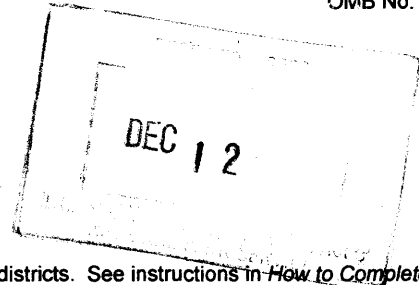


1419

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 instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name THE MOUNTAIN HOUSE

other names/site number Barron Stage Stop, Barron Station

2. Location

street & number 1148 Old Highway 99 South not for publication

city or town Ashland vicinity

state Oregon code OR county Jackson code 029 zip code 97520

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

James Hamrick 5 Dec. 03
Signature of certifying official/Title/ Deputy SHPO Date

State or Federal agency and bureau / Oregon State Historic Preservation Office

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

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- 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 1/24/04
Signature of Keeper Date of Action

THE MOUNTAIN HOUSE
Name of Property

Jackson County, Oregon
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	6	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
2	6	Total

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

none

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: Hotel (Way Station) _____

Domestic: Hotel (Stage Stop) _____

Domestic: Single Dwelling _____

Agriculture: Storage _____

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: Single Dwelling _____

Vacant/Not in Use; _____

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Vernacular: Classical/Settlement Period _____

Vernacular: Double-stack "I" House _____

Vernacular: Agricultural (Brick) _____

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Wood; Post & Pier _____

walls Wood; Horizontal Board, Lapped _____

Wood; Horizontal Board, Drop _____

roof Asphalt _____

other Stone: Sandstone _____

Narrative Description

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

Please see attached continuation sheets

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number: 7 Page: 1

The Mountain House, v. Ashland, Jackson Cty, OR

The Mountain House, also known as “Barron’s Stage Stop” and “Barron’s Station,” consists of two connected volumes — the Mountain House itself, built in 1852 and a two story volume that was added to it in 1887. The Mountain House is one of the first frame dwellings built in Oregon south of the Willamette Valley and is the oldest known dwelling in southern Oregon. An important traveler’s landmark and way station during the area’s pioneer settlement era, the Mountain House is built of plank and balloon framing and remains an intact example of a very early vernacular dwelling. The 1852 Mountain House, although currently in only poor-to-fair condition, retains very high integrity to its original design. The fine two-story volume, also built in the vernacular style, was added to the re-oriented Mountain House in 1887 and a contributing brick structure was added to the complex circa 1890 and was an integral element of the property by 1904, when Major Hugh Barron died and the land was transferred to his children.

The combined structure, still known as the “Mountain House” and the associated outbuilding are rare examples of a very early architectural form in southern Oregon. The Mountain House, accurately relating its original design, history, and the associations for which it is significant, is nominated for listing on the National Register under eligibility criterion “A” and “C.”

LOCATION:

The Mountain House occupies a 6.52 acre parcel on the south side of Old Highway 99 South (Old Siskiyou Highway) about eight miles southeast of Ashland, in Jackson County, Oregon. The site is identified as 1148 Old Highway 99 South and is depicted on Jackson County Assessors Plat 40S-2E-32 as tax lot number 600.

The property faces on Old Highway 99, originally the “Yreka Wagon Road” and the primary stage route to California, then later the Pacific Highway, the state’s primary north-south automobile route. A 6.57 mile section of this route, including the portion that lines the nominated property, has been designated as a Historic Highway by the Oregon Department of Transportation. “This section of highway was part of the original Pacific Highway and was one of the first sections improved under the State Highway Commission established in 1913...historically this route followed the old north/south Indian Trail, the Siskiyou Wagon Road of the 1850s and the California-Oregon Stage Road” (ODOT, c1985:29).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number: 7 Page: 2

The Mountain House, v. Ashland, Jackson Cty, OR

Neighboring uses are predominately small, non-historic, rural dwellings although a large horse stable and modern barn with surrounding pasture are located across the road and to the east. The Hugh and Martha Barron House, built in 1858, where the Barron Family lived after Hugh and Martha's marriage, is about one-half mile east on Old Highway 99.¹

To the north of the nominated property is the intersection of Old Highway 99 with State Highway 66 (Greensprings Highway), historically known as "Klamath Junction" during the years when Old Highway 99 remained a major transportation corridor. The former roadbed of the Pacific Highway (and the assumed original location of the wagon road) continues north from Highway 66 into the area inundated by Emigrant Lake, a component of a local irrigation district. The lakefront area above the dam is operated for recreational purposes by the Jackson County Roads and Parks Department.

SITE FEATURES:

The nominated parcel is irregularly shaped with its longest length fronting on the public roadbed. The site is generally flat, with a modest rise to the south. Immediately west of the Mountain House a sharp drop in grade leads to a pasture.

As a result of the re-grading of the road over the past century, the Mountain House now sits on a slightly elevated site above the roadbed of the Old Highway 99, behind a stacked cobblestone retaining wall of uncertain date. This wall, while attractive, clearly post-dates the period of significance, as shown in Photograph #2.

Setback is approximately 20' from the road. No designed or seemingly significant landscape features remain or are known to have existed historically other than the now-removed wood fence that lined the roadbed (See photographs #1 and #2). Today a

¹ The Hugh Barron House (built 1858) is located at 1685 Old Siskiyou Highway and was included in the Jackson County Cultural and Historical Resource Inventory as Site #417, ranked primary. The subject resource, identified in that survey as the Hugh Barron House/Mountain House, is documented as Site #419 and also ranked primary. A separate form, Site #416 (ranked "minor") documents the "Barron Station Landmark" described under Site Features. Please refer to Section 8 for additional discussion of Barron's other residence and its connection with the subject portion of the once-extensive Barron holdings.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number: 7 Page: 3

The Mountain House, v. Ashland, Jackson Cty, OR

modern steel gate opens onto a central dirt surface driveway/parking area that is flanked by various non-historic barns and outbuildings. To the southeast portion of the property, fencing, cross-fencing, and loading chutes associated with the former ranching use remain. These features are of mixed wood, metal, and wire and there is no indication whatsoever that any remaining element dates from the pre-WWII period.

Long neglected, most surviving plantings are substantially overgrown and in poor condition. Mature trees, some clearly evident in available 19th century photographs, remain in the front yard and shade the two-story 1887 volume. None appeared to have been pruned or thinned in decades and most have multiple dead sections and an uncertain future.

A carved wood plaque in the shape of the State of Oregon is located on a tree at the NE corner of the two-story volume, facing the road. This plaque reads "Barron Station - 1st stagecoach stop this side of the Siskiyou, 1859-1959." According to the 1976 State Inventory form "This marker appears to be one of several which were erected at the time of the Oregon Centennial in 1959" (SIHP/Beckham, 1976). (See Photograph 22)

THE MOUNTAIN HOUSE [REAR 1-1/2 STORY VOLUME], 1852

Documented by archival sources and supported by physical evidence, the rear one and one-half story volume was built in 1852 by Major Hugh F. Barron, John Gibbs and John Russell at the intersection of their three Donation Land Claims. Named the "Mountain House" the building served as a prominent way station for travelers moving through the Rogue River Valley over the Siskiyou, as well as on the Applegate Trail or "Southern Emigrant Route" over the Cascades (what is now the Greensprings Highway), to the northeast.

Major J.H. Russell was one of the 4 Mountain House Boys... those Boys -- John Gibbs J.H. Russell Hugh F. Barron & T. Hare -- hauled lumber with ox teams 50 miles to build the frame house that is still being used as a beautiful home. owned now [1930] by one of the sons of Hugh Barron (Ann Hill Russell, 1930).²

² Ann Hill Russell was married to J. H. Russell and arrived in the Rogue Valley as a teenager in 1853. Please refer to Section 8 for more detailed archival information the construction of the Mountain House in 1852.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number: 7 Page: 4

The Mountain House, v. Ashland, Jackson Cty, OR

The Mountain House as built on this site originally faced ninety degrees to the north, with what is now the east-facing elevation facing toward the wagon road. The Mountain House in its original position is shown in Photograph #1, dated circa 1884, prior to the addition of the two-story volume. The volume as presently sited in shown in Photograph #2.

STRUCTURE & EXTERIOR:

The 1852 Mountain House has outside dimensions of approximately 32'-4" x 30'-6", not including the non-historic (reconstructed) shed-roof porch that lines the east-facing elevation. The Mountain House is a gabled-volume with an extended plane to the west, creating what is typically known as a "saltbox" design. Based on construction and siding seams at the SW corner, it is believed that this volume was originally built with a entrant porch on what is now the west elevation. Surviving lattice work skirting, a change in exterior siding, and floor structure support this conclusion however it remains somewhat speculative.³

The roofing of the Mountain House is brown asphalt shingle, over at least one earlier asphalt roof and a layer of wood shingles. Roof framing is of rough sawn 2x6" [+/-] fir rafters on random (30" and greater) centers. Rafters are mortised to the hewn top plate. Roof sheathing is of rough sawn and split 1x8" nailers, spaced approximately 2" apart, all appearing very early or original to the construction.

Small boxed soffits line the gable end and terminate in simple eave returns without any flashing or drainage element, typical of pioneer-period detail.⁴ A plain [10" wide] board frieze with crown molding meets the soffit and eave returns. Exterior walls of the 1852 volume are erratically framed, possibly an indication of sequential alteration. Verticals are predominately 5" x 5" roughsawn or hewn timbers spaced on 24" centers. Sills and floor joists that are visible include rough sawn timber with evident milling, hewn logs, and partially round logs, some with small portions of bark or wany edges.

The foundation of the rear volume is generally of 2" x 8" rough sawn joists laid parallel to the ridge. Posting is irregular and includes stacked hewn boards, split timbers, sandstone

³ The mis-matched siding at the former "porch" area of the NW corner matches the drop siding of the two story addition. The east-facing saltbox elevation of the 1852 volume is weatherboard.

⁴ Later structures (post-1890s) often retain eave returns as a design detail but are typically built with a sloped upper face to improve drainage and reduce decay.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number: 7 Page: 5

The Mountain House, v. Ashland, Jackson Cty, OR

and round logs set vertically. At this point it is uncertain to what extent the sills are continuous or how they are connected but the assumption is that an original hewn sill with mortises or lapped corners likely remains.

The siding of the east and south facing elevations, presumed to be original, is of 5/8" thick sawn horizontal boards laid approximately 4" to weather. This material continues (unpainted) underneath the non-historic east-facing porch. 4" painted corner boards survive at both exterior corners [SE and SW] as well as at the NE inside corner, where the 1852 and 1887 volumes meet. Again typical of early vernacular architecture (and in contrast to the design of the two-story volume) the corner boards of the Mountain House are set in plane with the siding, which other than at the west elevation appears to be original.⁵ At the NE inside corner the drop siding of the two-story volume butts directly into the narrow corner board of the 1852 volume, indicating construction sequence.

The original window pattern of the west and south facing elevations is unclear. This is particularly true on the west elevation where siding changes and the enclosure of the entrant porch obscure the original design. As revealed in historic images, by 1884 the east-facing elevation presented a large door and windows on the first floor with three square windows set just above the porch roof on the upper half-story. These three windows, each of six-lights, survive in poor condition. The first floor window pattern has been largely modified, with a horizontal aluminum sash window spanning the openings to the north (formerly a window and door) and the central area joined together to form a single large window bank that lit the kitchen sink area of the latest interior room arrangement. Two paneled doors are located at the SE corner of the building with one providing access to the upper floor. Three window openings are located on the south-facing elevation. One, lighting the upper story at the top of the stairwell, is missing entirely while two non-historic fixed obscure glass windows light the NW corner area, most recently the location site of a bathroom. Non-historic fixed display windows are present on the west-facing [rear] elevation.

⁵ At some point, likely in the 1960s, the entire exterior was clad in 8" aluminum siding, which is being removed at this writing, revealing the original exterior in generally good condition below (See Photograph #6).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number: 7 Page: 6

The Mountain House, v. Ashland, Jackson Cty, OR

MOUNTAIN HOUSE INTERIOR: MAIN FLOOR:

The original or early room arrangement of the main floor of the Mountain House apparently consisted of three basically square rooms with the entrant porch at the SW corner. Evidence of the latter is largely based on the remaining plank wall construction in this area.⁶ A second plank wall, partially removed, defines the narrow stairwell at the SE corner that leads to the upper story. This partition wall, while clearly early, does not appear to be original as floorboards on both levels indicate the stairwell was originally 12" wider than it is today.

Most interior walls are finished with horizontal 4" wide beadboard, laid over the structural members on the perimeter and applied to both surfaces of the remaining interior plank walls. It is not known if this beadboard treatment was an original element of the construction or a later, though clearly early, alteration. No evidence of any earlier wall surface is present and the surviving plank walls appear to have been left rough sawn, with no paint, wallpaper, or other finish treatment. Walls at the NE corner of the main floor, last used as a kitchen and dining area, have a low wainscot (approximately 30" high) of vertical beadboard with a small projecting cap detail. The wainscot, now painted white, also appears to be very early construction.

At the NW corner of the main floor of the Mountain House, along the north wall common with the two-story volume, is a fireplace. An original-appearing gray stone hearth and fire box remain, with the depth of the firebox reduced by a later inserted layer of red brick. Stacked fieldstones provide support to the stone hearth, as evident from below. A traditional pioneer mantle design of wood survives with chamfered base plinths, projecting bullnose parting bead-like elements, and a finely proportioned mantel top. The feature, while possibly incorporating an earlier element, was clearly modified or built entirely during the construction of the two story volume since it shares a chimney with a second firebox immediately to the north.⁷

⁶ 1x12" roughsawn boards in vertical orientation form the wall defining the porch area. Please refer to the attached floorplan.

⁷ The Mountain House had a fireplace located along what is now the north elevation (originally the east elevation). The chimney of this fireplace is shown in Photograph #1 and presumably did not survive the 1887 relocation of the original Mountain House to its present site and orientation.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number: 7 Page: 7

The Mountain House, v. Ashland, Jackson Cty, OR

Flooring in the 1852 volume appears to be original planking, now covered with a mixture of plywood and particle board beneath sheet vinyl. Ceilings are original-appearing 6" beadboard, applied directly to the joists of the upper floor.

At the SW corner of the 1852 Mountain House, within the area previously described as a former porch, a small substandard bathroom was created, probably in the 1950s based on the plumbing. This feature was very poorly built and extensive water damage and rot have destroyed much of the flooring and substructure in this area. At the SE corner, being the interior of the narrow stairwell to the upper floor, the wall is plaster, the only example of this finish on the main floor. Damaged areas reveal early-appearing split lath.

As noted above, patching in the floorboards of both the main and upper floor indicate that the present stairwell (approximately 24" wide) was at some point wider (approximately 36"). In its current configuration, wood risers, treads and stringers lead in a single straight flight to the upper story. The well is protected by a simple balustrade of 2x4" verticals posts and 1x6" horizontal boards with a simple 2x4" cap. The "newel" post at the terminus of the rail is additionally supported by two 1½" wide L-brackets that appear to be hand-forged. All elements are painted gray and show evidence of considerable wear.

MOUNTAIN HOUSE INTERIOR: UPPER FLOOR:

The west portion of the upper floor is located behind a continuous lath and plaster-finished wall that forms a hallway running the full width of the volume. An early appearing board door, with hand-cut chamfered nailers, provides access to the unfinished "attic" space.

On the east wall of the hallway, two early paneled doors with transoms above open into sleeping rooms, each lit by the square 6-light windows above the porch.⁸ Flooring here is simple plank, with all walls and the ceiling surfaces in lath and plaster. The lath, split as described before, is presumed original and the plaster, while cracked and damaged, survives. Baseboards are simple 7" [+/-] tall boards with "chamfered" edges. Door and window casings are simple 4" wide boards, all painted. Cloth covered electrical lines, surface mounted on porcelain insulators on the ceiling, provide for a single exposed incandescent bulb and remain the sole source of electricity in the two rooms.

⁸ The third window, at the SE corner, lights a landing in the stairwell area.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number: 7 Page: 8

The Mountain House, v. Ashland, Jackson Cty, OR

Apparently long un-used and exposed to the elements with the removal or damage to the windows, the rooms of the upper floor are in poor-to-fair condition at best however they still retain substantial indication of their original design and character and appear to be much as when completed in 1852 and remodeled in 1887.

TWO-STORY [FRONT] VOLUME, 1887

According to period newspaper accounts, Ashland builder C.W. Ayers was hired by Hugh Barron in Summer 1887 to construct a large addition to the Mountain House. As detailed in Section 8, the 1852 Mountain House was relocated from its original position facing the wagon road, turned 90-degrees to the east, and moved further back on the lot prior to the addition of the two-story volume to the site. Ayers completed his work in December 1887.⁹ The front two story gable volume forms the primary visible face of the Mountain House and is generally misidentified as being the original "Mountain House" or the stage stop. It is, however, an addition, and while a fine example of its type, was added to the Mountain House four years after the stage use of the site ended.

STRUCTURE & EXTERIOR:

The two story volume is centered upon the north elevation of the older rear portion to form a T-shaped floorplan. Overall width of the addition along the long (east-west) axis is 38'-1' with a depth of 24' [+/-] north-to-south. A full-width, 8'-3" deep, porch lines the front (north) elevation and wraps the east elevation where it abuts the porch of the 1852 Mountain House volume.¹⁰ The largely original upper portion of the porch on the addition is of wood frame with early-appearing beadboard painted green/blue that forms the soffit or ceiling. The overall footprint of the combined 1852 and 1887 volumes is roughly 38' x 56' with a total floor area of 1900 square feet on the first floor and 1578 square feet on the upper story.

The two-story 1887 volume rises from a post and pier foundation with some stacked fieldstone elements. Piers are general massive cut stone blocks with hewn beams and sills, all in very good condition. Floor joists are 2" x 8" rough sawn timbers running

⁹ See Section 8 for the newspaper accounts of this construction.

¹⁰ Whereas the Mountain House porch is entirely reconstructed, all but the vertical supports and floor structure of the 1887 addition porch (i.e. the roof, soffit, and rim) appear to be original construction.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number: 7 Page: 9

The Mountain House, v. Ashland, Jackson Cty, OR

perpendicular to the ridge. A larger 8" x 8" [+/-] summer beam runs midway through the volume.

The gable roof is clad with asphalt shingle and the single ridge runs parallel to Old Siskiyou Highway. A large brick chimney with three-part corbelled cap is centered on the south-facing [side] elevation. Siding is 8" drop shiplap without any watertable, stringcourse or other horizontal divisions. The 8" siding continues around the SW corner of the Addition and butts into the narrow corner board of the Mountain House volume on the south. On the west elevation the siding continues around the SW corner of the Addition onto the west elevation of the Mountain House and stops at the extreme NW corner, presumed as evidence of alteration or enclosure of the former porch in this area. While stripped of the original 6" wide corner boards and window trim, paint evidence revealed following the removal of aluminum siding provides a clear indication of the design of these features and will serve as models for their restoration.

A wide [10"] plain board frieze with molded crown meets the boxed soffits, each formed by a single wide board. The cornice and decorative roof molding are in good condition, but have dozens of holes from generations of woodpeckers that still inhabit the property. There are no gutters on the main roof however a deteriorated system of eave troughs (made from short, 24" soldered sections of terne or similar material) lines the east edge of the porch roof.

Two doors open on the north elevation porch. The central door, a 36" wide four panel door with beadboard, cross-bracing and other elements typical of the Eastlake period, is flanked by two glass and panel sidelights, set beneath a narrow 3-light transom window, all appearing original. To the east, opening onto the "Hall" a second exterior entry onto the north porch dates from original construction. This door, also a four panel design, is set below a two-light transom window. Windows on the north elevation are 1/1 double hung sash, all of which are original. Windows on the east and west facing [side] elevations are 2/2 double-hung, all with narrow hand-made muntins, and are also all original. (See Photograph #2)

Window and door trim, though removed with the application of aluminum siding, remains visible through paint shadows and is documented in Photograph #2 as being 6" side sash with crown molding. Projecting sills extended beyond the side cases and a simple

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number: 7 Page: 10

The Mountain House, v. Ashland, Jackson Cty, OR

descending block was present below the side casings on either side of the apron. Paint lines will be measured and sash replaced based upon this information as a part of the planned restoration.

The shed roof porch on the north and east-facing elevations was an original design element of the 1887 construction. As mentioned above the underside or soffit area of this feature survives and the original boxed beam with decorative molding forms the rim. The present vertical supports are 4" [+/-] diameter peeled logs, probably replaced in the 1960s or later. Paint lines remain at the rim that show earlier posts in the same locations to have been the 6" square columns, as depicted in Photograph #2, which also shows a small balustrade lining the porch. The porch floor is of 2x6" milled material, all clearly not original. Aluminum siding skirting covers the re-built deck structure.

TWO-STORY VOLUME INTERIOR: MAIN FLOOR

Eastern First Floor- the "Hall"

The first floor of the 1887 volume is a typical vernacular "hall and parlor" design, with a central stairwell dividing two large living spaces on the first floor. To the east, in what is presumed to have been the more formal "hall" space, a large central fireplace with cut stone box and hearth is centered upon the eastern, exterior wall. The original character of this feature is hidden behind an applied surface of used brick, probably installed c1970s, however the large wood mantel frame, with a projecting wood mantelpiece of delicate wood brackets remains. Open shelving is located on either side of the interior chimney, lined with 4" beadboard and surface nailed shelf supports.

Until February 2003 the walls and ceiling of this space were hidden behind applied celutex type surfacing and a dropped 2x4" framed celutex-clad ceiling that altered the interior volume. These non-historic elements have been removed, re-establishing the original ceiling height. The re-exposed ceiling and walls are all of painted 4" wide beadboard, assumed to have been the original surface treatment. At some point, presumably in the early 19th or early 20th century, the beadboard walls were clad with a muslin-backed embossed wallpaper in a brown "leather" pattern trimmed with a decorative detail band. The only area of the Hall to evidence any other finish layer is above the mantle, where a wallpaper detail band frames a panel of the leather-look wallpaper, applied over an earlier floral wallpaper design. Much of the wallpaper survives, although there is damage from the application of the celutex and plaster failure in many spots.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number: 7 Page: 11

The Mountain House, v. Ashland, Jackson Cty, OR

Flooring in the Hall is 6" wide board, probably Fir, covered with ½" particle board underlayment for a shag carpet and pad. The installation of carpet in this room is presumed to coincide with the creation of the raised brick hearth, applied on top of the at-grade stone hearth, which survives. Carpeting, particle board, and brick will all be removed as an element of the proposed rehabilitation of the building, re-exposing the original flooring. Baseboards in the Hall were 7" high based on physical evidence but have been removed, probably coincident with the installation of the celutex walls. Door and window trim is of painted 5" wide boards with projecting sills. There is no crown molding or parting bead, nor any indication that such was ever present.

Western First Floor- the "Parlor"

Like the Hall on the east, the "Parlor" occupies the entire western portion of the first floor. Prior to the present project, this space had been divided into two bedrooms with a central 2x4" framed "closet" wall that offered storage facing into each of the two room, as shown in plan A1.1 This divider, clearly non-historic (c1970s) was built of particle and gypsum board with sliding hollow-core doors and was removed in late February 2003. Celutex walls and a dropped ceiling, again as in the Hall, were also present in this room and have also been removed, re-establishing the original volume of the room.

At the rear of the Parlor, along the south-facing wall that is common with the 1852 Mountain House volume, is a fireplace. This feature retains the original mantel, stone firebox, and at-grade stone hearth. All are in very good condition. Once again the depth of the firebox has been reduced by the installation of a layer of red brick. Now painted white, this mantle appears to have originally been faux-grained.

Door and window trim is as in the Hall and survives. Baseboard, of 7" high roughly chamfered boards have been carefully removed to allow the removal of the closet partition and restoration of the flooring but will be re-installed as a part of the planned rehabilitation. Flooring, of 6" wide board, is covered with particleboard underlayment and vinyl tiles. This alteration is contemporary with the construction of the central closet space and will be removed to re-expose the original flooring.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number: 7 Page: 12

The Mountain House, v. Ashland, Jackson Cty, OR

Central Hall and Stair

The main entry door of the front porch opens to the stairway and a central hall that runs the full depth of the two story addition, connecting to the 1852 rear volume. Walls and ceilings in this space are of 4" painted beadboard, all original, with simple 7" high hand-chamfered baseboards. The massive newel post flares out into the center of the room, rising from an octagonal base. Turned rims lead to a battered octagonal shaft with a series of turned elements that terminate in a finely detailed cap post that flows into the handrail. Beadboard forms the stairwell's side wall, below the stringer, which flares out to engage the newel. A small closet with a board door is nested underneath the stair flight, facing north. Three original doorways with simple board trim and faux-grained paneled doors lead into the parlor and hall.

The central stairwell has painted wood risers, stained treads, and delicate turned balusters (two per tread) and handrail that rise to the upper story sleeping areas. The entire stairwell and central hall space retains very high integrity and appears virtually "as built."

TWO-STORY VOLUME INTERIOR: SECOND FLOOR

The upper story of the 1887 two-story volume has four sleeping chambers of roughly similar dimensions, each opening onto the central hallway and stair. All doors are original appearing, with four framed panels and faux-wood grain finish. The hallway and stairwell have painted 4" beadboard walls and ceilings, with a graceful balustrade (approximately 24" high) that protects the open well. From all available information this area, with the exception of the present carpeting, is virtually "as built" and like the first floor hallway retains an amazingly-high degree of integrity.

Each of the four sleeping chambers is finished somewhat differently, with beadboard over plank wall construction used for all partition walls. As depicted in the attached "as built" floorplan A1.2, Bedroom #7, at the NW corner, has early appearing wallpaper with a figured detail band that frames a wallpapered ceiling. A very early feature, this wallpaper is in poor condition with tears, heavy water staining, mold, and other damage. Baseboards are 7" high board [+/-] with a stepped chamfered top, somewhat similar to an enlarged v-groove shiplap siding. Door and window trim are simple 5" wide boards with no base plinths, parting bead or crown molding. Floors are of 6" wide planking laid parallel to the main ridge. All finishes in this bedroom, as well as all trim, appear to be original or very early.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number: 7 Page: 13

The Mountain House, v. Ashland, Jackson Cty, OR

Bedroom #4, at the NE corner, is of similar detail and design. A layer of wallpaper partially remains over painted beadboard but is largely missing. Bedroom #5, at the SE corner is similar in character, with painted beadboard walls. All door and window trim is as described for Bedroom #7.

Bedroom #6, at the SW corner of the upper floor is also of painted beadboard with faux grained door and window surrounds. A small paper detail strip is located at $\frac{3}{4}$ height of the wall, roughly equal to the door and window head casings. This detail strip, with brightly colored figures, appears to date from the 1940s or 1950s. With this exception all structure and other detail is as previously described, and assumed to be original or very early.

The four bed chambers on either the east and west side of the central stairwell are divided by a set of full-height closets, also framed of beadboard over plank wall construction. The closets on the east side are somewhat deeper than on the west, as a result of the chimney the rises from the first floor hall through this space. (Please see attached floorplans).

OUTBUILDINGS:

Originally developed as a traveler's wayside and long used a focal point for a large and successfully ranching and agricultural development, the Mountain House site has long held various outbuildings, barns, stables, and related utilitarian structures of varying design and construction quality. As early as 1853 archival sources refer to a "barn" on the property and the surveyors notes for General Land Office survey of this township, in 1854, notes a "barn" as corner reference.

As shown in the Walling lithograph and the few available photographs of the property dating from the 1880s, various agricultural volumes were built in close proximity to the house. In 1887, along with the construction of the two-story addition, Mr. Ayers was also contracted to build a "large barn" that may have been across the wagon road from the house. Today, within the nominated parcel, a series of connected outbuildings remain to the rear of the residence along with several other free-standing structures to the east. As is typical of such minor resources, specific dates of construction or original uses are difficult if not impossible to discern, with even the most substantial structures having likely served

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number: 7 Page: 14

The Mountain House, v. Ashland, Jackson Cty, OR

several different and entirely unrelated purposes over time. That said, the following catalogs the outbuildings on the site at this writing.

1. *Breezeway, n.d.*

A wood framed structure that connects the Mountain House with the brick building to the south, the breezeway has a wood-plank flooring on joisting that sits directly on the earth with small concrete footings along the west elevation. The weatherboard siding of the 1858 Mountain House forms the interior wall on the north while the brick masonry and the projecting brick hearth of the brick volume forms the south. Simple 2x4" walls, most milled, form the north and south elevations. Siding here is mixed, with plywood and vertical boards in a somewhat patchwork fashion. Large z-braced doors provide access through both elevations. The roof is essentially a shed roof, sloping to the west, although the ridge also slopes to the south. Roofing is corrugated metal. The breezeway is undated but, built of milled 2x4 construction, is assumed to post-date the period of significance. As an attached volume, it is *not counted* as an individual resource in Section 5.

2. *Brick Volume, c1890*

A two-story volume with a truncated pyramidal hipped roof, this structure is built of thick bearing masonry walls with arched door and window openings on the first floor. A coursed sandstone foundation is visible at the north. The exterior is of exposed red brick laid in common bond with narrow mortar joints typical of late-19th century construction. A plain board frieze meets the small boxed soffits. First floor windows are small wood-framed casements while square-topped second floor windows are 4/4 double-hung with no projecting sills or exterior casings of any sort. A former door opening is located on the upper floor, at the SE corner, providing indication of either of now-removed porch or exterior stairway.

The northern 1/3 of the first floor is a stucco-clad room without flooring and appears to have been used for cold storage although the presence of window openings in the exterior wall is not particularly consistent with that use as the original intent. The southern 2/3 of the first floor, divided from the cold room by a brick partition, previously included a straight stairwell to the upper floor, now removed. This area, apparently plaster over beadboard walls, is lined with simple wood shelving and has a wood-framed floor. Open floor joists (roughsawn 2" x 8") form the ceiling. The upper floor, with wood-plank floor,

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number: 7 Page: 15

The Mountain House, v. Ashland, Jackson Cty, OR

plaster walls and beadboard ceilings, appears to have been a single square room. The entire interior of the brick volume is in very poor condition, with substantial water damage to all wood elements.

Located to the SE corner of the volume, outside of and attached to the exterior wall, is a brick hearth. A stone hearth is located at grade in front of this feature and the firebox and chimney appear to be of handmade brick, indicating early construction. A concrete or similar material forms the "cap" or top of the hearth, with a round circular opening (approx. 24" diameter) to the rear. The brick chimney steps down in size and then rises along the adjoining wall but terminates just below, and in line with, the wooden boxed soffit of this structure's hipped roof, creating a detail of dubious logic that somewhat confuses our understanding of this design. The firebox has been subsequently plumbed with a gas line and burner but there is no evidence of any recent use and the entire hearth is in poor condition.

The original use of the brick volume is uncertain but it may be the structure referred to in the following.

Maj. H. F. Barron will have a blacksmith shop built this summer at his place at the head of the valley (*Ashland Tidings*, 17-July-1885, 3:2)

The substantial construction of this volume, the only brick edifice on either this property or the Barron's other dwelling to the east, supports the logic that it was built for a specific and probably commercial use of some sort. A blacksmithy, given the nature of the activity, would seemingly be appropriate in a non-combustible structure of brick. On the other hand it is unlikely that anyone would build a blacksmith shop in such close proximity to a wood frame building, even considering the original location of the Mountain House would have been some 30' further north. Finally, in 1885 Maj. Barron was living, and apparently running the Barron Ranch, from the upper house (which is more at the "head of the valley") and while he still owned the Mountain House, its days as stage stop were essentially over. The brick fire box appears an unlikely forge and the circular opening seems similar to the large round-bottom cauldron's often uses for laundry. Apparently by the early 20th century it was.

The first floor was cool and its shelves contained the fruit and venison my mother canned herself. Upstairs was random storage. Next to it

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number: 7 Page: 16

The Mountain House, v. Ashland, Jackson Cty, OR

was the laundry room where water was heated to do laundry, by hand. My mother had to work under real 19th century conditions... (Eddy Barron, 2003).¹¹

Based on design and construction detail, the brick volume is an obviously 19th century structure and appears on the site circa 1890 and is clearly in place by 1904, with Major Hugh Barron's death. Though not specifically dated and of uncertain original usage, the brick volume has likely changed over time and those changes may include conversion from its original function to use as a cooler, storage, lodging for hired help in the second floor, or something else. The brick volume however remains an important and significant outbuilding on the property. Dated circa 1890, the volume marks the end of the period of significance and is counted as a *contributing* building in Section 5.

3. *Garage #1, c1960*¹²

Located to the south and east of the brick volume, this shed and flat-roofed structure is approximately 28' square with a gable extension to the north, stepped back around the brick volume, with is approximately 20' wide. This latter area is connected to the non-historic porch that lines the south elevation of the brick volume with an open breezeway. Garage #1 has a concrete floor for the main volume and dirt flooring in the extension. Built of milled 2" framing with plywood and similar sheetgood siding, Garage #1 is clearly non-historic and is dated c1960 but may be later. Garage #1 is counted as a *non-contributing* resource in Section 5.

4. *Corner Storage, Barn #1, c1960*

Essentially a continuation of Garage #1, the corner storage and barn is a series of connected gable and shed roof structures that form an "ell" with Garage #1 and are located at the head (south) of the dirt driveway to the property. Dirt floors, what appear to be hay or storage areas, chicken pens, and various other spaces of indeterminate use, construction throughout is predominately of milled 2x materials, sheetgood siding and similar non-historic treatments. Portions to the rear, mostly appearing as animal pens or

¹¹ Mr. Eddy Barron, personal communication with Kay Atwood, February 2003. Mr. Barron is the grandson of Homer Barron, the youngest child of Major Barron, and the son of Hugh F. Barron (2nd), who owned the Mountain House until 1960.

¹² Structurally independent, the connected volumes of Outbuildings Nos. 3 and 4 are depicted on site plan AO.1 as a single footprint, identified as "Existg. Barn."

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number: 7 Page: 17

The Mountain House, v. Ashland, Jackson Cty, OR

agricultural storage, may include some older construction with plank siding and milled 2x6 or larger framing. Overall, the construction and character of this structure is substandard and it is counted as *non-contributing* in Section 5, broadly dated at 1960.

5. *Barn #2, c1950*

A small (10' x 20' [+/-]) wood frame gable volume, Barn #2 is located directly east from Corner Storage-Barn #1 and sits on a stacked concrete masonry units and grade. Vertical plank siding and milled 2x4" wall and roof framing provide structure for what appears to be covered storage. Barn #2, which does not use plywood or sheetgood siding, appears to pre-date the other structures and is painted yellow to match the house rather than the green that characterizes Garage #1 and Corner Shed-Barn #1. Dated c1950, Barn #2 is counted as *non-contributing* in Section 5.

6. *Hay Storage Shed, c1960*

A two-part shed roof volume with a taller portion to the south and an open covered pen at the north, the Hay Storage building is constructed of milled 2x framing with slatted walls providing ventilation. Roofing is corrugated metal over 1x4" widely spaced nailers. The Hay Storage building painted brown, dated c1960, and counted as *non-contributing* in Section 5.

7. *Garage #2, c1970*

Probably used to protect farm vehicles, this volume is formed by two adjoining shed roof volumes with open sides to the central driveway/parking area. Framed of 2x materials with mixed plank and corrugated metal siding, Garage #2 is grafted onto the north face of the stable building (No. 8), and is depicted on site plan A0.1 as a single footprint. Garage #2 appears to be of fairly recent construction and is counted as *non-contributing* in Section 5.

8. *Stable, c1960*

A large shed-roofed structure with simple trussed roof and T-111 and plank siding, this dirt-floored structure appears to have been used as a stable or similar animal-related function. A open vehicular-sized door faces west, to the central driveway area. Small partitioned volumes line the south and wooden "horses" indicate saddle storage and similar tack uses. Of more substantial construction than many of the other outbuildings on the

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number: 7 Page: 18

The Mountain House, v. Ashland, Jackson Cty, OR

property, there is no indication that the "Stable" was built during the historic period. It is roughly dated c1960 and counted as a *non-contributing* resource in Section 5.

OUTBUILDINGS SUMMARY:

As described above, there are eight structures identified at the Mountain House property, although some are combined volumes that include multiple roof forms, framing and assumed uses that may reflect serial construction and addition. Only one, the Brick Volume, can reasonably be placed on the site in the 19th century and even this is based largely on construction and design as opposed to any specific historic source.

The present wood-framed outbuildings all post-date the historic period by more than 50 years. In generally poor condition and with few exceptions of shoddy construction and non-compatible materials, it is the present intent to raze several of these structures and construct one or more new, compatibly-designed, weather tight storage structures on the property in their place.

SUMMARY:

The Mountain House, built on the nominated property site in 1852 and long used as a stage stop and traveler's station at the southern entrance to Oregon, is one of the first frame structures constructed in southern Oregon and is among the oldest standing buildings in Oregon south of the Willamette Valley. Turned ninety degrees and moved back into the site in 1887 to allow for construction of a two-story volume to the north, the Mountain House remains an important surviving example of one the very earliest examples of the vernacular style in the region. The building retains a clear individual structural identity that documents its original construction and subsequent development on this site. With plank walls, weatherboard siding, early wall and ceiling finishes, trim, and other features, the Mountain House exhibits an high degree of integrity to its original construction more than 150 years ago.

The 1887 two story addition to the Mountain House, built for Major Hugh Barron by noted Ashland builder C. W. Ayers, is almost entirely "as built" more than a century ago. Built in a later expression of the same vernacular tradition, the two story addition is a fine example of its type and serves as an entirely complimentary continuation of the older rear volume. The c1890s brick outbuilding, while not specifically dated, retains high integrity

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number: 7 Page: 19

The Mountain House, v. Ashland, Jackson Cty, OR

in design and was clearly on the site during Hugh Barron's life, reflecting the original development period of the property.

The 1852 Mountain House was built and used for nearly three decades as an early emigrant's wayside and then as a stage station upon the major wagon route into Oregon prior to the completion of the railroad line. As enlarged with an architecturally significant, addition in 1887, the Mountain House remains an important local landmark in this portion of southern Oregon and is strongly connected with the history of the area's earliest settlement and development in the last half of the 19th century. *The Mountain House meets eligibility Criterion "A" for its strong association with the early settlement of southern Oregon.*

The Mountain House, comprised of these two compatibly connected volumes, built for the pioneer Barron family and inhabited by its members throughout the period of significance, is a rare example of a very early architectural form in southern Oregon and one that effectively relates its idiosyncratic but significant development as one of the region's very earliest structures. *The Mountain House, accurately demonstrates its original design and construction, meets eligibility Criterion "C" as an exemplar of the vernacular style.*

The Mountain House, built 1852-1887 with a significant outbuilding built circa 1890 and standing prior to 1904, accurately and effectively conveys its original design, history of development, and the associations for which it is significant under eligibility criterion "A" and "C" for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

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.

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 a 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.)

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture: 19th Century Architecture .
 Exploration/Settlement .
 Transportation: Stage Stop .
 _____ .
 _____ .
 _____ .

Period of Significance

1852-1904 .
 _____ .
 _____ .

Significant Dates

1852 (Initial Construction) .
 1887 (Addition Construction) .
 c1890 (Brick Outbuilding Construction) .

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

n/a .

Cultural Affiliation

n/a .
 _____ .
 _____ .

Architect/Builder

Ayers, C. W. (1887 Volume) .
 _____ .

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Jackson County Courthouse .
 Southern Oregon Historical Society .

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number: 8 Page: 1

The Mountain House, v. Ashland, Jackson Cty, OR

Situated at the base of the Siskiyou Mountains south of Ashland, Oregon, the Mountain House was built during the initial settlement period of the Rogue River Valley and long served as an important point in the region's transportation system. Constructed by settlers Hugh F. Barron, James H. Russell and John Gibbs in 1852, the builder first served overland travelers arriving in the valley on the South Emigrant or Applegate trail and the California-Oregon Road. Later, designated as a stage station for the California-Oregon Stage Company, the Mountain House, (known also as the Barron Stage Station) served without interruption between from 1860 and 1884 when the Oregon and California Railroad's progress forced the company to terminate their use of the station. Upon the joining of the railroad tracks at Ashland in 1887, stage travel over the Siskiyou came to an end.

The original 1852 Mountain House was relocated on the site and augmented in 1887 by the construction of the two-story front volume. A significant brick outbuilding was constructed to the rear of the house c1890. Combined, the two portions of the Mountain House embody the distinct characteristics of travelers' accommodations in southern Oregon between 1852 and 1887 and the vernacular architectural forms that were prevalent during that period. The c1890 brick outbuilding, an unusual rural example of that type, was built on the property during Hugh Barron's ownership and effectively relates the status of his agricultural development in this area of the valley.

Highly significant for its long associations with early transportation and settlement in southern Oregon, as well as for its architectural importance, the Mountain House is nominated under Criteria "A" and "C" for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

THE MOUNTAIN HOUSE 1852-1859

As the weather softened in the Rogue River Valley in 1851, settlers arrived a few at a time. They came south from the Willamette Valley, north from California, and east through the Cascade range to take advantage of the Donation Land Claim Act passed by the U.S. Congress in September, 1850. The Act encouraged potential settlers to move west in search of free, farmable land, allowing a married couple 640 acres of land and a single man 320 acres, providing the settler was in Oregon Territory on December 1, 1850. Claims amounting to one-half that much were available after December 1 (Berquist, 1957:28-8).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number: 8 Page: 2

The Mountain House, v. Ashland, Jackson Cty, OR

In southern Oregon, cabins appeared near ferries at strategic Rogue River crossings and a few individuals selected donation land claims that summer—Alonzo A. Skinner, government Indian agent, settled southeast of Table Rock and Samuel Colver chose a site along the Oregon-California road. Among the settlers arriving in late 1851 were Hugh Franklin Barron, born in Lee County Virginia August 28, 1827, Tennessee-native James Russell, aged 29, and 22-year-old New Yorker John Gibbs. The three men, making a return trip from the Willamette Valley to northern California, paused in the upper Bear Creek Valley and decided to stay.¹

Hugh Barron and his two companions were not the first Euro-Americans to visit the area. During the preceding three decades, fur trappers, military explorers, and entrepreneurs traversed the region. In February 1827, Peter Skene Ogden, a Hudson's Bay Company employee, led the earliest known fur trade expedition down the slopes of the Siskiyou to camp on the same oak-covered site visited by Barron, Gibbs and Russell thirty years later. Ogden described the country:

All here looks like summer...the Oaks here being nearly double the size of any I have seen this season... this is certainly a fine Country and probably no Climate in any Country equal to it... Birds of all kinds, grass green and at its full growth (LaLande, 1987:59).

For the next twenty-five years trappers and government explorers used the ancient north-south route that became the Oregon-California Trail. In 1829, Hudson's Bay Company trapper Alexander McLeod crossed into the Rogue drainage and during the 1830's and 1840's others passed through—trapping, hunting, and occasionally clashing with inhabitants. In 1837, Ewing Young led a large cattle drive through the region on his way from California to the Willamette Valley. In September 1841, members of the U.S. Navy Exploring Expedition led by George F. Emmons, explored the Rogue River Valley while traveling south between the Columbia River and San Francisco Bay.

In June 1846, Jesse and Lindsay Applegate, Levi Scott, and others forged a wagon route along the Oregon-California Trail before turning east through the Cascades toward

¹ Several sources indicate the presence of a fourth man, Thomas Hare, in the original group. Hare, whose name does not appear in early Jackson County records, apparently departed the area early.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number: 8 Page: 3

The Mountain House, v. Ashland, Jackson Cty, OR

Klamath Lake. Camped on Emigrant Creek near the place where Ogden had stopped twenty years earlier, Lindsay Applegate described a view that,

....seemed like a green meadow, interspersed with groves of oaks which appeared like vast orchards. All day long we traveled over rich black soil covered with rank grass, clover and pea vine (Applegate, 1921).

The 1848 California gold discovery brought hundreds of prospectors through the Bear Creek Valley and over the Siskiyou on the way from the Willamette Valley to the gold fields. These miners prospected the creeks and ravines as they headed south. By the summer of 1850, gold had been found near the mouth of Josephine Creek on the Illinois River, and in December 1851, miners found gold near Jacksonville. Soon miners rushed into the region, fanning out along the Applegate, Illinois and Rogue Rivers and their tributary streams.

In the late autumn of 1851, Barron, Gibbs and Russell each selected a 160-acre donation land claim near the base of the Siskiyou Mountains. A substantial stream, now known as Hill Creek, coursed through each claim. The three men saw tremendous opportunity in the steady numbers of travelers along the road that crossed their newly acquired land. To fulfill the Donation Act requirement that settlers construct built improvements on new claims and to create a lucrative business, Barron, Gibbs and Russell planned a substantial hostelry at the common corner of their three claims (TS 40 South Range 2 East, DLC #s 37, 38 and 39).

Leaving his partners to construct a modest cabin for winter shelter and to begin work on a barn and other improvements, James Russell hurried north to the Willamette Valley for seed potatoes, vegetable seeds, flour and other food supplies. On subsequent pack trips to Scottsburg and into California he stocked up on staple goods, tools, and other equipment. Returning from the Willamette Valley, he brought cattle, pigs and chickens (Clarke, 1903:47, Gaston, 1912:850:3 and 1088:9).

In the spring of 1852, with onions, potatoes, peas and cabbages and grain crops planted, Barron and Gibbs began work on the Mountain House. Realizing that the residence would need to shelter and board many travelers over several years, the men planned a substantial structure, to be built of framed and sawn-lumber, in the style that they knew well from the

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number: 8 Page: 4

The Mountain House, v. Ashland, Jackson Cty, OR

eastern states. The nearest sawmill was miles distant, and required the use of an ox-team and wagon to haul materials to the building site. In later years James Russell's widow recalled:

[James Russell] was one of the ...Mountain House boys who... aimed to make that a stopping place for the night... After a saw mill was built on Rogue River in 1852, those boys [Gibbs, Barron and Russell] hauled lumber with ox teams 50 miles to build the frame house...²

The men raised the one-and one-half story building in a saltbox configuration with a long sloping rear roofline, mounting it on a hewn sill. They covered the building's exterior with narrow sawn weatherboard siding, joined the corners with plain corner boards, and extended a one-story shed roofed porch across the front elevation to welcome travelers on the roadbed in front. By summer 1852, the building they called the Green Springs Mountain House was well underway.

In January 1852, Abel Helman and Eber Emery had settled lands about eight miles north of the Mountain House at the future site of Ashland and had a sawmill in operation by late spring. On January 12, 1852 the territorial government designated the land surrounding the newcomers as Jackson County. As travel along the road increased in the summer of 1852, Barron, Gibbs and Russell had the Mountain House in full operation. Scores of people passed their door traveling on horseback, on foot, and in wagons. Men drove cattle the road, and single miners as well as families traveled by in both directions. Pack trains loaded with supplies for the mines and for Jacksonville merchants paused at the Mountain House. Here the sojourners bought meals and lodging, rested and fed their animals. As the warm autumn of slid into the harsh winter of 1852-1853, Barron, Gibbs and Russell found their business highly successful. They took advantage of winter to repair tools, construct other improvements and acquire additional supplies.

In April 1853, Isaac Hill and his family settled in the upper Bear Creek Valley on a donation land claim north of the newly completed Mountain House. Barron, Russell and

² Ann Hill Russell, Manuscript Notes, 1930. Ashley Russell, grandson of James Russell, wrote, "Russell and three other men, Hugh Barron, John Gibbs and T. Hare had built the wayside inn at the foot of the Siskiyou Mountains—the first building other than log cabins in the Upper Bear Creek Valley." Letter, Ashley Howard Russell to Nan Hannon 1988.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number: 8 Page: 5

The Mountain House, v. Ashland, Jackson Cty, OR

Gibbs loaned Hill some cows with young calves to milk, if he would provide them with a gallon of milk each day. They asked the Hill sisters; Martha, Mary and Ann, to sew for the Mountain House and the young women created bedticks, sheets, and pillowcases and kept them in good repair (Gillette, 1975:60, Dunn, 1929:n.p.) On June 6, 1853 Jackson County residents voted in their first election as the Territory chose a delegate for Congress and a representative to the legislative assembly. Nine candidates, including John Gibbs, ran for the position of Jackson County Commissioner. With 364 votes, Gibbs, the successful operator of the Mountain House, was elected to one of the seats.³

The summer of 1853 brought large numbers of new settlers over the Green Springs route into the Bear Creek Valley and it also brought tragedy. Hostilities flared between Indians and the miners who poured over the ravines and gulches west of Jacksonville and the tensions spread throughout southern Oregon. In the upper Bear Creek Valley near the Mountain House, settlers congregated at a few cabins for protection. Revengeful attacks occurred with increasing frequency on both sides. On August 24, 1853, John Gibbs died from injuries suffered when an Indian with whom he was acquainted shot him. Hugh Barron and James Russell buried him on a slope above Isaac Hill residence.⁴

Within a week of Gibbs' death, many large wagon trains lumbered down the Green Springs trail, hurrying to settle in before winter weather struck. The Mountain House was the first sign of civilization the travelers had seen in months. Riding with his family in one of these wagons, sixteen-year-old Welborn Beeson wrote in his diary:

...Caught sight of the mountain house with a beautiful green garden around. The alley is about three miles wide here... the cattle that are running around here are very fat...(Beeson, 1851-1856).

Hugh Barron and James Russell decided to purchase John Gibbs' land claim and interest in the Mountain House from his family (and heirs). Court-assigned appraisers examined

³ Secretary of State, Provisional and Territorial Government Documents, 1843-1859, Roll 8, Film No. 24, Nos. 1835-2135, MS, Microfilm, Oregon State Archives, Salem, Oregon.

⁴ John Gibbs is believed the second person interred in the Hill-Dunn Cemetery. The first was Isham Keith, the Isaac Hill's nineteen-year-old nephew who was also killed during Indian hostilities. The cemetery is located on a hillside above Emigrant Lake Reservoir.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number: 8 Page: 6

The Mountain House, v. Ashland, Jackson Cty, OR

Gibbs estate and recorded its substantial value. In addition to the "land claim and improvements," including the Mountain House and nearby barn, the appraisers counted in part, six acres planted to potatoes, twenty acres planted to wheat, 1000 head of cabbage, 400 bushels of oats, 100 bushels of corn, 5000 pounds of onions and other food goods. Tools and equipment comprised wagons, log chains and ox yokes, three plows, a grindstone. Stock included twenty-eight cows, twenty-six calves and forty head of other cattle, seven mules, three horses, a dozen hogs, and 175 chickens. Inside the Mountain House the appraisers tallied decanters, bar fixtures, cigars, dishes, six beds, 200 pounds of sugar, 225 ponds of salt, 135 pounds of fruit, seventy pounds of coffee; 40 milk pans, tumblers, a churn, and other items.⁵

The value of John Gibbs' land claim and the Mountain House was set at over \$25, 500, a considerable amount. On March 15, 1854, Barron and Russell paid the heirs \$6000 for Gibbs' interest (JCD 1:127). Two months later, on May 9, 1854, James Russell married Ann Hill, Isaac Hill's daughter, and brought her to live at the Mountain House where, with her husband and Hugh Barron, she welcomed the many overland travelers and new emigrants who arrived at the Mountain House. The Russell's first child, James Buchanan Russell, was born at there on September 15, 1856 (SOHS, Russell File).

Various documents for the years 1854 through 1856 indicate the prominence of the Mountain House in the upper Bear Creek Valley. In the late summer 1854, the Jackson County Tax Assessor noted that together, James Russell and Hugh Barron held 480 acres of land worth \$12,315.⁶ At the same time, while recording township boundaries in the vicinity of the Mountain House, U.S. Government Land Office surveyors used the dwelling and barn as reference points for their calculations. They noted, "This house [the Mountain House] is at the foot of the Siskiyou Mountains and is the most southern in Gold River Valley."⁷ In 1855, Territorial Road surveyors tied one of their location points to the northeast corner of the "Mountain House, thirty feet away."⁸ When officially defining the

⁵ Circuit Court of State of Oregon, Jackson County, John Gibbs Estate File No. 480.

⁶ Jackson County Tax Assessment Record 1853, 1854, Microfilm 22 Southern Oregon Historical Society.

⁷ General Land Office Field Notes, South Boundary Township 39, Range 1 East. Gold River was the short-lived early name of what has since been known as the Rogue River.

⁸ Territorial Road Survey, Minutes of the Jackson County Commissioners, Vol. No. 1

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number: 8 Page: 7

The Mountain House, v. Ashland, Jackson Cty, OR

boundaries of John Gibbs' land claim in the summer of 1855, Surveyor Sewall Truax began the survey at the southwest corner of the claim "in the Mountain House."⁹

On March 18, 1856 Hugh Barron married Bear Creek Valley resident Martha Walker at her family's home and the two moved into a new log cabin that Barron had constructed approximately one-quarter mile south of the Mountain House on his own donation land claim. In October 1856, James and Ann Russell turned over their share in the Mountain House to Barron and moved to Yreka, California where Russell established a butcher shop.¹⁰ James Russell had also invested in Abel Helman's flour mill at Ashland Mills, a facility that was financed in a complicated series of mortgages by Wagner Creek area brothers Eli K. and James F. Anderson. As a result of these transactions, in May 1857 Russell conveyed much of his donation land claim to James F. Anderson.¹¹

Each year, more settlers arrived to convert southern Oregon's grassy meadows into rich cropland. Log houses and sturdy barns appeared every few miles along the road. Gradually frame dwellings replaced the cabins. In 1858, Hugh and Martha Barron and their infant daughter moved from their small log dwelling to a new frame residence erected in front of the older structure.¹²

⁹ Donation Land Claim Survey, 1855, DLC No. 47 (T39 2E) and DLC No. 37, (40 2E).

¹⁰ Martha Walker Barron was born in Bethany Illinois, January 1, 1833. *Portrait and Biographical Record of Western Oregon*, 947; Gaston, Vol. 4:1088-9; Jackson County Assessment Roll, 1856, Microfilm 22, Southern Oregon Historical Society. In 1856, the record shows Hugh Barron and James Russell each with \$950 worth of improvements at the Mountain House. In the following year 1857, Barron holds the entire improvement.

¹¹ Jackson County Deeds, Volume 2, Page 505; Jackson County Tax Assessment, Microfilm 22, Southern Oregon Historical Society. James and Ann Hill Russell returned to the Rogue River Valley in 1860 where he erected a marble mill on Coleman Creek Road near Phoenix. In 1865, the Russells moved to Ashland where he built another marble mill and established a marble carving business. He excelled, as did his wife, at the art of carving grave markers. James Russell died on October 1, 1895; Ann Hill Russell died November 27, 1930.

¹² Gaston, Vol. 3, 850-853; Jackson County Tax Assessment Record, Southern Oregon Historical Society, Microfilm 22, 1858 and 1859. The "new frame house" refers to the Hugh and Martha Barron House, also known as the Barron-Parker Ranch House, located at 1685 Old Siskiyou Highway, east of the Mountain House. (See Jackson County Cultural & Historical Resource Inventory, Site #417).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number: 8 Page: 8

The Mountain House, v. Ashland, Jackson Cty, OR

As the Barrons settled into their new home, a new era in transportation began as stage travel developed along the California-Oregon road. Stages had traveled between Yreka, California and Jacksonville as early as 1854. . In September 1856, the California Stage Company began a tri-weekly stage service between the two communities, but with roads nearly impassable during the wet season, the company was able to operate the route only during the summer months. By early 1859, the California Stage Company gained full use of the route by receiving a federal contract to carry the U.S. Mails on "daily service in stages, between Sacramento City, California, and Portland, Oregon... from April 1 through December 1." Service was set to begin September 15, 1860 (Meier & Meier, 1987:17-18).

Gradually the difficult road conditions over the Siskiyou Mountain route improved. On January 14, 1858 the Oregon Territorial legislature established the Siskiyou Mountain Wagon Road Company. Operated at first by Michael Thomas, the company was purchased by Lindsay Applegate on August 27, 1859. Under Applegate's management, the steepest part of the road, beginning at a point just past Hugh Barron's upper farm, was finally kept open for travel year around (Meier & Meier, 1987:18).

THE MOUNTAIN HOUSE 1860-1887

With John Gibbs' death in 1853 and James Russell's departure for California three years later, Hugh and Martha Barron's assumed full management of the Mountain House. In 1860, under their ownership and management, the facility began a new era of use as a stage station. The California Stage Company (to become the California-Oregon Stage Company within a few years) contracted with the Barrons as one of sixty stage stations along its route. The 700 miles overland journey between Sacramento and Portland could be completed in about seven days. Stations under contract to the stage lines were often situated on donation land claim farms where the company paid the settler a set amount for house and feed a hostler and the horses. While the stage company paid the hosts for these services, the station operator could set his own charges to the passengers. The stage companies depended on the stations for fresh horses as well as food and overnight lodging for the passengers (Meier & Meier, 1987:26-37).

Eventually, Hugh Barron acquired title to both Russell's and Gibbs' land claims as well as additional properties, to own over 4000 acres of land in Jackson County; Gaston, Vol. 3, 850-3.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number: 8 Page: 9

The Mountain House, v. Ashland, Jackson Cty, OR

Cole's Station, located about one mile south of the California-Oregon state line, was the final California stage stop before the route crossed the top of the Siskiyou Mountains. The Mountain House station was the first scheduled "home station" in Oregon, on the north side of the Siskiyou, coming from California. Home stations provided regularly schedule meals and lodged passengers while swing stations were used only for changing horses. Other home stations in southern Oregon along the line heading north were located near present-day Phoenix, at Jacksonville, at Rock Point along the Rogue River thirteen miles north of Jacksonville, near the present site of Grants Pass, and at Grave Creek (Meier & Meier, 1987:37, 57-8).

At the Mountain House, where travelers had stopped for almost a decade, Martha Barron supervised cooks and other workers in running the establishment, while the stage company's hostler harnessed fresh teams for the stagecoaches. As the lurching vehicles converged at Barron's station, tired and hungry guests sought respite from the grueling trip at the Mountain House. The facility saw steady use throughout the 1860s. In 1865, the line was taken over by the Oregon Stage Company, although written reference continued to refer to the company as the O and C, or C and O line. Traffic between the mines in California and Oregon, pack trains to Jacksonville and points north, and shipment of goods south from Ashland's flour mill and woolen mill, kept a steady pace past Barron's station. In 1867, Jackson County officially established a "County Road from Jacksonville to the California State Line." At milepost twenty-five as the road near the stage station, the surveyor noted, "...Enter Mountain House claims; Mountain House bears west 45 links [29.7 feet]" (JCD 1:115).

By 1870, Hugh and Martha Barron and their three children Alice, (b.1857), Edgar (b. 1859), and George, (b. 1861), as well as two young children who were relatives of Martha Barron, lived at the upper (1858) Barron house, while overseeing the stage station operation nearby.¹³ In 1875, the Barron Post Office opened at the Mountain House and in 1877 Martha Barron was named postmaster.¹⁴ Throughout the decade she supervised

¹³ U.S. Federal Census, 1870. The Barron's youngest child, Homer Walker Barron, was born in 1873.

¹⁴ Ashland *Tidings*, October 5, 1877, 2:1. Lewis L. McArthur, *Oregon Geographic Names*, Portland Oregon: Oregon Historical Society, 1974, 42. The Barron Post Office opened on June 18, 1875 with James Tyler as the first postmaster. The office closed on October 15, 1910.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number: 8 Page: 10

The Mountain House, v. Ashland, Jackson Cty, OR

the cooking and managed the station and the post office, while raising her family. The Ashland newspaper editor praised her culinary skills in particular:

Travelers coming over the Siskiyou praise the excellent meals set before them at Cole's station, and the fare at Major Barron's Mountain House is a luxury worth traveling for (*Tidings*, 18-Jul-1879, 3:2).

While his wife ran the stage station, Hugh Barron managed the family's growing stock-raising operations. In 1879, owning a large acreage and thousands of heads of sheep and cattle, the Ashland newspaper listed him as the single largest taxpayer in Jackson County (*Tidings*, 10-Oct-1879, 3:2).¹⁵ In 1881, Hugh Barron opened a meat market in Ashland where he sold fresh meats, advertising "fat cattle, hogs, hay, grain and flour and other marketable produce taken at current prices in exchange for beef" (*Tidings*, 20-May-1881, 3:2).

By 1882 the Oregon and California Railroad had worked its way south from Roseburg toward southern Oregon. Gradually, the Oregon Stage Company closed stations along the line as the rails advanced toward Grants Pass and then, in early 1884, to the new city of Medford. When the line reached Ashland on May 25, 1884, the region was now fully accessible for both passenger and freight service to the north. Although stages continued to run between the railhead at Ashland and the approaching tracks on the on the south side of the Siskiyou, the number of stations needed for the shorter trip was reduced. In July 1884, the California and Oregon Stage Lines ceased the use of Barron's stage station:

The C & O Stage Co. have now discontinued their station at Barrons and will drive 6 horses without change from Ashland over the mountains to Rufus Coles (*Tidings*, 25-Jul-1884, 3:3).

In October, the new Kingsbury station located closer to the stage road east to the Klamath country opened approximately one mile north of the Mountain House. Although the stagecoaches no longer took advantage of the Barron's accommodations, the family continued to house groups of travelers passing over the Siskiyou. Gradually the rails

¹⁵ Jackson County Tax records consistently listed Hugh Barron as one of the highest tax payers in Jackson County throughout the 1870s and 1880s.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number: 8 Page: 11

The Mountain House, v. Ashland, Jackson Cty, OR

reached Oregon from California and on December 17, 1887, before a crowd at the Ashland Depot, officials drove the last spike, joining the north and south sections of rails and connecting California and Oregon. Staging days in the Siskiyou had come to an end.

In November 1886, Hugh and Martha Barron oldest son, Edgar Baker Barron, married Stacy Payne and the young couple moved into the 1858 Barron residence south of the Mountain House. Following the ceremony,

...The bridal pair drove up the valley to their home, the upper farm house on the Barron place which had been all prepared for... their occupancy.¹⁶

As their son Edgar and his new bride settled into the former family home, Hugh and Martha Barron and their two unmarried sons George and Homer, moved down the road into the Mountain House. Needing more space, they decided to enlarge the thirty-five year old structure. In the summer of 1887, the Ashland *Tidings* noted:

Maj. H.F. Barron will have his large farm house remodeled and improved this season, and has let the contract for the job to C.W. Ayers, of Ashland. The front section of the present house is to be turned half around and used as the rear extension of the new building. The house when completed will contain nineteen rooms. Work is to be commenced on it immediately (*Tidings*, 29-Jul-1887, 3:2).

The project contractor, Clarence W. Ayers, Ayers had moved to Ashland about 1880 and established a successful construction business. As the Ashland representative of the Sugar Pine Door and Lumber Company of Grants Pass, Ayers carried a complete line of building materials. He constructed many important buildings in Ashland during the 1880s including the Church of the Holy Rosary, the George Hargadine House, the Chilcott, S.B. Galey, and Fordyce Roper residences, E.C. Kane's house and Thomas Bolton's dwelling. Ayers also constructed a large, elaborate residence for prominent Wagner Creek farmer and businessman, E.K. Anderson northwest of Ashland.¹⁷

¹⁶ *Tidings*, 5-Nove-1886, 3:8. The couple's only child, Austie Alice Barron, was born March 10, 1888.

¹⁷ After his divorce from Elizabeth Hargadine Ayers in 1895, Clarence Ayers left Ashland permanently.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number: 8 Page: 12

The Mountain House, v. Ashland, Jackson Cty, OR

As his building project progressed, Hugh Barron planned construction of a new barn, to be built on the property now occupied by his son Edgar Barron south of the Mountain House:

Maj. H.F. Barron is having a large new barn, 100 x 50 feet built at his place at the head of the valley. C.W. Ayers has the contract for the barn, as well as the new house, but employed Wm. Patterson to build the barn (*Tidings*, 30-Sept-1887, 3:2)

In early December, the relocation of the Mountain House and the construction of Barron's new two-story addition was complete. Again, the Ashland newspaper reported on the project:

C.W. Ayers has finished the new buildings up at Maj. Barron's place, and the Major now has one of the most commodious and comfortable houses, as well as one of the largest and most substantially built barns in the county. The house is being furnished in fitting style by Mrs. Barron (*Tidings*, 9-Dec-1887, 3:2).

The dwelling that Hugh and Martha Barron directed contractor Ayers to build for them and their two bachelor sons was a large and comfortable, but simply-designed, home appropriately designed for their rural farm property. While some of their neighbors—older farmers like Thomas Smith and Patrick Dunn—had recently moved into “town” and constructed elaborate, high-style dwellings, the Barron's wanted a house that reflected country life. Their reconfigured residence continued the vernacular tradition that dominated southern Oregon residential design in the later decades of the 19th century. The plans for the rectangular building with symmetrical façade, boxed eaves, shiplap siding, simple door and window surrounds and few decorative details, resulted in construction of a spacious, but utilitarian farmhouse for the Barron family.

Although he was now over sixty years of age, Hugh Barron remained active on his ranch. In December 1888, he planted 2500 apple trees on “the sloping field west of his house, and on the same side of the road as the house” (*Tidings*, 28-Dec-1888, 3:2). Through the early 1890s he continued to work with his sons overseeing the extensive ranch properties and it is probably during this period that Barron and his sons constructed the two-story brick outbuilding located just to the rear of the main Mountain House volume. On November

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number: 8 Page: 13

The Mountain House, v. Ashland, Jackson Cty, OR

11, 1897, Homer Barron, the Barron's youngest son, married Wilhelmina (Minnie) Ross. The young couple lived at the Mountain House with the groom's parents and his older brother, George (*Tidings*, 15-Nov-1897).¹⁸ With his father, Homer Barron worked hard raising and selling livestock. Several accounts between 1899 and 1903 describe the Barrons' active stock business:

1899. About 250 head of beef cattle from the Barron, Wagner...and other ranches south of Ashland will be delivered to McDermott, the San Francisco buyer, in Ashland, for shipment below...(*Tidings*, 21-Sept-1899, 3:2).

1901. McDermott, San Francisco beef buyer has purchased about 800 head of beef cattle from growers south of Ashland, during the past week, including the Butler, Barron and Kincaid cattle (*Tidings*, 26-Sept-1901, 3:1).

1903. Major H.F. Barron and Sons have disposed of about 600 head of stock cattle to J.G. Mitchell in addition to the latter's purchases of beef. A drove of 196 head were delivered at Ashland Tuesday, for shipment south by Mr. Mitchell...(*Tidings*, 10-Sept-1903, 2:3).

1904. Major H.F. Barron, the well-known stock man, is engaging in the sheep business. A band of sheep which he recently purchased in the lower valley was driven through Ashland today, bound for the Barron range southeast of Ashland (*Tidings*, 13-Jun-1904, 3:3).

On December 4, 1904, Hugh Barron, a resident of the Rogue Valley since 1851, died at the age of 77 years in a wagon accident while tending stock. On December 8, 1904 his family buried him in the cemetery where he and James Russell had interred John Gibbs a

¹⁸ Hugh and Wilhelmina Barron had three children, Hugh F., born January 27, 1899; Isabel, born November 17, 1900 and George Francis, born April 4, 1908. The Federal Census for 1900 indicates that Hugh and Martha Barron, Homer Barron, his wife and child, and George Barron live together at the Mountain House.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number: 8 Page: 14

The Mountain House, v. Ashland, Jackson Cty, OR

half-century earlier. Noting Barron's long residence in the county, the Ashland *Tidings* stated,

...He has ever been held in the highest respect and leaves a record of a long honorable and active career... By careful industry he accumulated large landed and stock interests and has long been counted one of the wealthiest ranchers and stockmen of the valley (*Tidings*, 6-Dec-1904).

THE MOUNTAIN HOUSE IN THE 20TH CENTURY

While the period of significance and initial development period of the property closed in 1904 during the years following their father's death, the Barron brothers continued to manage the extensive Barron properties and family ranching operation. Their activities were frequently reported in the local newspaper.

1907. The sale of four car-loads of mutton sheep was made last week by the Barron brothers to Mr. Johnson, the well known buyer of San Francisco (*Tidings*, 20-Sept-1907, 3:4).

1913. The Barron Brothers, George and Homer, have just finished ... shipping their wool clip, having had about 9,000 pounds. The Barron brothers have sold their entire flock of sheep, numbering about 2,200 head (*Tidings*, 2-Oct-1913, 1:5).

Homer and Minnie Barron remained at the Mountain House and continued the property's stock and haying operations. Homer's older brother Edgar, Edgar's wife Stacy, and their daughter Austie, supervised operations at the upper ranch. In 1910, the census taker noted that Homer and Minnie Barron and their three children lived at the Mountain House, Edgar and Stacy Barron occupied the "upper" Barron home, while Martha Barron resided with her son, George, on his homestead (*Tidings*, 1-Jun-1888, 3:7). In 1918, Martha Barron moved to Almond Street in Ashland with George Barron, and lived there until her death on January 29, 1925 at the age of 92 years (*Tidings*, 30-Jan-1925, 21-Mar-1930).¹⁹

¹⁹ George Barron died in Ashland March 21, 1930. He left his widow Elizabeth King Barron, whom he had married in 1924.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number: 8 Page: 15

The Mountain House, v. Ashland, Jackson Cty, OR

Homer Barron stayed on at the Mountain House. The 1922 Oregon-California State Farmers Directory describes Barron as raising stock, grain and alfalfa on 1152 acres with an assessed value of 14,870 (Ore-Cal Farmers, 1922:12-13). Homer Barron died at the Mountain House on August 11, 1933, and his widow moved into Ashland. Following his father's death, Homer Barron's oldest son, Hugh F. Barron, assumed full responsibility for the family property. In 1960, Hugh too retired to Ashland and sold the Mountain House, ending more than century of Barron family ownership. Sold to another ranching family, the lot associated with the Mountain House was reduced in size, the result of partitions and surrounding development, until it reached the present 6½ acre site that includes the old Mountain House and its associated structures.²⁰ The present owners purchased the property in late 2002, intent on a major restoration project that will see the Mountain House used as both their home and, in the front two-story volume, a travelers accommodation. More than 150 years after its construction, the Mountain House is to return to its original role as a stopping point for travelers in the Rogue River Valley.

PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE:

The period of historic significance for the Mountain House is established as 1852-1904, reflecting the initial design, construction, and operation of the Mountain House as first a travelers way station and then, beginning in 1860, as home station on the California-Oregon Stage Company line. While the stage operation at the site ceased in 1884, the facility remained as a local way station until the design and construction of the fine two-story vernacular volume added to the earlier building in 1887 and the two-story brick building that was constructed circa 1890. The nominated property remained associated with Hugh Barron, its pioneer builder, until his death in 1904, which serves as the close of the period of significance.

VERNACULAR ARCHITECTURE:

The original 1852 Mountain House, its 1887 two-story addition, and the c1890 brick outbuilding are built in what is generally termed the vernacular style, a term used to

²⁰ Other transactions include Hugh Barron's sale of the property to Adrien P and Barbara Barats, (Jackson County Deeds, Vol. 61, Page 357. Mr. and Mrs. Barats sold the former Mountain House to Montegene F and Shirley E. Hall, Jackson County Deeds, C#4132; JV 67-4365.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number: 8 Page: 16

The Mountain House, v. Ashland, Jackson Cty, OR

describe simple structures that are built according to traditional designs rather than following the precepts of any particular fashion or outside influence.

Its meaning is flexible, according to the situation; but in essence, 'vernacular' means an unaffected, unselfconscious, unaccented, way of building...in other words, it is use of architectural style without being conscious of style (Gowans, 1986:41).

Vernacular architecture, in the folk-housing tradition, naturally characterizes much of the construction during Oregon's pioneer settlement period. Classical forms, interpreted in wood, were applied to the traditional gable and saltbox volumes and settlers who could built houses that were familiar, reflecting what they knew and where they came from. Boxed soffits, plain board friezes and eave returns roughly correspond to the entablature and framed pediment of the more elaborate Classical forms of the East and Mid-West and are often found on vernacular buildings, including the Mountain House.

Prior to 1884, when the first railroad arrived in southern Oregon, few buildings in the region made any pretense toward "high" architectural styling. City and rural homes alike generally remained within the vernacular tradition although the influence of new styles such as Italianate or even Eastlake, began to appear in surface detailing. With the arrival of the rails, especially after the completion of the thru connection to California in late 1887, new styles such as Queen Anne and more particularly the ready availability of mass-produced exterior detailing such as ball and spindle screens, pre-made eave brackets, window hoods, eave compasses, and similar work, quickly became popular in residential construction.

Still, especially in non-urban areas and even more particularly for rural ranches and farms, the traditional vernacular form, in some sources called the "western farmhouse," persisted well into the late 19th and even the early 20th century.

"The term 'western farmhouse' designates that extensive group of rather plain rural homes built throughout the 1870-1900 period...which do not comfortably fit within any national stylistic architectural vogue...The buildings achieve and exhibit some unique detail. As a group they express, as they reasonably should, interest in utility at reasonable cost — a comfortable home (Dole, 1974:231).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number: 8 Page: 17

The Mountain House, v. Ashland, Jackson Cty, OR

It is within this tradition of utility at a reasonable cost that Major Barron not only re-oriented and retained the original Mountain House as the rear wing of his family's new home, but built the large two-story addition at its front in the same simple rural vernacular. Although changes in style, technology, and the availability of ready-made materials were already influencing architecture in southern Oregon cities by the late 1880s, the two-story addition to the Mountain House exhibits a simple vernacular style on both its interior and exterior, that would not be out of place in a building built two decades earlier.²¹ As such, the two combined volumes that form the Mountain House today, though built three decades apart, represent the singular tradition of the vernacular style.

CONCLUSION:

With the two main volume of the structure constructed in 1852 and 1887, the Mountain House began as the way station that Hugh Barron and his partners Russell and Gibbs built at the beginning of Euro-American settlement in the Rogue River Valley. What is now the rear portion of the building was completed by Fall 1852 and was not only the first Euro-American building many pioneers saw as they entered the Valley, but served as an important source of comfort and welcome at the base of the Siskiyou Mountains. Later, during the period 1859-1884, the Mountain House would continue as a home station on the stage line that ran between Oregon and California prior to the arrival of the railroad.

With its transportation use at an end, the Mountain House was re-oriented on the site and expanded with the addition of a fine two-story vernacular volume built by C. W. Ayers and used as Hugh Barron's family home beginning in 1887. The two-story brick outbuilding to the rear of the house was constructed c1890 and the property remained the home of Hugh Barron until his death in 1904. The entire complex, still known as the Mountain House

²¹ Indeed, the interior of the two-story addition to the Mountain House shows substantial similarity to the 1874 Wolf Creek Tavern in Josephine County. In comparison, the E. C. Kane House, built in Ashland's Railroad Addition Historic District in 1886, the year *before* the Mountain House addition, is a comparatively exuberant example of the Queen Anne style, despite the fact that both it and the Mountain Addition were both constructed by the same builder, C. W. Ayers. Among other examples of "new" architectural styles in southern Oregon built before 1887 none is as notable as the Jacksonville Courthouse, completed in 1883, just before the first trains pulled into the new town, and eventual county seat, of Medford.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number: 8 Page: 18

The Mountain House, v. Ashland, Jackson Cty, OR

remained in Barron family ownership for 108 years. Representing a continuation of the vernacular forms that served as the primary architecture of the pioneer era, the Mountain House is rather amazingly intact and retains very high integrity. The 1852 portion is probably the first frame dwelling ever constructed in southern Oregon and remains the oldest single identified property of any sort known to survive in Jackson County.

The Mountain House, is highly significant for its association with the earliest settlement period and transportation systems in Southern Oregon. The rear 1852 volume being the original Mountain House, the oldest dwelling in the southern Oregon, as augmented by a fine addition in 1887 and a brick outbuilding c1890, is additionally significant as an example of the vernacular style.

The Mountain House retains a high degree of integrity and accurately relates both its original construction and the associations which make its significant. The Mountain House (1852-1904) meets eligibility criterion "A" and "C" and is recommended for listing on the National Register of Historic Places for its strong associations with the settlement of the southern Oregon area and as an exemplary of the vernacular style.

THE MOUNTAIN HOUSE
Name of Property

Jackson County, Oregon
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 6.52 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1 [1 1 0] [5 1 3 1 2 1 3 1 7 1 0] [4 1 6 1 6 1 3 1 6 1 1 1 0]
Zone Easting Northing
2 [1] [1 1 1 1 1 1] [1 1 1 1 1 1]

3 [1] [1 1 1 1 1] [1 1 1 1 1 1]
Zone Easting Northing
4 [1] [1 1 1 1 1] [1 1 1 1 1 1]

See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title George Kramer, M.S., with Kay Atwood
organization Historic Preservation Consultant date 1-March-2003
street & number 386 North Laurel telephone (541)-482-9504
city or town Ashland state Oregon zip code 97520-1154

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name John & Kathy Loram
street & number 1148 Old Highway 99 South telephone (541) 482-8969
city or town Ashland state Oregon zip code 97520

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

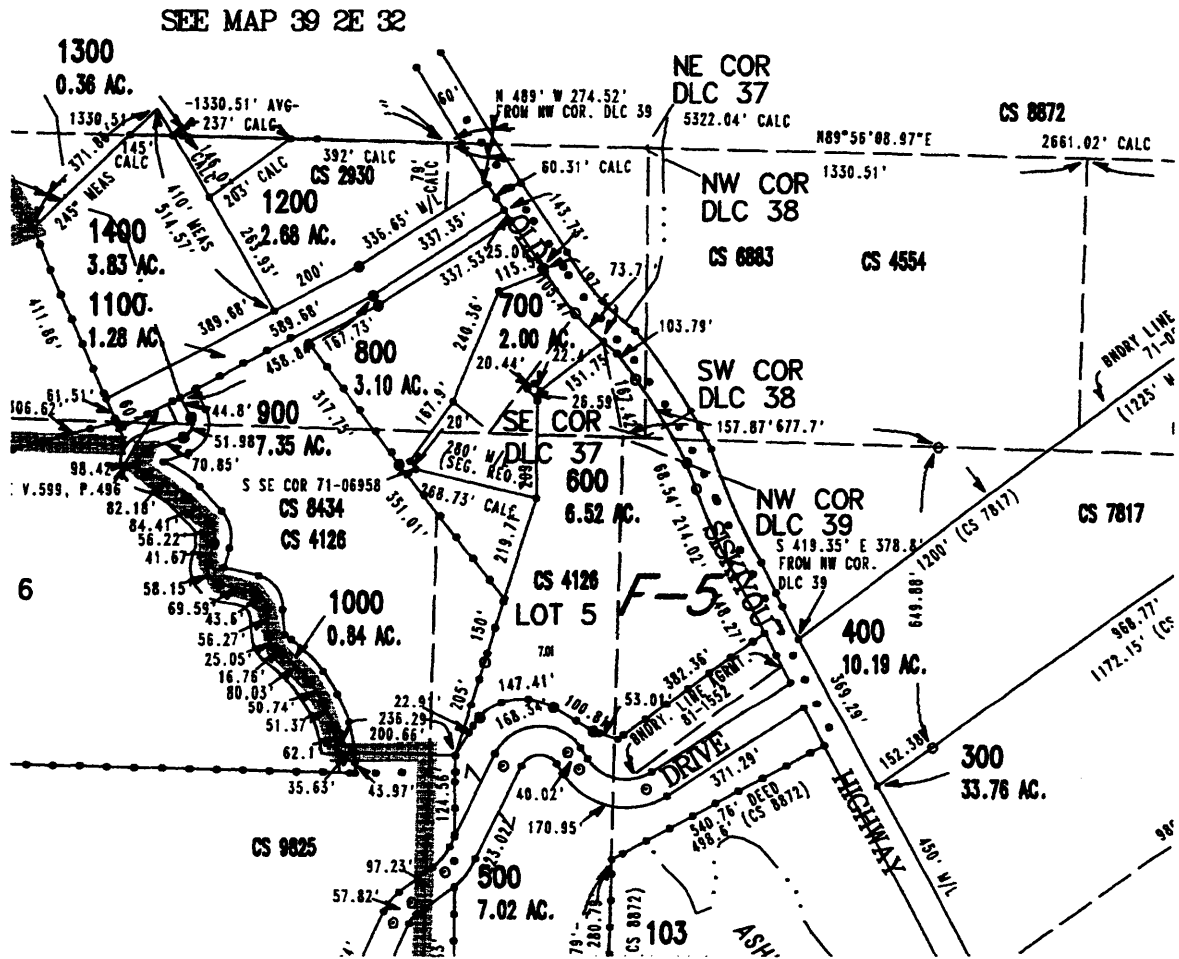
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number: 10 Page: 2

The Mountain House, v. Ashland, Jackson Cty, OR

ASSESSOR'S MAP



THE MOUNTAIN HOUSE
Jackson County Assessors Plat 402E05
Tax Lot 600 (in shade)
Source: Jackson County Assessors Office

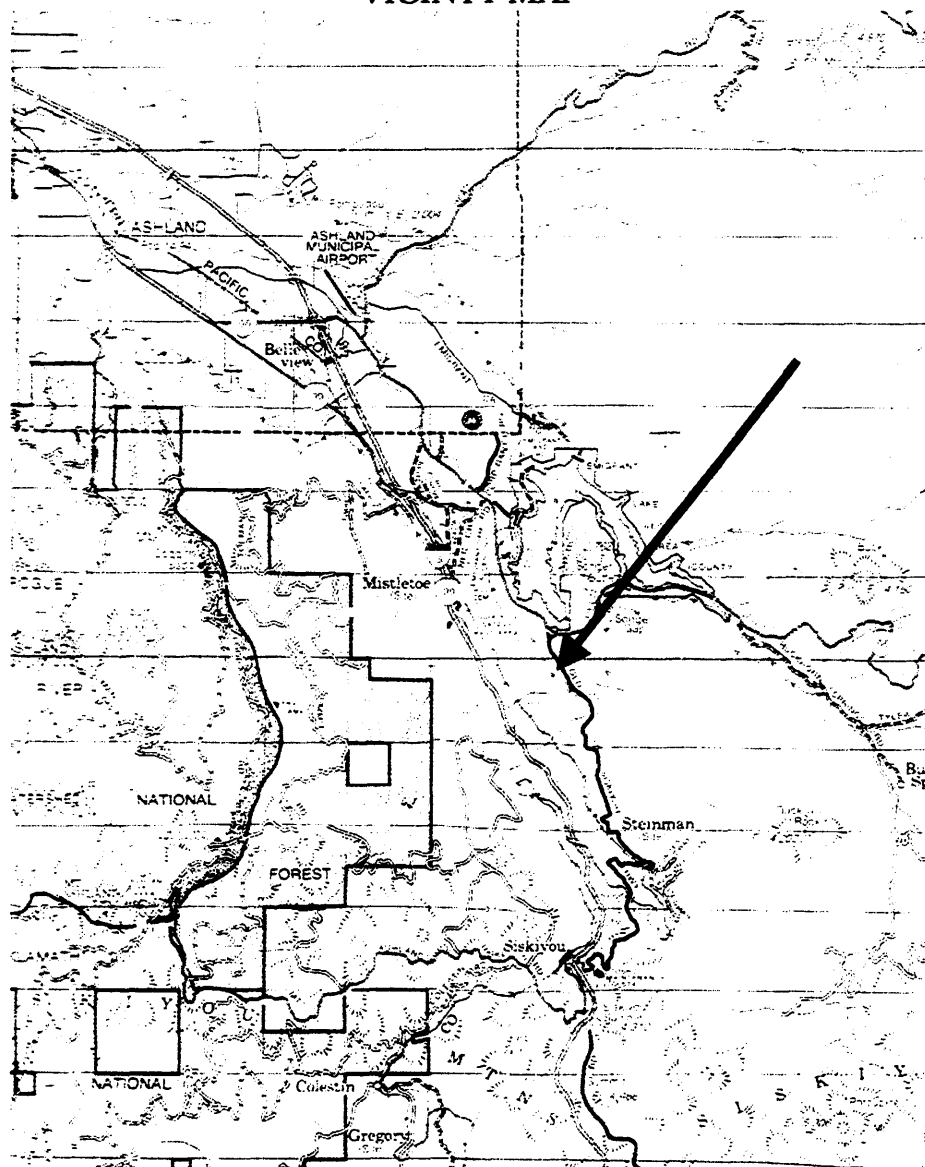
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number: 10 Page: 3

The Mountain House, v. Ashland, Jackson Cty, OR

VICINITY MAP



THE MOUNTAIN HOUSE

Source: ODOT Jackson County Map, Sheet #4, 1982



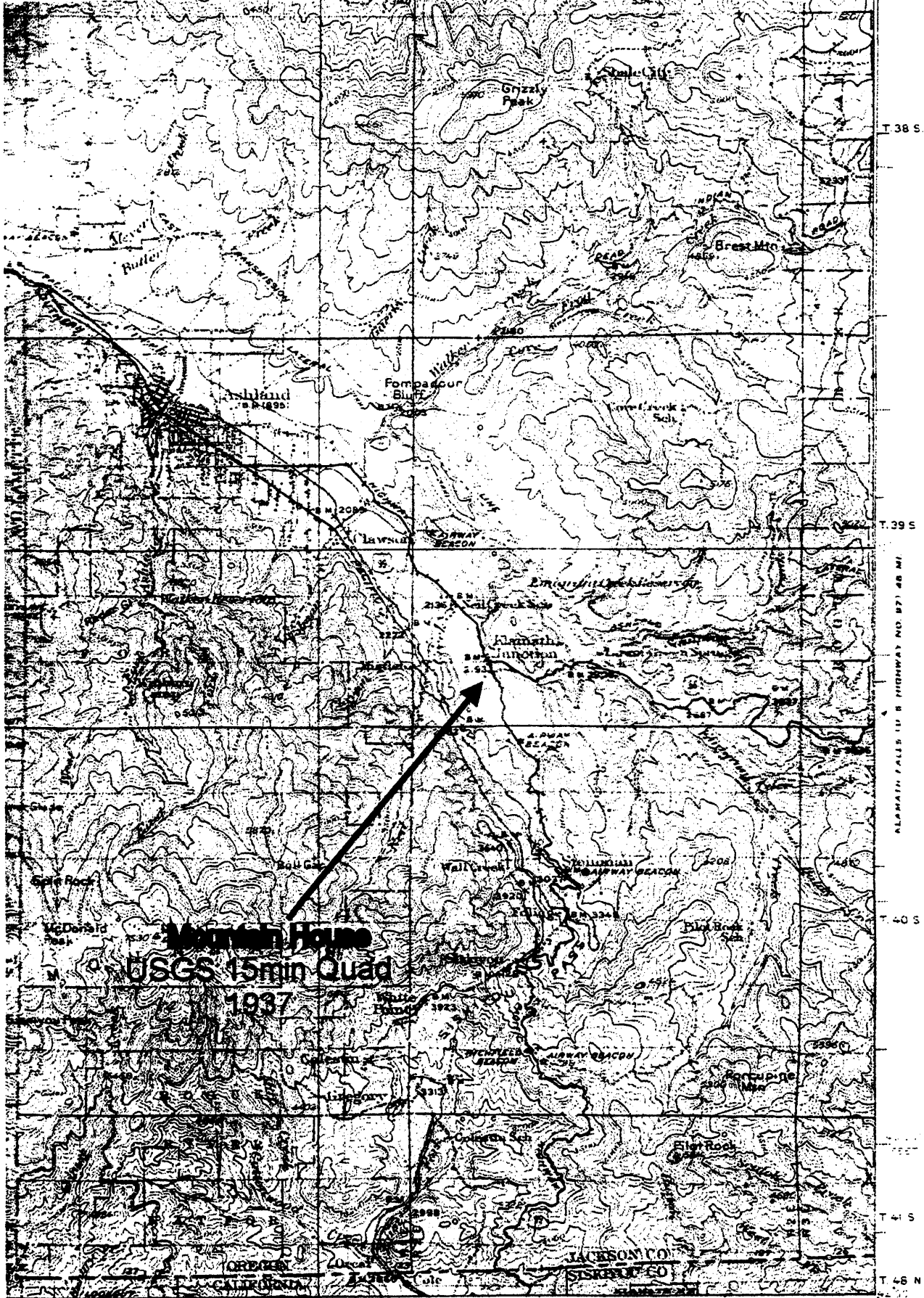
RESIDENCE.

MADE BY THE PHOTOGRAPHIC

PILOT ROCK.

H. F. BARRON'S STOCK RANCH, BARRON, JACOBSON CO.

STAGE HOUSE.



Moose House
USGS 15min Quad
1937

Scale 1:125000
 0 1 2 3 4 5 Miles
 0 1 2 3 4 5 Kilometers
 Contour interval 100 feet
 Is mean sea level

APPROXIMATE MEAN
 ELEVATION 1927

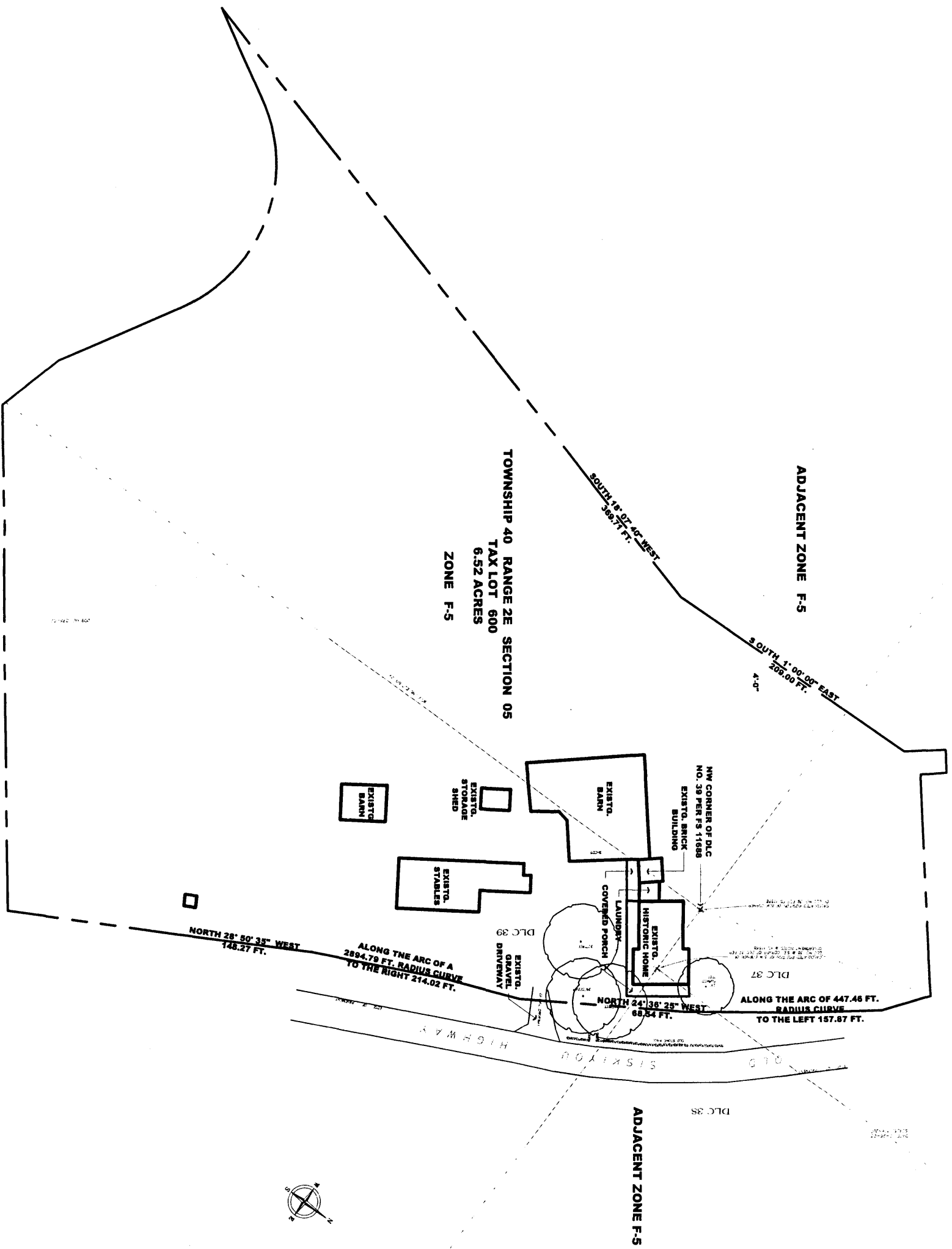
1937 MELFORD, OREGON-CALIF
 Edition 1946

1 UNITED STATES HIGHWAY NUMBER
 2 STATE HIGHWAY NUMBER

HARD IMPROVED SURFACED ROADS
 OTHER MAIN TRAVELED ROADS

YREKA 23 MI
 REDDING 130 MI

JACKSON CO
 Siskiyou CO



MOUNTAIN HOUSE
 1148 OLD SISKIYOU HIGHWAY
 ASSESSOR'S MAP T40S2E5 TAX LOT 600
 OWNER: JOHN & KATHY LORAM PH: 541.482.2541
 180 Beacon Hill Ln. Ashland, OR 97520

JEROME WHITE
 ARCHITECTURE
 545 A STREET
 SUITE NO. 3
 ASHLAND, OR
 9 7 5 2 0
 tel 541.488.2830
 fax 541.552.9512



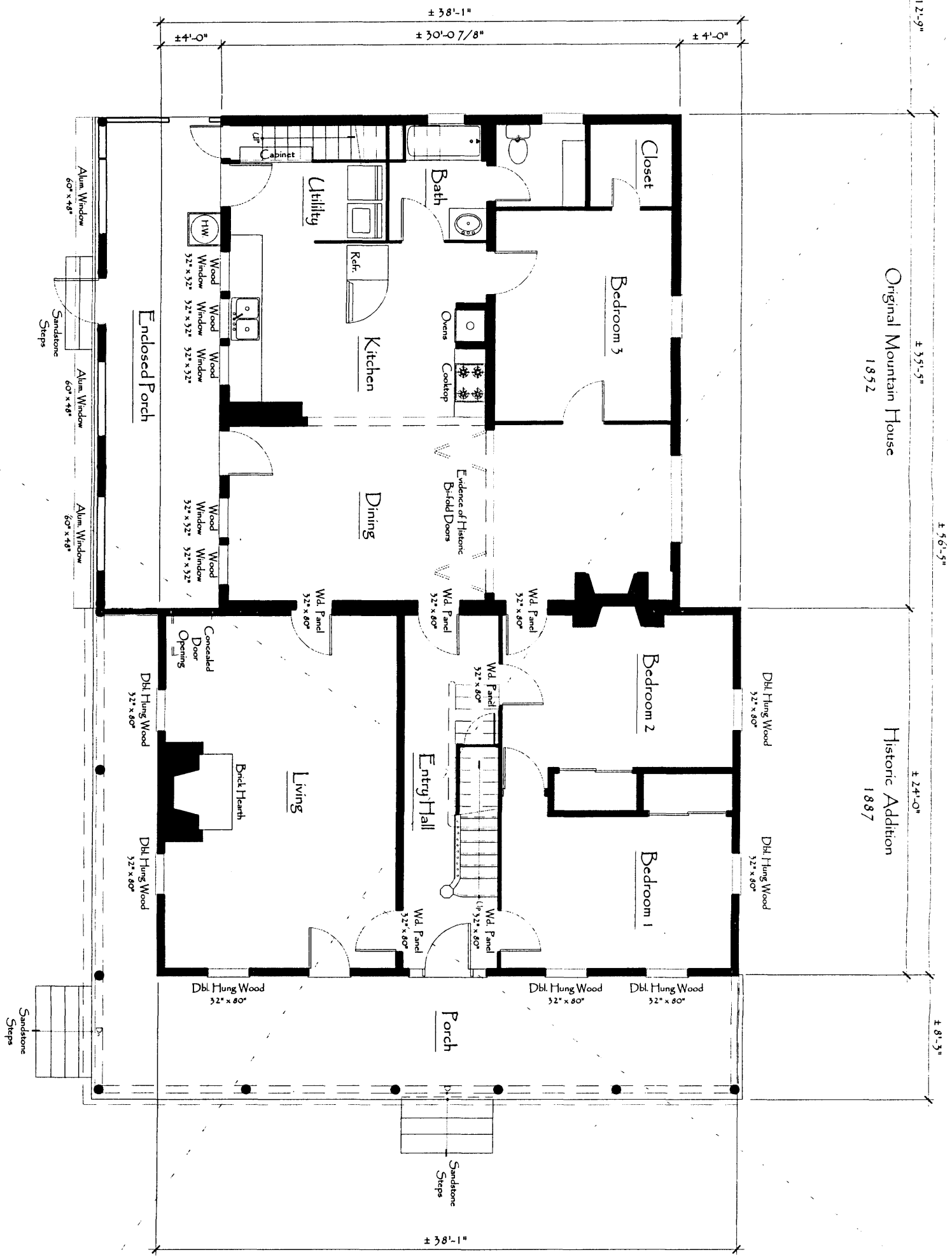
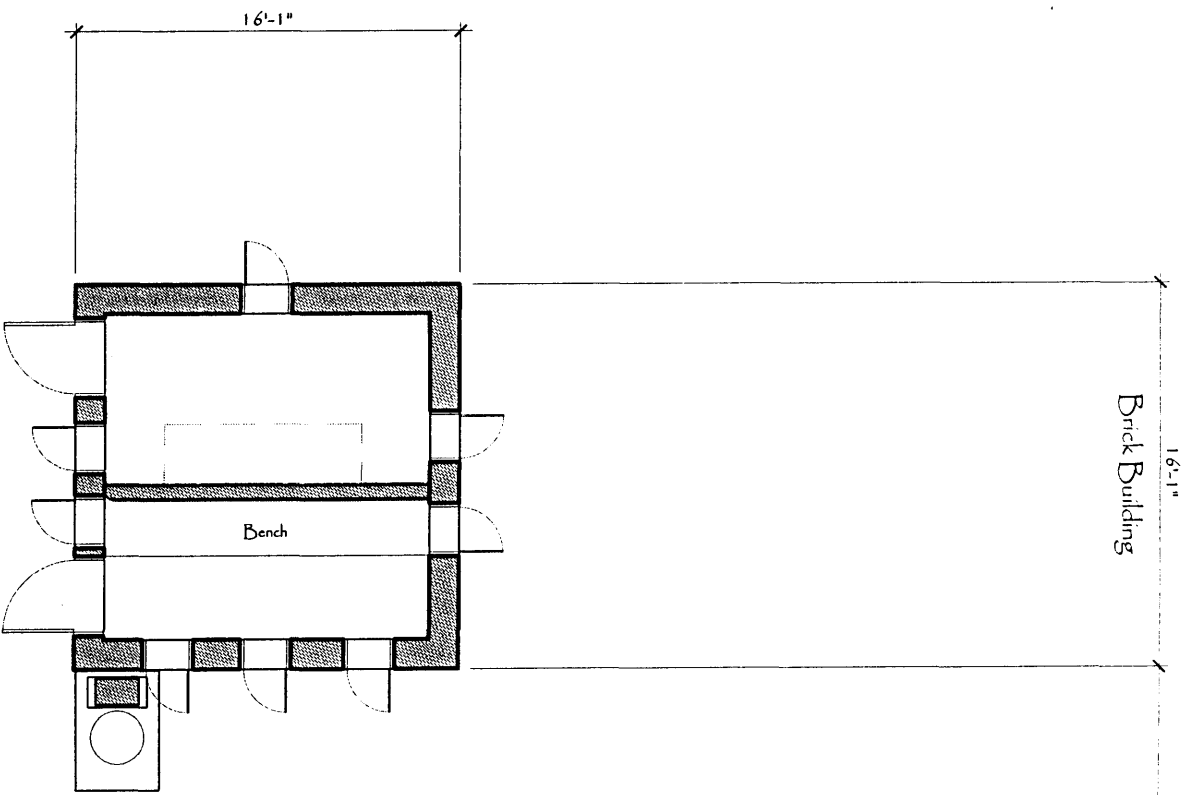
DATE	DESCRIPTION

SITE PLAN

JOB NO.: 02-008
 DATE: 10 MAR 03
 SCALE: 1" = 80'
 DRAWN: JM, MTL
 SHEET:

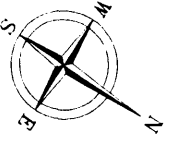
OF #

A0.1



FIRST FLOOR PLAN

Original Mountain House 986 s.f. Gross
 Historic Addition 914 s.f. Gross
 Total First Floor Area 1900 s.f. Gross
 Brick Building 259 s.f. Gross



AS-BUILT DRAWINGS
 2/21/03



JEROME WHITE
 ARCHITECTURE
 545 A STREET
 SUITE NO. 3
 ASHLAND, OR
 9 7 5 2 0
 tel 541.488.2830
 fax 541.552.9512

DATE DESCRIPTION

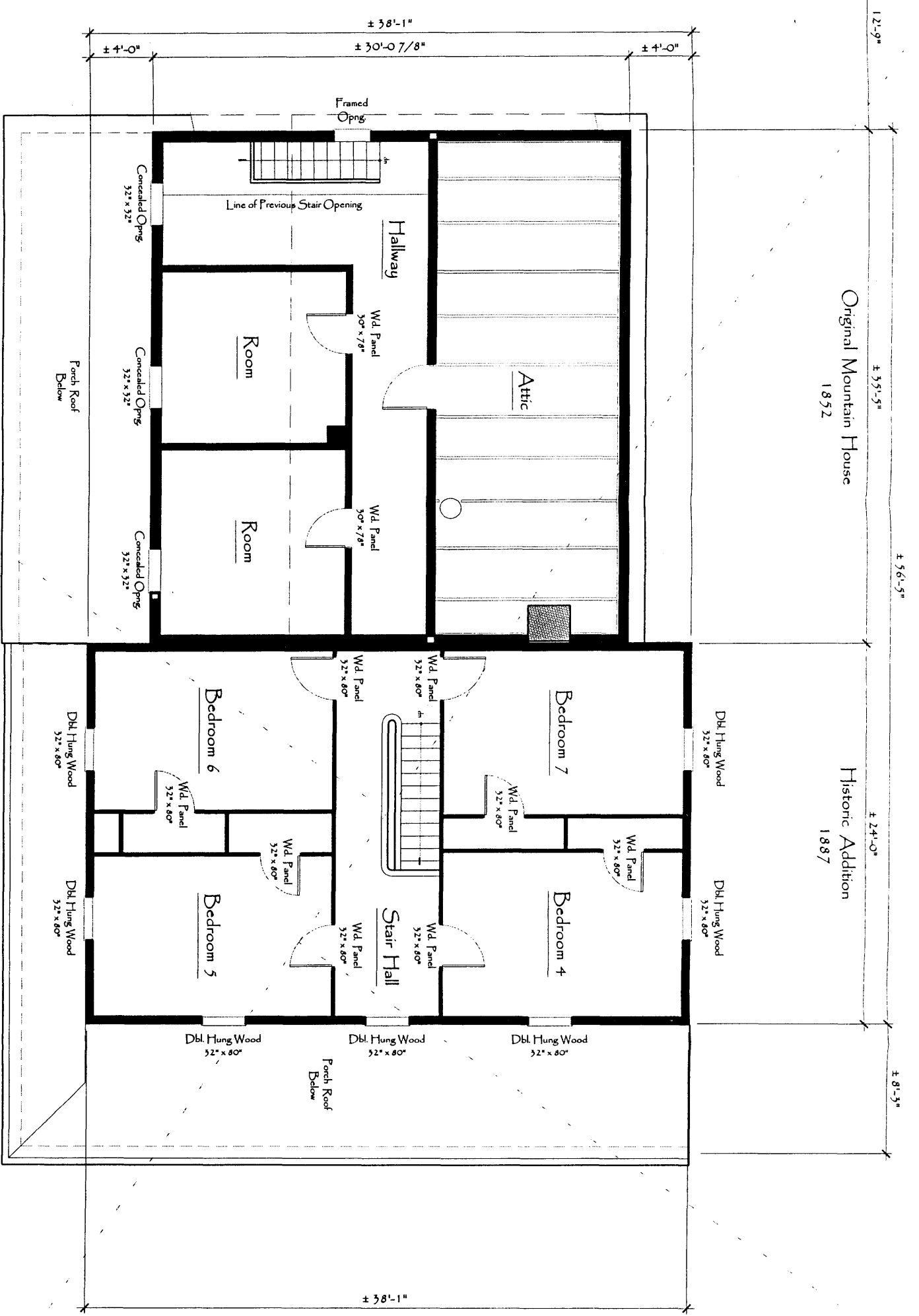
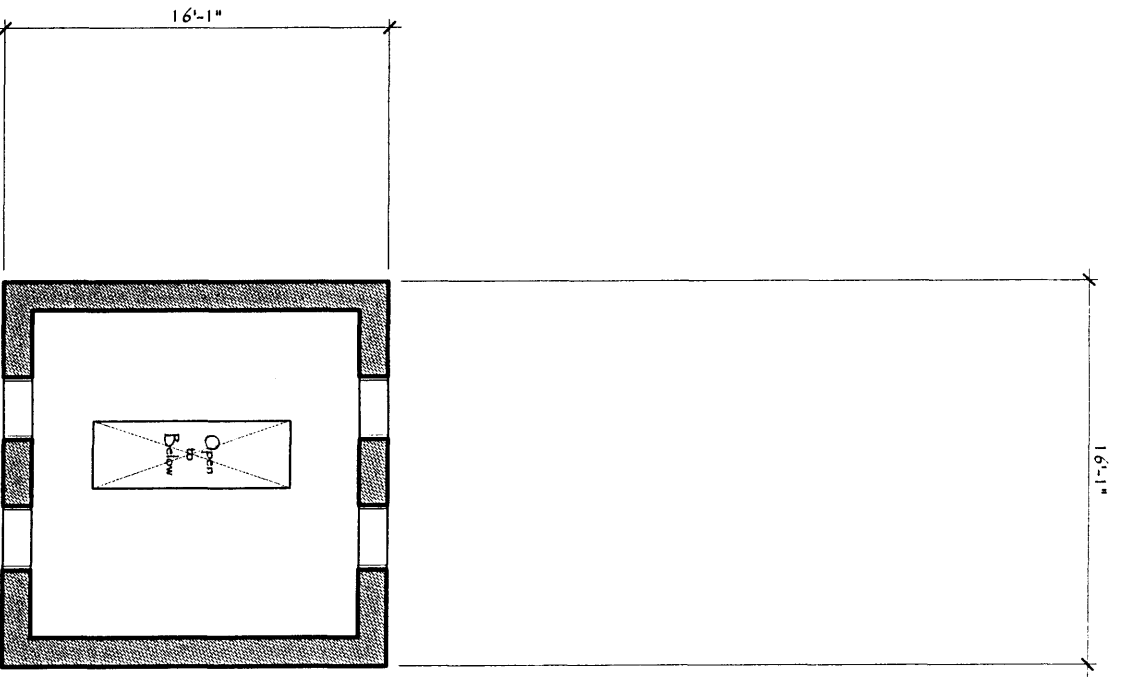
MOUNTAIN HOUSE
 1148 OLD SISKIYOU HIGHWAY
 ASSESSOR'S MAP T40S2E5 TAX LOT 600
 OWNER: JOHN & KATHY LORAM PH: 541.482.2541
 180 Beacon Hill Ln. Ashland, OR 97520

EXISTING
 FIRST FLOOR
 PLAN

JOB NO.: 02-008
 DATE: 10 MAR 03
 SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"
 DRAWN: JW
 SHEET:

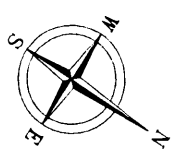
A1.1

OF #



SECOND FLOOR PLAN

Original Mountain House 986 s.f. Gross
 Historic Addition 592 s.f. Gross
 Total Second Floor Area 1578 s.f. Gross
 Brick Building 259 s.f. Gross



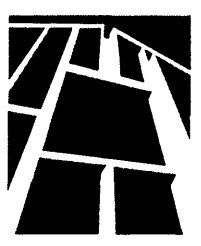
AS-BUILT DRAWINGS
 2/21/03

Original Mountain House
 1852

Historic Addition
 1887

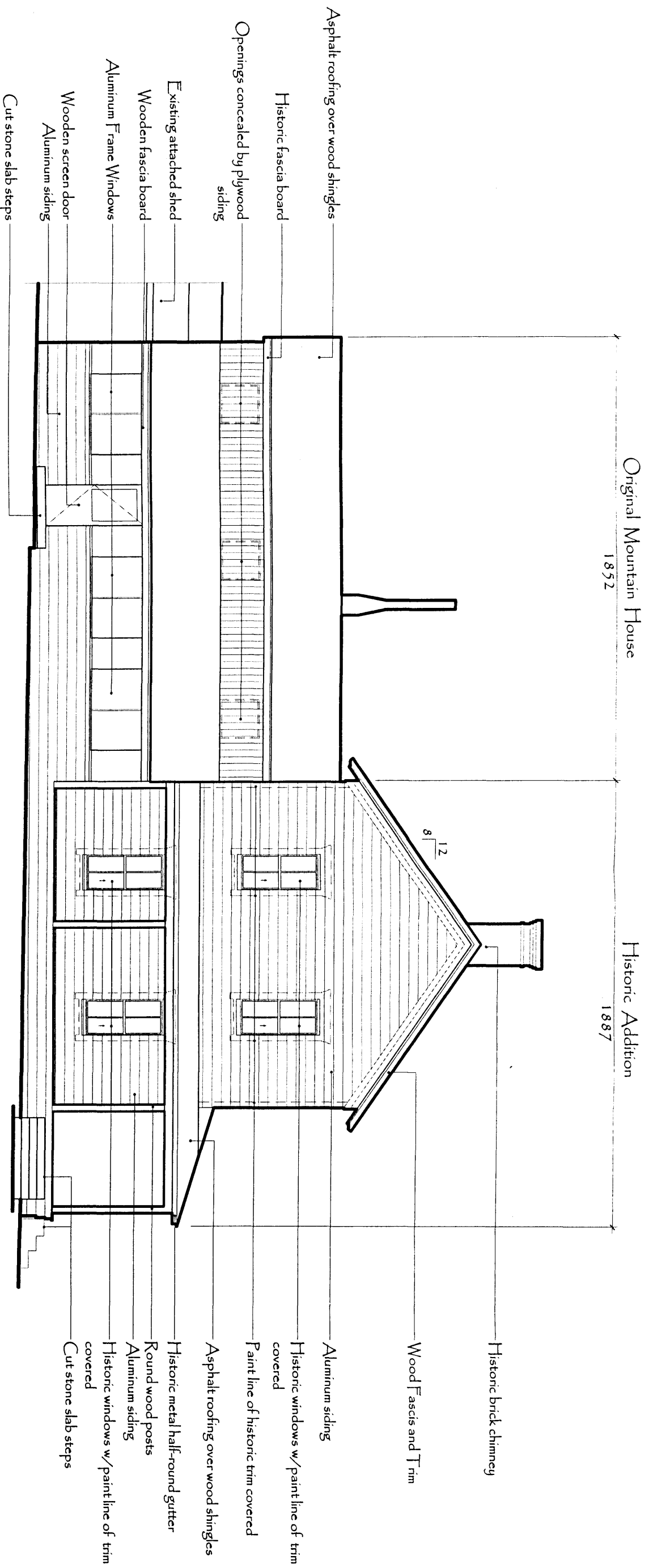
MOUNTAIN HOUSE
 1148 OLD SISKIYOU HIGHWAY
 ASSESSOR'S MAP T40S2E5 TAX LOT 600
 OWNER: JOHN & KATHY LORAM PH: 541.482.2541
 180 Beacon Hill Ln. Ashland, OR 97520

JEROME WHITE
 ARCHITECTURE
 545 A STREET
 SUITE NO. 3
 ASHLAND, OR
 97520
 tel 541.488.2830
 fax 541.552.9512

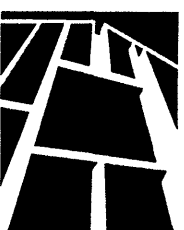


DATE	DESCRIPTION

EXISTING SECOND FLOOR PLAN	
JOB NO. :	02-008
DATE :	10 MAR 03
SCALE :	1/8" = 1'-0"
DRAWN :	JW
SHEET :	
OF #	A1.2



South East Elevation



JEROME WHITE
ARCHITECTURE
545 A STREET
SUITE NO. 3
ASHLAND, OR
9 7 5 2 0
tel 541.488.2830
fax 541.552.9512

DATE	DESCRIPTION

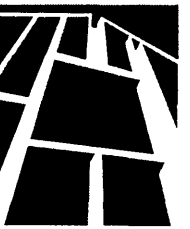
MOUNTAIN HOUSE
1148 OLD SISKIYOU HIGHWAY
ASSESSOR'S MAP T40S2E5 TAX LOT 600
OWNER: JOHN & KATHY LORAM PH: 541.482.2541
180 Beacon Hill Ln. Ashland, OR 97520

EXISTING
SOUTH
ELEVATION

JOB NO. :	02-008
DATE :	10 MAR 03
SCALE :	1/8" = 1'-0"
DRAWN :	JW, MTL
SHEET :	

A2.1

OF #



JEROME WHITE
 ARCHITECTURE
 545 A STREET
 SUITE NO. 3
 ASHLAND, OR
 97520
 tel 541.488.2830
 fax 541.552.9512

DATE	DESCRIPTION

MOUNTAIN HOUSE
 1148 OLD SISKIYOU HIGHWAY
 ASSESSOR'S MAP T40S2E5 TAX LOT 600
 OWNER: JOHN & KATHY LORAM PH: 541.482.2541
 180 Beacon Hill Ln. Ashland, OR 97520

EXISTING
 EAST
 ELEVATION
 JOB NO.: 02-008
 DATE: 10 MAR 03
 SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"
 DRAWN: JM, ML
 SHEET:

OF #
A2.2



North East Elevation
 (facing highway)

Historic brick chimney

Asphalt roofing over wood shingles

Historic wood decorative trim on fascia board

Paint line of historic trim

Historic wooden windows w/ paint line of trim covered by aluminum siding

Asphalt roofing over wood shingles

Wood fascia board

Round wood posts (typ.)

Paint line of historic trim concealed by aluminum siding

Historic entrance doors w/ wood screen doors (not shown for clarity)

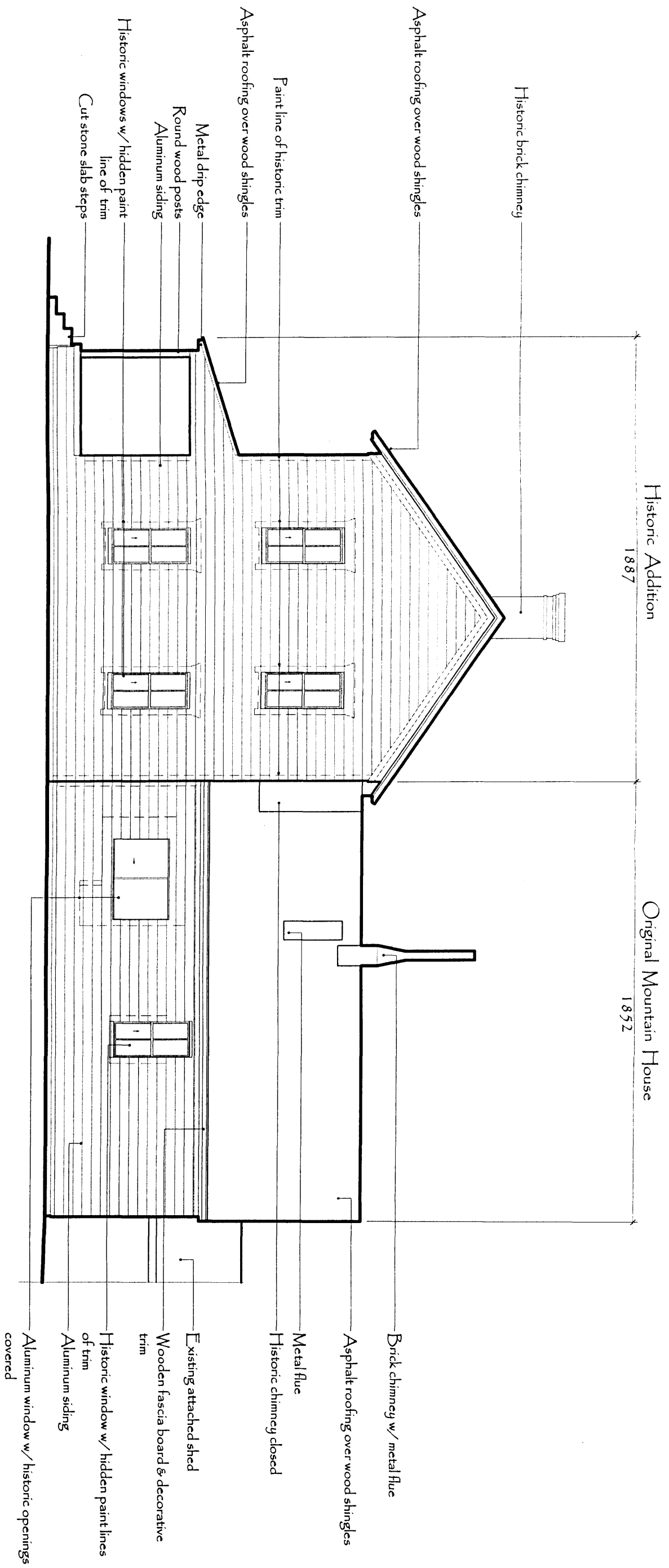
Cut stone slab steps

Round wood posts (typ.)

Historic windows w/ paint line of trim concealed by aluminum siding

Aluminum siding

North West Elevation



JEROME WHITE
ARCHITECTURE
545 A STREET
SUITE NO. 3
ASHLAND, OR
9 7 5 2 0
tel 541.488.2830
fax 541.552.9512

DATE	DESCRIPTION

MOUNTAIN HOUSE
1148 OLD SISKIYOU HIGHWAY
ASSESSOR'S MAP T40S2E5 TAX LOT 600
OWNER: JOHN & KATHY LORAM PH: 541.482.2541
180 Beacon Hill Ln. Ashland, OR 97520

EXISTING
NORTH
ELEVATION

JOB NO.: 02-008
DATE: 10 MAR 03
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"
DRAWN: JW, MTL
SHEET:

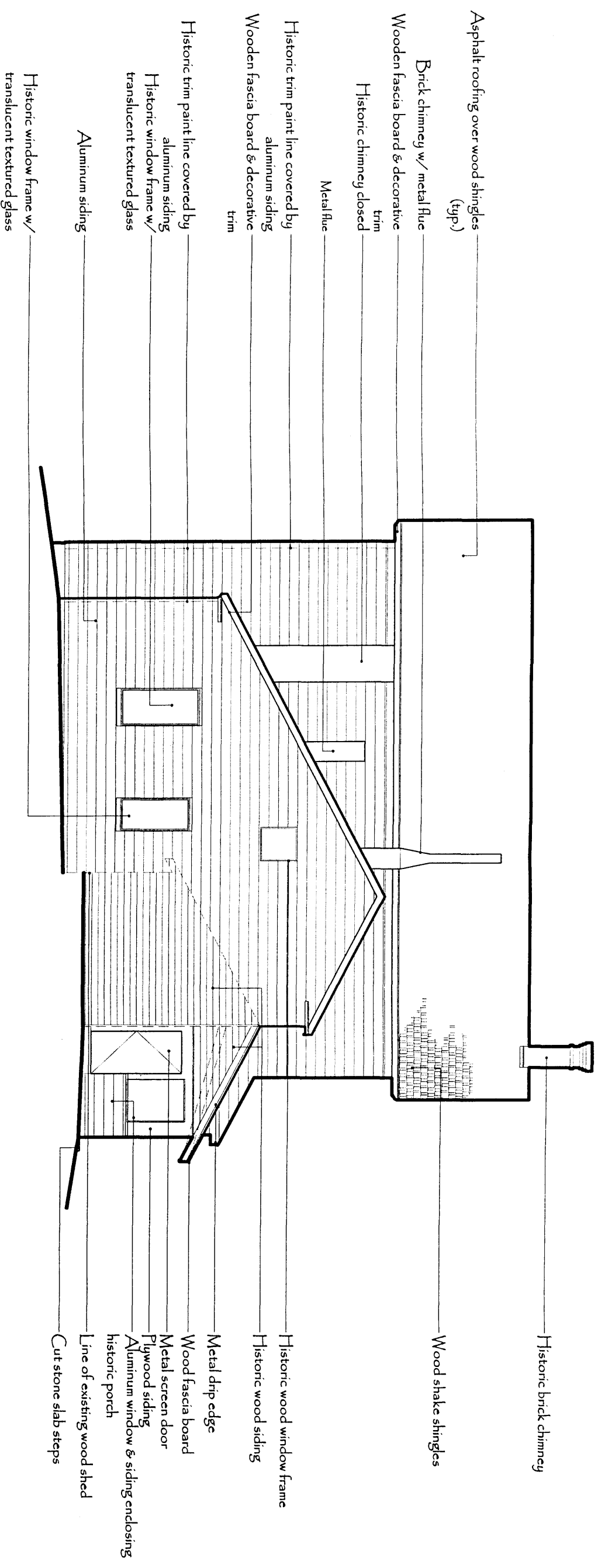


JEROME WHITE
 ARCHITECTURE
 545 A STREET
 SUITE NO. 3
 ASHLAND, OR
 97520
 tel 541.488.2830
 fax 541.552.9512

DATE	DESCRIPTION

MOUNTAIN HOUSE
 1148 OLD SISKIYOU HIGHWAY
 ASSESSOR'S MAP T40S2E5 TAX LOT 600
 OWNER: JOHN & KATHY LORAM PH: 541.482.2541
 180 Beacon Hill Ln. Ashland, OR 97520

EXISTING
 WEST
 ELEVATION
 JOB NO.: 02-008
 DATE: 10 MAR 03
 SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"
 DRAWN: JM, MTL
 SHEET:



South West Elevation

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number: Photographs Page: 1

The Mountain House, v. Ashland, Jackson Cty, OR

1. Historic View: Mountain Hse [Barron Stage Stop]
Looking: So, from Wagon Rd [Orig. Site]
Photographer: Peter Britt
Date of Photograph: 1885
Negative: So Ore Hist Society, Neg 722
2. Historic View: Mountain Hse, w/2-Story Addn
Looking: Southwest, from Wagon Rd
Photographer: O & C Railroad
Date of Photograph: early 1888
Negative: So Ore Hist Society, Neg 6224
3. Current View: North [Façade] Elevation
Looking: South, from Old Siskiyou Hwy
Photographer: G. Kramer
Date of Photograph: late January 2003
Negative: Coll of the Photographer
4. Current View: Front Porch
Looking: East, NE corner of 2-Story volume
Photographer: G. Kramer
Date of Photograph: late January 2003
Negative: Collection of the Photographer
5. Current View: West elevation
Looking: NE, toward 2-story volume
Photographer: G. Kramer
Date of Photograph: late January 2003
Negative: Coll of the Photographer
6. Current View: SW corner, 1852 Volume,
showing orig. siding beneath aluminum
Looking: NE
Photographer: G. Kramer
Date of Photograph: late January 2003
Negative: Coll of the Photographer
7. Current View: c1890 Brick Volume
Looking: Southeast
Photographer: G. Kramer
Date of Photograph: late January 2003
Negative: Coll of the Photographer
8. Current View: c1890 Brick Volume
Looking: Southwest
Photographer: G. Kramer
Date of Photograph: late January 2003
Negative: Coll of the Photographer
9. Current Detail: 1852 Mt House, Saltbox
Looking: Northeast
Photographer: G. Kramer
Date of Photograph: late January 2003
Negative: Coll of the Photographer
10. Current Detail: 1852 Eave Return/Window
Looking: Northwest
Photographer: G. Kramer
Date of Photograph: late January 2003
Negative: Coll of the Photographer
11. Current Detail: 1887 Chimney, windows
Looking: Northeast
Photographer: G. Kramer
Date of Photograph: late January 2003
Negative: Coll of the Photographer
12. Interior: Front entry, 2-Story Volume
Looking: North, from central stairwell
Photographer: G. Kramer
Date of Photograph: February 2003
Negative: Coll of the Photographer

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number: Photographs Page: 2

The Mountain House, v. Ashland, Jackson Cty, OR

13. Interior: Central Stairwell & Hall
Looking: South, from front entry
Photographer: G. Kramer
Date of Photograph: February 2003
Negative: Coll of the Photographer
14. Interior: Eastern 1st Floor "Hall"
Looking: Northeast
Photographer: G. Kramer
Date of Photograph: February 2003
Negative: Coll of the Photographer
15. Interior: "Hall" mantle, windows
Looking: East
Photographer: G. Kramer
Date of Photograph: February 2003
Negative: Coll of the Photographer
16. Interior: Mantelpiece, 1852 volume
Looking: North, toward "Parlor"
Photographer: G. Kramer
Date of Photograph: February 2003
Negative: Coll of the Photographer
17. Interior: Second floor hallway
Looking: North
Photographer: G. Kramer
Date of Photograph: February 2003
Negative: Coll of the Photographer
18. Interior: Second floor hallway
Looking: NW, to front bedroom
Photographer: G. Kramer
Date of Photograph: February 2003
Negative: Coll of the Photographer
19. Interior: SW bedroom closet door
Looking: NE
Photographer: G. Kramer
Date of Photograph: February 2003
Negative: Coll of the Photographer
20. Interior: SE bedroom door & finish
Looking: SW, to second floor hall
Photographer: G. Kramer
Date of Photograph: February 2003
Negative: Coll of the Photographer
21. Interior: Faux painted door
Looking: North
Photographer: G. Kramer
Date of Photograph: February 2003
Negative: Coll of the Photographer
22. Site Feature: Commemorative Plaque
Looking: South, from front yard
Photographer: G. Kramer
Date of Photograph: February 2003
Negative: Coll of the Photographer