

INVENTORY SHEET FOR GROUP NOMINATIONS: IDAHO STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY, BOISE, IDAHO

NOMINATION: (Lava Rock Structures in South Central Idaho)

SITE NAME: Gottfried, Gehrig, Cabin

SITE NUMBER: 2

LOCATION: ~~Approximately eleven miles~~ northeast of Shoshone, ID

OWNER'S NAME AND ADDRESS: Paul Bancroft
Route 1, Box 154
Shoshone, ID 83352

QUADRANGLE AND SCALE: Kinsey Butte, 7.5 minute ACREAGE: less than one

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

This nomination includes the Gehrig Cabin and the property on which it stands in the SE 1/4, SE 1/4, NE 1/4, NE 1/4, SW 1/4 of Section 28, T4S, R18E. Legal description on file at Lincoln County Courthouse, Shoshone, Idaho.

UTM(S): 11/717820/4769170

DATE OR PERIOD: c. 1893

ARCHITECT OR BUILDER: Gottfried Gerig

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE: Architecture, exploration/settlement, and agriculture

EVALUATED LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE: local

CONDITION: deteriorated, altered, original site

DESCRIPTION:

This low stone building is approximately fourteen feet square. A log cabin of slightly smaller dimensions is set almost end to end with the stone building. A wall of railroad ties has been built across the six-foot gap between the two cabins to form a connecting wall for an area once used for poultry. Poles fitted into the stones at one end are nailed to the logs at the other end to support a metal roof. The stone cabin itself has approximately five foot high walls of coursed rubble. The stones used are small, usually 8 by 10 inches. The stones are blue lava, a type of lava that is very dark bluish-black to very dark red in color, with very small evenly distributed bubbles, giving the stone a fine grained appearance. There is evidence of some dressing of stones, especially around the doors and on corners. The stones were laid with mud and pointed with soft lime mortar on the inside only. The walls are approximately 24 inches thick rather than the usual eighteen inches. The roughly shaped gable walls are approximately eight feet high. Seven log rafters are covered with boards. Metal roofing now covers the original sod-covered roof. A plank door braced in a Z pattern is centered on the gable facade. Wood planks frame the opening. A boarded-up window is centered on the gable facade. Wood planks frame the opening. A boarded up window is centered on the left wall. The opening was originally lined with wood. The right wall has no openings, but about four feet up from the dirt floor on the rear gable wall is a small square opening lined with wood. Probably this opening was for a stove pipe. Part of the

right wall is falling out. The log cabin is made of unpeeled logs about ten inches in diameter. Hand split wood wedges between the logs are caulked with mud. A low gable roof is about nine feet tall. A plank door is offset to the right of the gable facade. One square window is on the left wall.

SIGNIFICANCE:

This small building is significant as one of the few surviving examples of the early use of stone as South Central Idaho was explored and settled. The site is on the bank of the Big Wood River at a point where it enters a small canyon. It was possible to obtain water there both for domestic use and for small scale irrigation. Lava flows from the Black Butte volcano lie across the river to the east and forming lava cliffs on the far side of the river. This flow is the source of blue lava. Gottfried Gehrig lived on the property beginning in about 1890. According to oral sources, he built both cabins. It is believed that he and his family lived in both buildings at first, but later the stone building was used as an animal shelter and/or for storage. The 24-inch thickness of the cabin walls indicates that a person not trained in masonry did the work, since that width required less skill than did the mason's standard 18-inch wall. The small scale of the buildings is also in the vernacular tradition. The covering of the roofs with metal does not detract from the overall integrity of the buildings in their setting.

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES:

North Side News (Jerome), April 24, 1913.

Bancroft, Mr. and Mrs. Paul, interview with Marian Posey-Ploss, Shoshone vicinity, Summer, 1979.