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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instruction 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 an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classifications, 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 Watson-Price Farmstead

other names/site number Watson, James and Mary, Farmstead

### 2. Location

street & number 23380 Hoskins Road  not for publication

city or town Philomath  vicinity

state Oregon code OR county Benton code 003 zip code 97370

### 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.

*James Hamrick*

17 May 2005

Signature of certifying official/Title Deputy SHPO

Date

Oregon State Historic Preservation Office  
State or Federal agency and bureau

### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:  
Action

entered in the National Register  
See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register  
See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register

removed from the National Register

other (explain):

*Edson H Beall*  
Signature of the Keeper

Date of

6/30/05

Watson-Price Farmstead  
Name of Property

Benton County, Oregon  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(check as many as apply)

**Category of Property**  
(check only one box)

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

- private
- public - local
- public - state
- public - Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
9	0	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
9	0	Total

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

N/A

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(enter categories from instructions)

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling  
DOMESTIC/secondary structure  
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/animal facility  
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/processing  
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/storage  
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/agricultural outbuilding

DOMESTIC/single dwelling  
DOMESTIC/secondary structure  
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/storage  
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/agricultural outbuilding

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century: Greek Revival

foundation: STONE  
walls: WOOD: weatherboard

roof: ASPHALT

Other: BRICK

**Narrative Description**

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

See continuation sheets.

Watson-Price Farmstead  
Name of Property

Benton County, Oregon  
County and State

**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).

- 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.
- 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.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE  
SETTLEMENT  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

c.1848-1954  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

c.1848  
c.1852  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Pitman, William  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply)

**Property is:**

- A** owned 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 of age or achieved significance Within the past 50 years

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

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

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography** (Cite books, articles, and other sources used in preparing the form on one or more continuation sheets) See continuation sheets

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36CFR67) 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:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
  - Other State agency
  - Federal agency
  - Local government
  - University
  - Other : Benton County Historic Museum
- Name of repository: University of Oregon



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## Introduction

The Watson-Price farm is located at 23380 Hoskins Road, Philomath Oregon in the Kings Valley section of Benton County. The house was built in 1852 in the Greek Revival style. It is the only remaining home built in the valley by William Pitman and is a fine example of his skill as both a designer and builder. The property has been continuously used as a farm since it was first developed. Other contributing structures on the property include a large side opening barn constructed in 1848 and seven additional outbuildings built within the period of significance.

## Setting

Kings Valley continues to be an agricultural community; the Watson-Price farm is surrounded by other farms on fairly level gently rolling land. The house is reached by a long gravel driveway that extends south from Hoskins Road. The house and outbuildings are visible from the road, but at a distance that affords a sense of peace and privacy. The house is located west of the driveway, facing east. The wood shed, smoke house, outhouse and chicken house are located behind the house and a cold storage building is located to the south of the house, just outside the kitchen door. The driveway then continues, curving around the south side of the house, past the former blacksmith shop, across Plunkett Creek and on to the machine shed and barn.

The farm consists of a total 229.4 acres of land, including most of the eastern half of the original James Watson Donation Land Claim. A small orchard originally located to the southeast of the house has been mostly removed and now contains one pear and one apple tree. Two large walnut trees are located just behind the house. The remaining acreage is used to raise crops and livestock. The nominated area is approximately 1.5 acres, an area large enough to include all significant structures.

## House

### Exterior

The Watson-Price House is an excellent example of an early Oregon pioneer Greek Revival farmhouse. The house is a one and a half story structure with a nearly square plan, measuring 40' - 4" wide and 34' - 4" deep. The side facing gable roof has a low (7/12) pitch and is now covered with composition shingles.

The front facade is symmetrical, with a recessed front porch located in the center, set behind two square columns. Six over six double hung windows are located to either side of the recessed porch. Originally the symmetry was reinforced by internal brick chimneys projecting through the ridge of the roof at each end of the house. One, a hung chimney at the north end, has since been removed and replaced by a metal stove pipe.

The house is sided with horizontal weatherboard<sup>1</sup>, with the exception of the walls in the recessed porch area. Here the box type construction is clearly expressed, with the vertical 12" wide planks exposed and the gaps covered with 4 1/2" beveled wood battens. The house has 6" wide corner boards and classical eave detailing with 20" wide frieze and angled rake boards. Pitman was able to achieve the look of rake and crown molding without actually using molded boards by simply

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angling the square boards available to him. There are few curved moldings anywhere in the house, yet the appearance is that of a finely detailed home.

The Watson-Price house still retains its original hand built windows and doors. The windows throughout the house are six over six double hung. Windows on the lower level are 2'-10" x 4'-7". The upper level windows are 2'-5" x 3'-8". The sash thickness is quite narrow and the muntins are only approximately 1/2" thick. Even the muntin profiles lack the curves typical of later sashes; the muntins have a simple angled profile. The doors throughout the house also have an elegant simplicity. Their design consists of two vertical panels with simple squared edges. The rails are mortised through the stiles. The doors have rim locks, typical of the period, some with metal knobs and some with ceramic knobs.

### Structure

The house was built using the box method of construction. The wall structure consists of 1 1/2" thick planks set vertically, attached to the sill at the bottom and plate at the top with no other vertical members such as posts or studs. The finished wall thickness in this type of construction is just less than 3". The particular type of box construction employed by Pitman in all the houses he built is known as "feathering". In this system, a groove was cut into the side of each plank and a narrow 1/2" x 1 1/2" strip of wood was driven in between, securing each plank to the next.<sup>2</sup> The house rests on a foundation of stone piers.

### Interior

The front door leads to a small entry hall. A door to the left leads to a room now used as the master bedroom. The door to the right leads to the parlor. The parlor is a large, nearly square room. Two windows provide ample light and the ten foot high ceilings throughout the house add to the sense of spaciousness. The walls and ceilings in this room were originally plastered but are now covered with plywood, batted at the seams. The wood floor is covered with carpet. A woodstove in the parlor is the primary heat source for the house.

A door on the east wall of the parlor leads to a small bedroom. The walls in this room have recently been stripped of multiple layers of wall paper and muslin, revealing the vertical structural boards of the box construction. The trim around the windows throughout the house consists of plain 5" wide boards, with the top board projecting slightly beyond the outer edge of the side boards. Since there is no overlay on the walls in this bedroom, the 1-5/8" thickness of these trim boards is revealed. A typical interior wall finish would have been a layer of muslin and/or wall paper so historically this thickness would have been visible.

A door on the west wall of the parlor leads to the original pantry, now used as a bedroom. This door is one of the few modifications made to this house. Originally, the pantry could only be accessed through a door on the recessed rear porch. A door at the west end of the south wall of the parlor leads to the back hall, with doors to the back porch and kitchen and the stairway leading to the second floor. The walls in the back hall are covered with painted horizontal boards. The flooring is 8" wide wood flooring.

The walls in the kitchen are vertical painted boards, a typical early treatment in this type of house. The ceiling is also painted boards. There is an original built in cabinet in the wall between the chimney and the outside wall, back to back

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with a similar cabinet in the master bedroom. Doors to these cabinets have simple unmolded panel details similar to the doors throughout the house and are held in place by three part hinges. The kitchen retains most of its original integrity, only a modern sink and sink base have been added. The floor is 3" tongue and groove wood flooring, which appears to have been overlaid on the original, wider floor boards.

A door on the west wall of the kitchen leads to a lean-to addition on the rear containing laundry and bathroom facilities. The addition has vinyl flooring, walls covered in horizontal wainscoting and sheetrock ceilings. This addition was not present in the 1930s but its construction and detailing indicate it was likely built shortly thereafter.

A door on the east wall of the kitchen leads to a room now used as the master bedroom, originally this was the living room. This room has painted vertical board walls and carpeted floors. There is a fireplace on the west wall with an elaborate wood mantle, classical in style. This is the only place in the house where curved moldings exist. HABS drawings from the 1930s note "fireplace rebuilt by current owner."

The stairway from the back hall rises through the center of the house to the upper bedrooms. There is one large room to the north. To the south another large room has been divided with a plank partition wall into two rooms. The brick chimney is exposed on the upper level, revealing the clay mortar used in its construction. The ceilings of the second floor rooms are sloped with the roof pitch and the walls and ceiling are covered with painted horizontal boards. Access doors in the knee walls provide a glimpse of the roof structure. Rough sawn 3 1/4" x 4 1/4" rafters spaced 2'-0" on center support waney edged sheathing boards. Joists are rough sawn 2 1/2" x 8" placed 2'-0" on center.

### Modifications

Overall, the house is remarkably intact. As noted above, there is an addition to the rear, one chimney has been removed and one door opening has been cut to the former pantry. The added door and trim match the doors and trim used throughout the house.

### **Barn**

The barn is a large (40' x 60') rectangular plan side opening structure with a low pitched gable roof covered with wood shingles on the east side and corrugated metal on the west side. The low sloped roof and side opening plan are typical character defining features of early Oregon pioneer barns. The siding is vertical fir boards of varying widths, with narrow gaps between the boards providing light and ventilation to the interior. The east wall is covered with more recent horizontal lap fir siding. The entrance consists of large double wagon doors, centered on the east wall. There are single story lean-tos along the full length of the west and north walls. A third lean to along the south wall was demolished early in the twentieth century.

The barn was built using heavy timber frame construction methods, with mortised and tenoned hand hewn members secured with wooden trunnels. The barn is four bents long. The structural members are all hand hewn fir and include 12" x 12" sills and posts, 10" x 12" top plates and 10" x 10" purlins, one on each side mid way up the slope of the roof, and no ridge beam. Sawn 3" x 4" rafters are placed approximately 2' on center with spaced sheathing above. Each of the sills, plates and purlins run the full sixty foot length of the barn in a single continuous piece.

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As you enter the barn, there is a hay mow to the right and to the left there was a large open threshing area that has since been divided into animal pens. A loft above the threshing area was used to store unthreshed wheat. The process of threshing wheat before mechanical equipment was available in Oregon required an open space large enough for the horses to circle as wheat was tossed down from the loft above.

In order to provide the required open space for the threshing area in the barn, a large hand hewn king post truss spans the 39' width of the barn just to the left of the entry doors. The lower chord of this truss is 11" x 19" at each end, but tapers to a height of 22" at mid span. This is thought to be the largest hand hewn timber section found in the Willamette Valley.<sup>3</sup> The floor of the loft above the threshing area is supported by 8" x 10" peeled logs placed 2' on center, mortised in to the back of the lower chord on the truss. The floor below the threshing area is 2" x 11" boards laid over 1" x 10" boards and supported by 10" x 12" hewn joists placed 42" on center.

### **Additional Outbuildings**

There are seven additional outbuildings, all of which are contributing structures in the ensemble. While the construction dates for the outbuildings are unknown, their form, method of construction and intended function indicate all are likely nineteenth century or early twentieth century buildings.

### Cold Storage Building

Just outside the kitchen door, 11' feet from the house, is a small 8'-6" x 14'-9" building labeled "fruit and well house" on the 1930s HABS drawings. The door is on the north side, straight across from the kitchen door. The building has a medium pitched gable roof covered with composition rolled roofing. The exterior walls are clad with channel rustic siding with 6 1/2" exposure and 4" corner boards. The interior walls are covered with horizontal boards and the walls are filled with sawdust insulation. The floor is poured concrete. A sawdust filled interior partition divides the cold storage area from the former well area. The well has been relocated. The building is in fair condition.

### Wood Shed

The wood shed is located behind the house, 24' from the southwest corner. It is a gable roof structure, with a 7/12 pitch roof. Parts of the composition roll roofing have blown off, revealing 9" exposure wood shingle roofing below on the north face of the roof. The structure is sawn timber frame fastened with wire nails, with 7" x 7" sills and 5" x 5" posts resting on wood blocks. The center bay is 14' x 25', with 8" wide lean-tos on each side creating a total footprint of 25' x 30'. The building is clad in vertical board and battened weathered wood. There are three doors on the west side and one at the north end of the east wall. The south wall of this structure has begun to collapse.

### Smoke House

The smoke house is located approximately 30' northwest of the wood shed. It is a 12" x 13'-8" building with a 7/12 pitch gable roof covered with composition roll roofing. It is a box type structure with 4 1/2" x 10" wood sills resting on the ground and 1 1/2" x 9" planks forming the wall structure. The planks are battened on the inside and the interior is black



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with soot. Entry is through a door centered on the east side. Side walls are 9'-9" high and the ridge rises 13' above the ground. The floor is dirt with the exception of a 12" high, 4' wide wood platform running the length of the west end. The sill on the south side has completely rotted away, but the building remains standing fairly strait.

### Out House

The outhouse is located approximately 50' west of the smoke house. It is a 5' x 5' box type structure with a 10/12 pitch gable roof. The roof is covered with wood shingles with 9" exposure. The 1" x 11" wall planks are wire nailed to 6"x6" wood sills resting on the ground. The planks are battened on the exterior. Entry is through a door on the north side.

### Chicken House

The chicken house is located further to the west, backing up to the creek. It is a 10'-5" x 17'-4" box type structure with an 8/12 pitch gable roof. The east side of the roof is covered with wood shingles, 25" long with 10" exposure. Corrugated metal covers the west side of the roof. Upright 2 1/2" x 11 1/2" wood sills rest on stone piers, with circular sawn 1/2" x 11 1/2" vertical planks, attached to the sill with nails, making up the wall structure. There is a wood floor and entry is through doorways on the north and south ends. Four 30" x 18" openings are cut in the top of the east wall, covered with chicken wire. The building is in fair condition.

### Blacksmith Shop

The blacksmith shop is located southeast of the chicken house, across the driveway that leads to the barn. It is a 24'-5" x 18'-3" one and a half story building with a gable roof. Double doors open the full width of the north end, with a single door to the second floor in the gable above the double doors. The building is clad in shiplap siding, with the exception of the north facade which is clad in channel rustic siding installed vertically. The structure is timber frame, mortised and fastened with metal bolts. Sawn 6" x 6" wood sills rest on stone piers. There are sawn 6" x 6" posts at the corners and at the mid point of the east and west walls. The top plate is 4" x 6". There are four windows across the south side and one each on the east and west facades. All windows are 22" x 29" four pane fixed sash windows. A ladder in the northeast corner provides access to the upper level. The roof has collapsed and the south wall of the building is badly rotted and starting to collapse.

### Machine Shed

The machine shed is located adjacent to the barn, across the creek from the other buildings. It is a gable roof 18' x 50' building with four open bays facing north. The north side is clad with ship lap siding. The three other sides are clad with vertical 3/4" x 9 1/2" boards. The structure is hand hewn timber frame, mortised and tenoned with wooden pegs. Posts are 6" x 6" and the top plate is 6" x 4". Rafters are 3" x 5" spaced 24" on center, with skip sheathing above. The roof is covered with corrugated metal.

### **Endnotes**

<sup>1</sup> The entire south elevation is clad in horizontal rustic siding, which replaced the weatherboard some time before 1934.

<sup>2</sup> Philip Dole, "Buildings and Gardens: Farmhouses and Barns of the Willamette Valley", Space, Style and Structure: building in Northwest America, ed. Thomas Vaughn (Portland: Oregon Historical Society, 1974) 101.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. p. 91-92

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## Introduction

The Watson-Price Farmstead in the Kings Valley area of Benton County was established in 1848 by James and Mary Watson and meets National Register Criteria A and C. The property was one of the first farms developed in Kings Valley and meets Criteria A under the category of settlement. The remarkable collection of buildings on the farmstead qualifies the property under Criteria C for its architecture. The farmstead includes a house, built in 1852, that is one of few remaining examples of an early Oregon pioneer Greek Revival farmhouse. The house was constructed with the box construction method typical of the period. It is the only house remaining in the valley built by builder William Pitman. The barn, built in 1848, is an excellent example of an early Willamette Valley side opening barn. It is a timber framed structure with massive hand hewn members, including a bottom chord on the central truss that is thought to be the largest hewn framing member in the valley. Various outbuildings contribute to the ensemble, creating a remarkably intact example of an early pioneer farmstead. The property was one of the first farms established in Kings Valley and has operated continuously as a farm, providing a basis for a period of significance from 1848 to 1954.

## Historic Context

Kings Valley is situated in northern Benton County, on the western edge of the Willamette Valley adjacent to the foothills of the Coast Range. The valley is about six miles long and two miles wide and "in the days of its first settlement was considered second to none as a luxuriant pasture ground for stock."<sup>1</sup> The valley was first settled by Nahum King and various members of his family in 1846. James Watson purchased the land on which he established his farm from Sol. King when he arrived in the valley.<sup>2</sup> The earliest land record of Benton County (excluding land that is no longer within the county) is the claim of Nahum King. The second is the claim of James Watson.<sup>3</sup>

James Watson was born in Mason County Kentucky in 1808. He married Mary Ridgeway on February 21, 1833 in Sangamon County Illinois. Watson arrived in Oregon in October 1847.<sup>4</sup> Watson's arrival in the area was just a few months before Benton County was established in December of 1847. Watson served as a County Commissioner for Benton County from 1852 through 1855.<sup>5</sup>

Prior to the arrival of the early settlers, Kings Valley was the home of the Kalapuya tribe. Diseases brought by European and American explorers had already greatly reduced the native population by the 1850s. In 1855, treaties were negotiated with the remaining Kalapuya villages giving the land in the valley to the United States government. The Kalapuya were moved to the Grand Ronde reservation in Western Polk and Yamhill Counties in 1856.<sup>6</sup> That year, Fort Hoskins was established just down the road from the Watson Farm. The purpose of the fort was to act as a buffer, protecting the Native population and the settlers from each other. Prior to building the fort, the troops camped on the Watson's land.<sup>7</sup>

Like most pioneers, the Watson's initially built a rustic cabin, believed to have been sited just behind the current house. When they were ready to build a more permanent home, they hired builder William Pitman. William Pitman is known to have built a number of houses in Kings Valley the 1850s, but only the Watson House remains.<sup>8</sup> Pitman was born in Ohio in 1827 and became a carpenter's apprentice at age thirteen. He left Ohio and settled in Kings Valley in 1851. That same year he is reputed to have "sawed the first plank of lumber in Benton County" in the Hartless & Matzger Mill.<sup>9</sup>

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Pitman is known to have built a number of the finest homes in the area, including the Isaac King, Roland Chambers and Lucious Norton houses in Benton County and the John Eakins Lyle House in Dallas (Polk County) as well as buildings at Fort Hoskins and the Polk County Courthouse. He moved to Corvallis in 1871 and established a sash and door factory there in 1875.

Pitman's design skill is evident in the graceful proportions of the house, while his skill as a carpenter is evident in the detailing. The house was built in the Greek Revival style typical of the period and is constructed of box type construction. Box construction consists of vertical planks set side by side, attached at the sill and plate to form the structural system, with no wall studs or posts.

In 1934 the Watson-Price house was selected to be one of the houses recorded by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) project. HABS was started as a way of creating work for unemployed architects, but also had the goal of preserving, if only on paper, the architectural heritage of the United States. Forty-seven buildings, nearly all residential, were selected to be measured and drawn in Oregon. By 1984, only 29 of those recorded buildings were still standing. Of those, all but four had been entered in to the National Register. Three had been disqualified due to alterations or relocation. Only the Watson house has never previously been nominated.<sup>10</sup>

James Price owned the house at the time of the HABS recording and interviews with him at that time indicate the house was built for \$2,400 in gold plus the labor of three family members for six months. The parlor was originally plastered, and Mr. Price believed it to be the oldest plastered house in the valley.<sup>11</sup> James Watson reportedly drove an ox team to Portland to pick up glass, nails and plaster.<sup>12</sup>

Much of the work preparing materials for the house, such as the construction of the handmade windows and doors, was done in the barn. As was typical for early farmsteads, the barn had been constructed earlier. The barn was built circa 1848 by John Ridgeway, probably the same John Ridgeway listed in the 1850 census as born in Kentucky in 1807, lived five years in Illinois, four in Missouri and settled in Oregon in 1845.<sup>13</sup> Not much is known about John Ridgeway, although it seems more than coincidental that Mary Watson's maiden name was Ridgeway and they share roots in Kentucky and Illinois.

The form and structure of the barn are a reflection of the specific time and place in which it was built and of the purposes it was intended to serve. University of Oregon architecture professor emeritus Philip Dole has studied and written extensively about early Willamette Valley farms, and has described the characteristics of the early Willamette Valley side-opening barn as so distinctive that construction dates can be closely approximated. The type first appeared in the 1840s, was very common in the 1850s but became rare after the 1860s. With its 1848 construction date, the Watson barn was one of the earliest barns of this type. This type of barn featured a low pitched gable roof and rectangular plan, generally about 30'x60'. Large wagon doors were located opposite each other on the long side of the barn, allowing for teams to enter, unload and pass through. The barns were sided with vertical boards, with gaps between the boards allowing for light and ventilation.<sup>14</sup>

Typically, the framing of these barns consisted of six hand hewn members that ran the length of the barn, including two sill approximately 12"x12", two plates about 10"x10" and two purlins about 8"x8". Often these members had a scarf joint at mid span, due to the difficulty of lifting such large members into place.<sup>15</sup> The Watson-Price barn is a prototypical

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example of the side-opening barn, containing all the characteristics of form and structure described by Dole. The six principal members in the barn are not scarf jointed, they run the full length of the barn.

The organization of the barn is a reflection of its early construction date in that it is organized for grain storage and processing functions done without the benefit of agricultural machinery that was not available to early Oregon pioneers. As you enter the barn, there is a hay mow to the right and to the left there was a large open threshing area that has since been divided into animal pens. A loft above the threshing area was used to store unthreshed wheat. The process of threshing wheat before mechanical equipment was available in Oregon required an open space large enough for the horses to circle as wheat was tossed down from the loft above. The massive hand hewn timber framed truss described in section seven made this open space possible.

Early pioneer farms were self sufficient farms. Families would grow cash crops such as wheat, but would also raise crops and livestock for personal use. Typical farms of the period would include a cellar or a small cold storage building near the kitchen, a smoke house for smoking meat, and a small chicken house to raise chickens and produce eggs for the families needs. These types of buildings were often destroyed as they became obsolete, but all these buildings still exist at the Watson-Price farm, although some may be late nineteenth or early twentieth century replacements.

The farmstead James Watson developed has remained in continuous operation for over 150 years. Remarkably few changes have been made in that time. One source reports that as late as 1954, when James Price owned and operated the farm, water was still being drawn up from the well by a bucket and horses were still being used for farming rather than machinery.<sup>16</sup>

The farm was purchased by Willard Price in 1909 and has been owned by the Price family since that time. The Price family is related to the Nathum King family that originally settled Kings Valley. The Price family operated the Kings Valley store from the late 1800s through the first half of the twentieth century. Willard Price purchased the farm for his son James and his wife Rovia. Rovia Price lived in the house until her death in 1986. The house is currently owned by Margaret Price Moore and occupied by her son Michael, his wife Courtney and their infant daughter Josephine. Josephine is the eighth generation of the family to reside in Kings Valley.<sup>17</sup>

### Comparative Analysis

There are no comparable farmsteads in Benton County. The Isaac King house was a similar house designed and built by William Pitman in Kings Valley in 1855 and was placed on the National Register in 1974. That house fell in to disrepair and has been destroyed. The barn associated with that house still stands, but has been substantially altered. There are a few houses dating to the same time period and a few barns, but to have both on one property still in usable condition is rare. To have the house, the barn and seven additional outbuildings is virtually unheard of.

The Watson-Price farm ensemble rates well in all aspects of integrity, retaining their location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. Very few changes have been made to the property. The only immediate threat to their integrity is deterioration due to exposure to weather. The house is in very good condition. The outbuildings, with the exception of the blacksmith shop, are all in functional condition although many have leaking roofs and some evidence of rot, particularly in the sills.

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## Conclusion

The Watson-Price Farmstead is an excellent example of an early pioneer farmstead and is locally significant under National Register Criteria A and C. The farmstead qualifies for criteria A under the category of settlement, as it was one of the earliest farms established in the Kings Valley area of Benton County. It has continued to operate as a farm and retains a high level of integrity in its buildings and landscape. The primary buildings that make up the farmstead each individually retain a high level of integrity as well. The house is a rare example of an early Greek Revival house that remains virtually unchanged since its construction. The barn is a prototypical early Willamette Valley side-opening barn that also possesses a high level of integrity. It is one of the oldest surviving barn in Oregon. A variety of outbuildings necessary to and representative of the operations of an early pioneer farmstead complete the ensemble.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Fagan, David D., History of Benton County, Oregon (Portland, A.G. Walling, 1885) 456

<sup>2</sup> Fagan, p.456 Fagan indicates Watson arrived in 1846 rather than the 1847 date in the DLC records

<sup>3</sup> Fagan, p.387

<sup>4</sup> Genealogical Material in Oregon Donation Land Claims Vol. 1, abstracted from applications by Genealogical Forum of Portland Oregon, 1957

<sup>5</sup> Fagan p.387

<sup>6</sup> Benton County Cultural and Historic Survey Vol. 1 1983, p.2

<sup>7</sup> Michael Moore, personal communication, May 2004

<sup>8</sup> Philip Dole, "Buildings and Gardens: Farmhouses and Barns of the Willamette Valley", Space, Style and Structure: building in Northwest America, ed. Thomas Vaughn (Portland: Oregon Historical Society, 1974) 108. Dole notes the existence of the Isaac King house which has since been demolished.

<sup>9</sup> Fagan p.524

<sup>10</sup> Elizabeth Walton Potter and Alfred Staehli History of HABS HAER in Oregon, manuscript, 1984

<sup>11</sup> Danell Aukerman, ed. WPA Historical Records Survey-Interviews Mark Phinney (2000) p.262

<sup>12</sup> Marion Teal, "House Built 102 Years Ago Still Used by Farm Family" Corvallis Gazette Times, January 25, 1954 p. 2

<sup>13</sup> Dole p. 93

<sup>14</sup> Dole p.89

<sup>15</sup> Dole p. 91

<sup>16</sup> Teal p.2

<sup>17</sup> Michael Moore, personal communication, May 2004

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**Verbal Boundary Description:** The nominated area is located in Township 10S, Range 6W, Section 29 of the Willamette Meridian, in Benton County Oregon. The area includes a portion of tax lot 500. The north boundary of the nominated area runs parallel to the north wall of the house, along a wire fence approximately 20' north of the house, following the fence as it angles toward Plunkett (Watson) Creek. The east boundary runs along a wire fence just east of the driveway. The south runs along the wire fence just south of the driveway, to a point just east of the blacksmith shop, and then follows the fence as it turns south toward Plunkett (Watson) Creek. The boundary then follows the creek to a point where the creek intersects with a line running parallel to the south wall of the machine shed, 20' south of the machine shed. The west boundary runs parallel to the west wall of the barn, 20' west of the barn. The boundary then runs parallel to the north wall of the barn, 20' from the barn, to Plunkett (Watson) Creek, then along the creek to the wire fence running north of the house.

**Boundary Justification:** The nominated area was selected to include the house, barn and all other contributing buildings using existing landscape features, including fencing and the creek, as boundaries where possible.

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### Photograph Descriptions

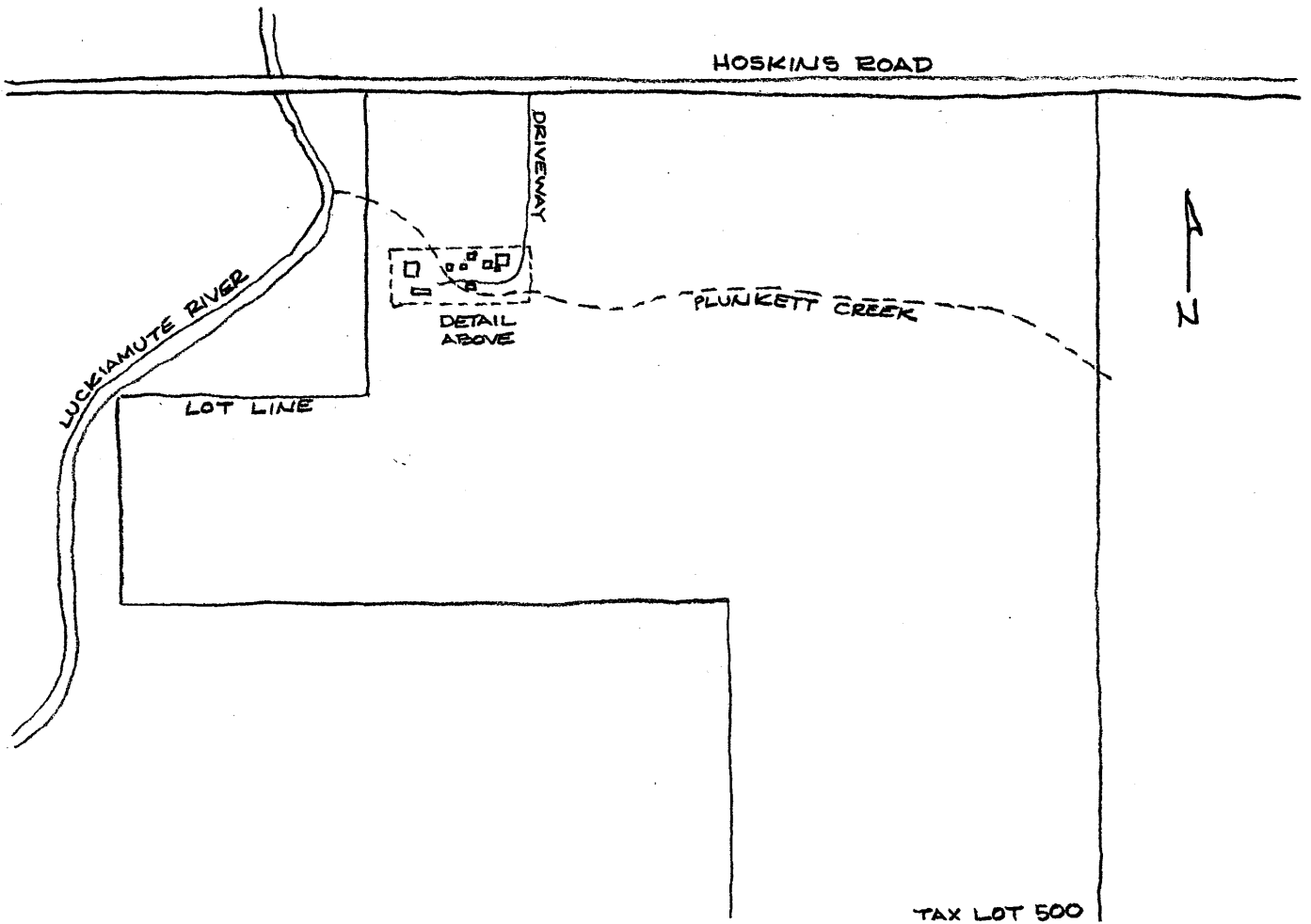
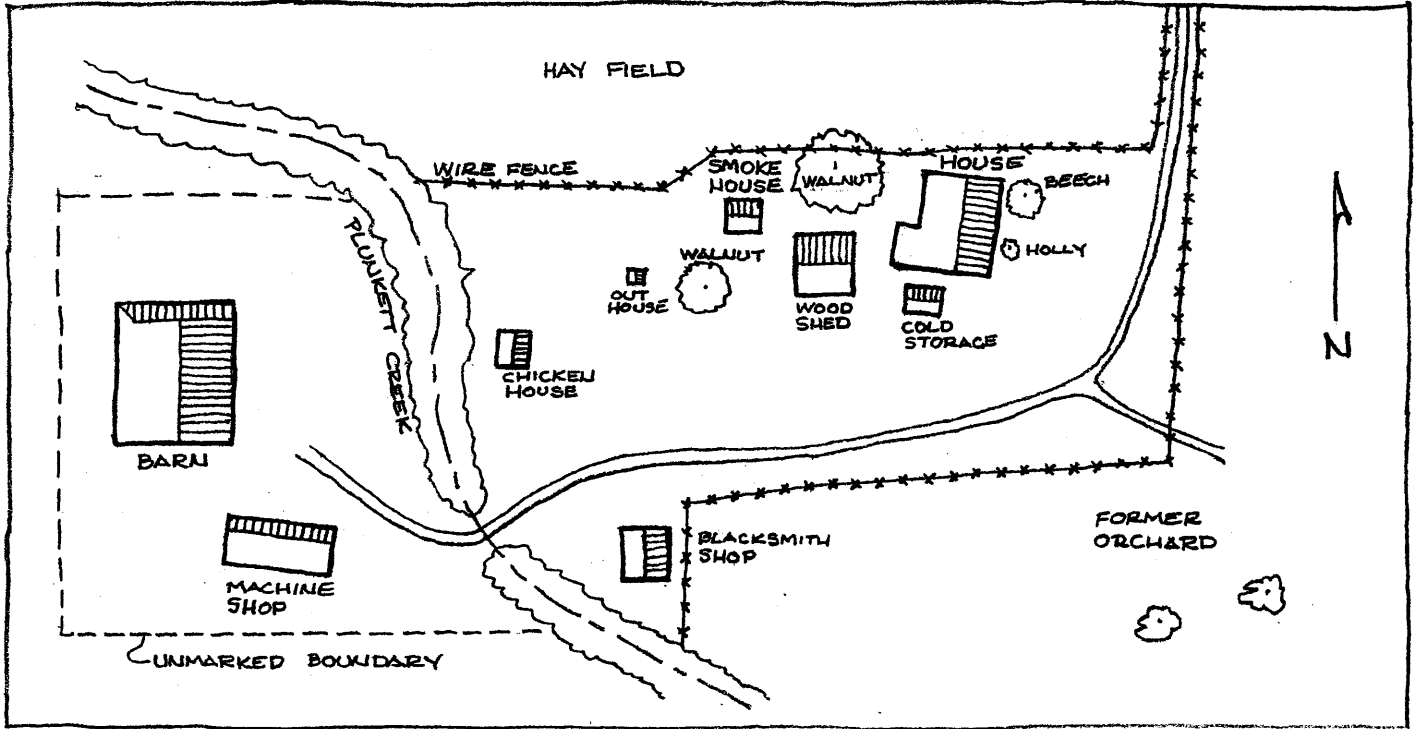
Watson-Price Farmstead,  
23380 Hoskins Road, Philomath Oregon  
Photographer: Sueann Brown, May 2004  
Negatives are stored at the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office

- 1) House and Cold Storage Building, south and east(front) elevations
- 2) House, front porch, east elevation
- 3) House, cornice detail, northeast corner
- 4) House, north and west elevations, from rear
- 5) House, north elevation, from driveway
- 6) House, front porch column detail
- 7) House, interior, parlor looking northeast
- 8) House, interior, door to front bedroom
- 9) House, interior, kitchen looking southeast
- 10) House, interior, fireplace in master bedroom (first floor)
- 11) House, interior, second floor north bedroom, looking north
- 12) Cold Storage Building, north and west elevations
- 13) View of the site from the south showing, from left: smoke house, wood shed, house and cold storage building
- 14) Wood Shed, west and south elevations
- 15) Smoke House, south and east elevations
- 16) Outhouse, north and east elevations, with chicken house and machine shed in distance
- 17) Chicken House, north and east elevations
- 18) Blacksmith Shop, north and east elevations
- 19) Machine Shed, north and east elevations
- 20) Barn, south and east elevations
- 21) Barn, interior looking west from door, truss on left
- 22) Barn, interior looking south from the northwest corner of the hay mow
- 23) Barn, interior looking south toward truss
- 24) Barn, south and west elevations
- 25) Barn, north and west elevations

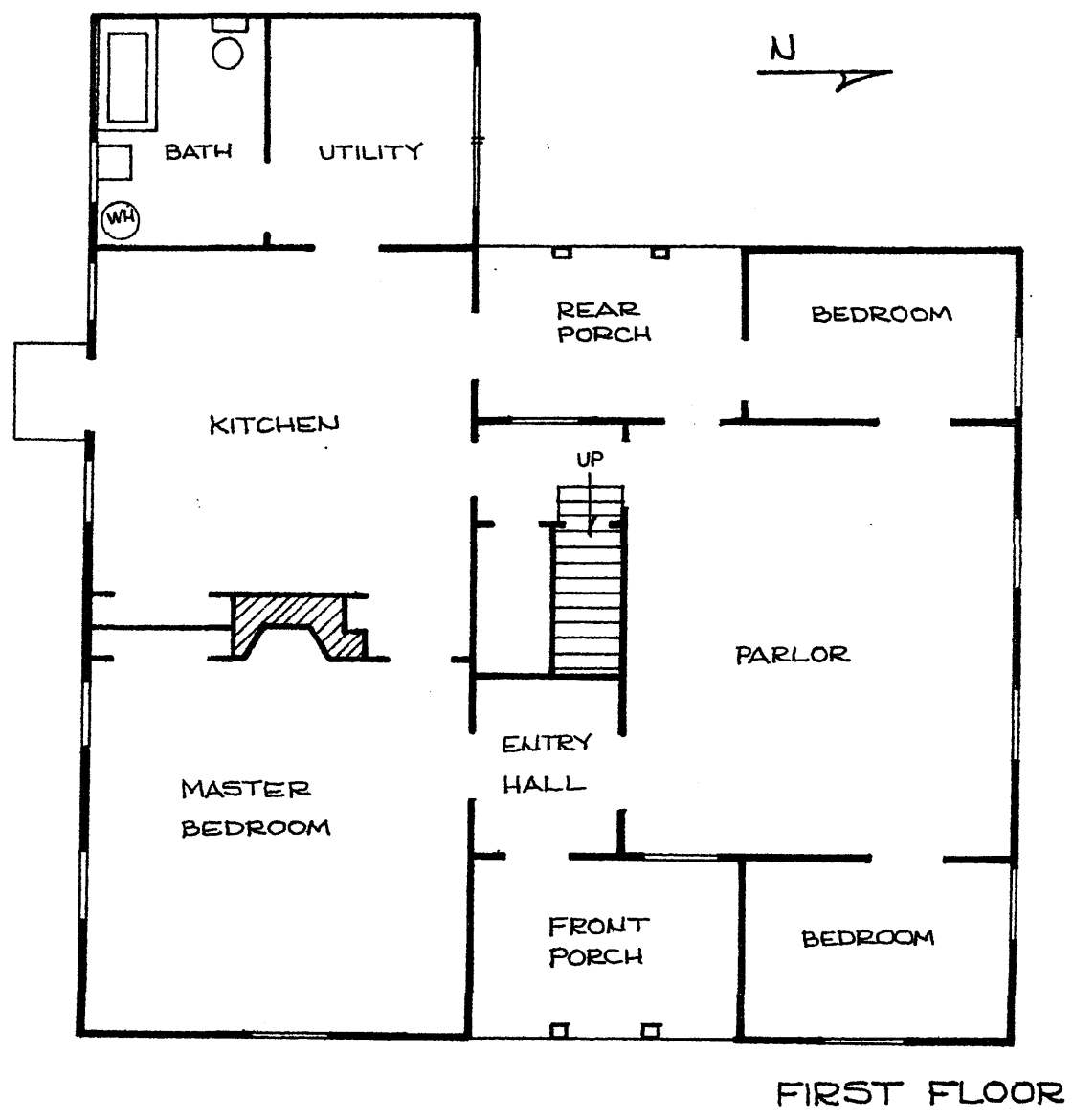
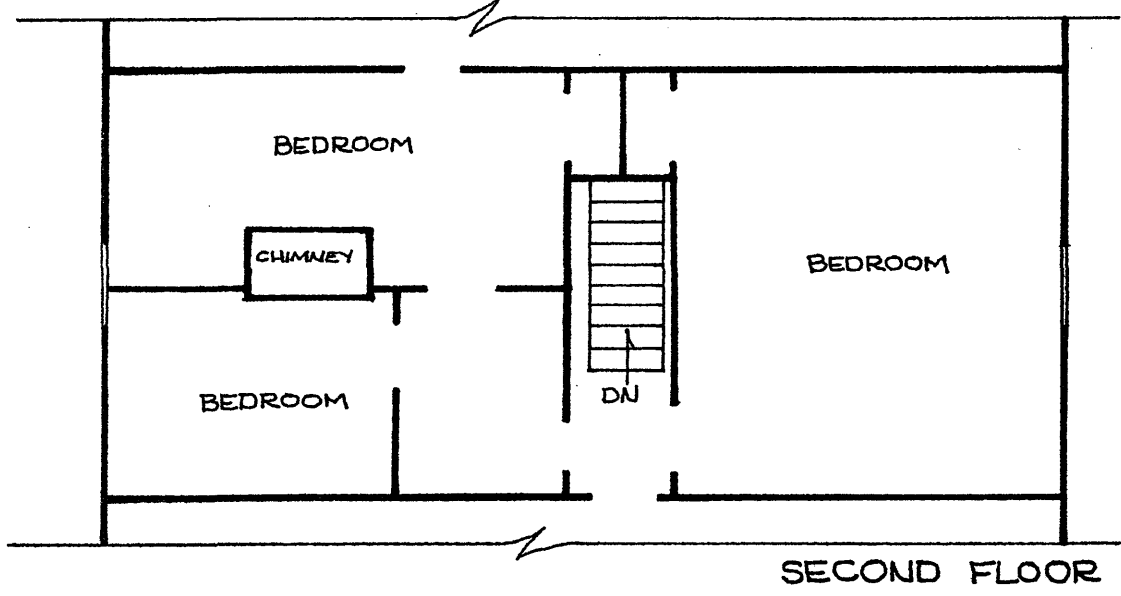


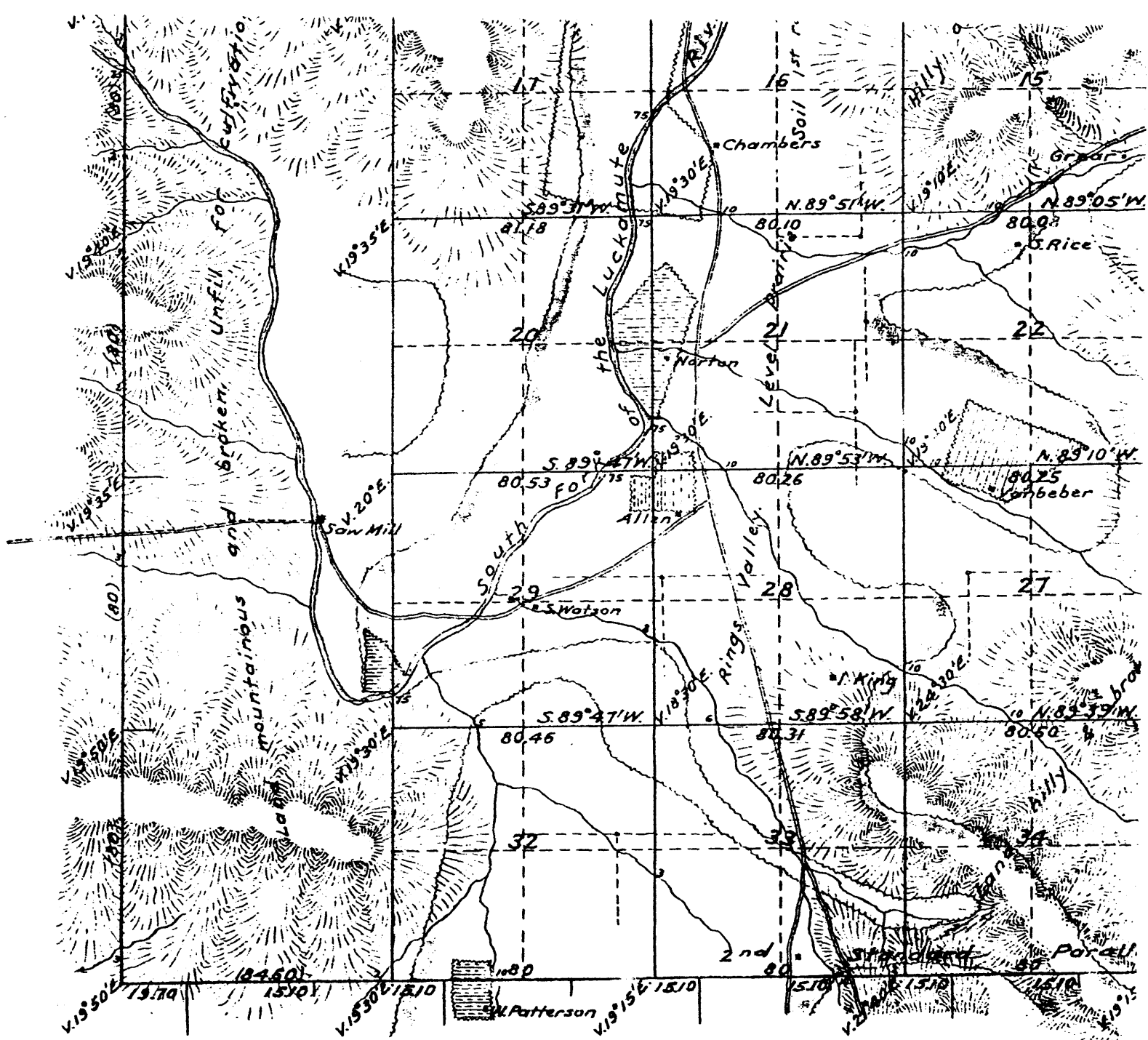


# JAMES AND MARY WATSON FARMSTEAD SITE PLAN



JAMES AND MARY WATSON HOUSE  
FLOOR PLANS  
NO SCALE





m surveyed	Contract		Amt. of surveys			When surveyed	When charged in the Sur. Gen's. Accounts.	
	No.	Date	Miles	chains	links			
1	Murphy	36	Sept. 19 <sup>th</sup> , 1853	6	03	25	June 15 <sup>th</sup> , 1854	2 <sup>nd</sup> Qr. 1854.
1	Murphy	36	Sept. 19 <sup>th</sup> , 1853	55	22	43	Sept. 22 <sup>nd</sup> , 1854	3 <sup>rd</sup> Qr. 1854.
	"	"	"	6	04	60		
19,351.01								

The above No. 6 West, of is strictly cor thereof on fi and approve Surveyor Gen Salem, Sept'r.

T105 26W