

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

NOMINATION: (Lava Rock Structures in South Central Idaho TR)

SITE NAME: Silva, Arthur D., Ranch

SITE NUMBER: 3

LOCATION: ~~Four miles north and approximately three miles west of~~ <sup>NW 1/4</sup> Shoshone, ID.

OWNER'S NAME AND ADDRESS: Corwin Silva  
Rural Route  
Shoshone, ID 83352

QUADRANGLE AND SCALE: Shoshone, 7.5 minutes

ACREAGE: 2 1/2 acres

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

The nomination includes the described buildings at the Arthur D. Silva Ranch and the property on which they stand. the SE 1/4 of the NE 1/4 and the NE 1/4 of the SE 1/4, all in the SE 1/4, NE 1/4, NE 1/4 of Section 17, T5S, R17E. Legal description on file at Lincoln County Courthouse Shoshone Idaho

UTM(S): 11/707560/4763050

DATE OR PERIOD: 1904 or 1905 1917 1920's, ARCHITECT OR BUILDER. George Ashley,  
1925 Jack Oughton, Sandy Reed

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE: architecture, agriculture, exploration/settlement

EVALUATED LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE: local

CONDITION: excellent, altered (the 1903 building has been altered, and there is a minor alteration on the barn.) original site

DESCRIPTION

The lava rock structures on this site are described in the order in which they were built:

Shop. This small one-story building is approximately 20 1/2 by 24 feet. It has been incorporated into a frame garage added onto its righthand side. The gable facade of the stone building has a door slightly offset to the left and a small window to the right. Connecting relieving arches are above them. Both the door and the window have curved wooden heads. A tipped square four-pane window is in the peak of the gable facade. Two small square windows on the left wall are set about symmetrically into the top of the wall, obviating the need for a lintel. The opening is lined with mortar. A low red pressed-brick chimney intersects the left shingled roof just inside the side wall. The coursed rubble walls have light colored mortar in the almost flush joints, into which a line has been incised. Several larger ox-eye-shaped lighter stones are incorporated into the facade, perhaps for decoration. Where mortar has fallen out, it can be seen that the building was laid up with clay and finished with pointing mortar. An early Delco power plant is in the building.

Bridge Piers. A timber and plank bridge leading from the main farm yard across the Big Wood River to the farm buildings and fields on the other side, is supported by three lava piers approximately twenty feet high. Each is about four feet wide and fifteen feet long with rounded ends.

Barn. The barn is approximately 40 by 31 feet. Its high, shingled, lateral gambrel roof has enclosed flared eaves with a narrow bargeboard on the gables. Shiplap siding is in the gables above the one-story, random rubble stone walls. Sand colored untooled mortar is in the flush, medium-width joints. A pointed hay hook is above the panelled, square hay door, flanked by two small, square four-paned windows in the gable facade. A small square door has been cut offset to the left, just above the wooden molding separating the wood gable from the stone wall. Offset to the right at the ground level is a panelled door, while a panelled double door with two square windows is offset to the left. The same pattern of doors is repeated on the rear wall. The doors were designed to be large enough for a commissary wagon to drive through the barn. On the right wall are three small square windows at the top of the wall. The walls on the left side of the barn have been extended about twelve feet and slope downward to form the side walls of a poultry house. The left roof of the barn has been extended over it to form a shed roof. The low side wall of the chicken house is frame, facing south to provide winter sun. The gable wall and door are painted dark red, while the window and door and other wooden trim on the building is painted white.

Pig Slaughtering Facility. This structure is on the bank of the river for easy access to water across the bridge from the main farm yard. It is roughly E-shaped with a wooden section built on rubble stone walls varying from about five feet tall on the sides to eight feet tall at the back. It is about twenty-eight feet long. One side wall extends about ten feet outward, while the center wall and the end wall are about eighteen feet long. The fronts of the pens formed by the three arms can be enclosed with moveable wooden panels. The frame upper structure of vertical board and batten has a shed roof. It is approximately eight feet wide, forming the back of the "E." In the right section is an open door with angled corners, wide and tall enough for a commissary wagon to be backed into it. A high concrete deck inside this part was built to one side so that a fire could be built beside it to heat water for scalding pigs. The lefthand section has a single low door. The whole facility faces south to take advantage of the winter sun.

Shed. The machine shed is approximately 24 feet wide and 50 feet long. It has a shingled gable roof with shiplap in the gable above the one-story walls. A wide wooden board used as molding is at the top of the walls below the narrow eaves and forms an apron along the open front. Poles support the open front of the shed. The almost flush joints have a line incised in the mortar. The building was laid up with mud and finished with pointing mortar. There is a noticeable bulge in the back wall where equipment was backed into it.

#### SIGNIFICANCE:

This group of structures is significant because they are an excellent example of the resourceful use of the local stone in building up a ranching headquarters. All of the rock came from the ranch itself or from the lava flow across the river. It is the largest group of lava rock structures found at a single site in the two-

county area of this nomination. Except for the shop, which has had various uses, the structures are still used for the purpose for which they were built. Further, the structures exhibit the work of fine stonemasons, starting with George Ashley, an English-trained mason, who built the original portion of the shop in 1903. The bridge pier is also believed to have been done by him in 1904 or 1905. The barn was built by Jack Oughton and Sandy Reed in 1917. The hog butchering facility, built in the early 1920's, is unique. It was developed to handle efficiently almost weekly slaughtering and dressing of pigs so that pork could be delivered to shepherders out on the ranges. The machine shop was built in about 1925. Jack Oughton and Sandy Reed built the latter two buildings. The shop building formerly a cook house although now incorporated into a larger building, is still usable. Its significant features are not affected by the addition. The addition of a small, square door on the barn makes it more functional for current use. The group is also significant because of its association with the Silva family. Arthur D. Silva, the original owner, was the son of a Portuguese family from the Azores who came to the area in the late 1870's. The Silvas were successful highly regarded ranchers and sheepmen who are closely associated with the settlement and development of Lincoln and Gooding counties.

#### MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES:

Silva Floyd and Corwin, interview with Marian Posey-Ploss, Shoshone vicinity, Summer 1979.

"Silvas--Early Sheep Ranchers," Bicentennial Supplement to the Gooding County Leader (Gooding) County Journal (Shoshone), and Hub City Voice (Wendell), July 15, 1976, p. 32.