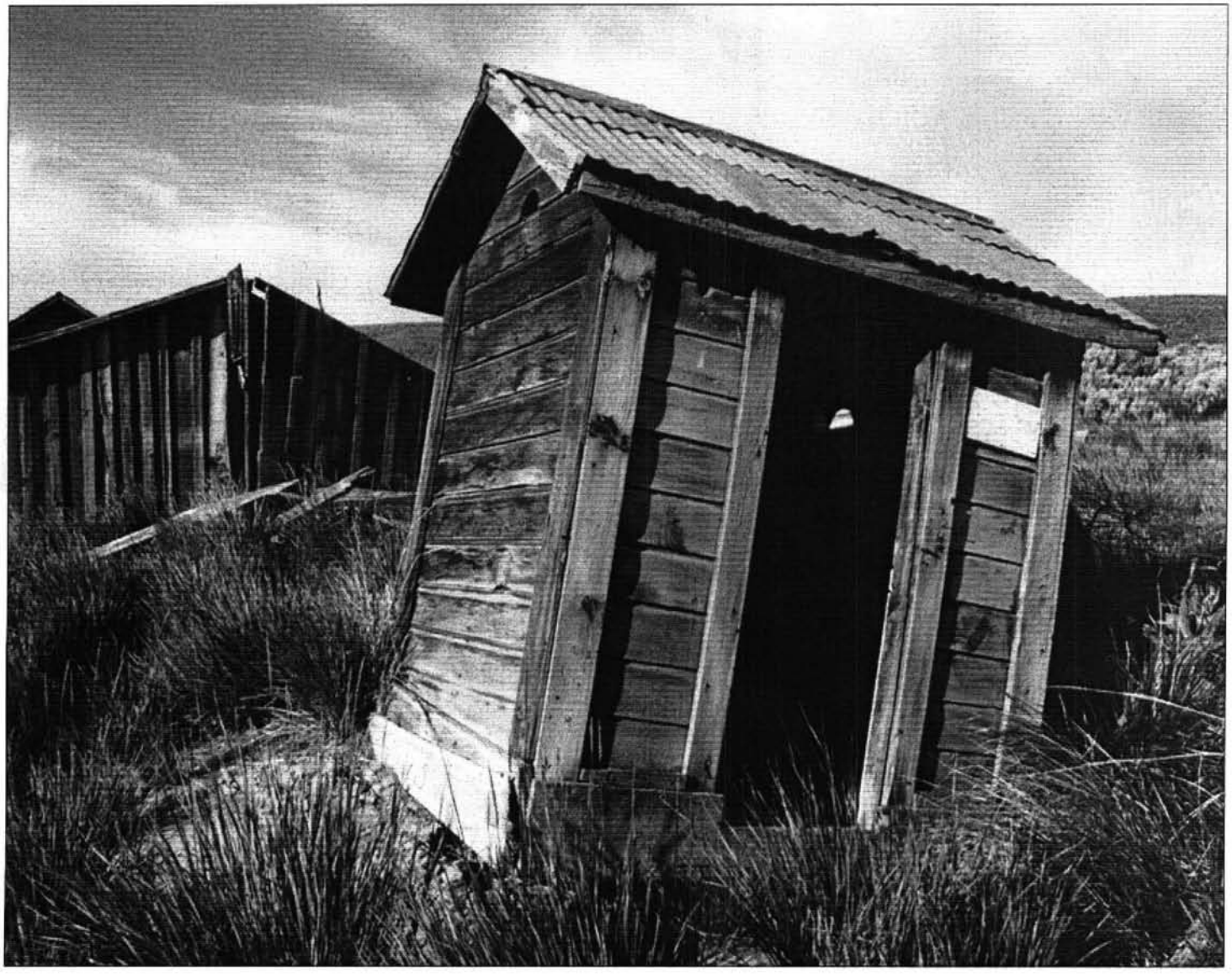
7 of 31: Exterior: Bunkhouse #2, south and east facades, facing northwest, 2004

8 of 31: Exterior: Old ranch house fireplace (ruin), facing northwest, 2007

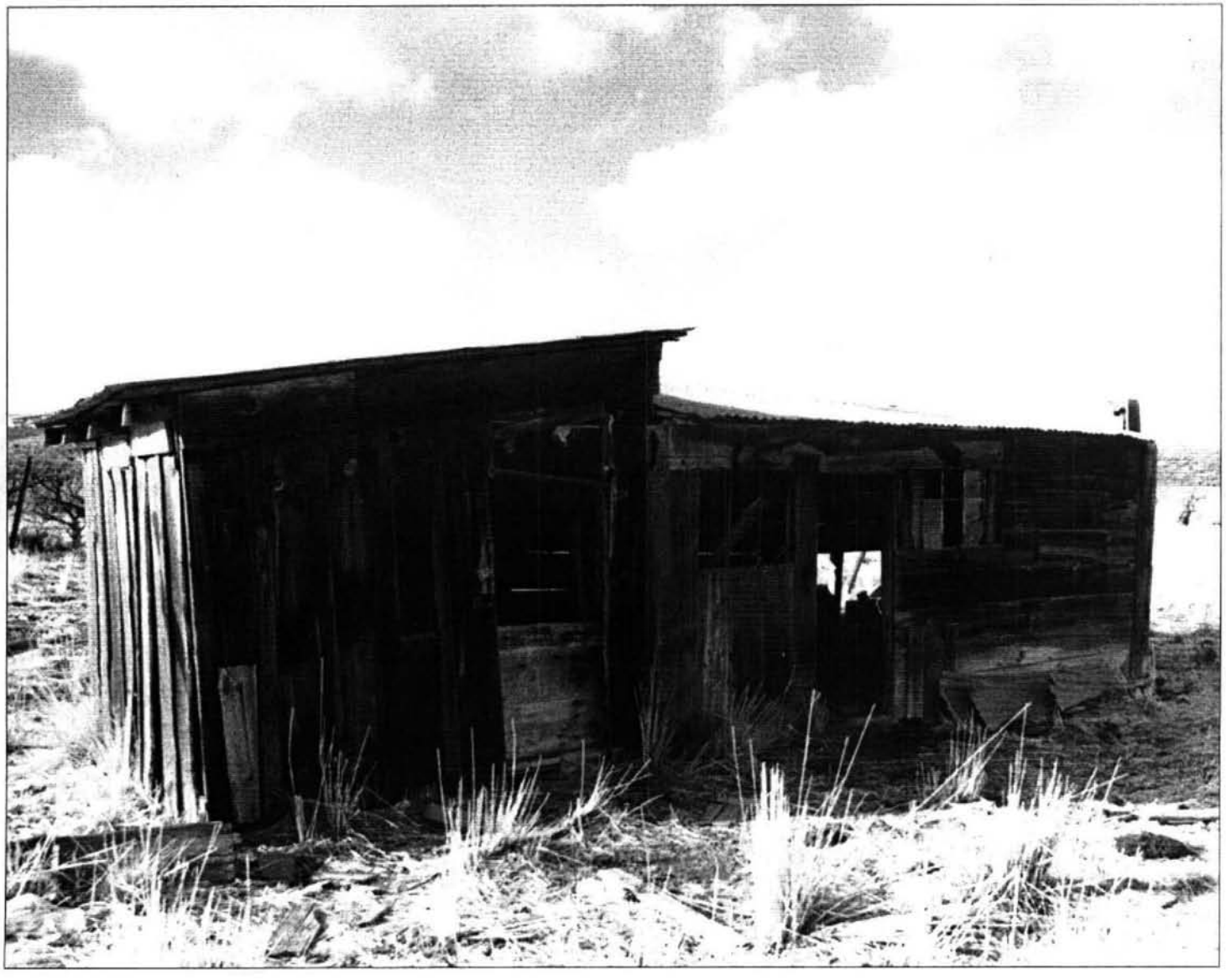
9 of 31: Exterior: Root cellar, east side, facing west, 2004



10 of 31: Exterior: Woodshed, north and east facades, facing southwest, 2004

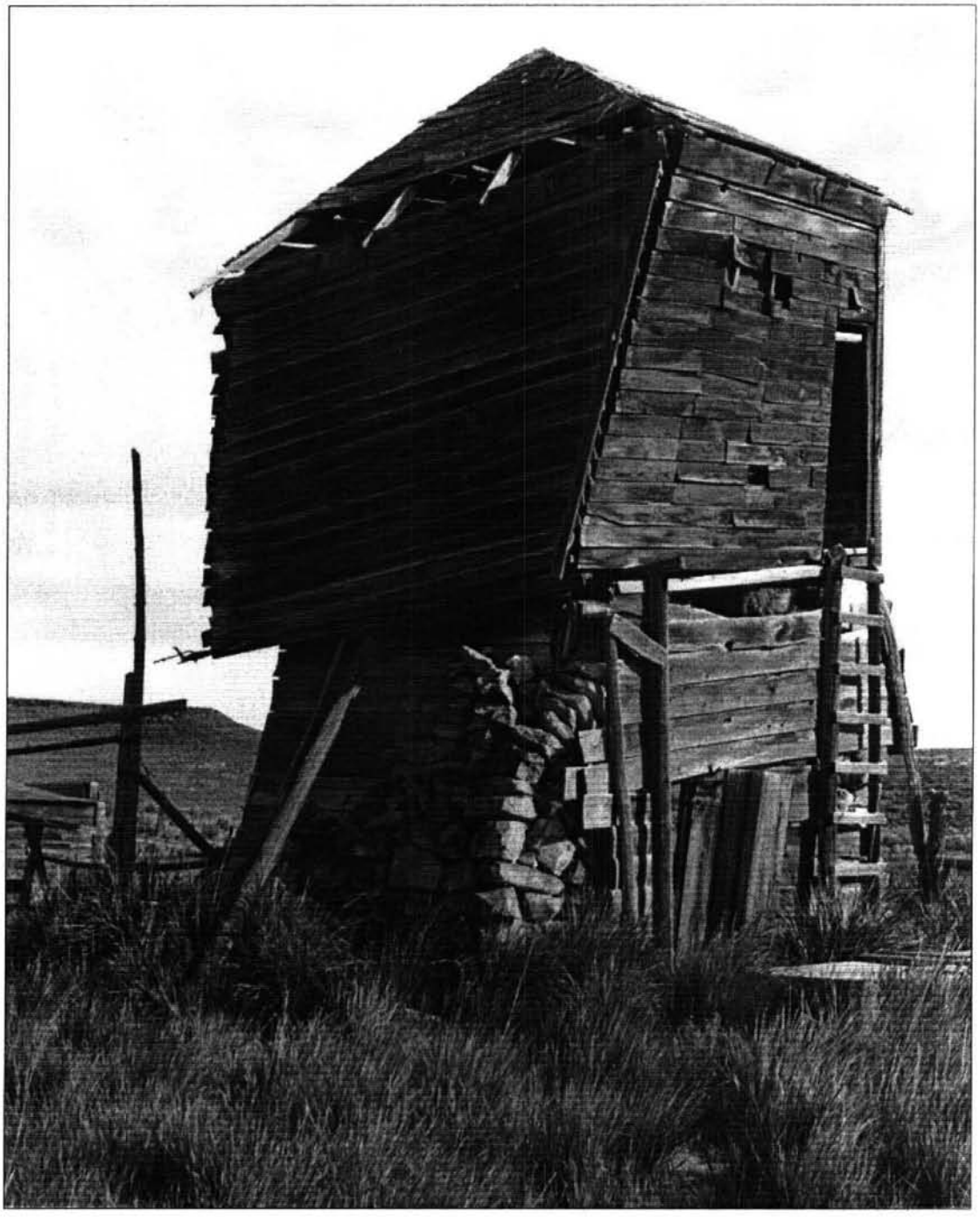


11 of 31: Exterior: Outhouse, south and east facades, facing northwest, 2004



12 of 31: Exterior: Chicken coop, east façade, facing west, 2004

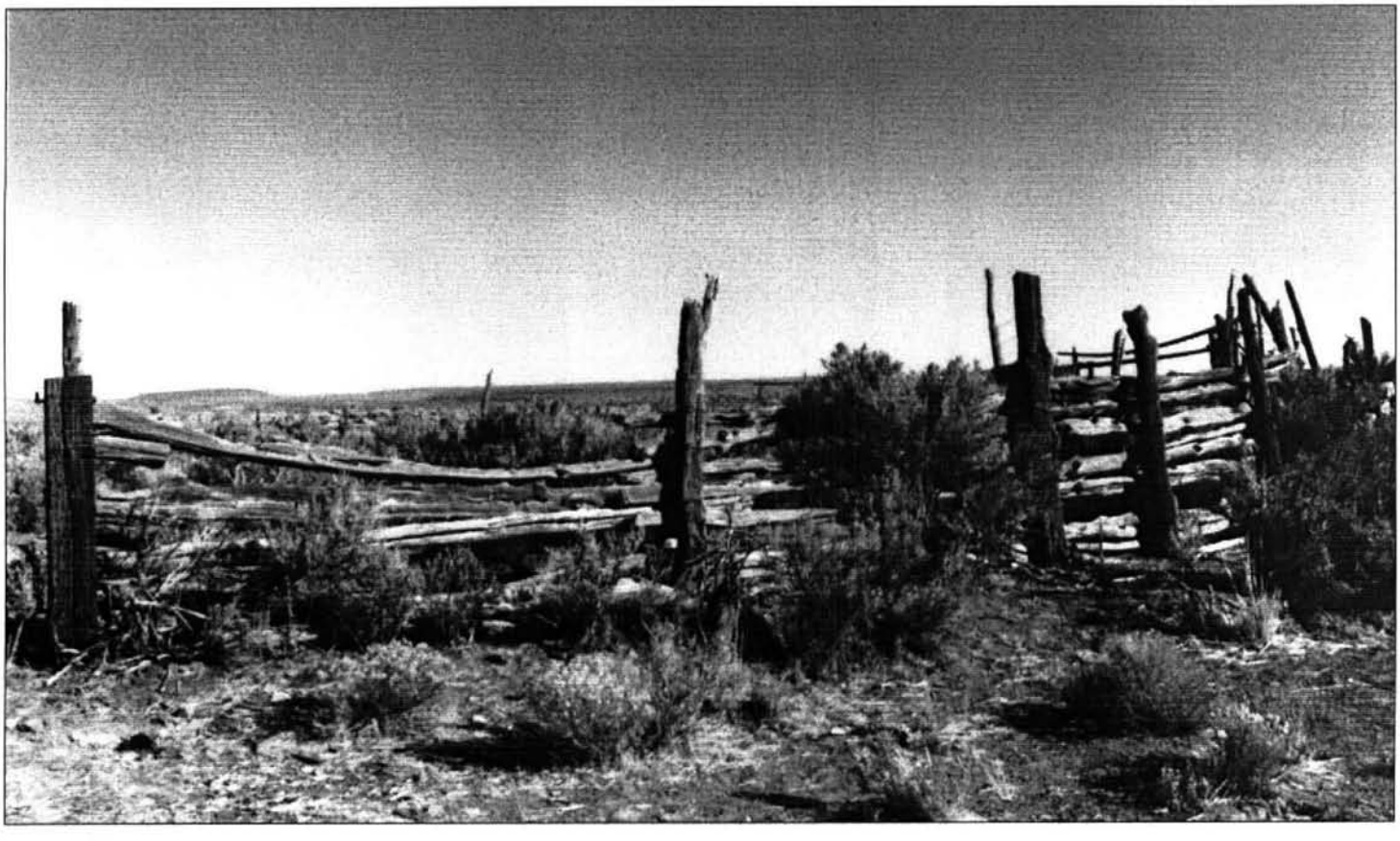
13 of 31: Exterior: Well, south and east sides, facing northwest, 2004



14 of 31: Exterior: Water tower, south and east facades, facing north, 2004

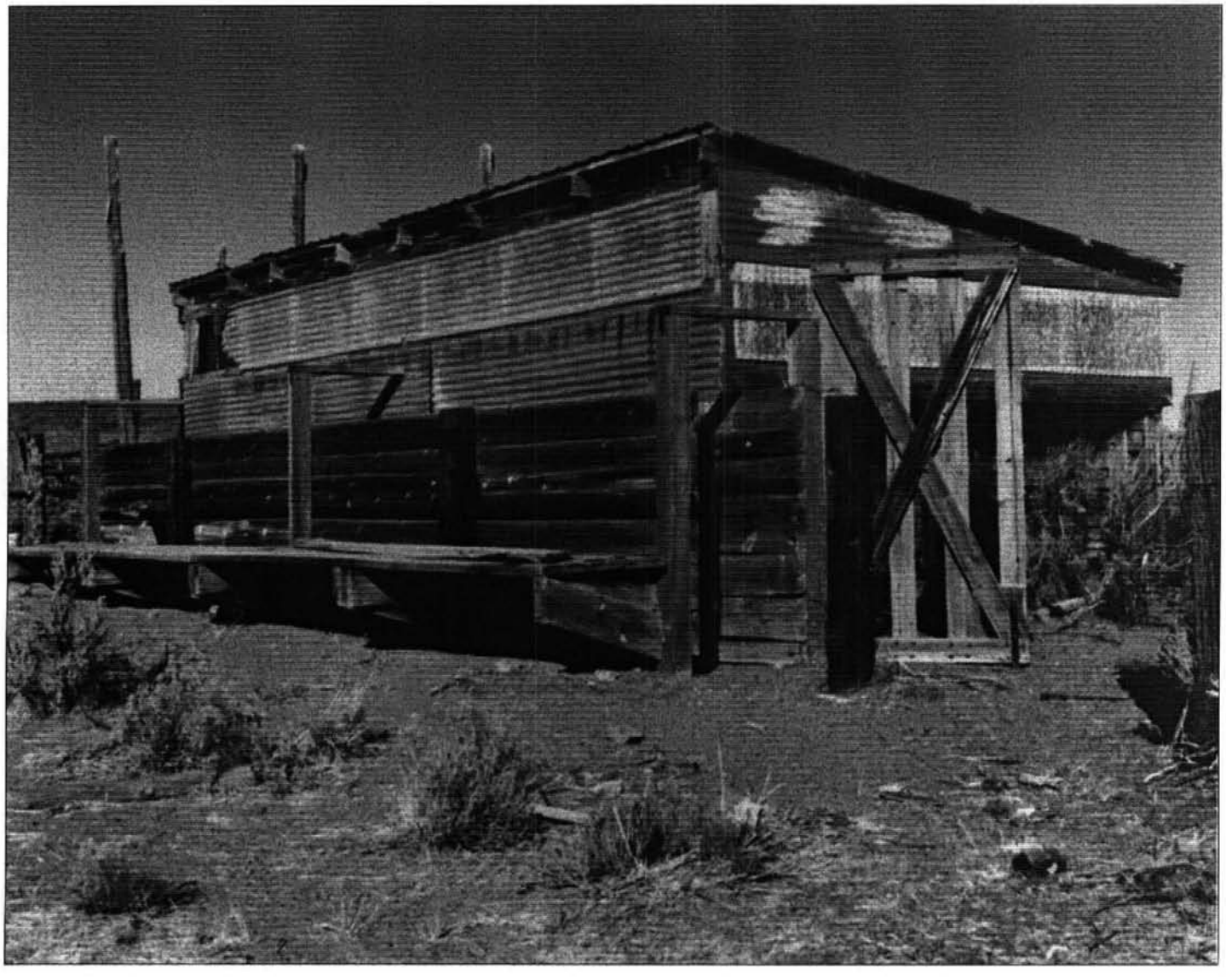
15 of 31: Exterior: Water tower, south and east facades, facing north, 2007

16 of 31: Exterior: Blacksmith shop, east façade, facing west, 2004

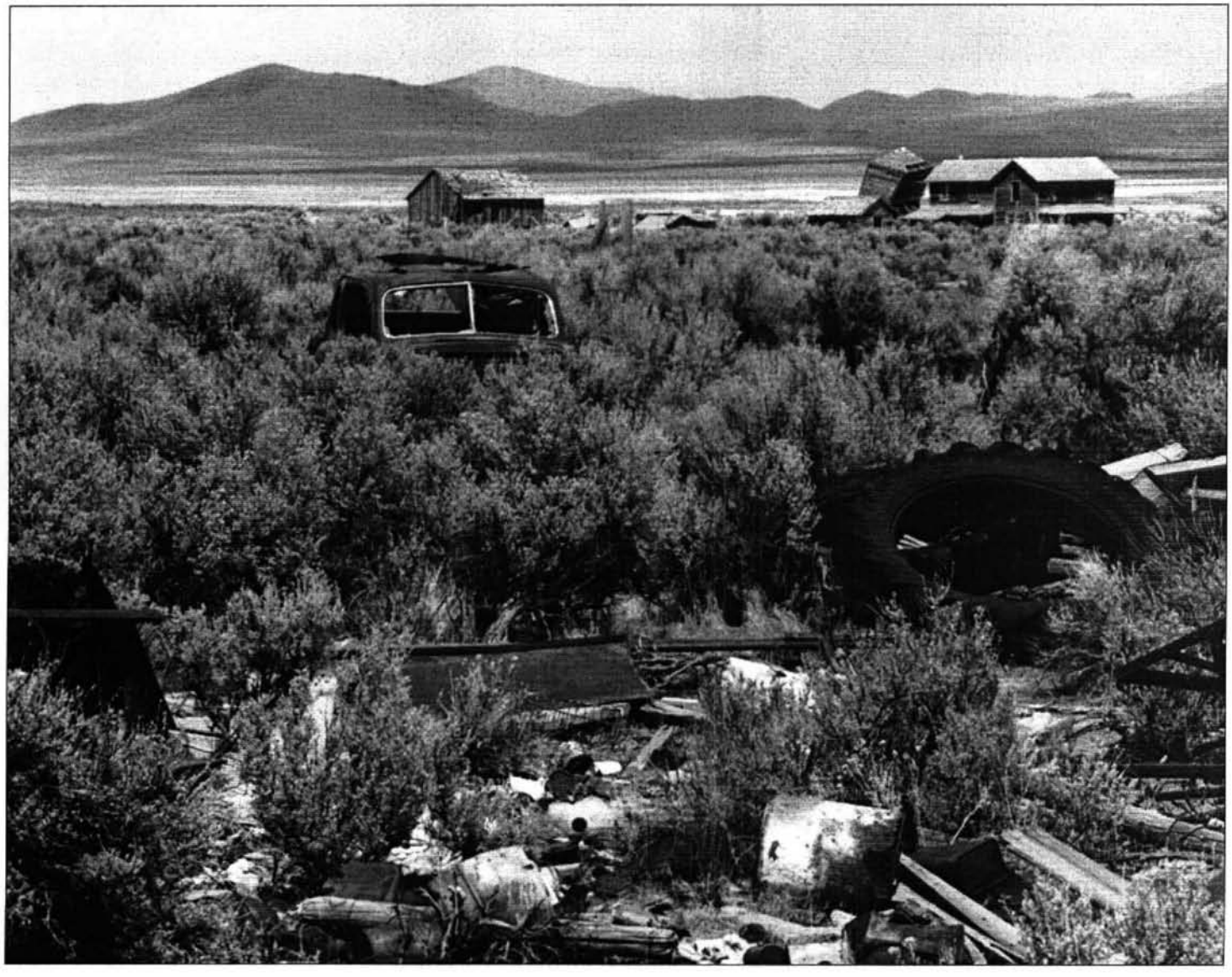


17 of 31: Exterior: Fencing, facing east, 2007

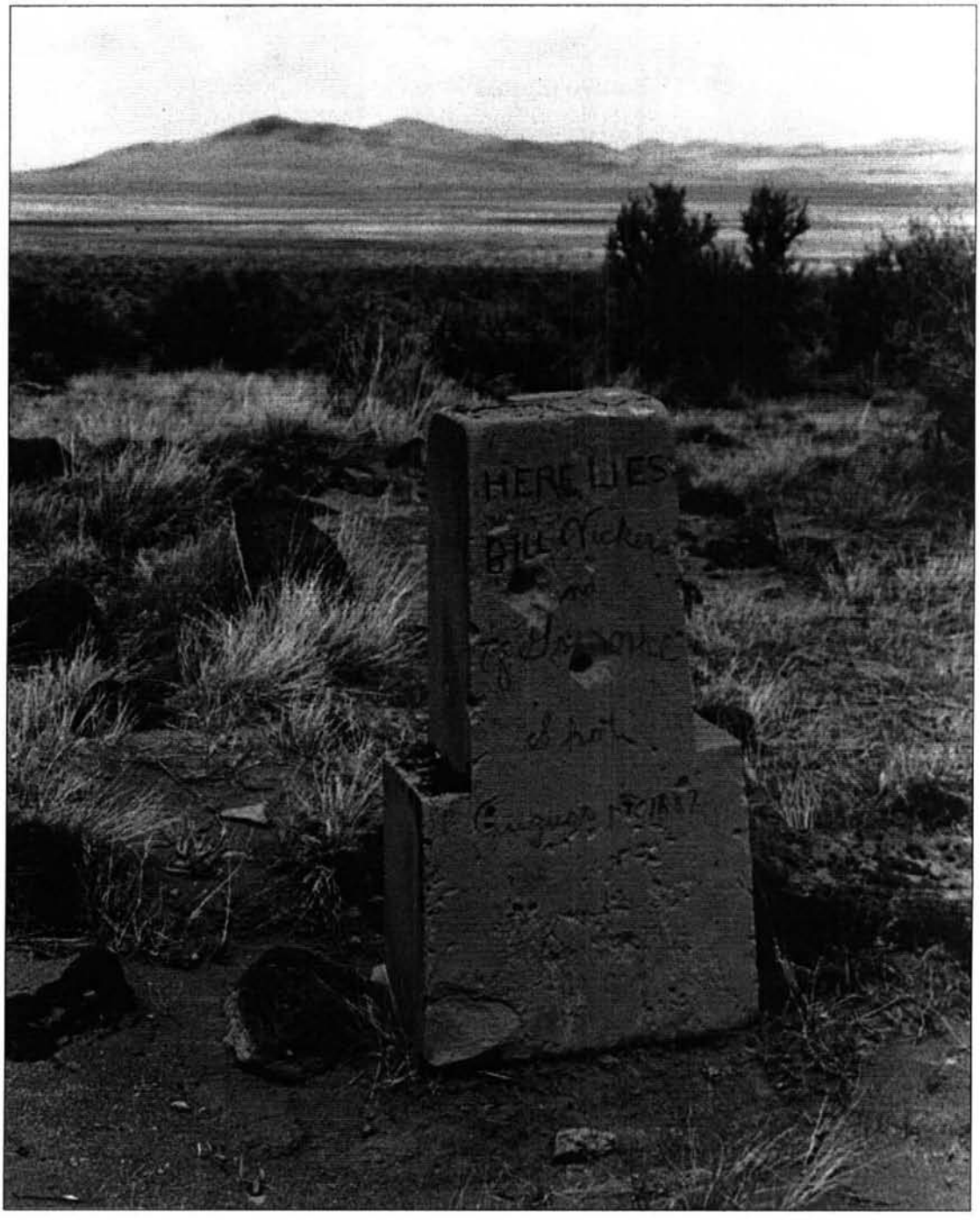
18 of 31: Exterior: Rocked shed, south façade, facing northeast, 2007



19 of 31: Exterior: Animal paddock, south and west facades, facing northeast, 2007

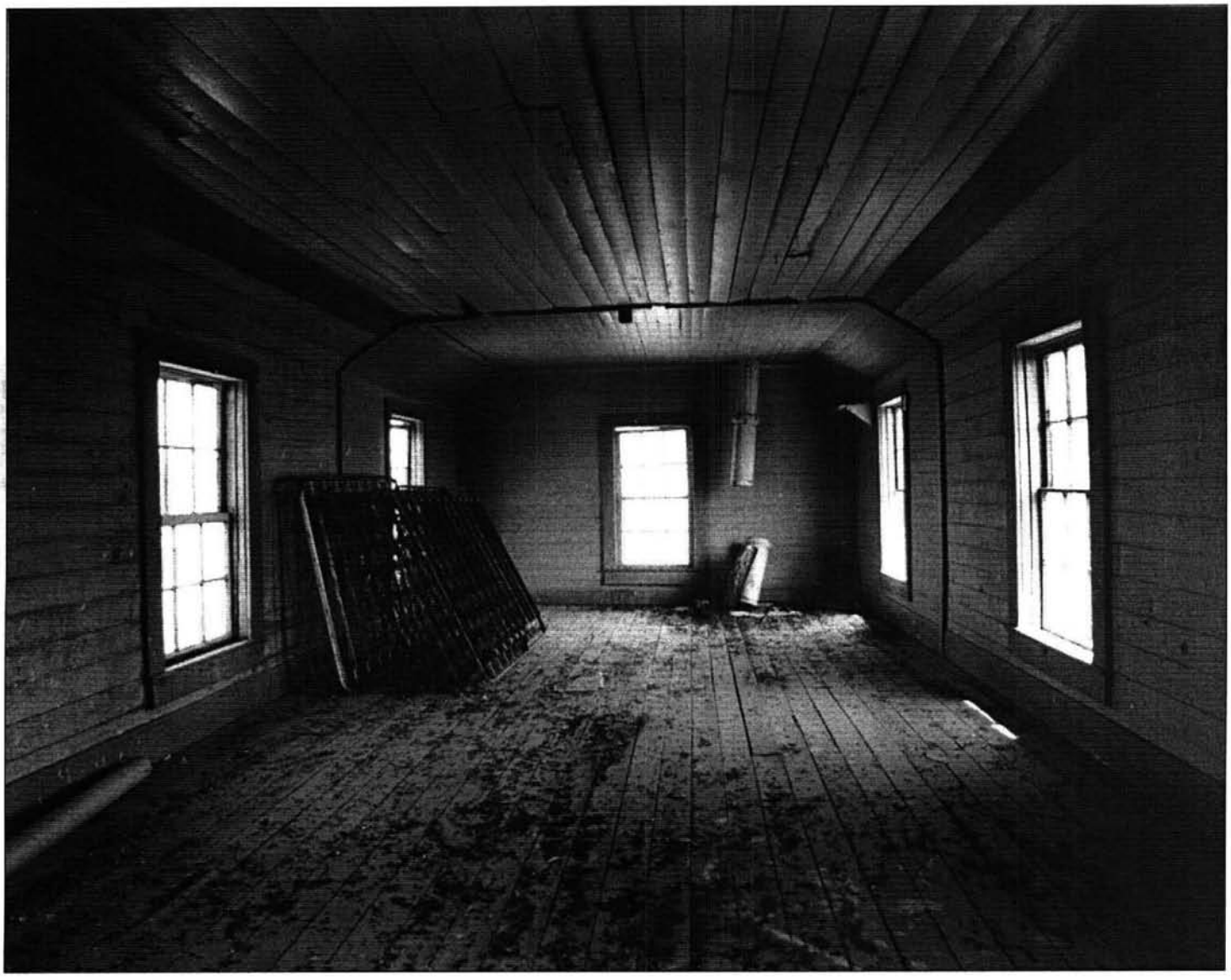


20 of 31: Exterior: Dumpsite, facing north, 2004

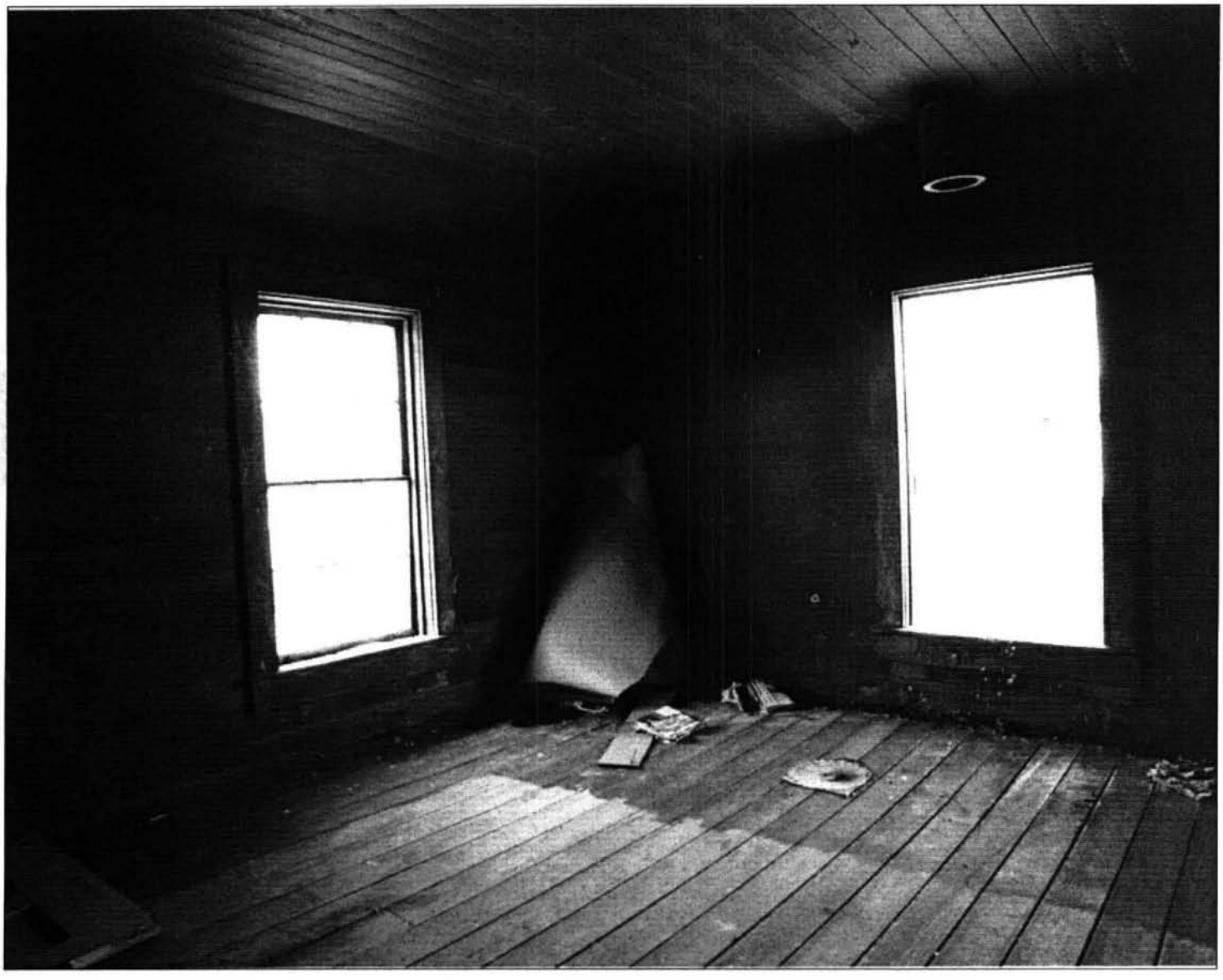


21 of 31: Exterior: Gravesite, facing north, 2004

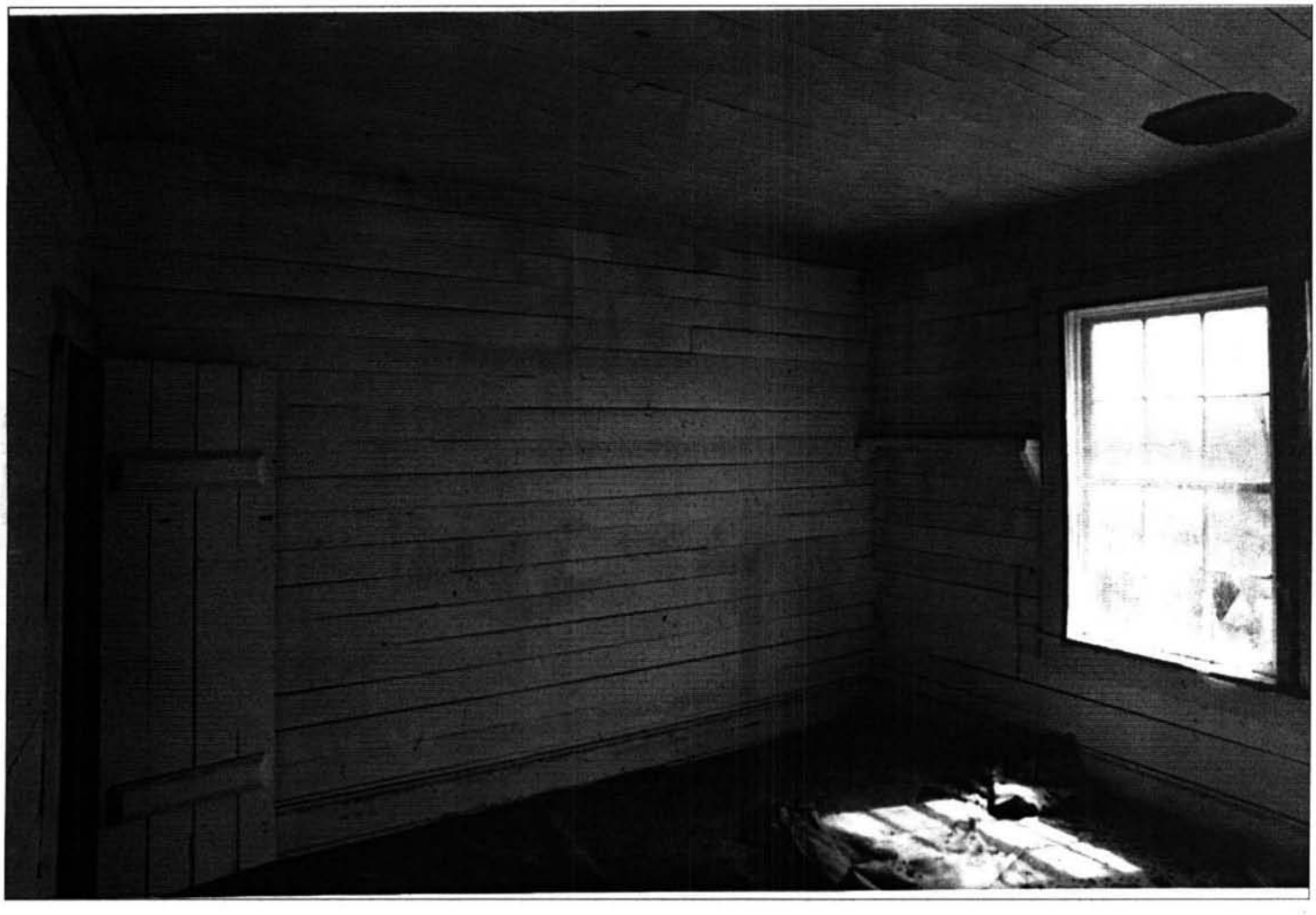
22 of 31: Interior Main Ranch House: Stairwell, facing north, 2004



23 of 31: Interior Main Ranch House: Billiard room, facing north, 2004



24 of 31: Interior Main Ranch House: Upstairs bedroom, facing southwest, 2004



25 of 31: Interior Main Ranch House: Downstairs bedroom, facing northeast, 2004

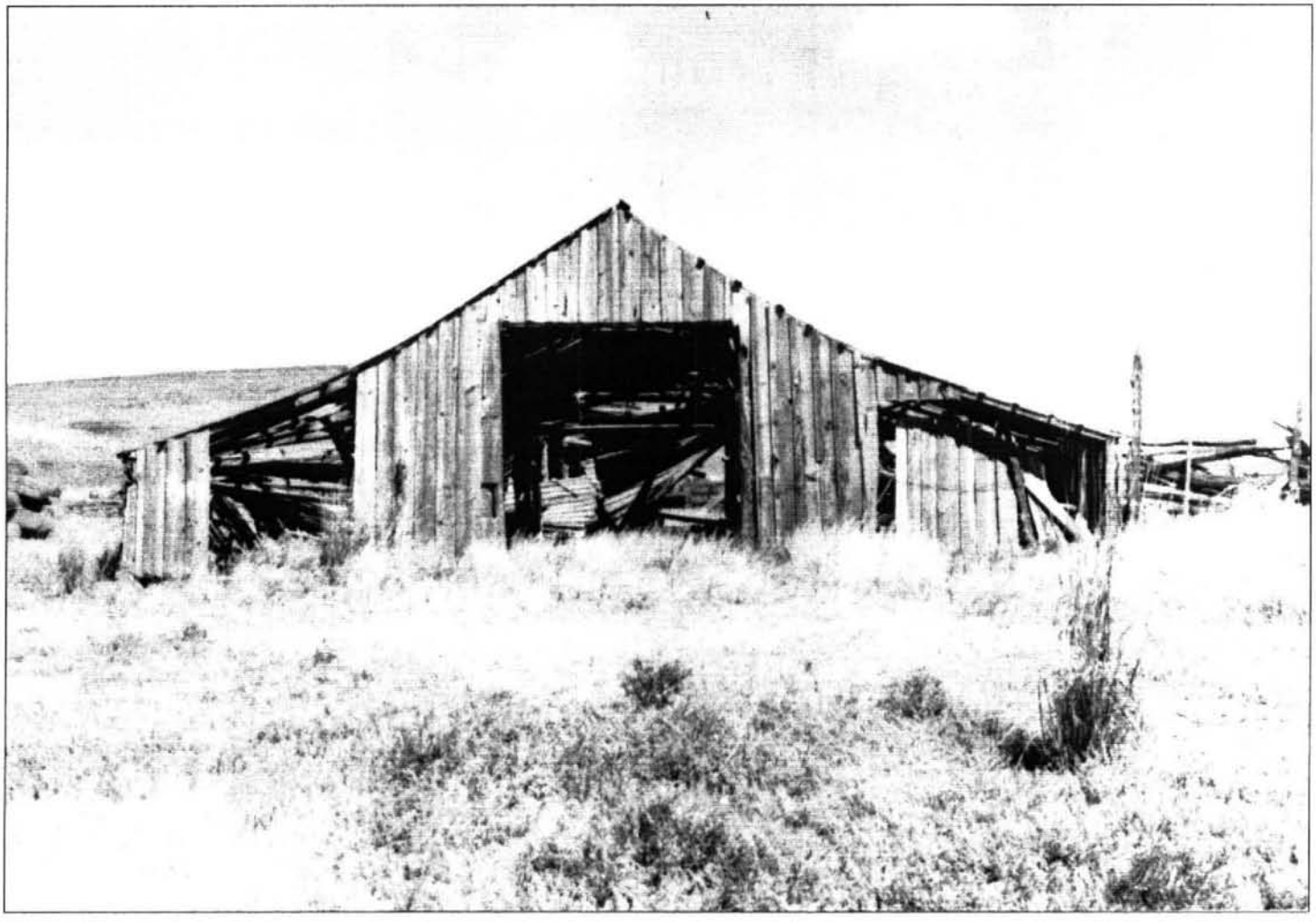
26 of 31: Interior Main Ranch House: Kitchen/shower, facing northeast, 2004

27 of 31: Interior Main Ranch House: Living room, facing north, 2004

DAVID LAWSON SHIRK
at the age of 28 years

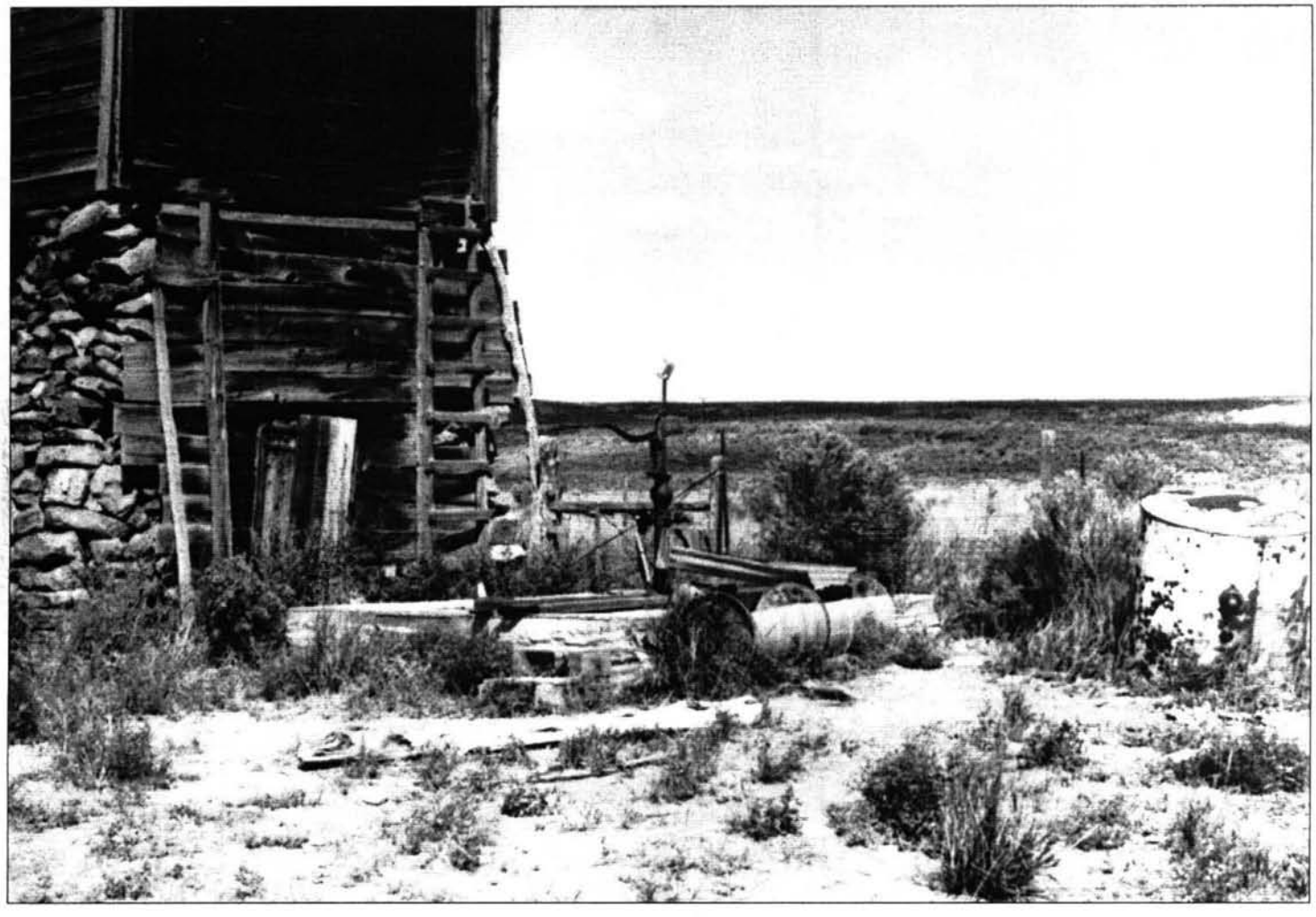
Reproduction of design used as corner card for envelopes

28 of 31: Reproduction: Design used as corner card for David Shirk's envelopes and photographic portrait of David Lawson Shirk, age 28 years, by Carleton E. Watkins Studio, San Francisco, California



29 of 31: Reproduction: Barn, facing south, date unknown, Bureau of Land Management, Lakeview, Oregon

30 of 31: Reproduction: Rock shed, facing southeast, date unknown, Bureau of Land Management, Lakeview, Oregon



31 of 31: Reproduction: Well, facing northwest, date unknown, Bureau of Land Management, Lakeview, Oregon

NPS Form 10-900-a

OMB Approval No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Figure 2: USGS Map, Guano Lake Quadrangle, showing approximate location of Shirk Ranch, 1 page
Figure 3: Section Map, showing approximate location of Shirk Ranch, 1 page
Figure 4: Site plan, 1 page
Figure 5: Floor plans, 2 pages
Figure 6: 1881 Government Land Office map of Shirk Ranch area, 1 page
Figure 7: Historic photo, David L. Shirk's Home Creek Ranch house, 1900, 1 page
Figure 8: David L. Shirk obituary, *Oakland Tribune*, 3 July 1928, 1 page

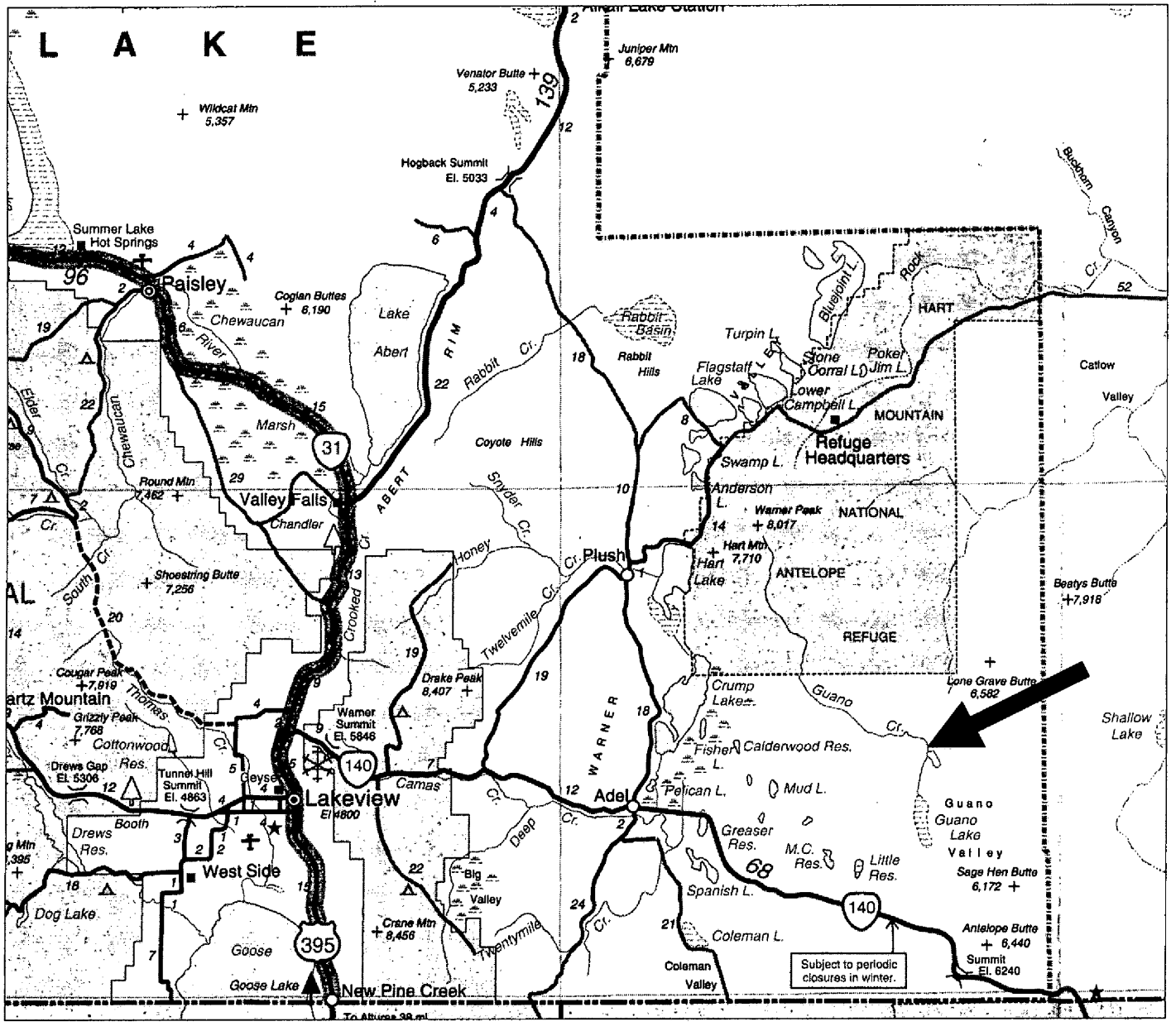


Figure 1: General Location Map. Approximate location of subject property marked with arrow

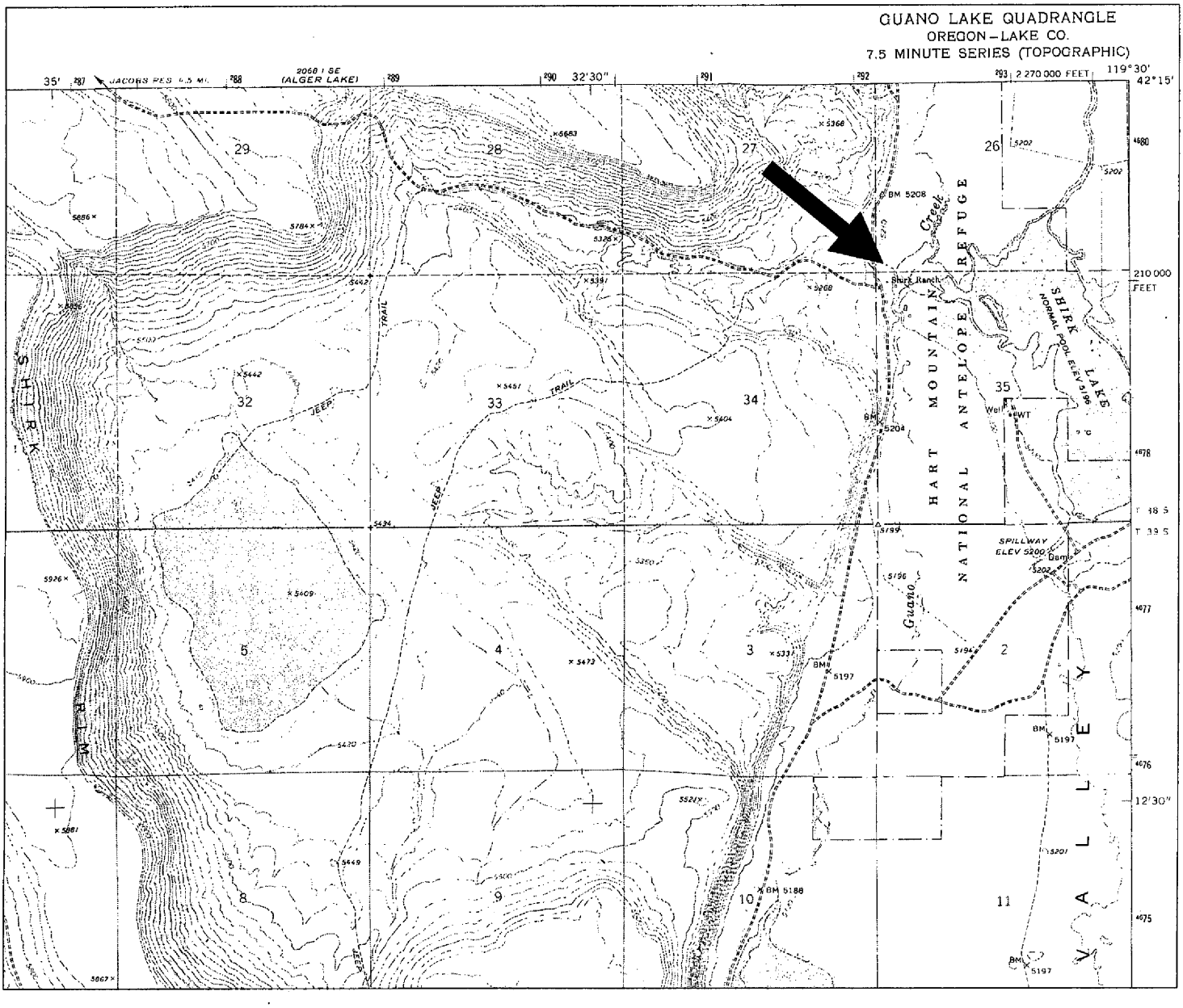


Figure 2: USGS Map, Guano Lake Quadrangle. Approximate location of subject property marked with arrow

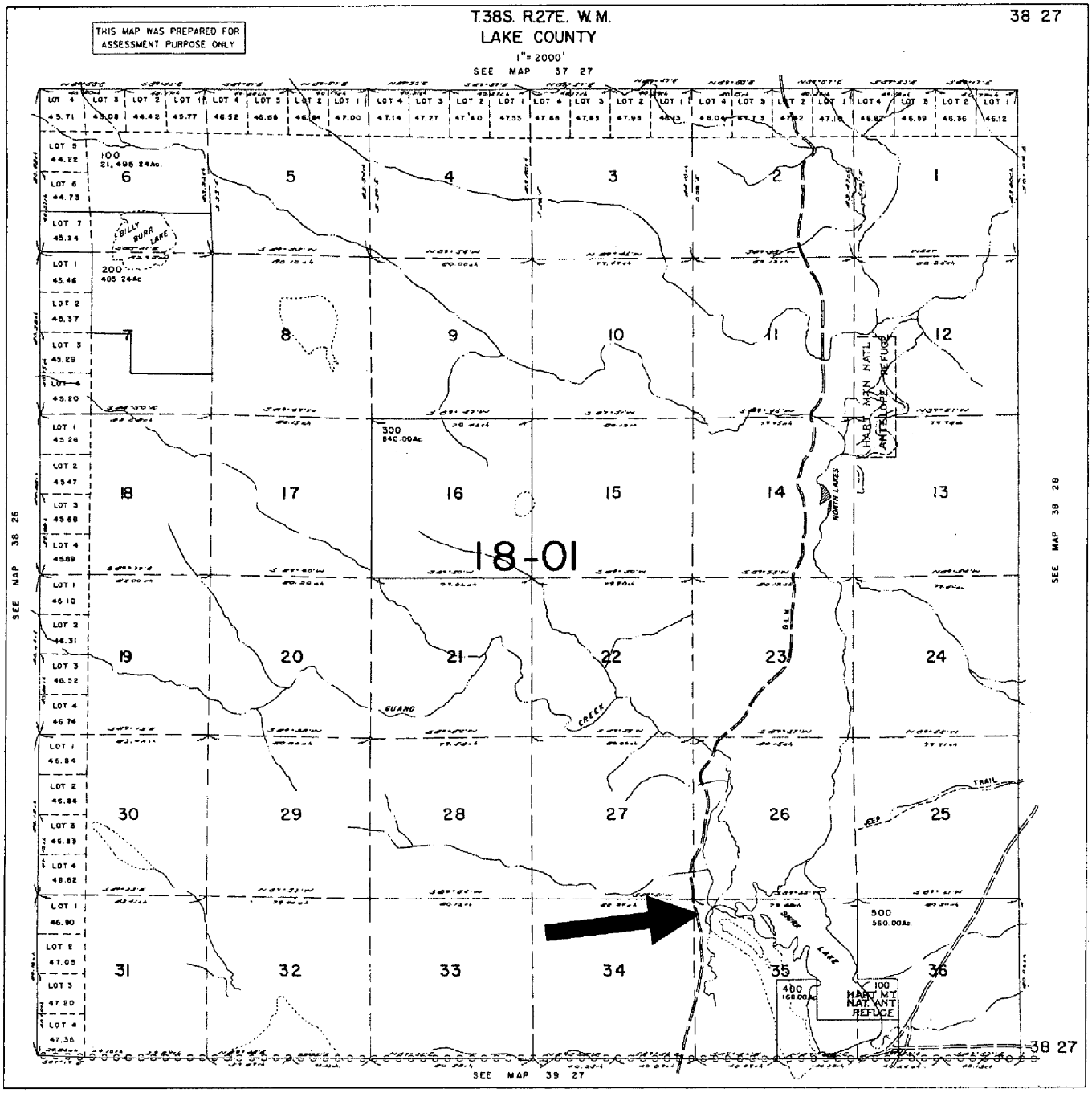
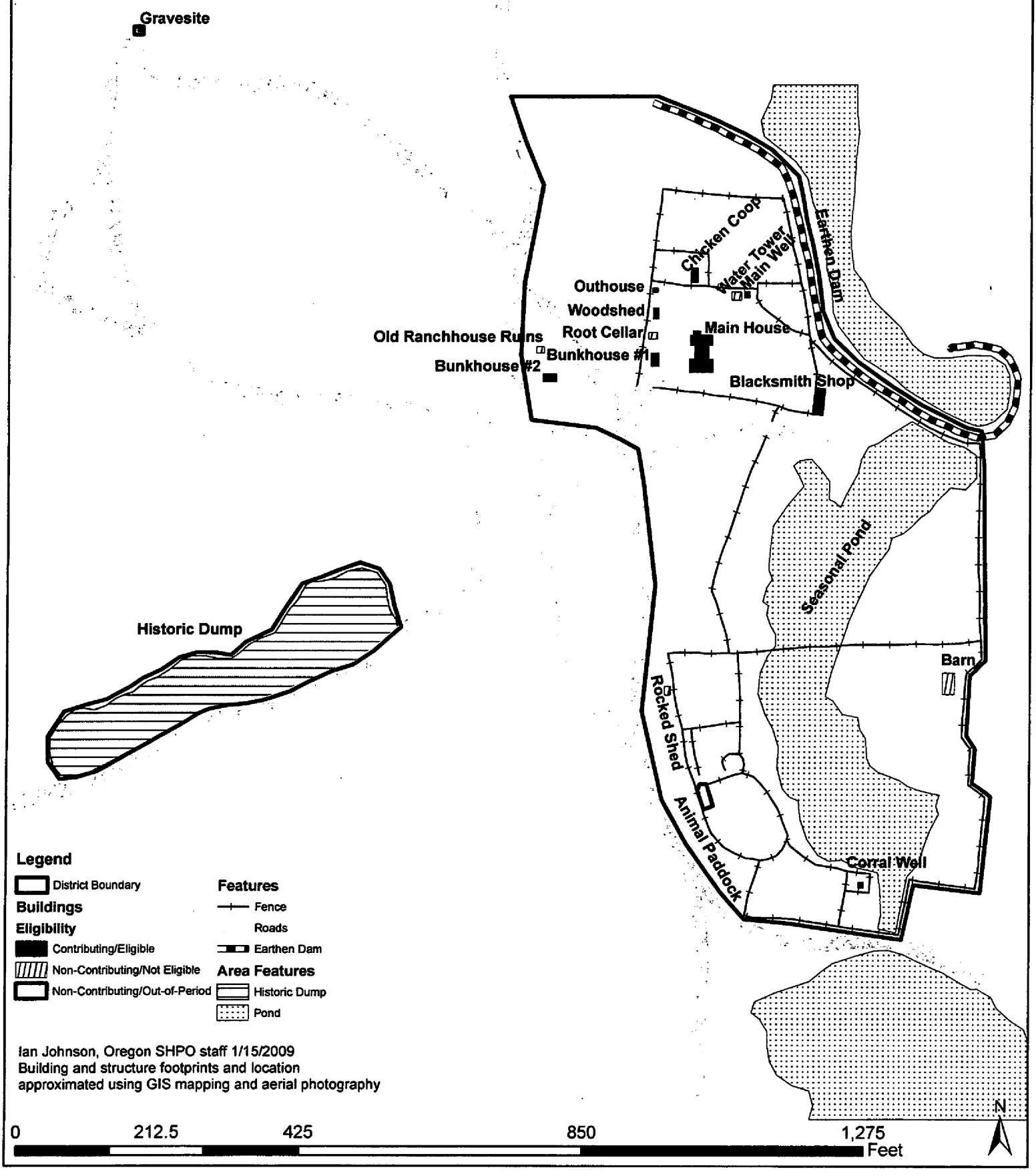


Figure 3: Section Map. Approximate location of subject property marked with arrow

Figure 4: Site Plan
Documents, Page 5
Shirk Ranch, Lake Co., OR



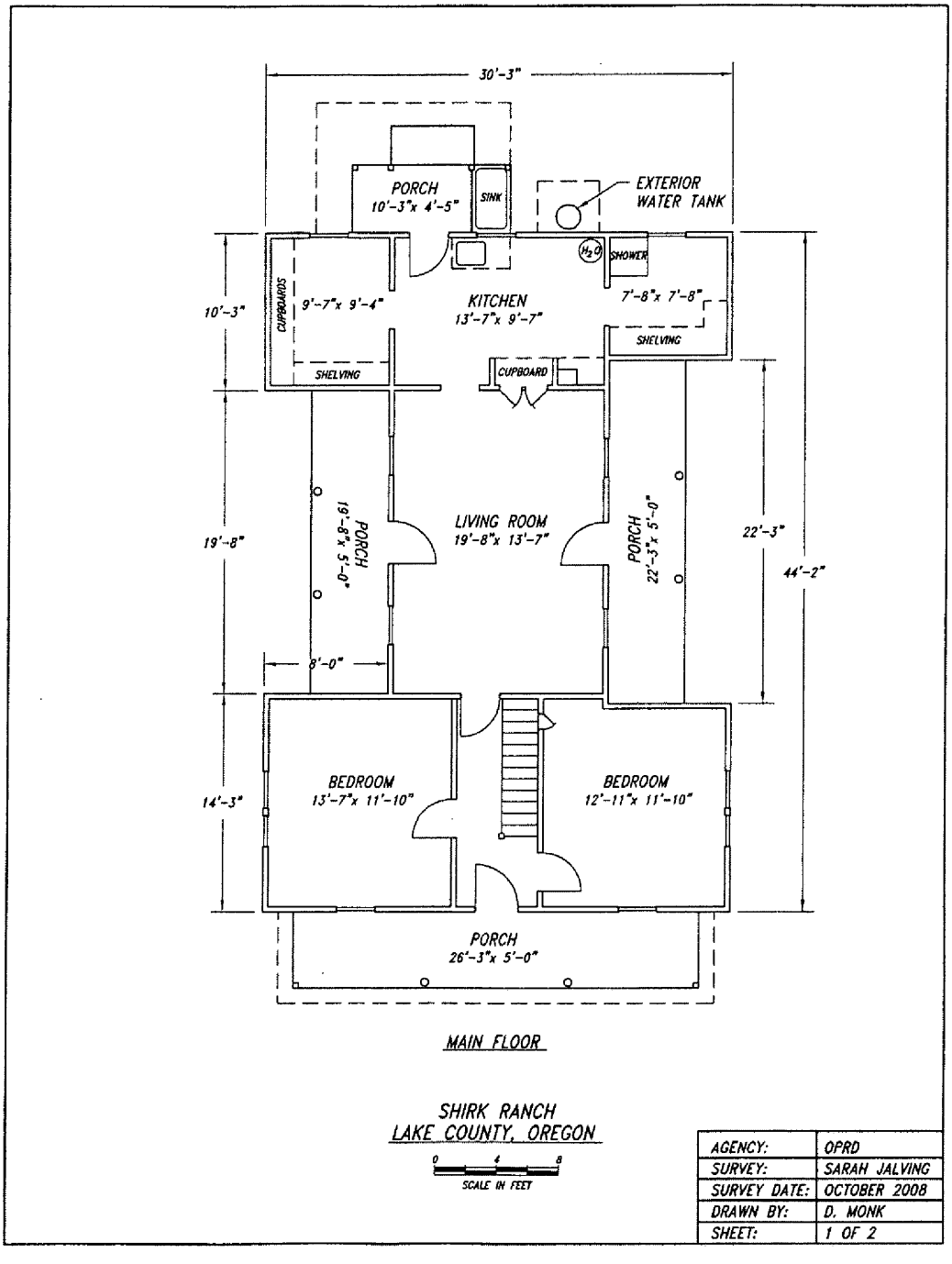


Figure 5: Floor Plans, 2 pages

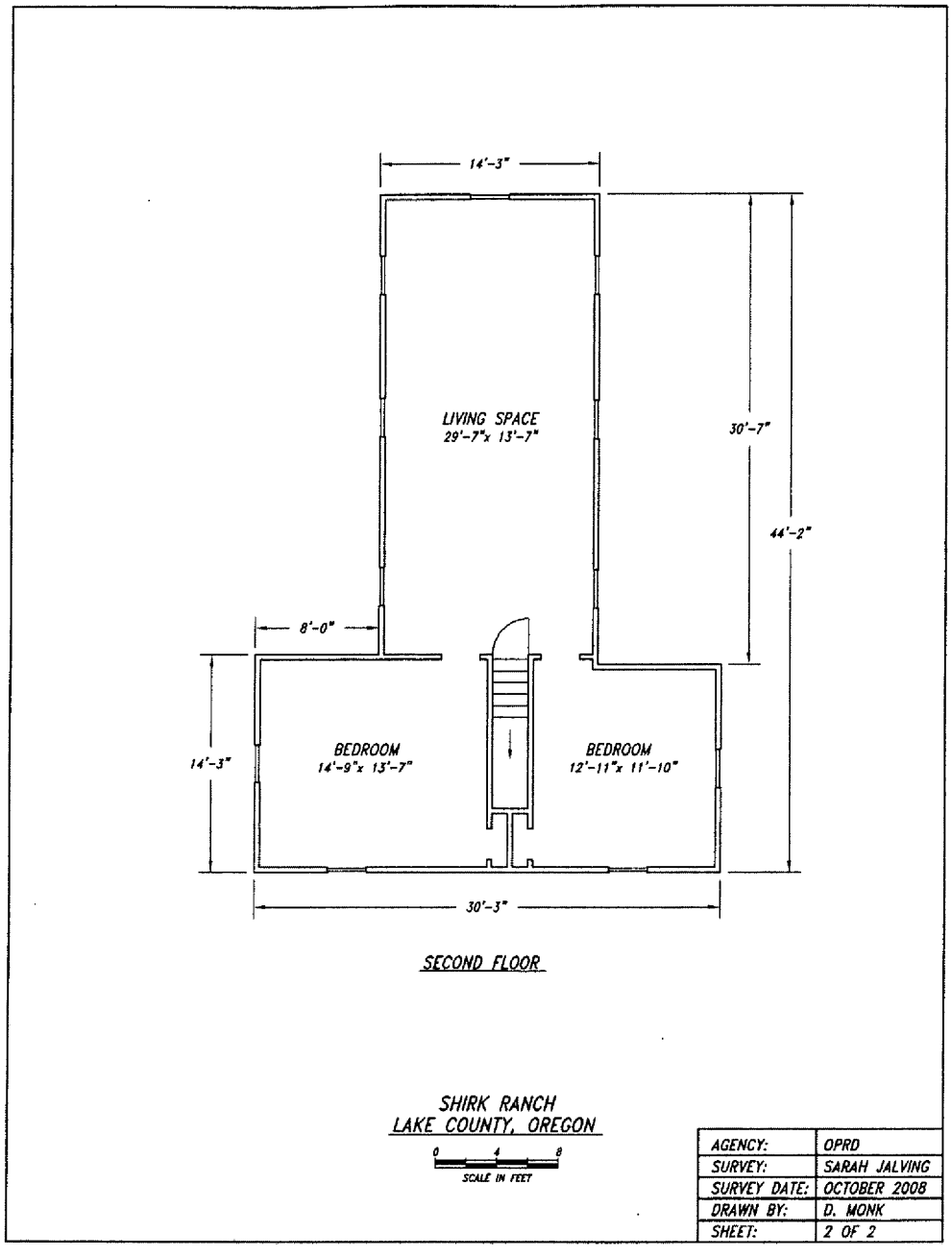


Figure 5: Floor Plans, 2 pages

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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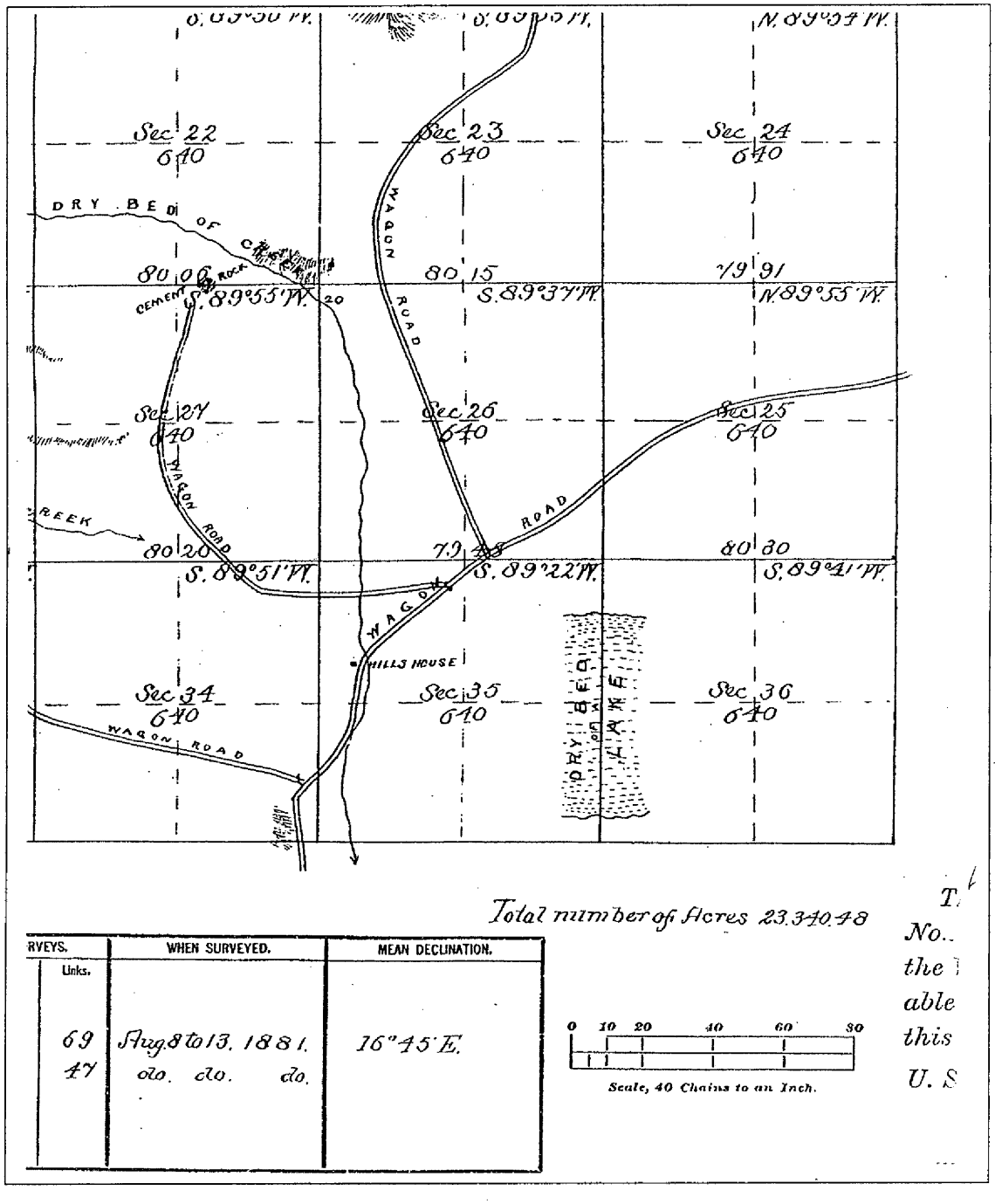

Figure 6: 1881 Government Land Office Map of Shirk Ranch area

D. L. SHIRK'S HOME CREEK RANCH
From left: The Shirk daughters, Lila and Ollie, and daughter-in-law Kitty, Joe Shirk's wife, 1900.

Figure 7: Historic Photo, David L. Shirk's Home Creek Ranch house, 1900
The photographed building is no longer extant

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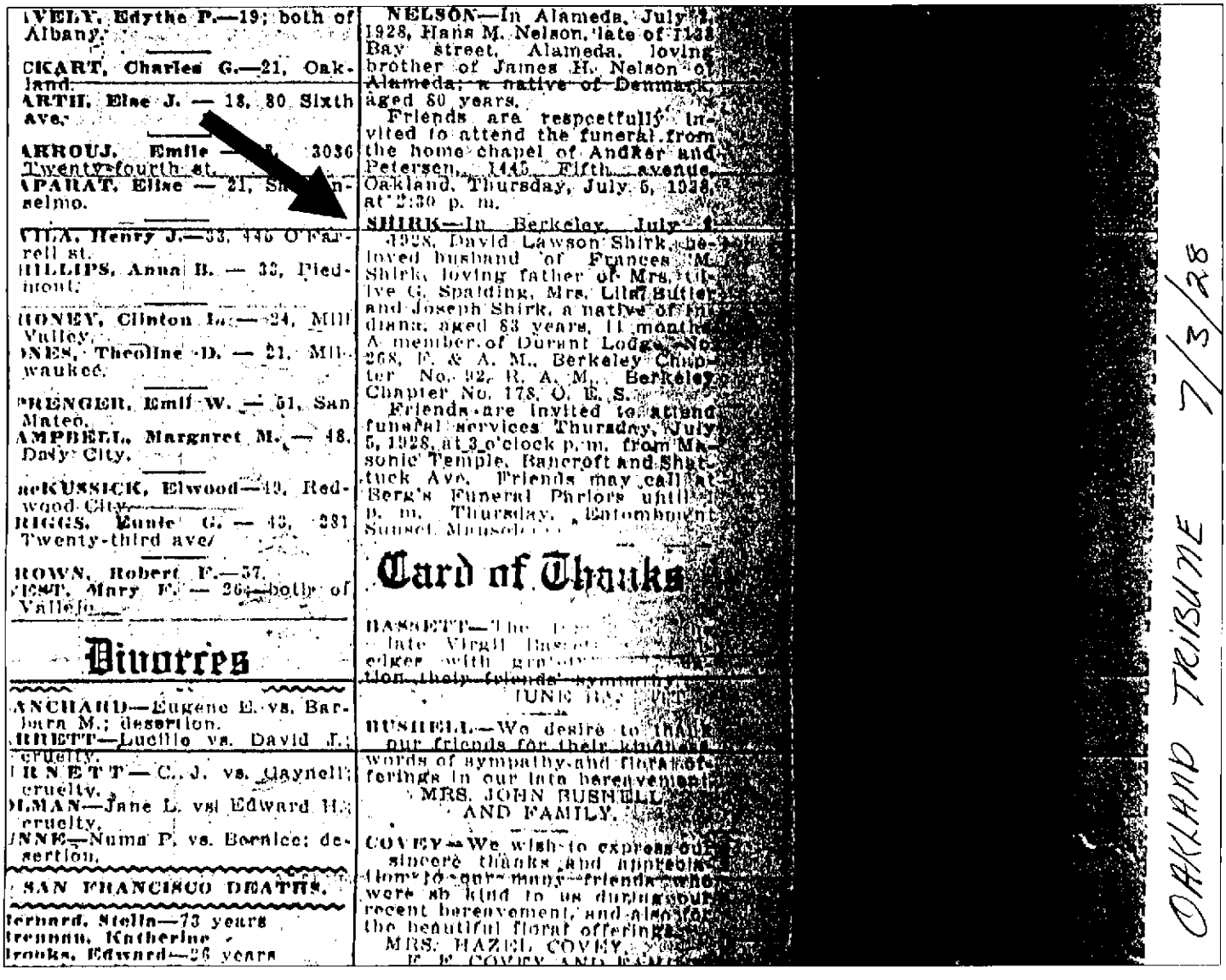

AVELY, Edythe P.—19; both of Albany.

CKART, Charles G.—21, Oakland.

ARTH, Else J. — 18, 80 Sixth ave.

ARROUJ, Emile — [illegible] 3036 Twenty-fourth st.

APARAT, Elise — 21, Sa[illegible]nselmo.

VILA, Henry J.—33, 445 O'Farrell st.

HILLIPS, Anna B. — 33, Piedmont.

HONEY, Clinton L. — 24, Mill Valley.

ONES, Theoline D. — 21, Milwaukee.

PRENGER, Emil W. — 51, San Mateo.

AMPBELL, Margaret M. — 48, Daly City.

acKUSSICK, Elwood—49, Redwood City.

RIGGS, Eunie G. — 43, 281 Twenty-third ave.

ROWN, Robert F.—57.

EST, Mary F. — 26—both of Vallejo.

Divorces

ANCHARD—Eugene E. vs. Barbara M.; desertion.

RRETT—Lucille vs. David J.; cruelty.

RNETT—C. J. vs. Gaynell; cruelty.

LMAN—Jane L. vs. Edward H.; cruelty.

NNE—Numa P. vs. Bernice; desertion.

SAN FRANCISCO DEATHS.

ernard, Stella—73 years
rennan, Katherine
rooks, Edward—26 years

NELSON—In Alameda, July 2, 1928, Hans M. Nelson, late of 1138 Bay street, Alameda, loving brother of James H. Nelson of Alameda; a native of Denmark, aged 80 years.

Friends are respectfully invited to attend the funeral from the home chapel of Andker and Petersen, 1445 Fifth avenue, Oakland, Thursday, July 5, 1928, at 2:30 p. m.

SHIRK—In Berkeley, July 2, 1928, David Lawson Shirk, beloved husband of Frances M. Shirk, loving father of Mrs. Olive G. Spalding, Mrs. Lila Butler and Joseph Shirk, a native of Indiana, aged 83 years, 11 months. A member of Durant Lodge No. 268, F. & A. M., Berkeley Chapter No. 92, R. A. M., Berkeley Chapter No. 178, O. E. S.

Friends are invited to attend funeral services Thursday, July 5, 1928, at 3 o'clock p. m. from Masonic Temple, Bancroft and Shattuck Ave. Friends may call at Berg's Funeral Parlors until [illegible] p. m. Thursday. Entombment Sunset Mausoleum.

Card of Thanks

BASSETT—The [illegible] late Virgil Bassett [illegible] edges with gratefully [illegible] tion their friends' sympathy.
JUNE BA[illegible]

BUSHELL—We desire to thank our friends for their kindness, words of sympathy and floral offerings in our late bereavement.
MRS. JOHN BUSHELL AND FAMILY.

COVEY—We wish to express our sincere thanks and appreciation to our many friends who were so kind to us during our recent bereavement, and also for the beautiful floral offerings.
MRS. HAZEL COVEY.
F. F. COVEY AND FAMILY.

OAKLAND TRIBUNE 7/3/28

Figure 8: David L. Shirk Obituary, *Oakland Tribune*, 3 July 1928.

SHIRK RANCH
Lake County, Oregon

1/31

SHIRK RANCH
Lake County, Oregon

2/31

SHIRK RANCH
Lake County, Oregon

3/31