

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

NOMINATION: (Lava Rock Structures in South Central Idaho ~~re~~)

SITE NAME: Van Wagener, Jacob B., Barn

SITE NUMBER: 28

LOCATION: Four miles east and three miles south ^{SE} of Jerome ~~ID~~

OWNER'S NAME AND ADDRESS: Kermit Cochran
Rural Route 4
Jerome, ID 83338

QUADRANGLE AND SCALE: Falls City, 7.5 minute

ACREAGE: 1 1/4 acres

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

The nomination includes the Van Wagener barn and the property on which it stands in the NE 1/4 of the SW 1/4 and the SE 1/4 of the NW 1/4 all in the SE 1/4 SE 1/4, SE 1/4 of Section 34, T8S, R17E. Legal description on file at Jerome County Courthouse Jerome Idaho

UTM(S): 11/709430/4728400

DATE OR PERIOD 1912

ARCHITECT OR BUILDER H T Pugh

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE architecture agriculture exploration/settlement

EVALUATED LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE local

CONDITION good altered original site

DESCRIPTION:

The Jacob B Van Wagener Barn has a gambrel roof with decorative asbestos shingles laid in a diagonal pattern. On the facade roof is painted MOUNTAIN VIEW RANCH in large letters. Unpainted shiplap is in the south gable above the tall two-story stone wall, but the north gable is stone clear to the peak. A concrete panel, centered at the top of the south wall has 1912 cut into it. A rectangular hay door in the north gable is now concealed by a silo. A narrow barbeboard runs along each gable and the eaves. Two double-hung sash windows are in the south gable. Two rectangular, louvered cupolas with gable roofs are on the ridge of the roof. Windows are placed about six inches from the outside wall and the opening is faced with wood. The masonry is random rubble with light sand-colored, brushed mortar in the medium width joints. A 1912 newspaper description of the barn is still accurate today.

The barn is 40 x 110 feet standing the long way north and south. The walls are of lava rock and the structure is built into a slight hill which provides the conditions sought for in the 'bank barn' construction.

The basement will be devoted to stalls for dairy cows. The basement walls are carried above the surface of the ground allowing for windows

for light and ventilation. There are a row of stalls on each side with a driveway between wide enough so that team and wagon can be driven through the basement from end to end The stalls will be floored with cork brick and the driveway with cement

The first floor above ground will be devoted to feed bins and electrically driven feed and grain choppers and grinders, as well as other machinery. There will be a wide driveway from east to west (the narrow way of the barn) in the middle.

The rock walls will be carried six feet above the ceiling joists of this story which are the floor joists of the loft

The sills and caps of the doors and windows are of cement cast in forms right on the ground. This adds much to the appearance of the building and relieves the monotony of the rock walls (North Side News, November 21, 1912.

Another story stresses how up-to-date the barn was.

. . . Electricity for both light and power has been installed and hay and grain is chopped and ground by electrically driven machinery. The hay comes from the second story to the choppers from these to the basement through chutes into hand propelled cars by which it is distributed to the cows Running water from the deep well is drawn from hydrants throughout the barn. (North Side News, May 8, 1913)

Centered sliding frame doors with X-bracing are opposite each other on the long walls, with banked driveways leading up to them. On the east side of the barn at the second-story level is a large opening for a double-frame door that opens inward at the inside wall edge. This opening has a wooden lintel the ends of which are inset about six inches into the stonework, made of several pieces of lumber approximately six inches by six inches square

The quoins on the corners of the barn are only slightly larger than the other stones in the walls. The southeast corner of the building slipped out in the 1930's and was repaired by mason Ed Bennett. Pugh's later buildings have larger quoins and have not needed repairs. The ornate cast iron stanchions and pens for dairy cows are still in the basement.

SIGNIFICANCE:

The Van Wagener barn is significant not only for its style, size and workmanship, but also because of its association with the agricultural development of the Northside. This is the earliest stone building in Jerome County attributed to mason H. T. Pugh. It is a good example of an English barn that employs a lower basilica-planned level for cows. Built in 1912 for Jacob B. Van Wagener, treasurer of the North Side Twin Falls Land and Water Company, the barn was part of a farm developed not only as an investment (Van Wagener was non-resident) but also as a show place, a demonstration of what a farm in this newly irrigated area could become. The farm's location on the freight road between Shoshone and the Blue Lakes Ferry and along the Idaho Southern (later Oregon Short Line) Railroad made it highly visible. The nearby road is now U S. Highway 93. and the still highly visible barn is a landmark.

Van Wagnener sent purebred Guernsey cattle from Wisconsin to begin his dairy herd, and it was partly because of the early example of financiers such as Van Wagener that dairying became a major secondary source of income for Northside farmers. This was especially important as orchards including Mr Van Wagener's failed. Dairying is an increasingly important part of the economy in Jerome County today, and the Van Wagener barn is still ready for use

The only alteration to the barn is the addition of another door on the east side to make the barn more functional by allowing wagons and trucks to back up to the floor level to load boxes of apples. The original east door is behind the metal sheeting.

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES:

North Side News (Jerome), November 21 1912; and May 8 and January 5 1913.

Blessing, Harold, interview with Marian Posey-Ploss Jerome, Idaho, August 26, 1978.