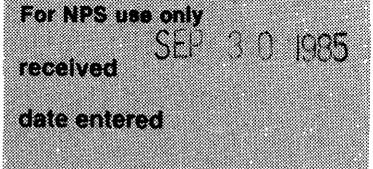


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Site # 9

1. Paul and Fredriika Geranen Farm
2. East of Frederick
Frederick Vicinity
South Dakota 046 Brown 013
3. buildings; private; NA acquisition; unoccupied; restricted access;
agricultural
4. Stanley and Signe Geranen
RR
Frederick, SD 57441
5. Register of Deeds
Brown County Courthouse
Aberdeen, SD 57401
7. good; minor alteration; original site

The Geranen farm consists of seventeen structures sheltered on the west and south by a windbreak. The section line road between Savo and Richland Townships bisects the farmyard. Three structures are metal, the rest are built of frame. All are painted white, which adds to the neatness and orderliness of the farm.

The original house (contributing) is the oldest structure; it is divided and presently used as two outbuildings. This dwelling may have been moved from the homestead, located across the road, or built in 1893 when the Geranens moved onto this land. Originally, the house appears to have been a one-and-one-half story, T-plan, frame dwelling.

In its present form, there is one rectangular, one-story unit used for gardening tools and a one-and-one-half story, T-plan used for farm storage.

A second house (contributing) was erected in 1916. This large two-story dwelling has the shape and general features of the four-square or two-story, cube house. Rectangular in shape, the house is covered in a hipped roof and has a hipped dormer on the east side. Decorative details are sparse. A garage was added on the north side and an interior remodeling altered the first floor window openings. The house is frame and built on a stone and concrete foundation.

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The third building in the houseyard is the sauna (contributing). This small, gable-roofed one-story, two-room structure was built of frame in c. 1916. Measuring 16' 3 3/4" by 10' 4 1/2", the sauna has a 3'8" X 10' change room and a larger steam room. Entered through the gable-end, the change room has benches on the north and east walls which are covered in traditional Finnish rag rugs woven by Fredriika Geranen. (The loom has been given to a recent bride from Finland, who continues to weave rag rugs). In the steam room, three benches rise along the rear, west wall and a transformer has been converted to use as the kiuas. It is fed through an opening to the change room. A somewhat unusual feature of the steam room is the vaulted ceiling covered with tongue and groove siding. The sauna appears to have always been a smokeless sauna and is the second one of the site. The first was destroyed.

The farmyard consists of the major structures forming two sides of a three-sided "courtyard," and the smaller structures are aligned along the east-west drive or on axis.

On the south is the barn (contributing), which is a large, gable-roofed, frame barn dating from the first quarter of the 20th century. The barn has original, shed units on the axial sides. Three doors open along the north wall. The barn rests on a concrete foundation and may date from c. 1900-1915.

A frame, gable-roofed garage (contributing) is located opposite the house, to the west. Sliding doors cover the axial and gable-end wall openings. The date of construction is unknown.

A very large granary (contributing) is sited to the north. The main section covered in a gable roof is two stories, while the perpendicular wings are one-story. Sliding doors cover the axial wall openings, while two windows pierce the gable-end walls on the first floor. One window is found in the second. A concrete foundation supports the building. The wings each have two windows on the rear and a door on the front, south wall.

Across the lane from the granary is the old house, a frame shed-roofed chicken coop (contributing) and gable-roofed, one-story shed (contributing). All are built of frame. The chicken coop has a bank of windows facing south, a common feature of pattern-book coop designs. The shed has a large garage door entrance and window facing south. Dates of construction for these two buildings are unknown.

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Two, octagonal, plywood-board granaries (contributing) are located to the rear of this bank of buildings. A smaller, gable-roofed granary is located on the far east end of the yard (contributing). No dates were recorded for these buildings.

A metal quonset garage (non-contributing) and a metal and glass gas pump (contributing) complete the north side of the farmyard.

A frame shed, metal, circular granary, and frame loafing shed complete the inventory of structures. All are non-contributing and their dates of construction are unknown.

8. 1800-1899; agriculture; architecture; settlement; Finnish ethnic history

Dates: 1893-c. 1920

Builder: Paul Geranen and Fred Geranen

The Paul and Fredriika Geranen Farm is a complete and exceptionally well-maintained example of a Finnish-American farmstead. The Geranens were members of the original Savo settlement and in 1902 when Paul opened a store, the community of Savo was established. The Geranens are tied to the early history of not only Savo, but the Finnish community of Poinsett/Lake Norden as well. This site represents settlement history, Finnish folk architecture, American vernacular architecture, agriculture, and Finnish ethnic history in South Dakota.

Born in Poulanga, Oulu Province, Finland, Paul Geranen came to the United States with his wife in 1877, during the very early years of Finnish migration to America. His wife, Fredriiki Lippo was born at Utajarvi in Oulu Province. They came to Hancock, Michigan, which was then the hub of the copper mining industry and the center for Finnish immigrants. After several years of working in the mines, Paul Geranen decided to homestead in the Dakotas, and came to Savo with the first pioneer families.

The Geranens homesteaded the section to the west of the present farmstead in 1882 and moved here in 1893. Paul's interests were not limited to farming and in 1902, he and his sons opened the Savo store at Savo. In 1906 he sold the store and he and Fredriika moved to Bryant, in Hamlin County. The following year they moved to the new town of Lake Norden and Paul opened a general merchandising store.

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The farm was rented to Paul and Fredriikas's son, Fred. In 1916 he initiated a rebuilding of the farmstead. The old, earth sauna was replaced with the present frame one and the large, imposing house was constructed for his family. Fredrick was born in Hancock, Michigan in 1882, a few years after the family's arrival in America. Nonetheless, he built the sauna in an old world tradition.

Neither Paul nor Fredriika lost touch with Savo. As charter members of both the Savo and Lake Norden Evangelical Churches and they were buried in Savo Cemetery.

The Geranen family history is intertwined with Finnish settlement history. In addition, their farm represents a very well preserved example of a prosperous and culturally mixed farmstead. While the sauna is Finnish, the rest of the buildings are American. Of special interest in the Geranen sauna is the imaginative adaptation of a transformer box to a kiuas. This is the second sauna and a third kiuas, and therefore the building represents the maintenance of a vital tradition into the second generation of building. The Geranen family still owns the farm.

10. Acreage: 5 Scale: 1:24 000
Quad: Savo SW

UTM: Latitude: 45° 51' 0"
Longitude: 98° 24' 48"

north zone

Verbal Boundary Description

The site is located in the NW/NW, Section 3, T127N, R63 and the SW/SW, Section 34, T128N, R63W. The boundary of the site is formed on the east by the shelter belt. On the south the boundary is a line lying 10 feet from the south wall of barn and running parallel to it. On the west, the boundary is the beginning of the cultivated fields which lie 30 feet from the east wall of the shed. On the north, the cultivated field forms the boundary line which lies 20 feet from the north wall of the quonset garage.

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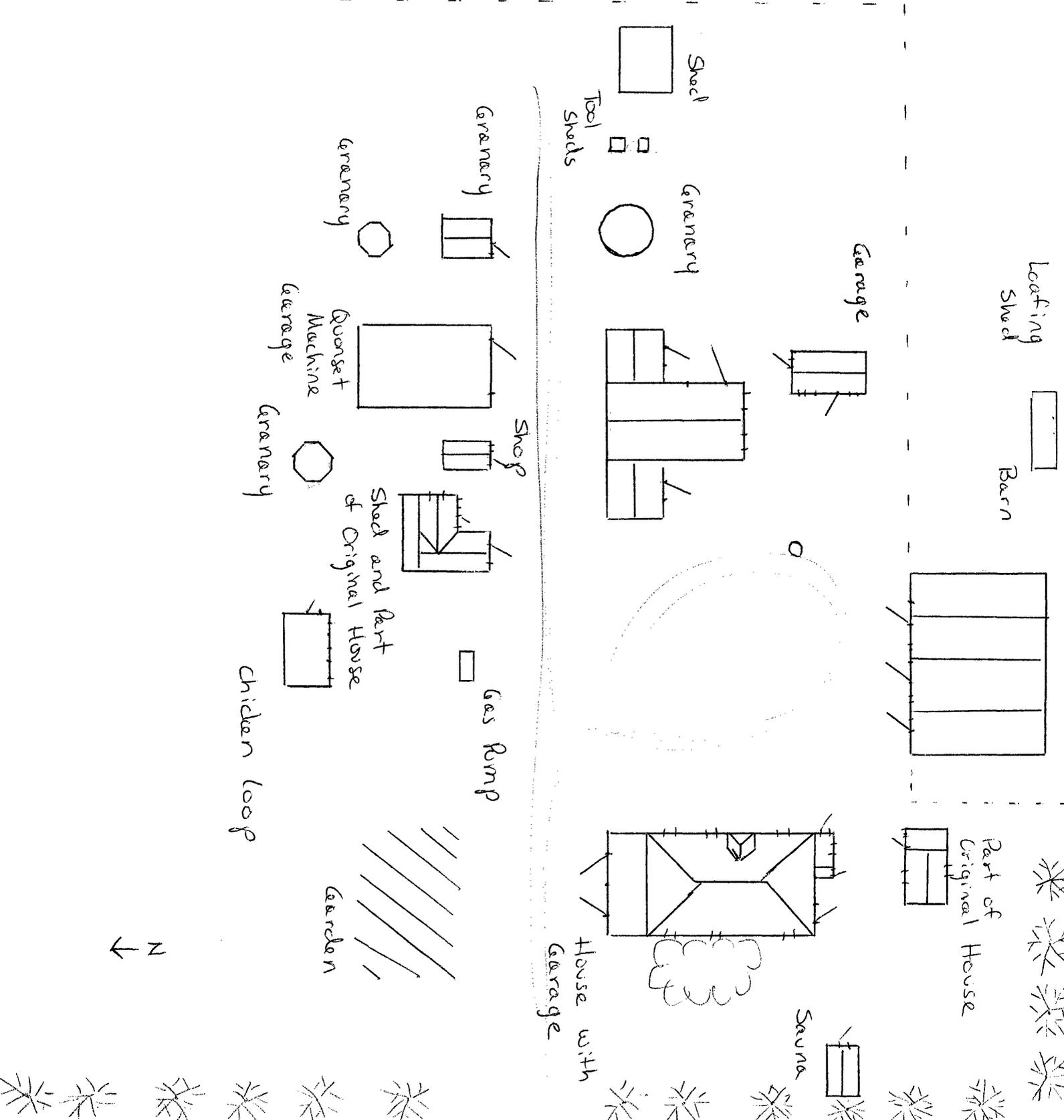
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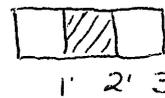
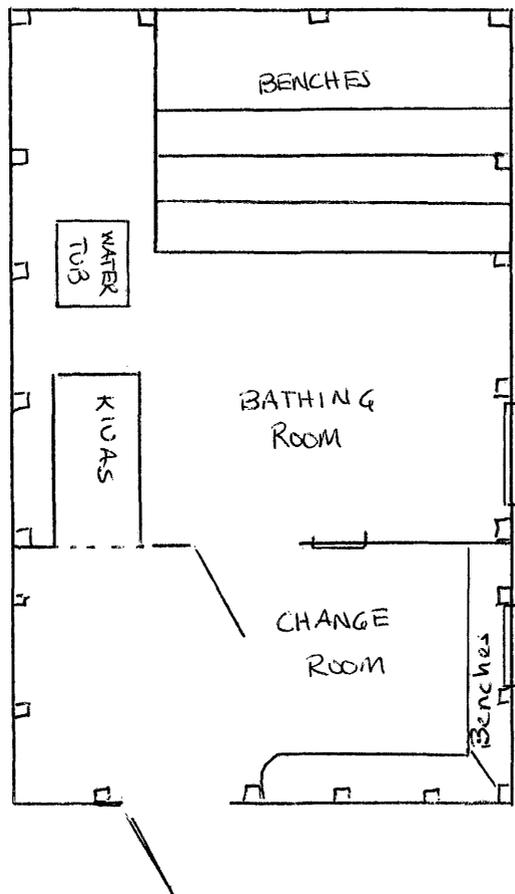
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GERANEN SAUNA
c 1916
Brown County, SD



Scale

N →