UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIORU NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES **INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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#### SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS **TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**

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<u>Guernsey Lake Park</u>			
AND/OR COMMON	ictnict		
Guernsey State Park Historic Di			
2 LOCATION			
STREET & NUMBER			
One mile northwest of Guernsey		NOT FOR PUBLICATION CONGRESSIONAL DISTR	
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STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
Wyoming	56	Platte	031
<b>CLASSIFICATION</b>			
CATEGORY OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRES	ENTUSE
		X_AGRICULTURE	X_MUSEUM
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# 7 DESCRIPTION

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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Guernsey State Park is located in southeast Wyoming, about forty miles west of the Wyoming-Nebraska state line and about a mile northwest of the town of Guernsey. It is situated along the shores of Guernsey Reservoir, a Bureau of Reclamation impoundment created in 1927 by the construction of Guernsey Dam on the North Platte River. Located near where the Great Plains meet the Rocky Mountains, the reservoir is on the west flank of a series of hills called the Hartville Uplift. Terrain on either side of the reservoir is generally rocky and rolling, and dotted with sparse stands of ponderosa pine, juniper and cedar. Along the banks of the upper reservoir some cottonwoods and willows can be found. Sagebrush, yucca, cactus, and grasses are found throughout the park and in wet years many types of wildflowers appear.

Although the foremost recreational attraction of the park is the reservoir, along the steeply-cut banks and precipitous cliffs linings its shores for several miles from the dam north are historic structures which in the passage of time have grown in historic importance. The structures, situated along the two main park roads flanking the reservoir--Lake Shore Drive on the east shore and Skyline Drive on the west shore--were built by the Civilian Conservation Corps during the 1930's. Roads, trails and structures are within the Guernsey Lake Historic District, whose boundaries enclose 3,760 acres of land and water. Although Guernsey State Park contains more than twice as much acreage as the historic district, the boundaries of the district are adequate to contain four major groups of historic structures: Guernsey Dam and Powerplant, Guernsey State Park Headquarters, the sites of CCC Camps BR-9 and BR-10, and the complex of roads, trails and structures built by enrollees of the camps. Each of those four major entities is described below.

Built by the Utah Construction Company, Guernsey Dam was begun in 1925 and completed by the end of 1927. It is located in a steep, rock-walled canyon called the "Narrows," at a place which was the furthest upstream of four potential dam sites. The dam is a composite structure of sluiced clay, sand and gravel covered on the upstream side with a three-foot layer of rock riprap and on the downstream slope with rock fill. It has an overall height of 105 feet, a base of 940 feet, and a crest 560 feet long by 26 feet wide. The dam has two spillways, one in each abutment. The north spillway is a concrete, open-channel type, and the south spillway is a concrete, morning-glory hole. Water used for power production is released through an additional power intake structure located west of the south spillway. The original capacity of the reservoir created behind the dam was approximately 74,000 acre-feet with a surface area of approximately 2,405 acres, but it has lost nearly half that capacity as a result of siltation. Maximum water elevation is 4,420 feet above sea level.

The most significant problem that engineers and construction crews had to overcome in the construction of Guernsey Dam was the lack of bedrock upon which to build. Test holes carried to a depth of 100 feet below the stream bed failed to reveal solid rock, and that fact determined the design of the structure. The design had to be one which would provide for a stable dam on a foundation through which water could seep. The result was a dam whose central portion is a clay-puddled core

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

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SPECIFIC DAT	es 1927-1938	BUILDER/ARCH	HITECT	Recreation

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Less than two miles northwest of Guernsey, Wyoming is a historic dam that backs up the waters of the North Platte River to form a fourteen-mile-long reservoir, providing the basis for Guernsey State Park, one of eleven administered by the Wyoming Recreation Commission. The park contains an extensive recreational complex of roads, trails and structures built of native stone and lumber. This complex, of historic and architectural significance to the state, was planned and built in the 1930's by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC).

The principal structure built by the CCC at Guernsey State Park is a stone museum located on a hill facing west, overlooking the Reservoir. It is not only one of the finest examples of park architecture, but as an interpretive center it provides the key to understanding the historical significance of the park. The museum's fourteen exhibits are based upon the hypothesis that the Guernsey environment and the culture of man are closely related. According to John C. Ewers\*, a former National Park Service technician who planned the museum exhibits, the theme of the Guernsey story is: "HOW MAN HAS ATTEMPTED TO ADAPT HIMSELF TO THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT IN THE GUERNSEY AREA FROM PREHISTORIC TIMES TO THE PRESENT." That theme is contained within a paper written by Ewers and entitled, "Preliminary Exhibit Plan for the Museum at Guernsey Lake Park, Wyoming" dated July 21, 1937. The plan contains a topical and chronological treatment of the geology, prehistory, and history of the Guernsey area up to, and including, the period in which Guernsey Dam and park facilities were constructed.

Ewer's theme is a convenient analytical tool that can be applied to the Guernsey story even beyond the period of the Great Depression. Moreover, guided by Ewers' methodology and research, the historian ought to notice a common denominator flowing through all elements of the Guernsey story. That common denominator, water, is the foremost physical factor acting as a determinant in the story. Water is the precious commodity that has to a large extent determined the course of history in not only southeast Wyoming, but in the entire arid American West, which constitutes nearly one-third of the nation. It is the resource that has determined such important decisions of man as which way he must travel, where he is to settle, and how he is to earn his livelihood.

\*Mr. Ewers is a noted anthropologist and historian and is today Senior Ethnologist at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D. C.

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# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

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### NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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founded in an open trench thirty feet below the river bed and which extends continuously upward through the embankment to the dam's crest. On each side of the clay core, which is impervious to water, is sluiced sand and gravel fill, covered by rock fill and riprap. Thus, water is permitted to seep into the dam, but the overburden prevents the seepage from undermining the entire structure. To tie the embankment into the rock abutments and prevent seepage along the sides, three concrete cutoff walls were built on either side of the river channel.

Another structure of significance to the reclamation project is the powerplant, containing two, 2,400 kilowatt units and located on the west side of the river, near the downstream toe of the dam. Not considered a part of the historic structures complex at this time are the present offices and storage yard of the Bureau of Reclamation located about one hundred yards south of the dam, on the west side of the park entrance road.

Opposite the Bureau of Reclamation offices, on the east side of the park road and a few hundred yards southeast of the dam, is the location of the former Bureau of Reclamation headquarters. It contains structures that were built at the time the dam was erected and that now serve as administrative headquarters for Guernsey State Park, which is under the jurisdiction of the Wyoming Recreation Commission. The historic headquarters complex consists of seven structures: four frame homes, two frame, two-stall garages and a frame, six-stall garage. A metal shop building at the headquarters is presently a non-historic intrusion upon the historic district.

Two Civilian Conservation Corps camps were established at Guernsey Lake Park. Plans for CCC Camp BR-10 are not presently available, so a description of structures that once existed there cannot be included in this nomination. Concrete foundations and depressions at the campsite, located about a mile west of the dam, suggest the location of structures that once were a part of the camp, but the only structure remaining at the camp site is a stone powder magazine built into an earth bank and facing north. The site plan for Camp BR-9 located just a few hundred yards northeast of the dam, is available and attached to this nomination. Of the twenty-two structures built at the site, two remain: a ten-stall garage and a shop, both onestory frame structures currently used by the Wyoming Recreation Commission for storage of park materials. Building foundations and barely discernible pathways provide further evidence of the once-extensive camp. The entire area is today used as a stockpile area for various items, including materials planned for use in the park.

Although a complete inventory of physical structures in Guernsey State Park is available, a recent and specific inventory of CCC-built park structures is not. The most recent inventory of CCC-built structures, roads, and trails is one made

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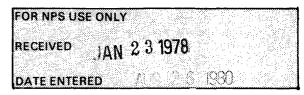
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in 1954 by Murray K. George, a National Park Service employee. In his inventory George refers to a document entitled, "Park and Recreation Structures, 1938 Edition" which, if found, could contribute to our knowledge of what the CCC had built in the park up to that time. National Archives records of the two CCC camps contain narrative reports of project work performed, and those reports form the basis for the following list of CCC accomplishments at Guernsey Lake Park. The list includes not only roads, trails and structures projects, but also projects for which there is no obvious physical evidence, such as survey work, emergency road work, and forest fire work. A complete and recent survey of CCC work is necessary to supplement original project descriptions available in the George inventory and camp records, and should in the future be attached to this nomination for record-keeping purposes as well as to provide the basis for restoration of park facilities and structures. Listed below are projects initiated by the CCC at Guernsey Lake, following construction of camp buildings. Original project numbers are retained in the project descriptions, and projects are placed in numerical order, not in order of importance or date of completion. Most of the projects were designed by camp architect Roland Pray, although the actual work was directed by various individuals, including Mr. Pray, depending upon the type of work involved.

<u>PROJECT 101 - Foot Bridge</u>. The project was begun by the enrollees of Camp BR-10 and completed by those of Camp BR-9 in October, 1936. Located a short distance off the road to Brimmer Point Overlook on the west side of the reservoir, the bridge spans a narrow ravine and is part of a CCC-built foot trail. The approaches to the bridge—a 19-foot approach on the east side and an 18-foot approach on the west side—are constructed of sandstone and mortar. The bridge itself, spanning a distance of 48 feet, is constructed of pine logs and planks. Although the present bridge timbers are recent replacements of originals laid by the CCC, bridge construction conforms closely to original CCC specifications.

PROJECT 104 - Vehicle Bridge. Two vehicle bridges were assigned to this project. although three were actually completed: one in Dead Man's Gulch, one in Fish Canyon, and one at the Spotted Tail Picnic Area along Lake Shore Drive. Of the three, the bridge at Dead Man's Gulch is located furthest north along the drive. A two-lane structure 8 feet high by 20 feet wide by 24 feet long, its construction is of timber beams with masonry abutments and wing walls. The original deck was made of planks and along the sides are log guard rails. The bridge at Fish Canyon is a two-lane structure 6 feet high by 20 feet wide by 24 feet long. Its construction is of timbers and I-beams, and it also has masonry abutments and wing walls, and a plank deck and log guard rails. The Spotted Tail Picnic Area bridge is 6 feet high by 28 feet wide by 32 feet long. Construction was originally the same as that of the Fish Canvon bridge. In 1953 the Spotted Tail bridge was improved by the addition of two steel treads and log guard rails. Traffic lanes on all three bridges were covered with asphalt when Lake Shore Drive was paved in the summer of 1974.



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PROJECT 111A - Office Addition. Completed in September, 1935, the structure no longer exists. It was 14 feet by 16 feet in size, and probably made of frame. The west portion was utilized for drafting space and the east portion for tool room storage. Roland Pray designed the building and supervised the carpenters.

<u>PROJECT 113 - Latrines</u>. Only two, vault-type wooden latrines remain of six constructed. One is located along a west shore spur road called Newell Bay Drive, and the other is located along Lake Shore Drive, a few hundred yards south of Spotted Tail Picnic Area. Both are small, frame structures with room for two occupants along each side of a wall dividing the structure. The most significant latrine built in the project is a massive sandstone and log, vault-type structure, and has been called the "million-dollar biffy." The entire structure is 21 feet wide by 42 feet long, although dimensions include masses of rock at each of its four corners, a feature that adds bulk to its appearance. The latrine is 9 feet 6 inches in height from floor to roof ridge, and its gable roof is covered with hand-split shake shingles. A CCC drawing of the building is included in the nomination.

<u>PROJECT 116 - Brimmer Point Overlook</u>. The project entailed construction of an 8 foot by 10 foot lookout platform enclosed by low walls and reached by about one dozen risers. It is made entirely of masonry and is perched on the edge of a cliff on the west side of the reservoir, opposite the Red Cloud Picnic Area. From the platform's east edge to a talus slope below is a sheer, 200-foot vertical drop. The lookout, offering a comprehensive panorama of the park, can be more fully appreciated by the visitor if he will imagine the peril involved in its construction.

<u>PROJECT 117 - Museum</u>. The museum project had priority over all other projects, and is the largest and most significant CCC-built structure in the entire park. The total cost of the structure was planned at \$3,850.00 and 6,100 man-hours. It is a massive, squat structure facing west and situated on the same hill as the BR-9 campsite. Basically an L-shaped structure, it is one-story in height with dimensions of 59 feet by 101 feet. It is constructed of buff-colored sandstone rocks which were carefully selected and laid in a random design. The gable roof is framed with heavy, hand-hewn timbers and covered with two-inch planks which, in turn, are covered by split cedar shakes. The interior of the museum contains approximately 2,200 square feet of floor space and is occupied by two, main exhibit halls, a library, office, storage room and one restroom each for men and women. A small basement contains a hot-air furnace.

Upon entering the museum the visitor enters a small vestibule, into the floor of which have been placed iron directional arrows, one facing west toward Laramie Peak

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and the other pointing north and south. The visitor then enters the main exhibition hall and from its east end he is directed into the south hall. Floors in both halls are formed by pieces of smooth flagstone laid over concrete. The stones were quarried to specifications at Thermopolis, Wyoming, and carefully cut and joined together to form a planned, irregular design. Floors in the library and office are oak, and Florida "pecky" cypress wood is used in the door and paneling of the library. Hardware such as door hinges and latches, and lighting fixtures, are of hand-forged wrought-iron.

Museum exhibits, supplied with indirect lighting, consist of fourteen plywood exhibit cases that contain maps, charts, photographs, paintings, models and figurines, specimens and artifacts arranged to aid in the interpretation of fourteen themes. Following is a list of themes planned for the fourteen exhibits:

- (1) Geology and fossil remains
- (2) Temperature, rainfall, topography, soil, and animal life
- (3) Evidence of prehistoric man
- (4) Indian inhabitants of 100 years ago
- (5) The Cheyenne man of action
- (6) The North Platte Valley becomes the white man's road
- (7) Emigrants encamped near Register Cliff in the 1840's
- (8) Departure of the Indians
- (9) The open range cattle industry
- (10) Changed conditions in the cattle industry
- (11) Mines, towns, and railroads
- (12) The search for water in an arid land
- (13) Construction of Guernsey Dam and Power Plant
- (14) Benefits of Guernsey Dam including irrigation, power, and recreation

When the George inventory of the park's recreational facilities was completed in April, 1954 the museum contained an exhibit plan, fourteen exhibit cases and only ten exhibits, and some artifacts and objects. Other articles, George reported, were removed to Fort Laramie on April 21, 1955 so they could be protected by the National Park Service. How long the museum had been closed since its opening in the summer of 1939 is at this point conjecture, but it was a decade from the time George made his inventory to the time the museum was reopened and staffed with volunteer help in June, 1964, by the Wyoming State Parks Commission. Exhibits were reinstalled through the cooperation of the Wyoming State Parks Commission, the Wyoming State Archives and Historical Department, and the National Park Service. Today the museum is manned by the Wyoming State Museum, and maintained by the Wyoming Recreation Commission.

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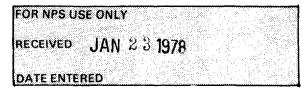
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PROJECT 117A - Wall Cases for Museum. Fourteen plywood exhibit cases, each 5 feet by 7 feet high and containing plate glass doors, were planned for installment in the museum. However, when the museum was opened on June 2, 1939, not all were in place or filled with exhibits.

PROJECTS 118, 119, 120 - Picnic Shelters. Along Lake Shore Drive are three picnic shelters, two built mainly of log and the other built of log and stone. All three at one time were roofed with wooden shake shingles but only one today displays its original roofing. In the Spotted Tail Picnic Area is a 12 foot by 12 foot log shelter with hipped roof (Project 118). It has a stone masonry floor and steps, and contains a log drinking fountain with bubbler, faucet and drain. At Red Cloud Picnic Area is a stone and log shelter capped by a log and plank, hipped roof and covered with asphalt sheathing (Project 120). It has masonry walls, columns and fireplace, a flagstone floor, and contains two picnic tables with a capacity of 30 people. Another picnic shelter in the Red Cloud Picnic Area is one built in the summer of 1939 by enrollees from a CCC camp stationed at Veteran, Wyoming. It is of log construction and has a gable roof covered with wooden shingles. Tables and benches within are attached to log uprights, and capacity of the shelter is 48 people. A 10 foot high, double fireplace is an outstanding feature of this particular shelter.

At the northern terminus of Skyline Drive, high atop a bluff overlooking the reservoir, is the largest and most complex picnic shelter in the park, a massive stone and log structure known as the "Castle" (Project 119). Its approximate dimensions are 50 feet long by 34 feet wide by 13 feet high. Above its central portion is a log and frame roof originally covered with wooden shingles but now covered with asphalt sheathing. Stone bulwarks at the east and west ends of the shelter extend above the roof line, and atop the turret bulwark on the west end is an observation platform that is reached by a winding staircase. The design, shown in the CCC drawing accompanying the nomination, and construction materials give the structure the look of a bastion, although it is easily accessible from three sides. Within are a stone fireplace and log picnic tables, and a directional arrow is located in the floor at the west end. The shelter, begun by enrollees of Camp BR-10 and completed by those of BR-9, was completed, except for the addition of shake shingles, by September, 1936.

<u>PROJECT 132A, B, C, D, E - Guard Rails</u>. Various guard rail projects were carried out in the park, most of which involved attaching 16-foot-long, peeled pine logs to natural-faced stone sleepers with iron bolts. Guard rails were installed along both Lake Shore Drive and Skyline Drive and along park spur roads, but few of the many rods of guard rails exist today because the logs suffered deterioration. Still in good condition, however, is a low, 600-foot section of masonry and mortar



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guard rail serving as a barrier for a parking lot located just north of the dam, on the east bank of the reservoir. Masonry guard rails also remain along Lake Shore Drive, and were constructed in association with culverts and retaining walls. At Brimmer Point Overlook are two sections of masonry work totaling 500 linear feet of low wall topped by a 3-foot-high chain link fence.

<u>PROJECT 134 - Power Line</u>. The project was designed to complement construction of Island Park fish rearing ponds located south of Guernsey. (See Project 901).

<u>PROJECT 136 - Disposal or Septic Tank</u>. The project entailed construction of a 2,550-gallon, concrete septic tank to serve the museum. The project, a difficult one because excavation work was done in rock, was completed September 22, 1935.

<u>PROJECT 138 - Sewer Line</u>. Designed to complement Project 136, this project entailed laying 620 lineal feet of four-inch pipe to connect the museum with the concrete septic tank north of it. Both the tank and the lines, the latter completed September 25, 1935, are still in operation. Excavation work, like that for the septic tank, was done in shattered rock.

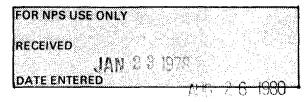
<u>PROJECT 142 - Open Ditches</u>. The project consisted of construction of control gates and 3,750 lineal feet of ditches to supply the Island Park fish-rearing ponds with water from a riverside pump location.

<u>PROJECT 143 - Pipe Line</u>. The water system at the park consisted of not only distribution lines to the camp, the museum and two campgrounds along Lake Shore Drive, but also a pump house and water tank. Included in the water system project was the construction of two water fountains, one of which was placed into a boulder, and another into a hollowed log.

<u>PROJECT 146 - Well and Pump House</u>. The well and pump house for the water system are located about two hundred yards southwest of Camp BR-9. From them water is pumped to a storage tank located uphill, or north, about 275 yards.

<u>PROJECT 148 - Fire Places</u>. According to original CCC reports, twelve or fifteen stone and firebrick fireplaces were completed by January, 1936. In 1954 the George inventory listed nineteen in the park, two of which were located in shelters. Two, or possibly three, of those exposed to the weather have survived and both shelter fireplaces also still exist. One of the latter is the double fireplace at the Red Cloud Picnic Area described earlier.

<u>PROJECT 153 - Signs</u>. Three-fourths of thirty-one signs planned for the park were completed by January, 1936. Fourteen of them were listed in the George inventory,



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but today only two or three are left. The largest and most prominent sign in the park today is at the Guernsey Dam parking lot. It has a masonry base and pillar, and attached log post and beam. Hanging from the beam by forged hardware is a wooden panel with incised lettering. On one side is inscribed "Lake Guernsey Park" along with distances to five points in the park. The other side contains reservoir data.

<u>PROJECT 155 - Table and Bench Combinations</u>. Exclusive of the tables attached to picnic shelters, only two picnic table and bench combinations remain in the entire park, out of a total of forty-one built. The remaining tables are presently deteriorating in an open storage area at the BR-9 Campsite.

PROJECT 157 - Swimming Float. This structure, which no longer exists, was rushed to completion by August 23, 1935 so that swimmers could use it. Located along Lake Shore Drive between the dam and the museum, it was 16 feet by 24 feet in size and constructed of timber and plank atop drum floats. By the time of the George inventory in 1954 the structure was a wreck.

PROJECT 205A, B, C - Park Roads. The original project involved construction of approximately sixteen miles of gravel roads including a main park entrance road from U. S. Highway 26, Lake Shore Drive, Skyline Drive, Newell Bay Drive, Powell Mountain (Brimmer Point) Drive, Davis Bay Drive, and various, short spur roads. Although Skyline Drive has necessary drainage structures and cattle guards, most of the masonry culverts and retaining walls, and all three bridges, are located along Lake Shore Drive. The George inventory accounts for thirty culverts, each four feet square in cross section and made of corrugated metal pipe, concrete pipe, connected steel drums, and dry laid stone with stone or timber roofs. Wing and head walls on these structures vary from 0 to 15 feet high by 50 or more feet long. Sixteen culverts were built that were larger than four square feet, and up to 18 square feet, in cross section. They were built of dry laid stone with timber, stone or concrete roofs. Wing and head walls on them vary and are up to 15 feet high by 50 or more feet long. Another construction feature along Lake Shore Drive, located north of Dead Man's Gulch, is a retaining wall 6 feet high by 200 feet Three masonry gutters, two approximately 300 feet in length and one 500 feet long. in length, are also located along Lake Shore Drive. As described earlier, the many rods of log guard rails built along both Lake Shore Drive and Skyline Drive have deteriorated.

<u>PROJECT 206 - Foot Trails</u>. Over eight miles of foot trails—2.5 on the east side of the lake and 5.8 miles on the west side—including improvements such as steps and bridges, were built by the CCC. These trails were renovated by Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) camps during the summer of 1976 and 1977.

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<u>PROJECT 601A - Forest Fires</u>. On August 3, 1936, eighty-five men from Camp BR-9 were sent from Guernsey to help fight a fire in the Laramie Range near Estherbrook, Wyoming.

PROJECT 601B - Forest Fires. On September 9, 1936 a small fire in Guernsey Lake Park was suppressed by Camp BR-9.

<u>PROJECT 702, 702D - Fine Grading, Road Slopes</u>. Termed a "sponge" project, this work probably absorbed the time of men not employed on other projects. It consisted of back sloping roads, and some of it was difficult work because of the presence of rock.

<u>PROJECT 705 - Landscaping Undifferentiated</u>. Completed August 22, 1935 the project consisted of the removal, destruction and rebuilding of unsightly and unnatural objects in a ten-acre area within the park.

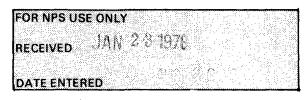
<u>PROJECT 706 - Moving and Planting Trees and Shrubs</u>. In the summer of 1935 approximately five hundred trees and shrubs were gathered from along park roads and back slopes, as well as from other park areas, and transplanted to best advantage. Some work was done in the museum area in July, 1936.

PROJECT 709 - Borrow Pit Obliteration. A pit dug during construction of Guernsey Dam, covering approximately five acres, was obliterated on September 30, 1935. Work on the project consisted of moulding ridges and sides to conform to surrounding terrain. Sand and gravel quarried in the process of moulding was used for roads and buildings.

<u>PROJECT 710 - Parking Areas</u>. Five gravel parking areas, three of which were enclosed by boulder barriers, were constructed in the park by the CCC. One possibly was constructed by the Veteran CCC camp established in the summer of 1939. The five are: a sixty-car capacity lot at the dam, a twenty-car capacity lot below, or west of, the museum (a smaller lot on the south side of the museum was constructed later), an eighteen-car capacity lot at the Spotted Tail Picnic Area, a five-car capacity lot on the south side of the Red Cloud Picnic Area and a ten-car capacity lot on its north side, a twenty-car capacity lot at Brimmer Point, and a two-car capacity lot at the North Bluff Rest Area.

<u>PROJECT 716 - Soil Preparation</u>. The project, completed in July, 1936, consisted of treatment of the soil around the museum.

<u>PROJECT 901 - Fish Rearing Ponds</u>. The project called for establishment of Island State Park, a fish-rearing unit less than a mile south of Guernsey and two miles



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south of the dam. The unit, although outside the main park boundaries, is included in the nomination because it was a project designed and built by the CCC. A plan for Island State Park is included in the nomination. The plan entailed construction of five large ponds, two minnow ponds and one display pond located between the North Platte River, and a slough south of the river that runs from west to east for nearly a mile. Each of the large ponds was to be no deeper than seven feet and minnow ponds were to be up to four and one-half feet deep. The planned flow of water into each of the ponds was to be regulated in part by stone-made headgates and kettles. Much of the fish-rearing unit was constructed before it was realized that due to the sandy nature of the soil, water could not be stored in the ponds. A cooperative project which included the Wyoming State Game and Fish Commission and the U. S. Bureau of Fisheries, Island State Park did not become functional, and today lies in disuse.

<u>PROJECT 1001 - Educational, Guide and Contact Station Work</u>. Completed in the summer of 1936, the project involved taking a traffic count beginning July 30 of that year. Ed Kelley, the first museum custodian, counted 4,000 park visitors in six weeks, including people from almost every state in the Union and from several foreign countries.

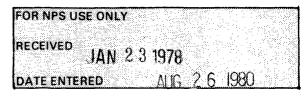
<u>PROJECT 1003</u> - Emergency Work. In August, 1935 heavy rains washed out a section of park entrance road, and the project involved the temporary placement of men and equipment at the washout in order to provide ingress and egress to the park and a CCC camp.

<u>PROJECT 1008 - Maps Topographic</u>. The project involved the reduction of field notes in preparing maps used in planning park improvements.

<u>PROJECT 1018 - Grade Line Surveys</u>. In this project grade lines were established for all construction work, and a new transit was purchased.

<u>PROJECT 1020 - Lineal Surveys</u>. The project involved survey work for road lines, sewer lines, pipe lines and other construction work.

<u>PROJECT 1021 - Topographic Surveys</u>. In this project 2,000 acres of rugged land were surveyed for topography and the results recorded under Project 1008.



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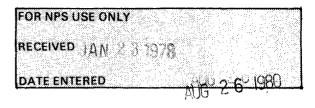
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A body of water of particular significance to southeast Wyoming is the North Platte River. Like a silver thread, the North Platte runs through the prehistory as well as the history of the southeast quadrant of Wyoming. Before recorded history, migratory aborigines followed the river, traveling in search of game that grazed along its bottomland. These bands of Indians found buffalo which they procured by various means, including driving them into sand traps such as that at Casper, or over bluffs such as those at Glenrock. (See: Casper Buffalo Trap and Glenrock Buffalo Jump nominations.) The Indians also discovered that tools and weapons could be fashioned from rocks quarried in hills collectively known as the Hartville Uplift. There they also learned that paint could be made from hematite, a resource which is today mined by the Colorado Fuel and Iron Corporation and sent to smelters in Pueblo, Colorado.

The sequence of events following entrance of the white man in southeast Wyoming combine to form a familiar chronicle repeated in many historical documents, including the exhibit plan by Ewers. The earliest contact of the white man with the North Platte was made by fur trappers who followed the river and its tributaries, or left it to pick up the Sweetwater River and cross South Pass and the Continental Divide, thereby establishing a route that became an important segment of the Oregon Trail. The trail later became a vehicle road used by missionaries, adventurers, government explorers, surveyors and scientists, military officers and troops, and tens of thousands of emigrants moving to homes, gold fields and new lives in America's Far West.

Most who traveled the Oregon Trail did not linger to evaluate the opportunities for a career somewhere along the route because the trail lay in generally inhospitable country. That country apparently contained few resources, it had but few settlements, and too many hostile bands of Indians posed a threat. There were not enough troops to provide protection for the settlers, and often there were not enough to protect travelers. However, beginning in the late 1860's, along the Union Pacific Railroad route in southern Wyoming, people began to settle at a few places in addition to the trading posts and watering holes found along the Oregon Trail. However, the Trail and a segment of it that has been called the Great Platte River Road continued in use, and in time the banks of the North Platte and its tributaries were sought by stockmen who turned out cattle and sheep to graze on native grasses.

Rainfall was vital to stockmen, but irrigation also became a necessity to ensure an adequate supply of hay and grain. As the West grew and as Wyoming matured, the latter becoming a territory in 1868 and a state in 1890, the number of settlers, including farmers, who became dependent upon water increased. The passage of the Carey Act of 1894 encouraged settlement by making public land available to states on the condition that the states cause the land to be settled and reclaimed. But



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reclamation developments stemming from the Carey Act were limited, and irrigation schemes concocted by entrepreneurs often failed. It was the financial resources of the federal government, made available through the Newlands Act of 1902, that provided the wherewithal to complete largescale irrigation projects. The dream of John Wesley Powell, Chief of the United States Geological Survey and one who had himself envisioned the locations of future reclamation projects along the great rivers of the West, thereby became reality.

Reclamation of the arid West was begun in the first decade of the twentieth century, and engineers of the Reclamation Service, a federal agency that became the Bureau of Reclamation, soon gave their attention to two Wyoming dam projects. Buffalo Bill Dam on the Shoshone, or Stinkingwater River, and Pathfinder Dam on the North Platte River, both completed by 1910, were the first, largescale, arch dams built by the Both are listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Pathfinder Bureau. Dam was the first facility constructed in the North Platte Project, a reclamation plan encompassing an area one hundred miles long by twenty-five miles wide and incorporating Scottsbluff, Sioux, and Morrill Counties in Western Nebraska and Goshen County in Eastern Wyoming. The North Platte Project, in turn, is the earliest in a series of projects that were accomplished along the river during the first half of the twentieth century. The dams, powerplants, reservoirs and canals of these projects in Wyoming are strung two hundred miles from Seminoe Reservoir located fifty miles southwest of Casper to the Nebraska state line.

Guernsey Dam was the second major structure built in the North Platte Project. The canyon or Narrows of the North Platte located upstream from the town of Guernsey, was recognized at an early date as a potential dam site. Prior to admission of Wyoming into the Union in 1890, Charles A. Guernsey, a Wyoming rancher and state senator, and Elwood Mead, a Wyoming state engineer who served as Commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation from 1924 until his death in 1936, had been interested in the potential of the Narrows site, and much credit for prompting the construction of Guernsey Dam and powerplant are due these two individuals. Charles Guernsey, who wrote in his book Wyoming Cowboy Days that the dam was his idea forty years before construction actually commenced, envisioned the dam as a source of power, as well as a facility for reclamation supplementary to Pathfinder Reservoir further upstream. Whatever political developments preceded construction of the dam, the Reclamation Service (Bureau of Reclamation) became involved as early as the spring of 1903, when a topographic survey of the dam site was made. The following year federal lands within or near present Guernsey Reservoir were withdrawn under provision of the Reclamation Act, and from 1904 to 1906 test borings were made at the damsite. Detailed investigations conducted by the Bureau resulted in the recommendation for construction of a dam, but it was not until 1924, the year Elwood Mead became Commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation, that Congress actually authorized funds for construction of Guernsey Dam. Total cost of the dam and powerplant was \$12,335,280.

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The significance of Guernsey Dam and powerplant relates to the total picture of reclamation development along the North Platte River. Pathfinder Dam is larger and more significant than Guernsey Dam in terms of the complexity of the construction task, and other major dams such as Seminoe, Alcova, Kortes, and Glendo may perhaps in the future also deserve the attention of the National Register staff. Although engineers point out the unique construction aspect of Guernsey Dam, which cost \$12,335,280 to complete, its chief historical significance is that it is one, however significant, element in a series of North Platte River reclamation facilities designed to furnish power, seasonal irrigation storage, river regulation, and flood control capacity. It is also a significant element in the Ewers theme: "HOW MAN HAS ATTEMPTED TO ADAPT HIMSELF TO THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT IN THE GUERNSEY AREA FROM PREHISTORIC TIMES TO THE PRESENT."

Seven years following completion of the Guernsey Dam and powerplant, the federal government again became involved in a major project in the Guernsey area, this time in an intensive, multi-purpose program involving men, land, and the water of the North Platte River. The occasion for the involvement was the Great Depression, and an attempt by President Franklin D. Roosevelt to combine two goals: conservation of the land, and relief for jobless men. In the first step of his New Deal approach to the nation's problems, Roosevelt attacked the banking Shortly thereafter he put into operation his scheme for conservation crisis. and relief. On March 30, 1933 both houses of Congress passed an act creating Emergency Conservation Work, a program better known by its "alphabet agency" title, the CCC, and the following day the act became law when it was signed by the President. Robert Fechner, former vice-president of the International Association of Machinists, was named Director of Emergency Conservation Work. By the middle of June, 1933, CCC camps numbered 1,300 and by the end of July about 300,000 men between the ages of 18 and 25 were at work cleaning up forests and beaches, planting trees, building dams and bridges, digging ditches, restoring historic sites, and performing a multitude of other tasks intended to restore and conserve the land, much of which had suffered from drought.

Various federal agencies became involved in the program: the Labor Department was charged with the selection of CCC enrollees and the War Department, through the Army, conditioned and transported them, and erected and operated the camps. Other agencies such as the Department of Agriculture, through the Forest Service, and the Department of the Interior, through agencies such as the National Park Service, put enrollees to work mainly on state and federal properties. Threefourths of the camps were operated by the Department of Agriculture and most of the others were run by the Department of the Interior.

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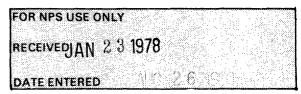
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In the CCC organizational scheme, Wyoming was at first administered as part of the Fort Warren District which later became merged with Colorado to form the Littleton, or Eighth, District. Yellowstone Park was included within the Fort Missoula (Montana), or Ninth, District. Until 1939 camps on the west side of the Continental Divide in Wyoming were also administered by the Missoula District. Wyoming's CCC quota was 500 men, one of every 400 residents. Since Wyoming had more CCC camps than men to fill them, most of the laborers came from states such as New Mexico, Arizona, Texas, Colorado and Oklahoma. A total of sixty-five CCC camps were established in Wyoming, each one occupied for an average period of slightly less than four years. Most were in the western part of the state and most were assigned to projects in the national forests. In the summer of 1933, the first year of the program, eleven camps were begun in the state, all of which closed down for the winter. The next year nineteen were established, including two under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Reclamation at Guernsey Lake Park.

The Bureau of Reclamation entered the Emergency Conservation Program during the third, six-month period of the CCC. In 1934 nine camps were established in the nation under the administration of the Bureau: six drought relief camps operating for twelve-month periods, and three regular CCC camps. Two of the latter were located at Guernsey Lake Park and the other was at Elephant Butte Reservoir in the Rio Grande Project in New Mexico. The purpose of the Bureau camps was to improve the government's investment in its reclamation projects; however, since the type of work done by the CCC at Guernsey and Elephant Butte involved park development, the National Park Service—through its Branch of Planning and State Cooperation—joined the Bureaus as co-administrator of the projects.

Two camps were established at Guernsey: Camp BR-9 or Company 844, and Camp BR-10 or Company 1885. Although more research needs to be done on Camp BR-10, it is known that the camp's location was on the west side of the reservoir, about one mile directly west of Camp BR-9. The former had the longest life, outliving Camp BR-10 by two years. Originally a forest service camp, Company 844 was organized at Fort Bliss, Texas in 1933, but that summer was moved to Hyenas, New Mexico. That fall the camp was moved to Cloudcroft, New Mexico where its enrollees worked to improve Lincoln National Park. On May 21, 1934 the company, containing 159 enrollees under Lt. W. E. Sharp and camp superintendent J. H. Coffman, arrived at Lake Camp was set up one-quarter of a mile northeast of Guernsey Dam, on Guernsev. the leeward side of a hill overlooking the dam, powerplant, reservoir and North Platte River. Tents housed members of the camp until wooden barracks could be built, which was accomplished by the fall of 1934. As soon as camp buildings were constructed, field work was begun by the enrollees.



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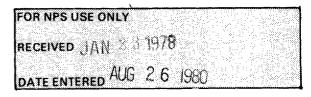
The two camps were assigned to construction and improvement of the proposed park at the lake. Camp projects were divided into three major groups: Architectural, Landscaping, and Engineering. Each group was headed by a technical senior foreman who was charged with the design and administration of the work. He was assisted by a facilitating foreman and a junior foreman, and his crews were helped by local experienced men (LEM). The crews were filled by untrained enrollees, or "boys", who were unemployed men between the ages of 18 and 25. BR-9 Camp Superintendent Coffman described them in the following way:

They have arrived in Camp bewildered and homesick. Most of them had never before had an opportunity to do a day's work. All were of the impression that as the CCC was a relief measure no actual physical labor was required or expected. Realizing that most of these boys were receiving their first contact with the serious business of making a living for themselves and dependents, it has been our constant aim to impress upon the enrollees that they are engaged in an important undertaking and to correct any erroneous understanding that they are embarked upon a pleasant vacation where work is not expected.

This is done when they are first turned over for field work by explaining to them the operation of the field organization, the fact that they must create a favorable impression on the visiting public who may view not only their work but themselves while so engaged, and that to be good workmen they must have interest and pride in the appointed tasks. It is further pointed out that these parts of their duties are only fairness and loyalty,—not only to themselves and other men who are enrolled but also to that vast multitude who are unemployed and expect at some time to have their chance in the CCC,—and therefore upon their shoulders rests the burden of successful continuation of ECW.

Some idea of camp life at Camps BR-9 and BR-10 can be had by reading available camp reports, and <u>The Guernsey Gazette</u> which reprinted news from the camp newspaper, <u>The Dam Site Bugle</u>. Particularly interesting are reports by Superintendent Coffman, in which were described work projects and related technical problems, the merits and deficits of supervisory personnel and enrollees, and the relationship between the camp and the local community which apparently was a harmonious one. Problems ranging from recalcitrant enrollees to equipment breakdowns are included in the reports, and the weather was described if relative to the work accomplished. Coffman discussed the state of camp morale, which was tied somewhat to the fluctuation of camp enrollment.\*

\*Enrollment in Camp BR-9 apparently peaked at 258 on July 1, 1935.



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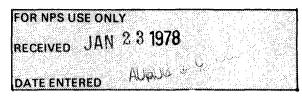
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Available records provide the impression that Company 844 was a model of CCC objectives and the park itself is evidence that the CCC boys performed their tasks well. There are also many indications in camp records that the psychological and physical needs of the boys were met. An educational program—one of the objectives of the CCC program—was conducted at BR-9 by an educational advisor and by five supervisory personnel who served as instructors in elementary and advanced subjects. The Extension Division of the University of Wyoming offered enrollees correspondence courses leading to a high school diploma. Outdoor recreation available to enrollees included swimming, boating and fishing in the summer and ice-skating and hockey in the winter. Indoor recreation was available at the Camp's recreation hall where there were card tables, pool tables, a ping-pong table and a library. Athletic teams were formed, softball, basketball and bowling among them, a camp orchestra was established, a radio station put into operation, and a camp newspaper was run by the enrollees. "Are we Down Hearted? Not by a Dam Site" was the slogan below the paper's masthead.

Superintendent Coffman felt that community sentiment toward ECW work was favorable and traffic checks made at the park indicated a general interest in the park. The checks revealed that average Sunday attendance at the park increased from fifty in 1934 to 800 in 1935, and that visitors traveled an average distance of 87 miles to reach the park. In June and July, 1936 a total of 4,230 people utilized the park's available recreational facilities, which were spread over 2,000 acres out of a total park acreage of 5,700 (1,900 more acres were added in 1937 and 1939). On August 11, 1935 12,000 people attended a Guernsey water carnival sponsored by the CCC camps and the Guernsey Boat Club.

Guernsey Lake Park was designed to serve as a recreational site whose level of development was somewhere between that of a national park and that of a state park. It was felt that there was not much in southeast Wyoming to attract a tourist, but Guernsey Lake offered a distinct recreational and scenic possibility. The purpose of CCC work at the lake was to make available to the public the scenic beauties of the lake area. "There are no other parks in this section of the United States that offer the combined recreational, scenic, historical, archeological, and geological features found in Lake Guernsey Park," wrote Superintendent Coffman. But at the time the CCC camps were put into operation, no roads, trails or camping and picknicking facilities were available, and nothing was available to make known to the public the history of the region. The purpose of camp projects, listed in the <u>Description</u> portion of this nomination, were thus addressed to those needs.

Among those projects was one which deserves particular attention, that of the museum. Even before exhibits were planned for the building, the museum structure



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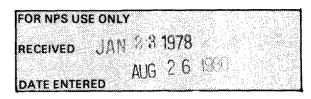
itself engendered the praise of a National Park Service museum technician. In a memorandum to Ansel F. Hall, Chief of the Field Division of Education in the National Park Service, Louis Schellbach wrote of the museums at Guernsey and at Custer State Park in South Dakota:

The buildings are worthy of housing interpretive stories of their respective areas, understandable to the average person, which are not capable of presentation by any other manner except by museum methods. Adhering to these aims there is not the shadow of a doubt but what both of them will be outstanding examples of park museums and worthy monuments to the Civilian Conservation Corps and the Emergency Conservation Work.

John Ewers, who prepared plans for the museum exhibits, stated that the museum building "has been repeatedly praised as one of the most beautiful small museums in the West." Located on the side of a hill overlooking Guernsey Reservoir, the museum provides from its entrance a fine view of Laramie Peak, thirty-five miles distant to the west. The building was designed by camp architect Roland Pray and construction was under the direction of facilitating foreman Edward A. Lynch. Built of stone and wood, the museum is a sturdy structure containing two exhibition halls, a library, an office, storage room and lavatories. According to Superintendent Coffman, no skilled stone masons were used in its construction, the work having been done entirely by enrollees. "The boys are gaining excellent training in building construction, and many of them have become competent stone masons," wrote Coffman in a report of September 30, 1935.

Museum exhibits were planned by Ewers and the planning staff from the Berkeley, California office of the National Park Service. In order to obtain data and materials for the exhibits, Ewers visited southeastern Wyoming, and made field studies of significant archeological and historical sites near Guernsey, interviewed early settlers, viewed collections of artifacts, and examined historical records at the Bureau of Reclamation's office at Guernsey, the State Historical Library at Cheyenne, and at the University of Wyoming library at Laramie. The process of preparation of the Guernsey Museum exhibits by the Berkeley staff is shown in photographs accompanying the nomination.\*

<sup>\*</sup>The total worth of the art objects in the exhibits was estimated by Historian Robert Murray in January, 1976 at over \$15,000, a figure that is more than the construction cost of the museum building.



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Using the latest theory of museum planning developed by members of the National Park Service museum staff from Berkeley, California, Ewers and his staff designed a plan for the Guernsey Museum, incorporating the data and materials he gathered into fourteen exhibit cases, each of which was to capture some significant phase of the Guernsey story and each of which was fitted into logical sequence. In his preliminary exhibit plan, Ewers commented on the overall National Park Service approach to museum planning and design:

This theory has both a negative and a positive aspect.

Negatively, we feel the necessity of abandoning the aims and methods of the old fashioned museum filled with innumerable, heterogeneous collections of natural history specimens or relics of bygone times, arranged haphazardly in display cases with the primary object of preserving these collections and without serious consideration of the educational benefits the average museum visitor will derive from his sojourn in the museum. The average visitor, who is neither a profound student of natural science or history, nor an experienced collector of specimens and relics, has been found to derive little real educational benefit from such a museum.

Positively, we feel that in planning the modern Park museum we should place the emphasis upon the educational benefits the average visitor will derive from the museum. The museum is regarded as a valuable and importnat part of the Park educational program. As such it serves to give the visitor a simple background of information which will enable him to appreciate the Park area more fully, and it serves to tell those portions of the Park story, both scientific and historical, which cannot be readily comprehended in the out-of-doors Park area.

In the modern Park museum an effort is made to interpret the Park story simply and directly by means of attractive museum exhibits arranged in logical and chronological order in the exhibition halls. In telling the story we do not limit ourselves to specimens and relics. Maps, charts, illustrations, and three-dimensional models and minature groups are prepared by skilled artists whose work is carefully checked for scientific and historic accuracy by trained technicians. Specimens and relics are included in the exhibit cases only when they serve to interpret portions of the story. Other specimens or duplicates are kept in the study collection in the museum office or study room where they may be made readily accessible to particularly interested students.

According to historian Jim Hanson, the team that created the Guernsey Museum exhibit figures later went to the Illinois State Museum at Springfield. There they achieved

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international fame with two series of dioramas, one relative to the history of Illinois, and the other relative to the story of Western Civilization.

By 1938 the museum and many other projects were completed by enrollees of Camps BR-9 and BR-10, but some contemplated projects were not completed. Some planned structures were the same in design as those which had been built, others were entirely new projects, such as: an entrance gate at the intersection of the park entrance road and U. S. Highway 26, an ampitheater, a custodian cottage, overnight cottages, a nine-hole golf course, trail side shelters, group boat houses, and campground incinerators. Ambitious CCC plans included preservation of archeological features in and around the park, the restoration of Fort Laramie and Fort Fetterman, and the preservation of Register Cliff and other historic sites. The hope was also expressed that a park could be created which would be much larger than the one at Guernsey Lake, a park containing Register Cliff, Lucinda Rollins' grave, the Oregon Trail Ruts, Mexican Hill and Fort Laramie. This hope may have been prompted by the passage of the Historic Sites Act in 1935, and CCC planners were probably responding to a National Park Service request that states compile inventories of their historic sites. Because there was also at that time a proposal to establish an Oregon Trail Park, planners may have wanted to include Guernsey Lake Park in such a proposal, or perhaps even make it the nucleus for such a park.

But these vast plans were not accomplished during the CCC program at Guernsey Lake Park. On November 30, 1935, Camp BR-10 contained 142 men and Camp Superintendent Thomas Tucker expected to be at "full strength" soon; however, on January 10, 1936, the <u>Guernsey Gazette</u> announced that Company 1858 would be abandoned. Forty-six enrollees were transferred to Company 844, and others went to Centennial and Cody, Wyoming. Although CCC Director Robert Fechner stated in a letter that the camp was to be closed temporarily, and possibly reopened as funds allowed, BR-10 was removed from the park permanently. The last available report from superintendent J. H. Coffman, dated February 5, 1937, contains a hint that Camp BR-9 was also to be closed. "Every effort," wrote Coffman, "is being made by the entire personnel to complete all approved Projects during the Eighth Period." Nevertheless, in that report Coffman expressed his pleasure with the morale of the camp personnel.

The morale of the enrolled personnel is high. Cooperation with and by the Army personnel is of the highest order. The food is good and the camp in general is again approaching that high standard that prevailed during the time Lt. Denton F. A. R. was in command.

During a recent competition between the thirteen camps in Wyoming, this camp placed second in an inspection conducted by two disinterested Regular

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Army Officers from Ft. Francis E. Warren.

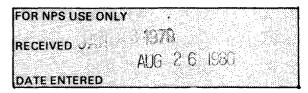
While the above mentioned inspection was made of the camp from the standpoint of the Army's interest, I believe it worthy of mention that the keen interest and esprit de corps evidenced by the enrolled personnel was and is favorably reflected in their work in the field.

On February 11, 1938, the <u>Guernsey Gazette</u> contained an article indicating that eastern Wyoming and western Nebraska were putting up a strenuous effort to retain the remaining CCC camp at Guernsey Lake, and printed a letter from Wyoming Congressman Paul R. Greever stating that an order terminating Bureau of Reclamation camps had been rescinded. One month later, however, the paper contained the news that Robert Fechner had ordered a reduction in the number of CCC camps for budgetary reasons and one of them was the Guernsey camp. For a year following abandonment of Camp BR-9 in the spring of 1938, the site lay vacant. The following summer a Bureau of Reclamation camp stationed at Veteran, Wyoming occupied the BR-9 site, and worked on roads and uncompleted park projects. Enrollees of the latter camp also built a new shelter in the Red Cloud Picnic Area, and probably helped complete preparations for opening the museum. On June 2, 1939 the <u>Guernsey Gazette</u> announced that the Guernsey Museum was open to the public, with Mr. Ed Kelley as custodian.

Further research is necessary in order to determine the date marking abandonment of all Guernsey Lake Park projects undertaken by the CCC. On a nationwide basis the CCC program was terminated in 1942. Since 1957, through an agreement with the Bureau of Reclamation, the Wyoming State Parks Commission and its successor, the Wyoming Recreation Commission, has administered Guernsey State Park. In the last two years Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) programs have been supervised by the Commission at the park, but the YCC is only a faint reflection of its ancestor, the CCC. However, the YCC contributes to the upkeep of park facilities, and is thus helping to preserve both the memory of the CCC program and the projects accomplished by it.

In conclusion, the CCC work at Guernsey State Park is important for several reasons, one of which is historical in nature. In the wide prespective the CCC camps at the park were part of a relief program that has received the plaudits of historians who point to the achievements of the CCC and label it a successful New Deal program. John Salmond concludes his study of the corps (<u>The Civilian Conservation</u> <u>Corps, 1933-1942</u>) by pointing out half a dozen accomplishments of the CCC on the national level. He explains that first and foremost the CCC was a relief agency, one which provided occupations, food, housing, clothing, bedding, medical care, education and recreation to nearly three million American men. Second, it provided

### NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM



CONTINUATION SHEET Guernsey ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 12

relief to the enrollees' families, each of which received \$25 of the enrollee's \$30 monthly salary. Third, the Corps did much work in conservation of the nation's resources. Fourth, it provided training and leadership opportunities for men who were to serve in the United States Army during World War II. Fifth, the Corps was a social leveler that brought youth from urban areas into contact with people from different areas of the nation. Historian Arthur Schlesinger supports the latter idea in his book, The Coming of the New Deal.

They did more, of course, than reclaim and develop natural resources. They reclaimed and developed themselves. They came from large cities and from small towns, from slum street corners and from hobo jungles, from the roads and the rails and from nowhere. One out of every ten or eleven was a Negro. Some had never seen mountains before, had never waded in running brooks or slept in the open air. Boys from the East Side of New York found themselves in Glacier Park, boys from New Jersey at Mount Hood in Oregon, boys from Texas in Wyoming. Their muscles hardened, their bodies filled out, their self respect returned. They learned trades; more important, they learned about other Americans.

Thus, the "melting pot", a democratic concept which is an important part of America's heritage, was furthered by the CCC program. Sixth, and last, Salmond points out that the CCC is important to the history of the reform movement in the United States because it was a program that attacked the problems of unemployed youth in an increasingly urbanized society. In that respect the CCC was a precursor to later national programs such as the Job Corps and the Youth Conservation Corps.

On the state level the work done at Guernsey State Park represents only part of the total CCC program in Wyoming, the latter amounting to a total of \$20,000 spent and 15,000 employed. However, if the work accomplished at Guernsey is judged only by what physically remains there, it was a successful project. Not only is the work significant in its magnitude—in the number or roads, trails and structures built in four years—but it is also significant in terms of the quality of the work. According to Historical Architect, Clayton Fraser, Guernsey park contains a significant type of architecture.

The CCC-built structures at Guernsey Lake Park make up an impressive array representing an architectural style which may be classified, with tongue only partly in cheek, as Recreational Rustic. It is architecture which is organic in general form and use of materials but designed and constructed with such precision as to be architectonic in detail. The forms are borrowed freely from the classical styles, most notably the

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CONTINUATION SHEET Guernsey ITEM NUL

ITEM NUMBER 8

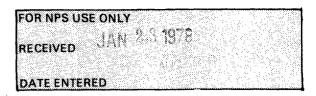
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Gothic, and are combined with both the western frontier vernacular and modern design concepts. The resulting buildings show a variety of shapes, but are universally massive and squat and masculine in character. They are handsome structures which blend in effortlessly with the surroundings.

More importantly, however, these structures represent the climax of a way of thinking in American architecture in which labor was by far the cheapest component in construction and was used readily, almost indiscriminately. Labor was indeed plentiful and cheap at Guernsey and the resulting craftsmanship would be impossible to duplicate today. The rise of the labor unions in the period after World War II has, in general terms, meant the decrease in craftsmanship in architecture. It is this change in emphasis that contrasts structures such as those at Guernsey from mainstream modern architecture.

A comparative study of National Park Service architecture is needed before the relative place of the Guernsey State Park project can be assessed in relation to other CCC projects throughout the nation. Judged apart from other CCC work the Guernsey State Park complex, located in a recognizable district around which boundaries can be drawn, ought to be eligible for the National Register as a significant element of the state's architectural heritage.

Several other factors relate to the significance of the Guernsey CCC project, and two of them specifically concern the Guernsey Museum. The museum building itself not only represents the best work of the enrollees and supervisors of Camp BR-9, its exhibits are collectively significant as the main focal point for interpretation of area culture. The exhibits, moreover, are significant both in their quality and in their value to historiography and museology. At the time the exhibits were built, the National Park Service was a leader in the development of the idea that museum exhibits should tell a story. Commenting on the National Park Service staff that built them, John Ewers stated: "They were miles ahead of the Smithsonian at that time." Most museums, he said, were stodgy old places, but the Guernsey Museum represents a departure from previous museum preparation, and demonstrates how the National Park Service idea could be put to work. Each case was planned as a chapter in the Guernsey story, fitting into a concept whose overall purpose was public education. Another significant factor relating to the museum is that there exists a photographic record—consisting of 146 photographs, 5" x 7" in size—that documents the work involved in preparation of museum exhibits. Finally, there is extant a set of plans and drawings of the museum and various other Guernsey CCC projects which were done by camp architects and draftsmen, and which are not only historical documents but are in themselves historic artifacts.



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The Guernsey Dam and powerplant are fifty years old this year and are thus eligible for the National Register. The significance of the dam, powerplant and reservoir, as described earlier, is that they have been and are a vital part of the economy of southeast Wyoming and western Nebraska. But they are also vital to the history and significance of the work accomplished by the Civilian Conservation Corps in that they provided the basis for a CCC work program. Camps BR-9 and BR-10 were the first state park CCC camps established by the Bureau of Reclamation in the United States. But the significance of the historic district is greater than this "first". It is significant that the reclamation project and the CCC program have been a benefit to not only those who took part in them, but to thousands of people who have visited and used the Guernsey park. Using Ewers' theme once again, Guernsey State Park serves as an example of how man has adapted himself to the environment of the Guernsey area, and once again it is demonstrated how the waters of the North Platte River have played a significant role in affecting the culture of man.

It was with pleasure that the Wyoming Recreation Commission received a memorandum, dated February 14, 1975, from A. R. Mortensen, former Director of the Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, indicating that this office would be pleased to receive National Register nominations of WPA and CCC-built structures. For the reasons listed above, it is suggested that there exists no finer opportunity to feature the work of the CCC in Wyoming that at Guernsey State Park.



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ADDENDUM ITEM 9 PAGE 5

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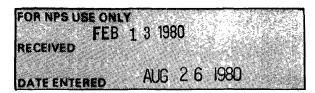
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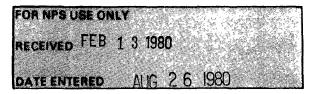
CONTINUATION SHEET ADDENDUM ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE 1

Guernsey Lake Park, Item #10: Geographical Data, Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the Guernsey Lake Park property nominated to the National Register commences at a point in Fish Canyon at the northeast corner of the legal boundary of Guernsey State Park. From that point the boundary extends south two and one-quarter miles to Hartville Canyon, thence west one-quarter mile to the middle of the North Platte River. From that point, and still following the park boundary, the line heads south one-quarter mile to the south bank of the river, thence west one-quarter mile, thence south one-quarter mile, thence west one mile, thence north three quarters of a mile, thence west one-half mile. From the latter point the historic site boundary departs from the legal property line circumscribing the park and heads north, following the west boundary of Sections 21, 16 and 9 of T27N R66W, to the northwest corner of Section 9. From that point the nomination boundary again picks up the legal, Guernsey State Park boundary line and heads east three quarters of a mile, thence south three quarters of a mile. thence east one-half mile, thence south one-quarter mile, thence east three quarters of a mile to the point of beginning. The total amount of nominated property is 3,760 acres.

The reason why so much acreage was chosen for this district is because its particular historical focal points, i.e., the CCC-buit facilities, cannot be separated from their environment. The museum picnic shelters, bridges, retaining walls and footpaths constructed by the Civilian Concervation Corps are not incongruous with the surrounding terrain but are in harmony with it. The Guernsey Lake Park Historic District is a good example of a complex of historic structures which is not only harmonious with the surrounding environment, but one which was actually designed by the National Park Service to blend into a large, outdoor recreational area. If the historic structures of the park cannot be disassociated from their setting then the park historic district cannot simply be represented by a series of lines connecting dots which mark the location of those historical-recreational features. It needs acreage which includes not only and of the sites listed in the nomination's description, but also trees, vegetation, water, rocks, hills - in short, all elements of that environment. However, the entire park as it exists today is not being nominated. It is not necessary to include hills and shoreline which lie beyond the area planned by the National Park and CCC for park development, or beyond the points from which the eye can see the historic features of the park.

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM



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The total area being nominated is part of a large state park administered by the Wyoming Recreation Commission. The Commission's Director, who is also the State Historic Preservation Officer, approves the enrollment of the property she administers.



ADDENDUM:

ITEM 10: GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

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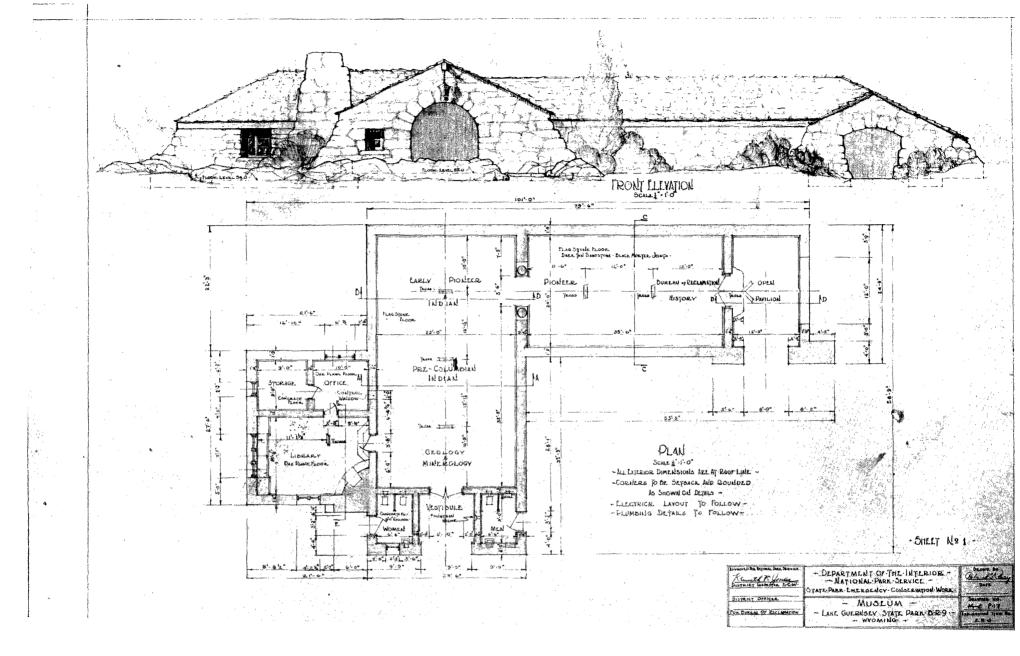
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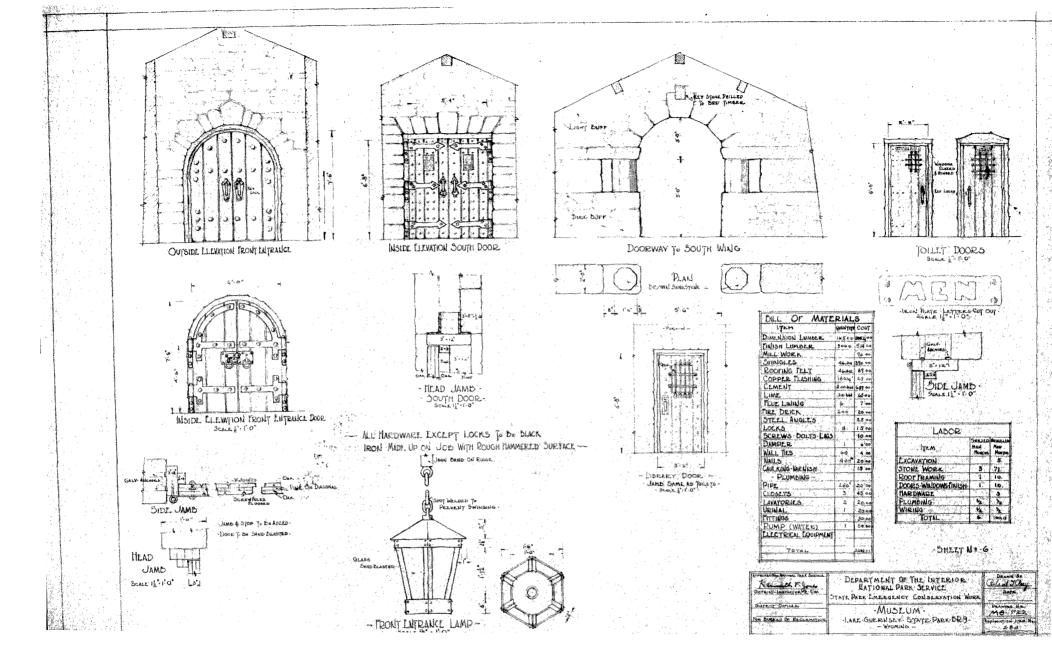
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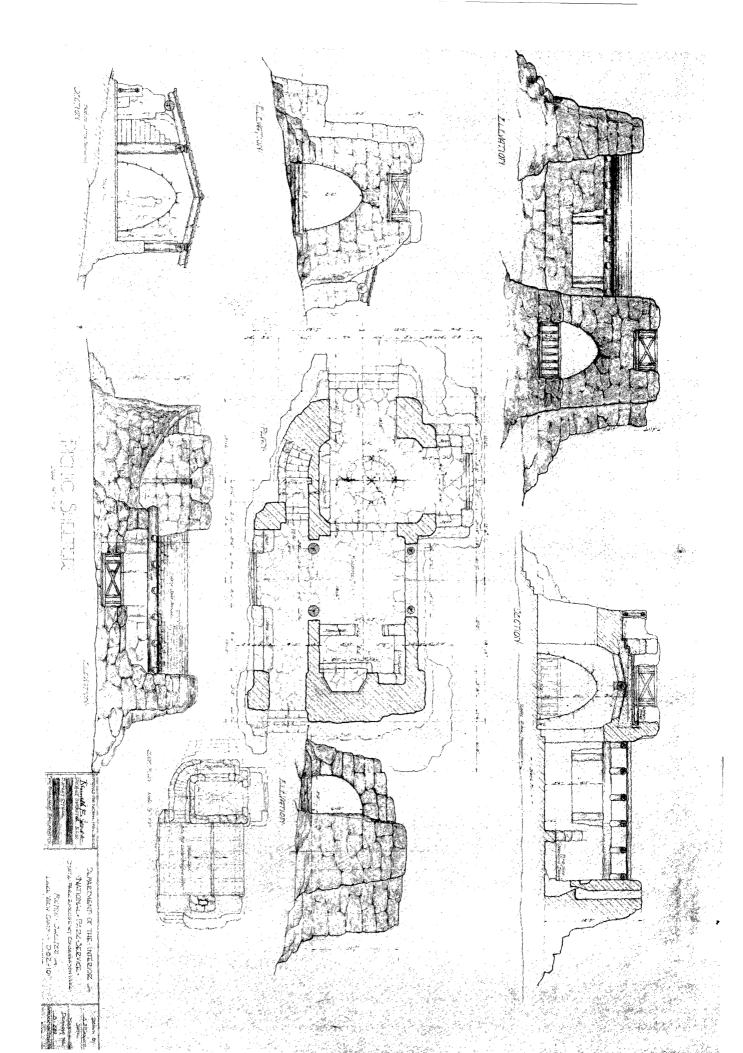
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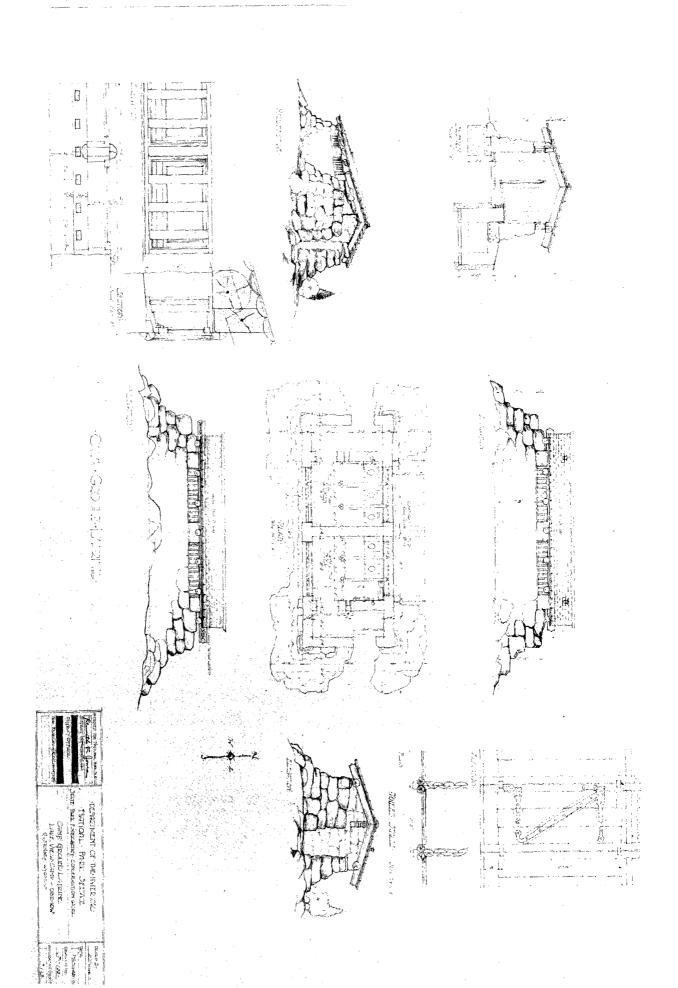
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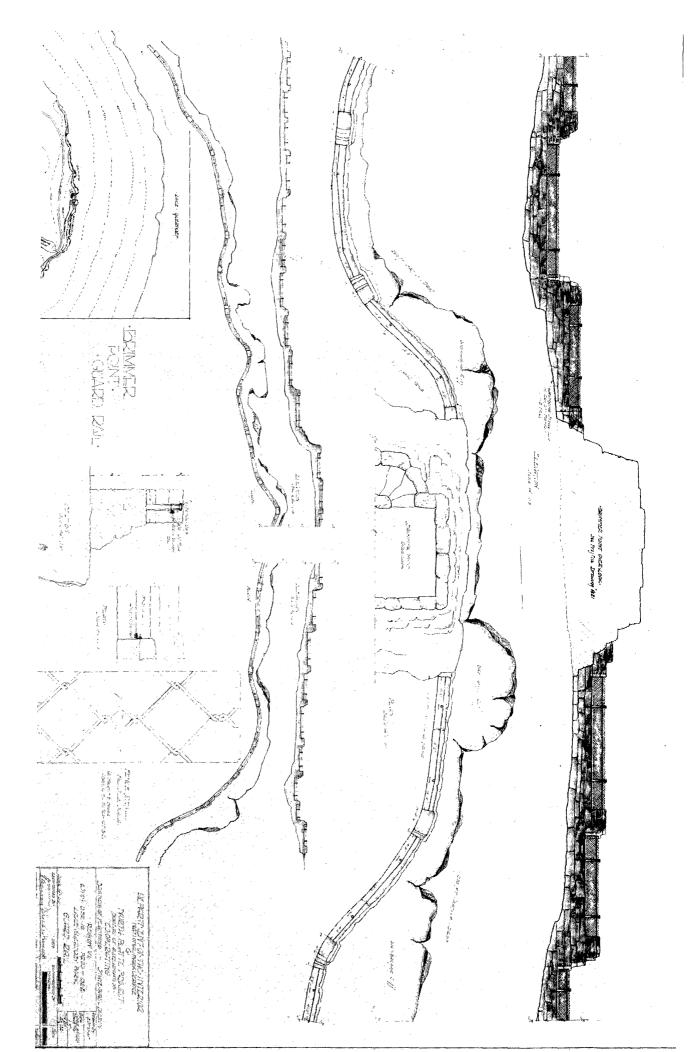
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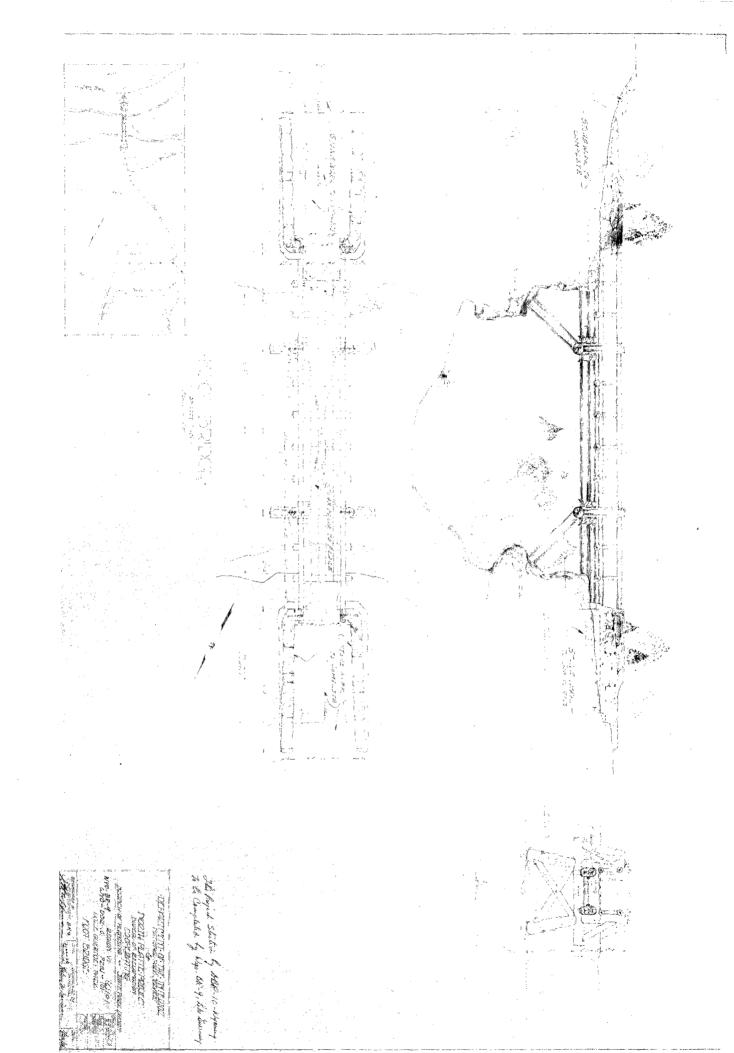
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Guard Rail at Brimmer Point

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From Original CCC Drawings JAN 2 3 1978 Wyoming Recreation Commission

N.S. 2.6 1980



GUERNSEY LAKE PARK Guernsey vicinity Platte Cd. 19 APR 35

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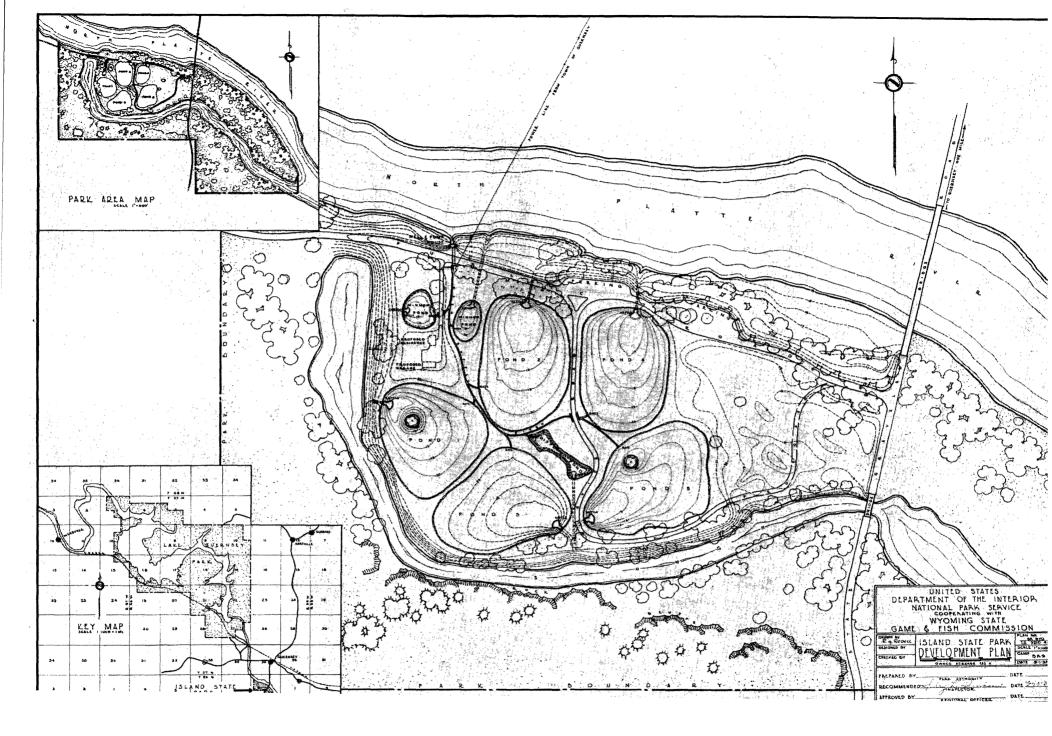
Foot Bridge

48

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From Original CCC Drawings Wyoming Recreation Commission

JAN 2 3 1978



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WERNSEY LAKE PARK Guernsey vicinity

'sland Park Development Plan

49 JAN 23 1978

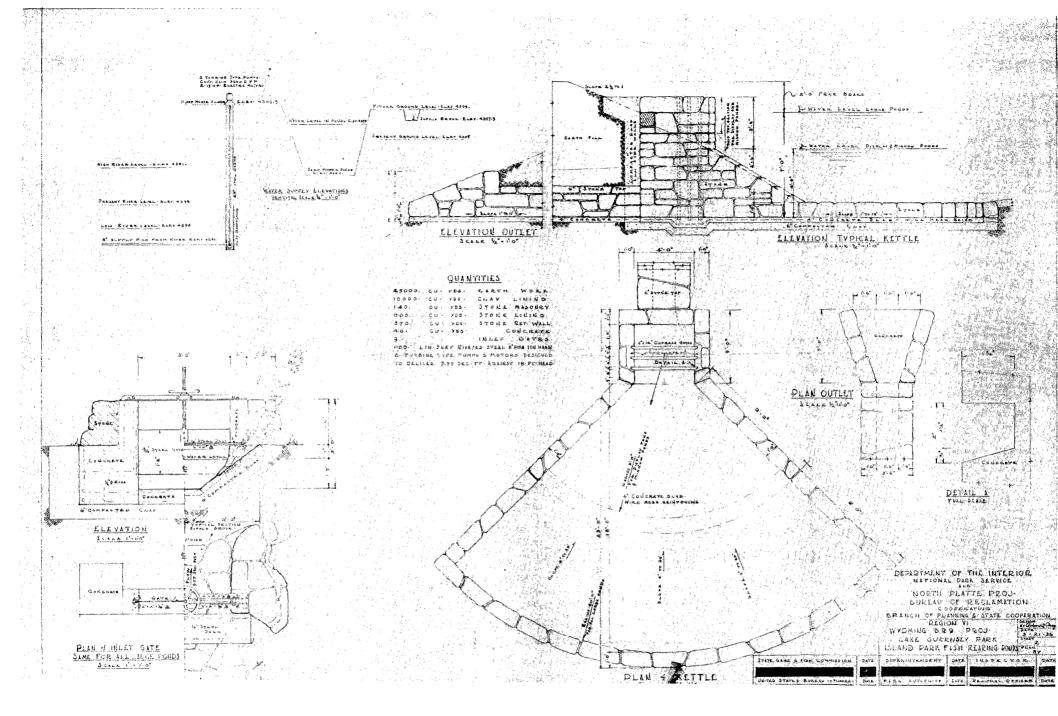
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The Contraction

GUERNSEY LAKE PARK Guernsey vicinity Dlutte Co.

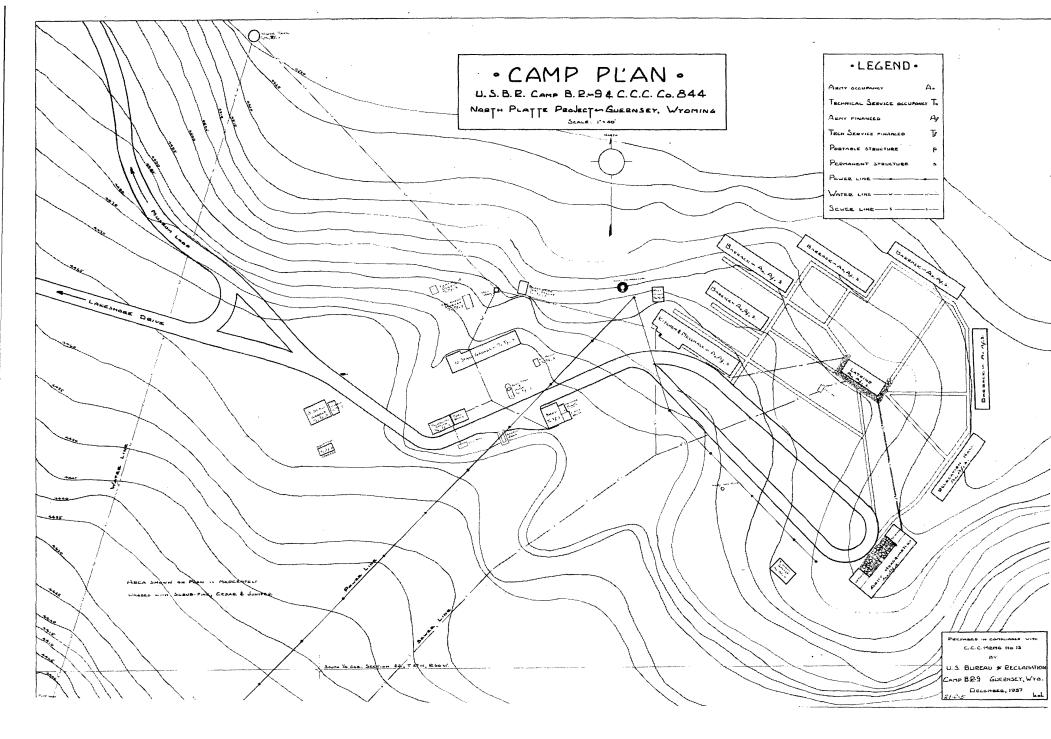
Island Park Fish Rearing Ponds detail 50

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From Original CCC Drawings Wyoming Recreation Commission

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GUERNSEY LAKE PARK Guernsey vicinity

Platte co.

Camp BR-9 Site Plan

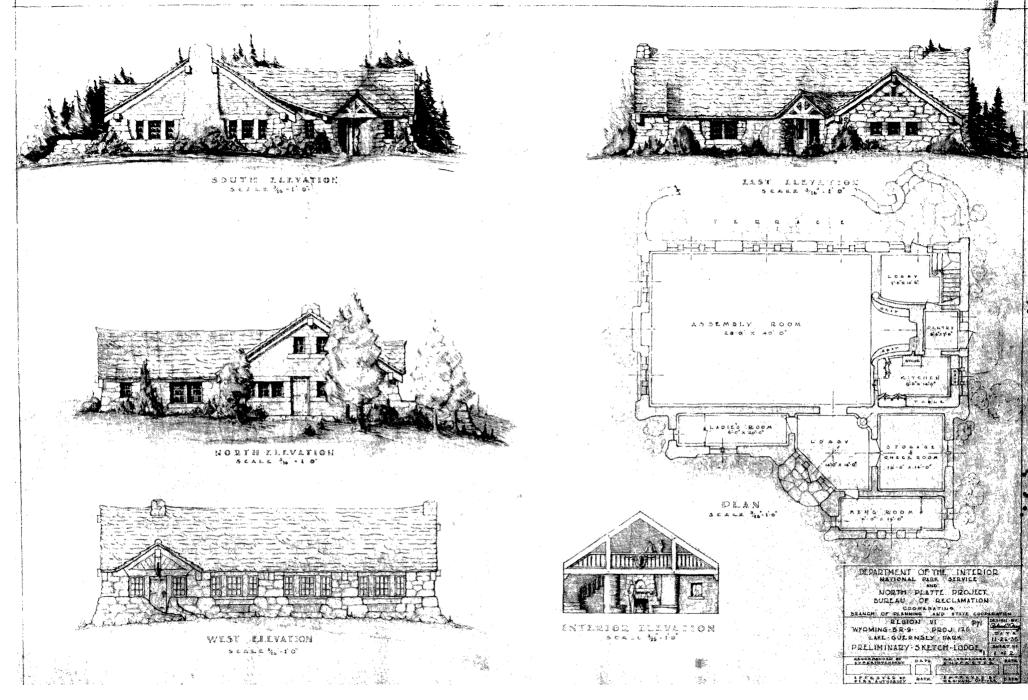
JAN 23 1978

From Original CCC Drawings Wyoming Recreation Commission

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26 NOV 35

GUERNSEY LAKE PARK Guernsey vicinity

Preliminary sketch of proposed Lake Guernsey Lodge

52

From Original CCC Drawings JAN 2 3 1978 Wyoming Recreation Commission

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