DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED APR 8 1975

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X_ORIGINAL SITE
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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Harrison Brunk constructed his house in 1860-61; it has remained in the family until 1974. The house was built for Brunk by Thomas Pearce, a local carpenter, for \$844. It is a wood frame, clapboard, two story house, and the style is a local adaptation of pre-classical revival.

Detail throughout the house is very simple. The main feature of the house is the central hallway, with a simple stairway and tapered bannister. Many of the windows have been replaced, but two of the upstairs windows maintain the original 6 over 6 lights.

The foundation is nine brick piers, held together with mud mortar. The piers and the original three brick fireplaces used an unusually large amount of brickwork for this area. Evidence suggests that the bricks were either made on the site or nearby.

The frame is of simple 4 x 4 studs with 2 x 12 planks on the interior walls and 1×4 clapboards on the exterior walls. The doors throughout appear to be original.

Originally, the front porch was open with six detailed supporting beams. There was a second floor porch with an ornate bannister. More recently, the porch has been enclosed and made into a sun porch. The original deck of the porch remains, and a restoration of the porch to original condition is planned.

Over the years there have been several changes made to the house, but enough of the original remains to make the house restorable. The Polk County Historical Society intends to restore the house to as near its original condition as possible.

The acreage includes several early out-buildings. A fruit-house 18×24 - ca. 1900, a granary 20 x 30 probably 1860s, a privy - ca. 1900, a greenhouse 1948, a garage date unknown, and a pumphouse are all retained on the site.

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Harrison Brunk House is significant as one of the oldest two-story farmhouses in Polk County. It is significant also as the residence of one of the earliest settlers in the area, Harrison Brunk. He and his son Thomas were important figures both as a farmer and politicians. The Brunk House and Brunk's Corner are important landmarks in Polk County.

Harrison Brunk came to Polk County, Oregon, in 1849. He purchased the present farm property in 1858, and built the house two years later. Brunk was an important and well known farmer and stockman in the county, but his son Thomas gave the Brunk name importance in Polk County. Thomas Brunk raised large-type Poland China hogs and Cotswold sheep. His animals won numerous ribbons at local and state fairs (he supposedly had a quilt made of blue ribbons), and his work with 4-H Clubs and the teaching of livestock judging were among his proudest achievements. In 1915, Thomas served as a livestock judge at the Panama-Pacific Exposition in San Francisco. He served in the Oregon State Legislature as a representative in 1913, and for many years was a judge for Polk County.

The Brunk House itself is the oldest known two-story farmhouse in Polk County, Oregon. The house and its occupants have played a prominent role in the cultural, economic, and political development of the county. Outbuildings that remain on the site add to the significance of the house and lend many possibilities to future use of historic interpretation when the house is restored by the Polk County Historical Society. Restoration of the house will once again make it a landmark for the traveller.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Scrapbook kept by Earl Brunk
Polk County Pioneer Sketches Vol II p. 30-31
Salem, Capital Journal November 10, 1938
Portland, Oregon Journal June 4, 1926

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Polk County Historical Society	March 21, 1975
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