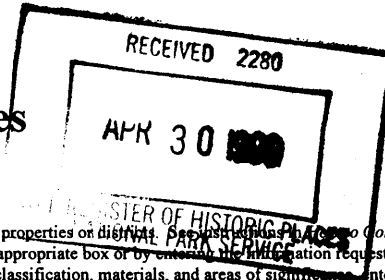


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



644

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in the National Register of Historic Places Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural 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 GERKING, JONATHAN N.B., HOMESTEAD

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Location

street & number 65725 GERKING MARKET ROAD n/a not for publication

city or town BEND VICINITY X vicinity

state Oregon code OR county DESCHUTES code 017 zip code 97701

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this x nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property x meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide x locally. (x See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

*John Hamrick*

Deputy SHPO

April 23, 1999

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title

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:)

*Bob*

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

*Edson H. Beall*

5/27/99

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 3 Page 1

Gerking, Jonathan N.B., Homestead, Bend Vicinity, Deschutes County, Oregon

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### **GERKING, JONATHAN N.B., HOMESTEAD (1906-1928)**

65725 Gerking Market Road

Bend OR

### **COMMENTS OF THE STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE:**

The Jonathan N.B. Gerking Homestead is a two-story modified version of a Vernacular American Foursquare house. It faces east on Gerking Market Road, approximately two miles northeast of Tumalo, Oregon. Built c.1906 (through c.1920s), the homestead complex consists of a dwelling, barn, bunkhouse, outhouse, two cisterns and an orchard that contribute to the site. There are three non-contributing buildings, including a hay barn, shed, and pump house.

### **HISTORY:**

The Gerking Homestead is significant for its association with J.N.B. Gerking, "Father of the Tumalo Irrigation Project". Jonathan was born in 1846 in Indiana and moved to Oregon in 1862, first settling just outside of Silverton. In 1866 he met his wife, Lucy. In 1872 he and his wife and three brothers homesteaded in Centerville (just outside of Pendleton, later named Athena). They were prosperous with their 320 acres. By 1889 they had eight children. When Jonathan heard about the possibilities in central Oregon, he signed a contract with the Columbia Southern Irrigation Company in 1904 to provide water to his newly purchased homestead. They moved from Athena to central Oregon with two of their children, Faye (age 24) and Ray (age 16) and began converting 320 acres into a productive farm. They grew strawberries, vegetables, grasses and grains.

The Carey Act stated that land would be given free to those who constructed irrigation canals. Those investors could in turn sell the free land to homesteaders. The Three Sisters Irrigation Company (who sold their rights to Columbia Southern Irrigation Company) originally won the right to Tumalo Creek and on January 12, 1904 the project was approved by the U.S. Department of the Interior, the first such irrigation project in Oregon. There were many problems with the project, however, as more land than could be irrigated was sold. In an effort to force the company to honor its initial contract, Jonathan Gerking filed a lawsuit against the Columbia Southern Irrigation Company, which was dropped. However, because Jonathan was persistent, the Columbia Irrigation Company was forced to deed the entire project to the Oregon, Washington and Idaho Finance Company. Still unsure about the success of the project, Jonathan and three other homesteaders went to Salem in 1913 to lobby for \$450,000 for the Tumalo Irrigation Project. The Oregon Legislature passed the Columbia Southern Act which allowed the construction of the irrigation project which was the first Carey Act Irrigation project in the

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 3 Page 2

Gerking, Jonathan N.B., Homestead, Bend Vicinity, Deschutes County, Oregon

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United States to be managed by a public agency. The project was completed in 1914. However, by 1931 it was clear there was not enough water to support the project. Despite the failure of the project, Jonathan Gerking was considered a hero for getting it on the drawing board and he was given the title of "Father of the Tumalo Irrigation Project". He died in 1928 and his body was shipped to Athena for burial.

The site is also significant as a rare, intact example of an early dry-farming operation in Deschutes County. It is one of the best remaining examples of an early farm complex on the Tumalo Irrigation project. Only two farmsteads in Deschutes County have been listed in the National Register, and a windshield survey of the Tumalo area shows that no other intact farmstead remain there.

The Gerking house uses standard balloon framing and is clad with 4" horizontal drop siding. The hip roof has wide overhanging eaves with tongue & groove soffits. The removal of most of the asbestos siding reveals cornerboards and 12" wide frieze boards. The 27' x 15' plan sits on 10 x 10 beams resting on basalt stones at each corner. The originally open front porch is now enclosed (date unknown). It contains the main entrance doors which open into the entry hall. The original entry door, now with the porch/study area, has a single light transom window. There is a secondary side entrance on the south elevation. There is a hipped roof rear kitchen ell (on the west). This original room has additions on the north and south ends. On the south is an early enclosed porch which has fixed four-light windows. The north is a small on-story attachment with a hip roof that contains the bathroom. This portion of the house was built c.1960 and is clad with asbestos siding over plywood.

There are double hung one-over-one wood windows used throughout, with tall windows on the first floor and shorter windows on the second. The interior retains much of its original woodwork and lath and plaster walls. A simple wooden stair has a simply detailed newel post. All interior doors are four-paneled with standard mortise locks and glass knobs. Simply detailed boards surround the door and window openings.

The Gerking house contributes to the historic qualities of the homestead, however, because of the changes, it is not being nominated under Criterion C for its architectural significance. This is one of the few remaining examples of the American Foursquare in this area, but until more of the historic fabric is revealed, it is not considered to be one of the best to represent this plan and style of house.

The outbuildings consist of a c.1920 hay and hoarse barn located to the west of the house. It is a basilican type barn with a tall gabled central portion flanked by one-story shed roof side aisles. It is of

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 3 Page 3

Gerking, Jonathan N.B., Homestead, Bend Vicinity, Deschutes County, Oregon

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balloon framing with milled lumber and is covered with a metal roof. The exterior consists of vertically placed board-and-batten. A small 5' square outhouse with pyramidal roof lies in the center of the service court just in front of the barn.

There is a c.1920 bunkhouse with an L-shaped plan, gable roof wood shingles, and board and batten siding. Inside is a living room, a bedroom, and the kitchen.

Two cisterns are just beyond the bunkhouse, one of which has retained its historic integrity. Stacked lava rocks made up the walls, and there is a gable roof with wood shingles covering the watering hole.

Non-historic: To the rear of the barn is a modern metal pole barn for additional hay storage. A small non-historic pump house with a gable roof lies to the north of the main barn, used with the irrigation system. The equipment shed is also non-historic.

Overall, the Gerking Homestead retains its historic association, feeling and appearance and contributes to the historic qualities of the Bend and Tumalo vicinities in Deschutes County. It is considered to be one of the best remaining examples of a homestead that portrays early dry farming and speaks of the attempts to irrigate agricultural land in this area.

Gerking, Jonathan N.B., Homestead  
Name of Property

Bend Vicinity, Deschutes County, Oregon  
City, 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	Non-contributing	
<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>		sites
<u>2</u>		structures
		objects
<u>7</u>	<u>3</u>	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**

n/a

**6. Function or Use**

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

DOMESTIC: single dwelling  
AGRICULTURE SUBSISTENCE: animal facility  
agricultural field; agricultural outbuilding

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

DOMESTIC: single dwelling  
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE:  
animal facility, agricultural field,  
agricultural outbuilding

**7. Description**

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

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY MOVEMENTS;  
OTHER: American Foursquare

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE  
walls Weatherboard; Asbestos siding  
roof ASPHALT  
other \_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

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

X See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 7

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Section 7**

**Page 1**

JONATHAN N.B. GERKING HOMESTEAD  
DESCHUTES COUNTY, OREGON

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**Narrative Description:**

The Jonathan N.B. Gerking Homestead is a two-story, single-family residence of an American Foursquare design. The home faces due east, on Gerking Market Road, approximately two miles northeast of Tumalo, Oregon. Nestled in a flat valley, the home and surrounding outbuildings were built next to a small bluff and adjacent to an irrigation canal to optimize the surrounding flat land for farming. Built circa 1906, the Gerking Homestead complex consists of one dwelling and eight outbuildings, five of which have historical significance, and a productive fruit orchard. (*Contributing: 1 house, 2 cisterns, 1 bunkhouse, 1 barn, 1 outhouse, 1 orchard, Non-contributing: 1 hay barn, 1 shed, 1 pump house*)

The Jonathan N.B. Gerking House was constructed using standard balloon-frame construction and is clad with four-inch horizontal, tongue-and-groove, drop siding. As evidenced by an early photograph circa 1915, the house remains today much as it did in the early part of the 20th century. The hip asphalt shingle roof boasts wide overhanging eaves with tongue & groove decking underneath the eaves. Shadow lines found on the building after the recent removal of asbestos siding, show a wide 12" frieze board originally topped the walls and 4" vertical boards capped the corners. Resembling a cube, the Foursquare's 27' 0" x 15' 0" plan sits on 10" x 10" beams resting on basalt stones, placed strategically at each corner. The design of the house is broken by an enclosed shed roof porch to the east, and a hipped-roof rear kitchen "ell" to the west.

The windows of the Gerking House are double-hung, one-over-one. The first floor windows are tall and narrow, the second floor windows, due to the hip roof, are short and squat. A majority of the windows are singular however on the north facade (second floor) and on the south facade (first floor) paired windows are found. Windows in the enclosed porch, a c.1960 bathroom addition and the kitchen window are two-pane aluminum sliders. All windows and doors have simple 1/2" x 4" molding surrounds. Set slightly off-center, the main entrance doors from the enclosed porch and into the entry hall are half-light in design, with a single pane in the upper portions. The original entry door, now within the porch/study area, boasts an additional single light transom window. A secondary side entrance door on the south facade is a modern half-light design.

Attached to the rear is a one-story, hip roof "ell" covering the kitchen space. This room, most likely original to the home per historic photos, has had an addition on the north and south ends. To the south lies an early-enclosed porch covered with a row of fixed four-pane windows and a shed roof (date added unknown). To the north is a small one-story attachment with hip roof that houses the bathroom. This building was built circa 1960 is clad with asbestos siding over plywood. The entry porch to the front of the home has been fully enclosed, although historic photos show a full width open front porch. By examining the siding, it appears the north end of the porch has been enclosed for numerous years. The interior trim, window size and exterior siding all match the historic portion of the home.

The interior of the Gerking House is arranged functionally with the public spaces on the first floor and the private spaces on the second floor. The square plan is divided by 5'0" x 5'0" entry hall and stair. Accessed directly from the front entrance door, this entry is adorned with lath and plaster walls and high 4" baseboards. A simple wooden stair with winder treads and a closed string are adorned with an ornate newel post with chamfered corners and a decorative cap and base. All interior doors are four-panel design with standard mortise locks complete with

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Section 7**                      **Page 2**

JONATHAN N.B. GERKING HOMESTEAD  
DESCHUTES COUNTY, OREGON

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**Narrative Description: Cont'd**

cut glass knobs.

The high 9' ceilings in the downstairs are accentuated by the tall narrow windows which have simple moldings divided by a small beaded cap. The upstairs spaces due to the hip style roof, have coved ceilings formed by the slant of the roof. At the top of the stair is a large 8' long three-door storage closet. The stair rail has simple square balusters and a decorative newel post. All of floors in the Gerking Home, except for the upstairs hall, have been covered with carpet.

Eight outbuildings make up the Gerking Homestead complex, five of which are contributing structures. The exact construction dates of the outbuildings are not known. The largest of these structures is the c.1920 hay and horse barn at 60' x 75'. Located away from the house to the west, the design of the barn is often referred to as a western barn. It has a two story center isle capped with a gable roof and an extending hay door hood. This central portion is then flanked by side isles covered with a shed roof. The north isle extends twice as far as the south isle. The barn uses simple balloon frame construction with milled lumber and is covered with a metal gable roof. The exterior is clad with vertical 1" x 8" boards and 2" battens. Also covered with vertical boards is a modern 30' x 60' equipment shed to the southeast of the barn. This gable covered building replaced a dilapidate sheep shed torn down by the current owners. To the rear of the barn is a modern metal 30' x 45' pole barn for additional hay storage. A small, non-historic pump house with a gable roof structure lies to the north of the main barn for the irrigation system. A small 5' square one-hole outhouse stands in the center of the service court just in front of the barn. The tongue & groove horizontal board walls are capped by a hip roof topped with a simple finial.

At the southwest corner of the Gerking House service court lies the bunkhouse. Built circa 1920, the bunkhouse is L-shape in plan with a 20' x 28' layout. The gable roof is covered with wood shingles and rolled asphalt paper. The interior is divided into three spaces, the living room, a bedroom and the kitchen. Beyond the bunkhouse just below the rising side of the adjacent bluff lie two cisterns. The west cistern has had its roof removed although the side walls remain. The east cistern remains 100% intact. Stacked lava rocks form the exterior walls with an 8' x 16' plan. A simple unadorned gable roof with wood shingles covers the watering hole. All eight outbuildings contributing or non-contributing are integral in telling the story of the Gerking Homestead. The apple orchard to the south west of the home appears to be original to the home as evidenced by the size of the trees. Today the 10 trees still bare fruit.

Alterations to the Jonathan N.B. Gerking Homestead include the addition of a bathroom at the northwest corner, the enclosure of the front and a projecting covered porch on the southwest corner of the home. As recently as October 1998 asbestos shingles were removed on the main part on the house to reveal the original drop siding. The enclosed porch and c.1960 bathroom addition has aluminum sliding windows and asbestos siding over plywood. Other updates include carpeting over the existing plank boards throughout the home. The outhouse has been moved several times, the last being when the current owners moved it from the west side of the equipment shed to in front of the barn. The north cistern remains as an open concrete pool, its original covering removed by previous owners.

Gerking, Jonathan N.B., Homestead  
Name of Property

Bend Vicinity, Deschutes County, Oregon  
City, County, and State

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" on one or more lines 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" on all that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

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

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

- AGRICULTURE
- EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT
- SOCIAL HISTORY
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

- 1906-1928
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

- 1906-1928
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

- Jonathan N.B. Gerking

**Cultural Affiliation**

- n/a
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

- Unknown
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 8

**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:**

- Deschutes County Historical Society

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 9



**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Section 8**

**Page 3**

**JONATHAN N.B. GERKING HOMESTEAD  
DESCHUTES COUNTY, OREGON**

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**Narrative Statement of Significance:**

The Jonathan N.B. Gerking Homestead is historically significant under criterion "B" for its associations with Jonathan N.B. Gerking, "Father of the Tumalo irrigation project." The home is also historically significant for its high artistic value and distinctive characteristics as classified under criterion "A", and as one of the few remaining example of its type in the Tumalo Project area.

**CRITERION "A"**

The Jonathan N.B. Gerking Homestead is locally significant under Criterion "A" due to its associations with the broad patterns of history as a rare, intact example of an early dry-farming operation in Deschutes County. Associated with subsistence farming activity, the Gerking Homestead represents one of the finest examples of an early farm complex on the Tumalo Irrigation Project. In addition to the main dwelling, believed to have been constructed in approximately 1906, the ensemble includes eight outbuildings; a horse/hay, a privy, an equipment shed, a pump house, a hay barn, a bunkhouse and two cisterns. Although the exact date of construction has not been determined for any of the buildings, architectural and historical clues suggest that the main dwelling was constructed circa 1906. A built date for the various contributing outbuildings can not be determined, however all are assumed to have been constructed prior 1925 as evidenced by historical accounts.

The American Foursquare design of the Gerking House, often referred to as a classic "box" house, is the most common house built after the turn-of-the-century in the United States. Yet, few exist in Deschutes County today. The Historical Resource data base for Deschutes County, containing over 1750 sites, has only eight other standing American Foursquares inventoried including: the Long Hollow Ranch (c.1906), the Joseph A. Wilcox House (1911) and the Shevlin-Hixon Executive House (1920). The apparent plainness of the house belies the richness of the philosophy and history behind the design. The American Foursquare possesses the simplicity and honesty that epitomizes turn-of-the-century homes, striving to be "the comfortable house".

The American Foursquare design appeared during the first decade of the 20th century, and its popularity lasted well into the 1920s (Kahn 17). As an inexpensive way to provide large amounts of comfortable living space, the Gerking Home was more than ample for Jonathan, Lucy and their two children. The 27'0" x 24'0" house easily contained two bedrooms, a living room, a parlor, a kitchen and a dining room. The American Foursquare design can be embellished with many stylistic features including: Craftsman, Colonial, Oriental and Victorian styling. The Gerking Home however, is devoid of any period ornamentation. Instead it is a simple dwelling, where form purely follows function.

Currently, Deschutes County has only two farmstead listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the Charles Boyd Homestead Group (1905) and the William T.E. Wilson Homestead (1903). The Gerking Homestead falls under the category of a multi-farm unit as defined in the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office Agricultural Context Statement. Note that a multi-unit farm is distinctive from a "basic farm" in that it consists of at least two or more outbuildings in addition to the primary dwelling. The Gerking Homestead contains a total of eight outbuildings and one house. Although the rural parts of Deschutes County has never been systematically

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Section 8**

**Page 4**

**JONATHAN N.B. GERKING HOMESTEAD  
DESCHUTES COUNTY, OREGON**

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**Narrative Statement of Significance: Cont'd**

inventoried, a reconnaissance survey conducted of the Tumalo area shows that no intact farmsteads remain, except for the Gerking Homestead.

The homestead house and the eight outbuildings are located within a small valley on Gerking Market Road between Innes Market Road and Brown Road. Note that the road the homestead sits on was named in honor of Gerking and his efforts as "Father of the Tumalo Irrigation Project." This road, a "market" road is so named due to the road being open during the winter to allow farmers in the area to go to the market to sell and buy goods.

The period of significance for the property lies from 1906 to 1928, the period when the property was associated the Jonathan N.B. Gerking. As per historical accounts from the grandchildren of Jonathan N.B. Gerking, the homestead remains intact to that period providing historians an intact example of an early day subsistence farming operation.

**CRITERION "B"**

Under criterion "B" the Jonathan N.B. Gerking Homestead is significant for its association to J.N.B. Gerking of the "Father of the Tumalo Irrigation Project" (Tumalo Pioneer..). Born January 28, 1846 in Clay County, Indiana, Jonathan Napoleon Bonaparte Gerking had come to Oregon as early as 1862, at the age 16 ("Historical Sketches of Walla Walla.."61). Jonathan ventured west on a wagon train with his three brothers, B.F., J.R. and S.I. Together the brothers settled on a small farm just outside of Silverton in Marion County. In 1866 Jonathan met and married his wife Lucy. In 1872 Jonathan with his wife and three brothers packed up their belongings and migrated to eastern Oregon, homesteading once again, this time on the outskirts of the small town of Centerville (Centerville lies just outside of Pendleton. Named changed later to Athena).

Settling on 320 acres of rich soil, Jonathan quickly became a prosperous farmer. By 1888, Jonathan had built his family an ornate six-bedroom Italianate house and his land was valued at more than \$6,000 (Polk Directory, 1893). By 1889, Lucy and Jonathan had eight children: Faye (1881-?), George, Otis, Charles, Grover, Dean, Minna and Willard Ray (1889-1965). The large Gerking family thrived in eastern Oregon and to this day the site of their homestead is still called Gerking Flat. While in Athena Jonathan and Lucy were active in many civic affairs helping build a school, acting as charter members of the First Christian Church, and were members the International Order of the Odd Fellows (Saylor 3).

However Jonathan N.B. Gerking's pioneering spirit began to make him restless by the turn of the century. Seeking to start anew again, Jonathan heard about the possibilities of Central Oregon and in 1904 Jonathan signed a contract with the Columbia Southern Irrigation Company to provide water to his newly purchased homestead just west of the growing town of Laidlaw. Gerking's contract with the Columbia Southern Irrigation Company stated that they would be provided 160 cubic feet of water per second per acre of land. The cost of the service was \$12,800; five thousand one hundred and twenty dollars of which was paid by Jonathan in cash up-front. The rest would come in two annual payments with 6% interest.

In 1905 at the age of 59, Jonathan officially moved to Central Oregon and left his Athena homestead in charge of his

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8

Page 5

JONATHAN N.B. GERKING HOMESTEAD  
DESCHUTES COUNTY, OREGON

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**Narrative Statement of Significance:** Cont'd

eldest son George. George by this time had married Ella Bostwick. To help out with the newly established farm, Jonathan and his wife Lucy brought their two youngest children Faye (age 24) and Ray (age 16) with them to Central Oregon (U.S. Census, 1910). Once there, the four began immediately converting 320 acres of raw land into a productive farm.

Gerking had taken advantage of the Homestead Act of 1862 and filed his official claim, application #72, for land along the Columbia Southern Irrigation canal at The Dalles. His circa 1904 claim was apparently not officially recorded until 1907. The backbreaking work of the Gerking and his family paid off and by 1915 the farm was thriving with the help of an adjacent irrigation canal. Things were going so well in fact the *Bend Bulletin* noted Jonathan N.B. Gerking's abundance of strawberries, vegetables, grasses and grains at the Tumalo Fair of 1915 (Tumalo Fairs of...).

Just as Gerking had done in Athena, upon his arrival in Central Oregon he quickly became involved in civic affairs. His main focus was to help others profit from productive farming like he had with the add of irrigation canals. Simultaneously hundreds of settlers and investors had been coming to Central Oregon spurred by the prospect of free land and fertile ground as a result of the Carey Act.

The act stated that land would be given free to those who constructed irrigation canals. Those investors could in-turn sell the free land they had acquired to homesteaders. Everyone was happy. If you had the skills, you could be a millionaire, if you had the fortitude you could become a prosperous farmer. Unfortunately the Carey Act brought with it fraud and corruption. Numerous companies fought for the rights to build the canals, and some even sold land to homesteaders that would never be irrigated. One of the largest potential areas for instituting the Carey Act was in Central Oregon. Vying for water rights to Tumalo Creek which would be the main source of water for the project was the Three Sisters Irrigation Company, the Columbia Southern Irrigation Company and the Deschutes Irrigation Company.

Eventually the Three Sisters Irrigation Company won the right to Tumalo Creek and began working on a contract with the State Land Board to reclaim of 27,004.83 acres of dry land in Central Oregon (Irrigation Development...17). On January 12, 1904 the project was approved by the U.S. Department of the Interior, the first such irrigation project in Oregon (Irrigation Development...17).

Within a year trouble had surfaced. Management had misrepresented the number of acres to be reclaimed and miscalculated the costs of the project. On November 1, 1905 the State Land Board asked the Department of Interior to delay granting the company more lands until all of the problems could be resolved. Disillusioned with the project the Three Sisters Irrigation Company sold their rights to the project to the newly formed Columbia Southern Irrigation Company just a week after hearing about the delay.

Even under new management, the irrigation project fledged along. The new project managers were still incapable of designing and building a workable irrigation project on such a large scale. As a result numerous settlers who had moved to Central Oregon with the promise of irrigation for their new homesteads were getting very upset with the lack of progress of the project. Stepping up the lead the charge on behalf of his fellow farmers, Jonathan

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Section 8**

**Page 6**

**JONATHAN N.B. GERKING HOMESTEAD  
DESCHUTES COUNTY, OREGON**

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**Narrative Statement of Significance: Cont'd**

N.B. Gerking, then President of the Laidlaw Development League sued W.A. Laidlaw, General Manager of the Columbia Southern Irrigation Company, for fraud and misrepresentation in 1909(Winch 58). Gerking stated that in his initial contract with the company, they had promised not to sell more land than could reasonably be irrigated from the supply. Unfortunately for Gerking and the settlers he represented, a Portland jury decided against him and eventually dropped the case.

However due to Gerking's actions and other political and financial pressures, the Columbia Southern Irrigation Company was forced to deed the entire project to the Oregon, Washington & Idaho Finance Company. They had been chosen by State of Oregon to prepare a finance and engineering report on the project.

Still unsure about the eventual success of the project, in 1913 Jonathan N.B. Gerking, along with J.R. Roberts, A.A. Anderson, E.D. Williams and W.D. Barnes went to Salem to lobby for the appropriation of \$450,000 for the Tumalo Irrigation Project (Winch 75). Gerking by then was one of the founders of the Oregon Irrigation Congress. Due to Gerking's leadership in February of 1913, the Oregon Legislature passed the Columbia Southern Act that authorized \$450,000 to reorganize and construct the irrigation project. Now under State control the project, known statewide as the "Tumalo Project," became the first Carey Act Irrigation project in the United States to be managed by a public agency.

Under the close supervision of project engineer Olaf Laurgaard, the Tumalo project was completed by December of 1914. However even with Laurgaard's expertise the project continued to be doomed. By February 1915, the water level in the newly created Tumalo Reservoir had dropped from fourteen feet to six feet. The situation improved slightly with the spring snowmelt rising the water to its highest point 25 ft. The water high didn't last long, and on April 9, 1915 breaks and sinkholes opened up on the eastern perimeter of the reservoir floor. Numerous other holes soon appeared some 30' x 50' and over 15' deep. Several measures were tried to close the holes including exploding dynamite and sluicing water from the main feed canal. Efforts failed though, and engineer reports indicated more voids in the rock beneath the reservoir and numerous fissures in the rocks would allow more water to escape. The success of the project was doomed forever. The State gave one last effort to fill the reservoir during the winter of 1923-24 but their efforts failed once again. By 1931, only 6,500 acres of the original 27,000+ acres were actually under cultivation as part of the Tumalo Project.

Despite the failure of the project, Jonathan N.B. Gerking was hailed as the hero for getting the project finally off the drawing board. His efforts gave him the title of "Father of the Tumalo Irrigation Project." Time passed and Jonathan Napoleon Bonaparte Gerking died on May 9, 1928 at that age of 82. He passed away on his homestead after being ill for more than a year. His body was shipped to Athena for burial (Athena Pioneer..).

Ray Gerking, Jonathan's son, is noted as one of the men who help blaze a road from the town of Deschutes to Prineville in 1908. Ray carved his name on a juniper tree on April 26, 1908. The tree is located off of present day Horner Road (USGS Quad: Forked Horn Butte, T:16 R:13 Sec:30).

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Section 9**

**Page 7**

JONATHAN N.B. GERKING HOMESTEAD  
DESCHUTES COUNTY, OREGON

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“93 Year Old Pioneer Tells about Gerking Flat.” The Athena Press. 21 February 1941

“Athena Pioneer Passes On at 82.” The Athena Press. 11 May 1928:1.

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Gilbert, Frank T. Historic Sketches, Walla Walla, Whitman, Columbia and Garfield Counties, Washington Territory and Umatilla County, Oregon. Portland, OR: House of A.G. Walling, 1882.

Kahn, Renee. “The American Foursquare.” The Old House Journal. February 1982: 15-17.

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Irrigation Development in Oregon’s Upper Deschutes River Basin 1871-1957: A Historic Context Statement.

By Mike Hall, Associate Planner Deschutes County Community Development department, Bend, OR, 1994.

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(8-86)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 9, 10

Page 7

JONATHAN N.B. GERKING HOMESTEAD  
DESCHUTES COUNTY, OREGON

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**Bibliography:** Cont'd

"Tumalo Project Pioneer Passes: J.N.B. Gerking Succumbs to Illness." The Bend Bulletin. 9 May 1928:3.

U.S. Census Bureau. Deschutes County Census. 1920: 11, Line 3.

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Winch, Martin T. "Tumalo: Thirsty Land." Oregon Historical Quarterly. Spring, Summer and Fall 1985.

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Tax lot 1000 of Section Two (2) in Township Sixteen (16) South, Range Eleven (11) East of the Willamette Meridian, in rural Deschutes County approximately three miles northwest of the unincorporated town of Tumalo.

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

The nominated property includes the current parcel where the Jonathan N.B. Gerking Homestead is located. It includes approximately 30 acres of the original homesteaded property which encompassing nine buildings spread throughout the property.

Gerking, Jonathan N.B., Homestead  
Name of Property

Bend Vicinity, Deschutes County, Oregon  
City, County, and State

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreege of property 20 acres

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

A 1/0 6/3/2/2/4/0 4/8/9/3/7/3/0  
Zone Easting Northing

B 1/0 6/3/2/4/9/0 4/8/9/3/7/3/0  
Zone Easting Northing

C 1/0 6/3/2/4/9/0 4/8/9/3/5/7/0

D 1/0 6/3/2/2/4/0 4/8/9/3/5/7/0

### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property.)

x See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 10

### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

x See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 10

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title MICHAEL HOUSER, Associate Planner, Historic and Cultural Resources

organization Deschutes County Community Development Department date March 1999

street & number 117 NW Lafayette Avenue telephone 541-388-7927

city or town Bend state OR zip code 97701

### 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/or 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

name GARDNER L. WILLIAMS AND PAMELA HATELY-WILLIAMS

street & number 65725 Gerking Market Road telephone 541-388-4712

city or town Bend Vicinity state OR zip code 97701

**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 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 Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. PHOTOS Page 1

Gerking, Jonathan N.B., Homestead, Bend Vicinity, Deschutes County, Oregon

### Common Label Information:

1. GERKING, JONATHAN N.B., HOMESTEAD
2. Bend Vicinity, Deschutes County, Oregon
3. Photographer: Michael Houser
4. Date: October 1998
5. Negative on file at Michael Houser, 117 NW Lafayette, Bend, OR 97701

### Photo No. 1:

6. East elevation of building. Camera facing west.

### Photo No. 2:

6. North elevation of building. Camera facing south.

### Photo No. 3:

6. West elevation of building. Camera facing east.

### Photo No. 4:

6. South elevation of building. Camera facing north.

### Photo No. 5:

6. Interior stair detail.

### Photo No. 6:

6. Upstairs hall and storage.

### Photo No. 7:

6. East elevation of barn. Camera facing west.

### Photo No. 8:

6. Southeast elevation of outhouse. Camera facing northwest.

### Photo No. 9:

6. East elevation of bunkhouse. Camera facing west.

### Photo No. 10:

6. Northwest elevation of cisterns. Camera facing southeast.

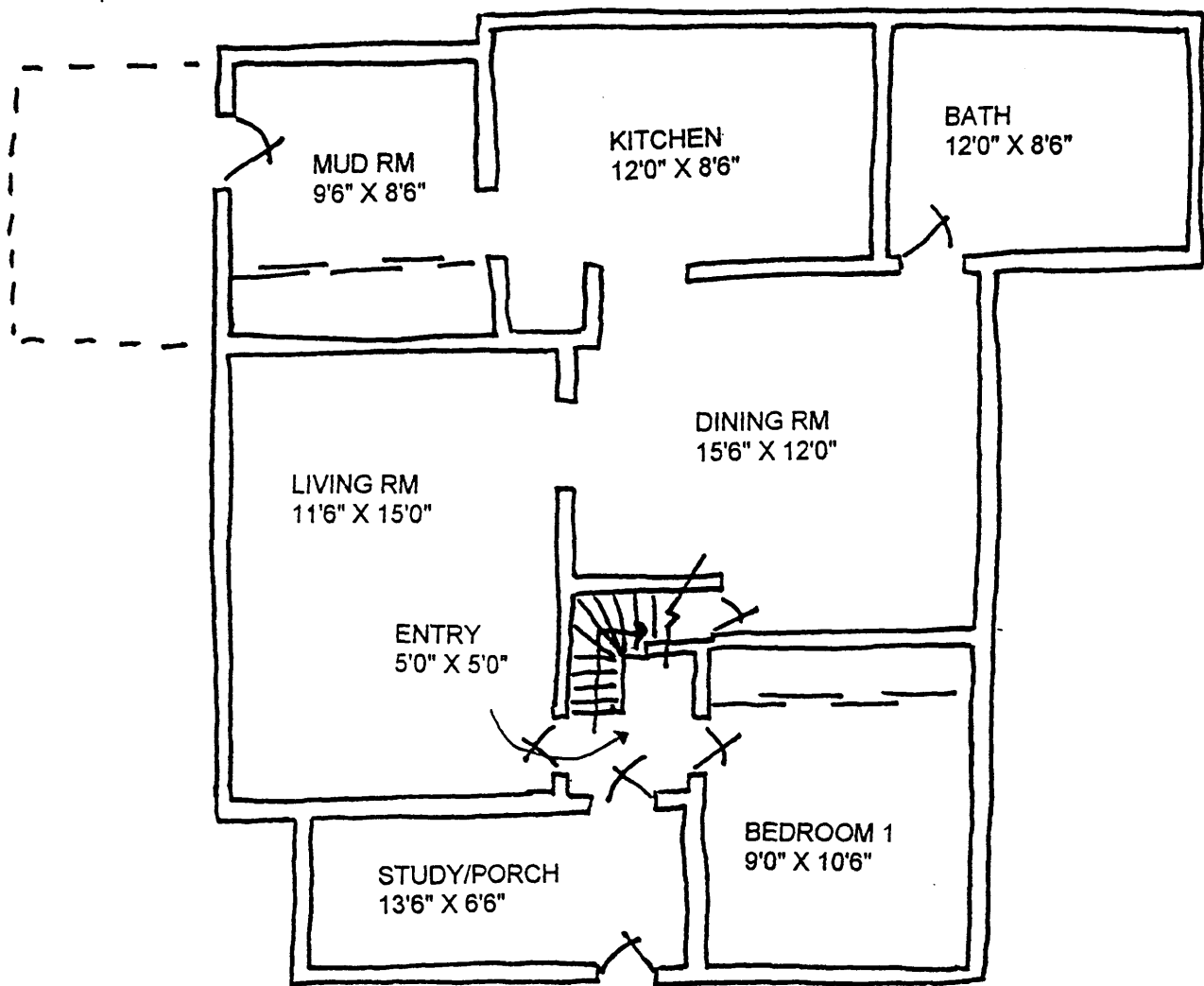
### Photo No. 11:

6. Jonathan & Lucy Gerking.

### Photo No. 12:

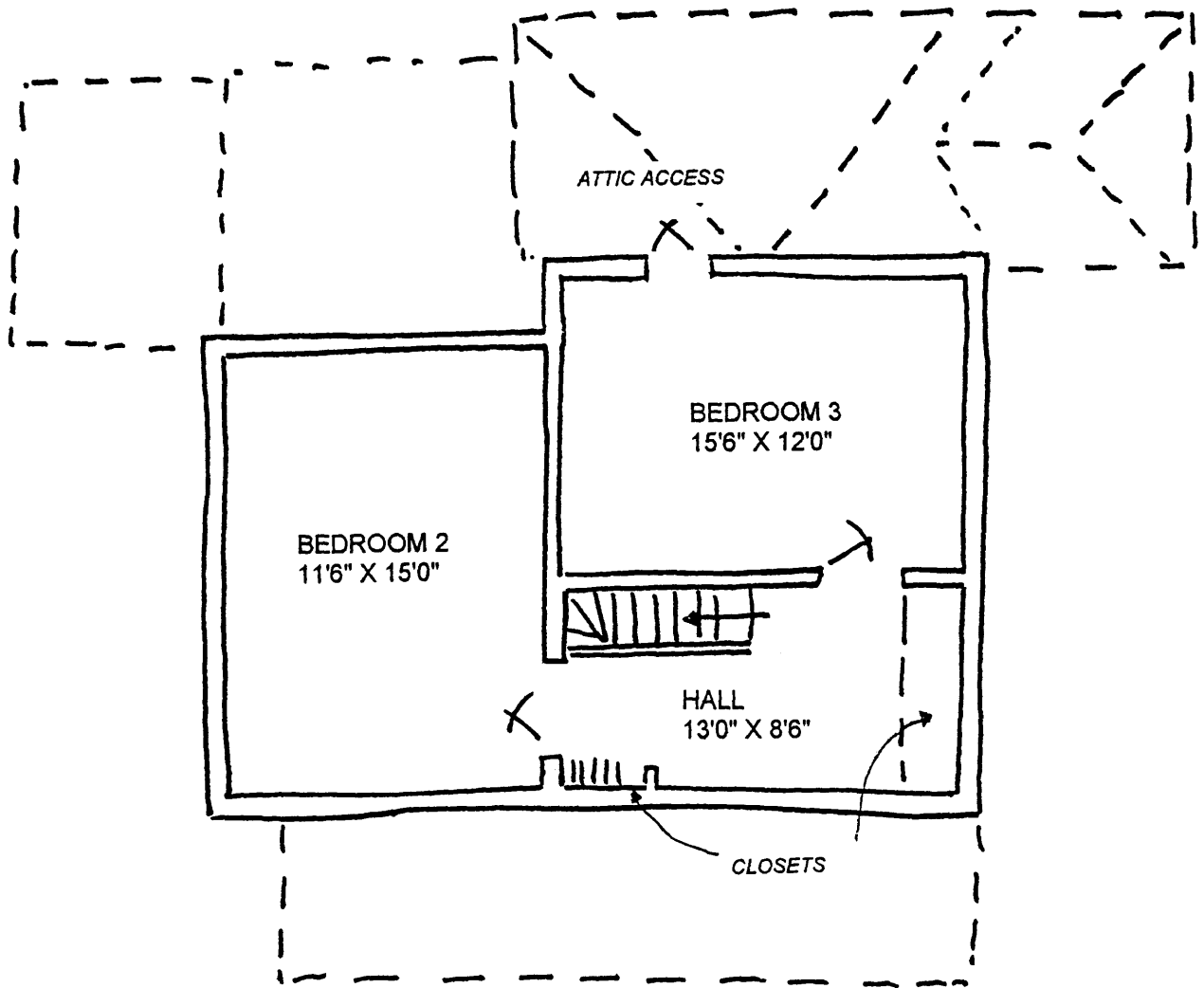
4. Unknown
5. Oregon Historical Society, 1200 SW Park Ave, Portland, OR 97205
6. Historic photo of homestead, circa 1915. #51081





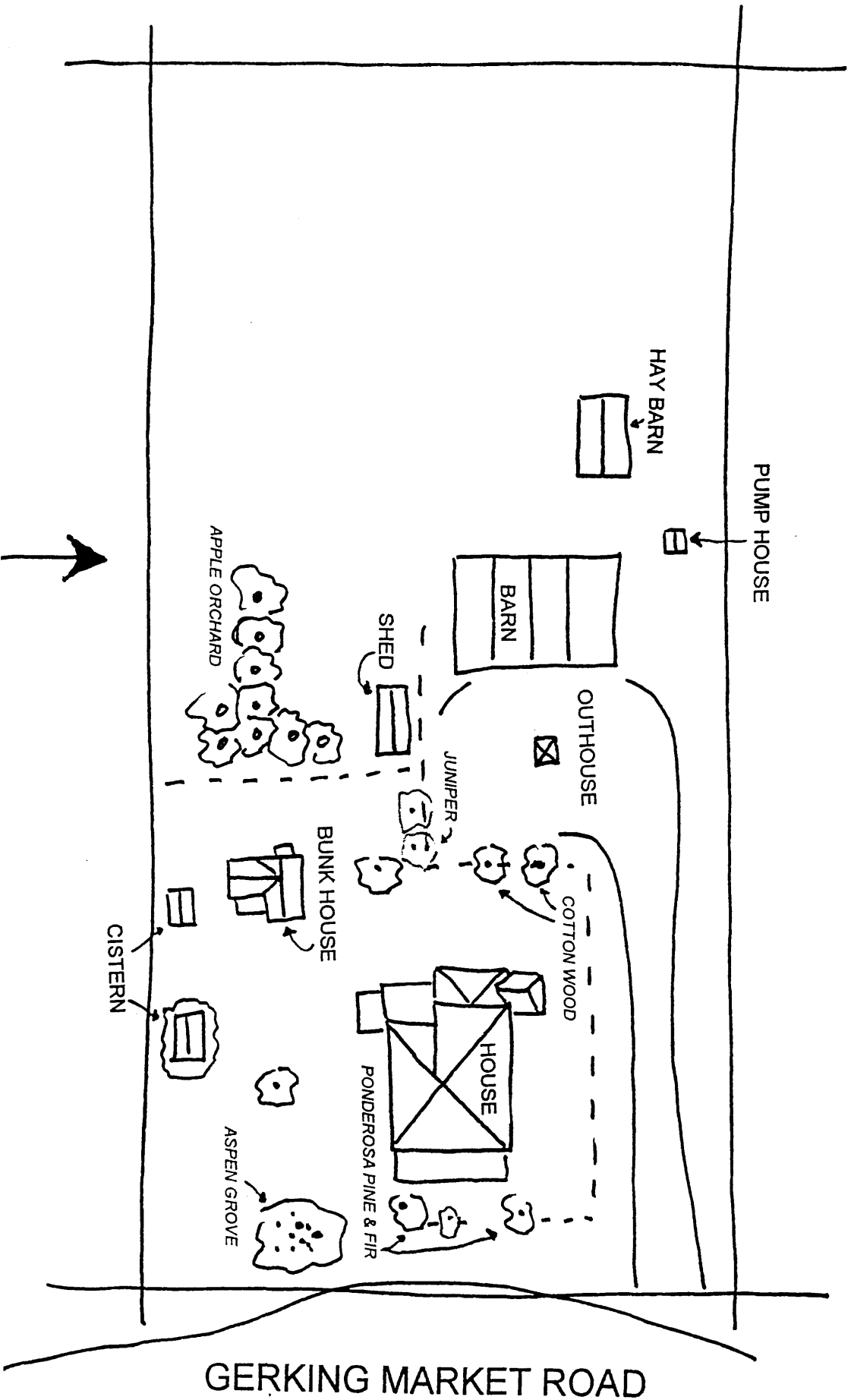
**Jonathan N.B. Gerking Homestead**  
65725 Gerking Market Road

**1<sup>st</sup> Floor**  
Not to Scale



**Jonathan N.B. Gerking Homestead**  
65725 Gerking Market Road

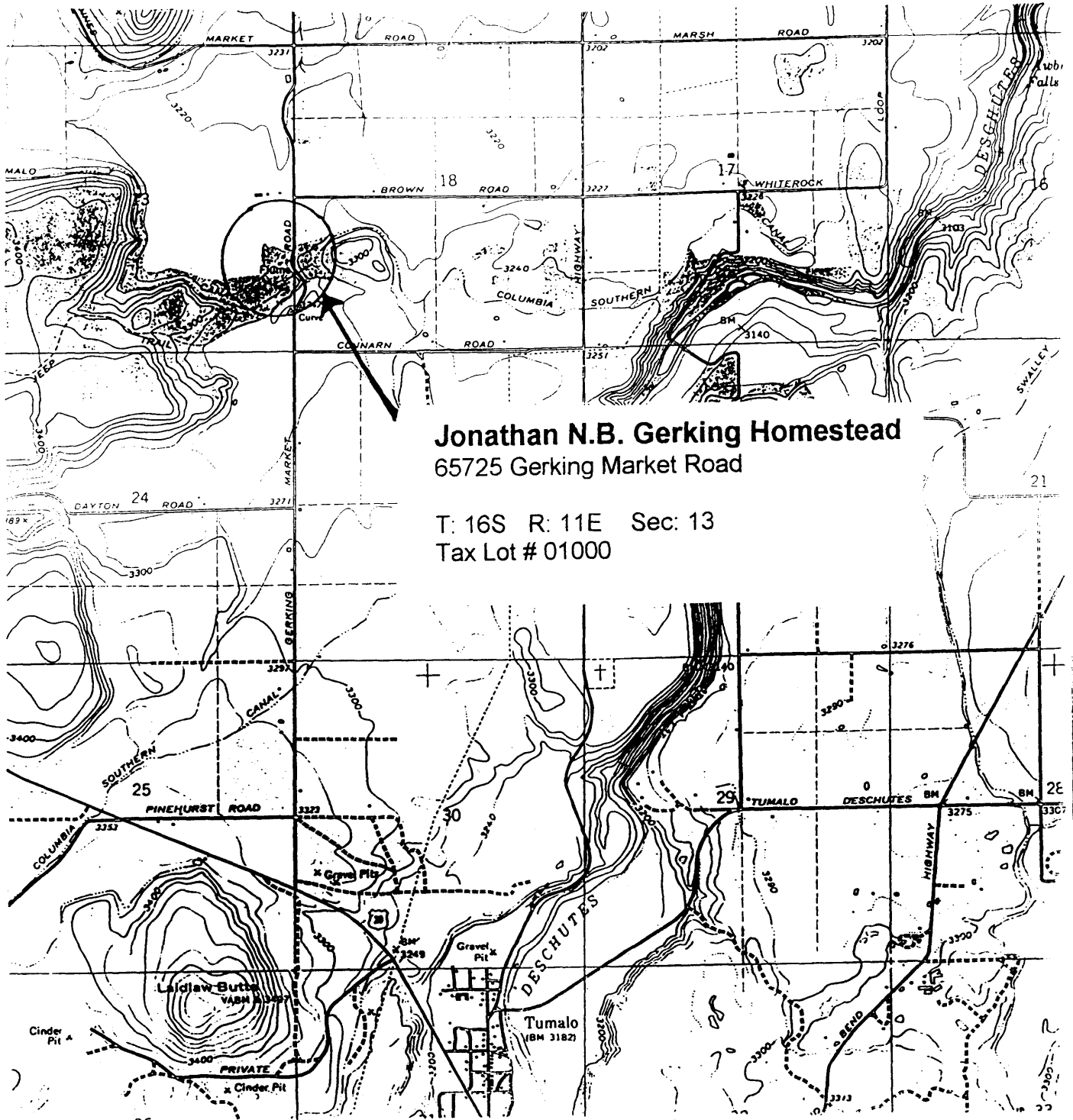
**2nd Floor**  
Not to Scale



Jonathan N.B. Gerking Homestead  
 65725 Gerking Market Road

Site Plan  
 Not to Scale

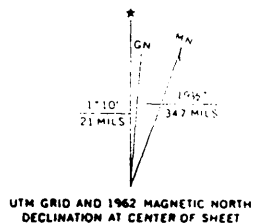




**Jonathan N.B. Gerking Homestead**  
65725 Gerking Market Road

T: 16S R: 11E Sec: 13  
Tax Lot # 01000

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey  
Control by USGS and USC&GS  
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial  
photographs taken 1957 and 1959. Field checked 1962  
Polyconic projection 1927 North American datum  
10,000-foot grid based on Oregon coordinate system, south zone  
1000-metre Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,  
zone 10, shown in blue  
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence lines  
Map photoinspected 1971  
No major culture or drainage changes observed



**ROAD CLASSIFICATION**

Heavy-duty	—————	Light-duty	—————
Medium-duty	—————	Unimproved dirt	.....
		U. S. Route	⬡

**TUMALO, OREG.**  
N4407.5—W12115/7.5  
1962  
AMS 1772 III NE—SERIES V892  
PHOTOINSPECTED 1975