National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

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See instructions in How to Complete National Register Forms Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic	Maxwell, d	lames O., Fa	rmstead	Number of contri	buting resources: 7
and/or common	Same		Nu	mber of non-contrib	uting resources: 4
2. Loca	ation				
street & number	Route 2, E	lox 82		1	VAnot for publication
city, town	Haines	X	vicinity of	Second Congression	al District
state	Oregon	code 41	county	Baker	code 001
3. Clas	sification	ז			
Category district _X building(s) structure site object	Ownership public X private both Public Acquisition N/A. in process N/A. being conside	ur we on Acces ye	ccupied noccupied ork in progress sible es: restricted es: unrestricted	Present Use _X agriculture commercial educational entertainment government industrial military	museum park X private residence religious scientific transportation other:
4. Own	er of Pro	perty			
name	Gerald Max	well			
street & number	Route 1, B	ox 80			
city, town	Haines		(_ vicinity of	state	Oregon 97833
5. Loca	ation of L	egal De	escriptio	on	
courthouse, regis	stry of deeds, etc.	Bake	<u>er County Cou</u>	irthouse	
street & number		3rd	and Court St	reets	
city, town		Bake	er	state	Oregon 97814
<u>6. Rep</u>	resentati	on in E	kisting S	Surveys	
	ide Inventory o ic Properties	of	has this pro	perty been determined eli	gible? yes _X no
date 1986				federal _X state	e county local
depository for su	rvey records	State	<u>Historic Pre</u>	servation Office, 5	25 Trade Street SE
city, town		Salem		state	Oregon 97310

7. Description

Condition excellent _X good fair	Check or _ deteriorated unalt _ ruinsX alter _ unexposed	ered <u>×</u> original site	N/A
· · · ·			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The James O. Maxwell Farmstead is located on the north side of the Muddy Creek County Road, approximately four miles northwest of Haines and fifteen miles from Baker, the Baker county seat. The ranch occupies fertile bottomland on the west side of Baker Valley and is traversed by Muddy Creek and a spring branch. The Elkhorn Range rises three miles to the west, and across the valley to the east the Wallowa Mountains form a lofty and impressive panorama. Although the Maxwell Ranch now includes approximately 900 acres, only the farmhouse, its outbuildings and the barns are proposed for nomination to the National Register with an area of 3.67 acres to encompass an orchard, the barn lot and associated pasturage which were central to the historic operation of the farm.

Historic and non-historic structural features within the nominated area are as follows:

1.	Farmhouse and Bunkhouse (1900)	Contributing
2.	Smokehouse (c. 1900)	Contributing
3.	Washhouse (c. 1900)	Contributing
4.	Original Log Barn (1880)	Contributing
5.	Pole-frame Granary (1890s)	Contributing
6.	Hay Barn (1896)	Contributing
7.	Equipment Shed (1890s)	Contributing
-		-

8.	Modern Grain Silos (2)	Non-contributing
9.	Metal Vehicle/Equipment Shed	Non-contributing
10.	New Shop Building	Non-contributing

The area between the farmhouse yard and the two barns, originally consisting of garden and barnlot, is now entirely barnlot; the strip west of the farmhouse yard is orchard and the strip east of the hay barn and equipment shed is pasture. These are historic uses, essentially unchanged during the lifetime of the farm. The shop is no longer extant. It had been in disuse for several years and was destroyed by a particularly heavy snowfall during the past winter. The original workbench and a number of artifacts were salvaged and are now housed in the eastern part of the log barn.

James O. Maxwell, a native of Missouri who had emigrated to California in 1875, came to Baker County in 1879.¹ He had intended to work for the railroad, but decided to take up farming instead.² James purchased the original land for his farm from the Oregon Railway and Navigation Company. The federal government encouraged railroad expansion by granting the companies alternate sections of public land, in a checkerboard pattern, along proposed rights of way. The railroad companies then sold portion of these lands to help finance construction. James purchased 320 acres.³ At about the same time, his brother John joined him there and bought land of his own from State School Lands.⁴ When his brother returned to Missouri in 1888, James purchased this land from him.⁵ In 1885 James purchased land from Mary and Robert Eakin,⁶ and in 1891 completed his farm with the purchase of 120 acres from Elizabeth Moor.⁷ By 1902, James owned 800 acres of (continued)

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land and had control of about 1,000 acres. (8) It should be mentioned here that the Maxwell brand is an outline of a pair of cow horns. This came about when James' sister, who had also emigrated to Oregon, married a local man named Horn. This was his brand and he evidently transferred it to Maxwell.

The first buildings erected by Maxwell on his farm were those typical of pioneer builders. Among them was a small log barn (1880), later used as a granary and the only original structure that still survives. In 1883 the town of Haines was established on the O.R.&N. right of way, and when the rails were finally laid in 1884, it became a shipping point for Maxwell and other farmers in the area. By the turn of the century Maxwell's farm had become a large operation and the number of farm buildings totaled sixteen. These included the original log barn and the huge barn that replaced it, two granaries, a silo, two pig sheds, a straw shed, a thresher shed, a binder shed, a shop, a scales house, a calf shed, an equipment shed, a combined buggy shed and woodshed, and the chicken house. In addition to these buildings were the main house with its attached cellar and bunkhouse, the wash house, the smoke house, and a privy in back. The smaller hired man's house was west of the main house, just beyond the orchard (for plan, see Appendix).

The farm was self-sufficient and produced hay, grain, pasture, beef, pork, lamb, chicken, eggs, butter, milk and cream. Over half the hay crop was used to feed the horses. There was a 200-head herd of choice graded shorthorn cattle, thirty of which were dairy cows, hogs, sheep, and from forty to fifty head of horses. These included twelve to fifteen work teams, two driving teams and the riding horses. The Maxwells raised, butchered and smoked all of their own meat, and canned or dried the produce of the half-acre garden and large orchard. Butter was made and sold to the Baisley-Elkhorn gold mine. James had married Nancy Hand in 1887 and, besides their own ten children, the Maxwells had boarders, relatives, and varying numbers of hired men, depending on the season, to feed. Nancy always had a hired girl to help her. As soon as breakfast was over she began preparing dinner. It was said that many times a $48\frac{1}{2}$ -pound sack of flour was used daily. During harvest the long oak table, which extended to seat eighteen, was set three times for each meal. Once, during a rainy harvest season, the transient crews had to stay six weeks before the harvest was over, and in that time they consumed two full sized beef.

James Maxwell died suddenly in 1917. After his death, his wife Nancy continued to operate the ranch. She not only managed the farm and her family but also bought forty head of Jersey cows, and milking became a large operation that continued into the 1940's. In 1920 Mrs. Maxwell, along with the late Charles Davidson, bought the Rock Creek Reservoir site from a Mr. Favorite. They built a dam there and bored a 280-foot tunnel through the rock below the dam. Inside this tunnel, and reached from a shaft above the dam, is the large valve used to let the stored water down the tunnel and into Rock Creek. From there it runs into the Maxwell Ditch and then onto the Maxwell fields. This stored water was, and is, used for late season irrigation. It is interesting to note that the permit for this reservoir is filed with the U.S. Department of the Interior (easement No.0025009). (9) Most other reservoirs in this area are of later date and have their agreements

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with the U.S. Forest Service. Nancy, it should be added, donated land for public use where the Anthony Lakes Highway runs north and south below the Maxwell property. Had she not done so, the road as originally projected would have cut through the Maxwell barnlot and absorbed the big barn.

After Nancy Maxwell's death in 1937 her sons, Omer and Glen, continued to work the ranch, paying off debts incurred during the depression years. In 1946 they bought the estate from the rest of the heirs. In 1941 they had started buying feeder cattle, fattening and marketing them and building the fine Hereford cattle herd that exists today. (10)

In 1966 a third generation Maxwell, Gerald, and his wife Farrell, purchased half of the estate from Gerald's father Omer. Gerald and his uncle Glen continued to operate the ranch until 1974, when he bought his uncle's half also. Gerald has continued to improve and modernize the operation. The cow-calf herd has been expanded to 230 head each, with about 210 head of yearlings, and the feed-lot turns out about 200 head of fat cattle each spring. The irrigation system has been updated and about a third of the tilled crop land is under sprinkler irrigation, fed by a large pond. The feed-lot has been modernized with concrete feed bunks that are filled twice a day. Feeding takes about fifteen minutes, using a feed wagon pulled behind a tractor. Two large grain silos sit beside the old log barn, now used as a granary; a long metal-pole building has replaced the buggy shed and holds a two-car garage and truck and equipment housing; and a large, new shop building has replaced the old shop, a small structure that finally collapsed during the past winter and is being razed. Gerald continues his grandfather's interest in community affairs and serves on many committees that benefit the agricultural community. His son, Alan, the fourth generation Maxwell on the ranch, recently purchased an additional eighty acres to add to the holdings. He. also. plans to share in the continued operation of the Maxwell family farm.

The Maxwell Ranch was honored with a Century Farm Award by the Oregon Historical Society in 1980.

In spite of the additions and changes necessitated by progress, the site retains its character and a surprisingly large number of the older structures remain. These include the farm house with its attached cellar and bunkhouse, the smoke house, the wash house, the original log barn, a granary, a large equipment shed, and the huge barn used for milking, horses and hay storage. There was once a large orchard but only a few trees remain now; they still bear fruit. The large, fenced yard is essentially as it was, with some of the old trees gone and newer trees grown in their place. These features form a visual and functional core of this historic farm.

The House

The original farmhouse was destroyed by fire, and construction of the existing

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house was undertaken immediately in approximately the same location. It was built in 1900.

The house is a massive two-story structure, rectangular with projecting bays on the south and east elevations, and measures 35 feet wide by 45 feet deep. The attached rear porch and combined cellar and bunkhouse add another 25 feet to its depth. It is a transitional Victorian design incorporating elements of the late Queen Anne and Colonial Revival styles, with some Eastlake decorative touches. Irregular massing and assymetry typical of Queen Anne dwellings are modified by such Colonial features as eave returns, a roof of comparatively low pitch, and broad shallow bay windows that cover the full breadth of the south bay on both first and second floors. This two-story bay is surmounted by overhanging corners with pendants at the frieze level, and the south gable front coincides with the front of the bay window structure; in effect, the corners of the building are clipped to form the bay, a feature common at the time. The house is of balloon-frame construction, the material being clear pine throughout. Siding appears to be center-matched stock with a v-groove at the joint. Trim is restrained and consists principally of corner boards and simple window and door trim with drip ledges. A belt course with drip ledge divides the two stories and provides a horizontal emphasis that reduces the impression of height. Formal entrance was from the south and this elevation is the most elaborate. Its most interesting feature is the two-story porch. It is said that Mr. and Mrs. Maxwell were in disagreement in regard to the front porch or veranda: Mr. Maxwell wanted a porch of ordinary size that would protect the front door, and Mrs. Maxwell wanted one on the second floor as well. Mr. Maxwell spent a long day in the field and when he returned, both porches were in place. They are separated by a roof ledge finished with cedar shingles of the "octagon butt" pattern. The porches are fitted with turned columns, turned balusters of the Colonial style, and have scrolled brackets surmounted by an open grille composed of spindles in the Eastlake style. Eastlake rosettes occur on panels above the ground-floor windows of the south bay and are repeated on the frieze below the gable. Eaves are fitted with scrolled brackets. Gable ornaments are of the classic open fan design, with turned spindles and rosettes. Fretsawed roof cresting was fitted. The central windows of the south bay are single two-light sash, an early version of the wide picture windows that became increasingly popular in succeeding decades.* The other windows are double-hung sash, one-over-one. The projecting bay on the east elevation is not provided with bay windows like those on the south, but is fitted with paired windows instead. It is flanked by a small porch sheltering the side entrance, similar in design to the others. Foundations are ashlar, cut from granite, and equipped with small cast iron ventilators. The brick chimneys were corbelled in and out at the top, as was usual at the time. The exterior walls were painted white, with the trim and decorative elements other than porch brackets finished in a hue described as dark mustard. It appears that two shades of this trim color were used.

According to the Maxwell family, the house was built by the local Baptist minister, Rev. E. P. Waltz. He was assisted a man from Haines named Frank Gray, who later built the little "hired man's house" on the west side of the orchard (no longer extant).

* A third window of this pattern occurs on the east wall of the parlor (see below).

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Neither man is listed in the Haines section of the 1899-1900 <u>Eastern Oregon Directory</u>, information for which was probably gathered in 1899. However, others are listed who may have been involved in construction at the Maxwell Ranch: Haines Planing Mill Company, lumber, sash, doors and blinds; Shiel, Charles, Painter; Stroup, George A., painter; Vanderventer, Jerry, sawmill; and Crosby, Millard F., carpenter, contractor and builder. The name of the architect is unknown and no original plans for the house have survived. Although it is possible that the design was taken from a plan book or ordered through the mail, it is this writer's opinion that Maxwell engaged the services of an architect and that the house was designed to meet his family's specific requirements. This possibility will be discussed in the Statement of Significance.

The house has been described by its present owners as "hotel-like." It contained six large bedrooms on the second floor and two on the ground floor. The ground floor also accommodated a parlor, large sitting room, dining room, kitchen with attached pantry, and a bathroom. The bath room was exactly that, its only fixture being a big enamelled cast-iron tub with a drain. Hot water had to be carried to it. Running water and the other fixtures did not become conveniences for several years. The house was designed to handle large numbers of people, including children, hired hands, guests and relatives. Two doors on the large, screened back porch opened into the house. One led into the kitchen, where people washed up before moving on to the dining room. The pantry also opened off the kitchen and its east wall formed the end of the back porch. The other door led to a hallway, which in turn led to the sitting room; the hall also included another entrance to the kitchen and a door to the back stairway. The rear bedroom, which also bordered the porch, opened off the sitting room. There were sliding doors between dining room and sitting room, as there were between sitting room and parlor. Another hall led from the parlor to the front bedroom, the open front stair, and the front door. This hall had an angled wall, next to the parlor, where the telephone was located. A door of standard size provided access to the parlor from the front hall. The parlor is unusually well lighted, with its broad bay windows and a wide window in its east wall overlooking the side porch, which opened off the sitting room. The second floor was served by two stairways. The formal front stair was a broad open flight with turned newels and spindles, moulded handrail, and matching balustrade at the stairhead. The back stair, which was most frequently used, was comparatively narrow, enclosed, and had one landing. The unusually broad second-floor hall is laid out in the form of an ell. Six bedrooms and a large storage closet open off this hall. The large front bedroom is the same size as the parlor directly below it, and its window arrangement is the same. Window placement on the second floor matches that on the ground floor. The door that opens off the hall onto the upstairs porch is a standard cottage door of the period with raised panels, applied mouldings and drip ledges, as is the entrance door immediately below it. The original etched glass panel, a stag design, is intact. The second floor porch affords a splendid view of the south half of the Baker Valley and of the Elkhorn Range. A scuttle in the ceiling of the storage closet provides access to the attic, which is much larger than an exterior view of the house would suggest -- so large, in fact, that Mr. Maxwell at one time considered installing two more bedrooms there for the use of hired men.

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The second floor has been unused since the 1930's and has not changed since that time. Smaller families and the change from labor-intensive to mechanized farming rendered it unnecessary.

Interior walls of the house are sheathed with shiplap, which was then covered with muslin and papered. Interior trim consists of 10" baseboard with moulded cap, moulded casings with plinth blocks and turned corner blocks. Doors are of the standard four-panel pattern. Nearly all hardware is original. The woodwork was originally painted white, but Mrs. Maxwell soon hired a grainer to refinish it. His name is not recorded but he was a master craftsman. Trim in the formal areas is grained in imitation of mahogany, with door panels and the central moulded surface of casings in imitation of figured circassian walnut. Even under magnification, the deception is almost perfect. Doors and trim in other rooms are in imitation of oak and are more stylized. Ceiling height on both floors was ten feet. Flooring is 5" center-matched pine; rugs were used and the front stair was carpeted. The house does not have a basment. It should be noted here that the granite used for its foundation came from the Haines quarry. Granite from this source is dark, fine-grained, and of very high quality. For many decades the Haines quarry supplied nearly all the granite used for monuments and construction in eastern Oregon. (11)

The house had no fireplaces; there were several chimneys with shared flues, so that a wood heater could be installed in each room. The form of artificial light first used was the kerosene lamp, but this soon gave way to gaslight--a carbide system installed throughout the house. Electricity was installed in 1922 and a furnace replaced the wood stoves in 1949. (12)

Alterations

Exterior changes have been minimal. When the house was reroofed the cresting was removed. The pantry was eliminated and the back porch shortened and enclosed in 1970. When the house needed repainting, Mrs. Maxwell decided it would cost too much to use the original color scheme and had it painted all white, thus eliminating the ochre accent color for the trim.*

Interior alterations were more extensive but the house retains its charm. The interior doors were fitted with transoms; these were removed during the 1930's and the trim modified accordingly. The work was well done and there is no evidence of the change. Some rearrangement of interior spaces also occurred, at that time and again in the 1940's. The original kitchen and dining room became bedrooms and the rear bedroom became the kitchen--a much more workable arrangement. Its rear window became a door opening onto the back porch. The other doors opening onto the back porch were eliminated, as was the lower flight of the back stair. The back hall became two closets and a second door to the bathroom was provided. The bathroom was modernized. The large sliding doors to the dining room replaced the smaller doorway from front hall to parlor and the smaller door/used for the former dining room. The front stair was enclosed and fitted with a door. A long narrow cloakroom

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opening off the front hall, to the left of the stairs, was eliminated and its doorway now opens into the front bedroom. The door from that room to the former dining room was shifted. The rear portion of the front hall became closets, two for the bedrooms and one located just off the parlor. All ceilings on the ground floor were lowered to $8\frac{1}{2}$ feet. The sliding doors were removed or sealed off.

As noted above, few changes occurred on the second floor. Aside from the fact that transoms have been removed and chimneys eliminated, the entire floor is as built. Some pieces of the original golden oak furniture are still in the bedrooms.

Restoration

Present plans call for general rehabilitation and repair in addition to limited restoration. The house was repainted in 1985 in white; the intention is to repaint the trim in its original scheme, matching the original color as closely as possible. The house will also be reroofed in an appropriate manner, but the cresting will probably not be replaced, in deference to the winter storms and high winds common to Baker Valley. The interior will not be returned to its original configuration, The ground but both the front and back stairways will be opened up and restored. floor ceiling will be raised again and the transoms above the exterior doors replaced. The windows will not be altered in appearance, but the existing sash will be replaced with double-glazed sash of the same style and configuration. The front door glass will be replaced with an etched reproduction of the original, which was lost to a storm. All plumbing and wiring will be replaced. The upper floor will be left much as it is, but since the Maxwells intend to utilize this home as a "Bed and Breakfast" facility, it will be necessary to install bathrooms on the second floor. There is enough space to make this possible without altering the basic plan. A new chimney will be constructed. Windows on the second floor will be renewed in the same way as those on the ground floor. Walls, ceilings and floors will all be repaired and painted, papered or covered in as appropriate a manner as possible. All grained woodwork will be preserved, cleaned and polished, and repaired as necessary. Some rooms were carpeted, as was the stair, and it is expected that carpeting will be installed throughout. Although the region's winters are too severe to allow returning the back porch to a screened area, the intention is to restore its decorative trim to a close approximation of the original appearance.

Attached and Dependent Structures

The original layout of the farm outbuildings was as follows: west of the main house and across the orchard was the small hired man's house; directly north of that were the original log barn, two pig sheds and a straw shed. Directly north of the main house, between the yard and garden, were the smoke house and wash house and the privy. Directly north from there and across the garden were the chicken house and run, and farther north was the shop. To the east of the house was the combined buggy shed and woodshed; farther east, across the drive, was an equipment shed. To the northeast of this building was a calf shed with pen. The large hay barn was north of the equipment shed. A silo was located at its northeast corner, and to its left was a scale shed. North of the big barn was the granary, and farther north

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were a binder shed and a thresher shed. The site plan (see Appendix) shows all these buildings in their proper positions and serves to indicate how extensive the farm operation was at the turn of the century.

The combined cellar and bunkhouse was attached to the broad back porch and formedits north wall for most of its length. The cellar has double walls lined with sawdust, with a total thickness of two feet. Windows with interior shutters are provided in each end for ventilation and a central partition divides the space into two rooms. Doors provide access to each room from the porch and there is also a door in the partition. The attic of this attached building served as a bunkhouse and access was by an exterior stairway at the west end. The attic is lined with center-match lumber and is provided with a wood stove. The stair was later reversed and access is now from the yard rather than the porch. There is a small window in the east gable. Roof cresting was originally fitted and matched that on the house. The cellar interior measures approximately 12' x 25' and is lined with shelves. The building is balloon frame with siding matching that on the house, and was originally painted in the same color scheme.

The outbuildings associated with the house were the wash house and the smokehouse. Both buildings are located behind the main house, separated by about twenty feet of yard. The wash house measures 12' x 15' and sits directly over the stone block cellar that was under the original house. It is of frame construction with the same kind of siding used on the main house and is painted white. Water was piped to it from the well and later, when electricity was available, that service was also installed. The belts, pulleys and gears that powered the washing machine are still in the building. The roof and boxed front gable overhang the entrance four feet. The smokehouse is located about fifteen feet from the wash house and is about the same size, but does not have an overhang. It is also a frame building with heavy beams and has only a dirt floor on which planks were probably laid from time to time. Siding matches that on the wash house and it too is painted white. It is currently used for firewood storage. Behind the smokehouse, through a gate in the fence, was the privy. It was torn down several years ago.

The well is located about fifteen feet south of the smokehouse. It is 250 feet deep and is capable of pumping about sixty gallons per minute. It was dug when the first house was built and has been in use for more than a century. The water is of exceptionally fine flavor and is very cold. Although water was plumbed from it to kitchen and wash house, the well was not fitted with a windmill and gravity tank. According to the family, pressure was supplied as needed by a hand-operated force pump until electricity became available.

The house was provided with a large yard suitable to its own proportions, which was enclosed by a stylish wire fence with a kick board along its bottom. There were two formal gates; one was at the end of the front sidewalk and opened onto a footbridge spanning the ditch beside the Muddy Creek Road. The other was on the sidewalk that led from the back porch door and side porch door to the barn lot drive. A third gate, located in the back fence between wash house and smokehouse,

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provided access to the privy and to the extensive garden. The garden was enclosed by a white picket fence on three sides, with its fourth side being the fence for the chicken run.

The orchard occupied approximately three quarters of an acre and, as noted earlier, was located west of the main house. The hired man's house was located just west of it. This modest dwelling was built with lumber left over from construction of the main house and consisted of a kitchen, a sitting room, and one small bedroom. It had a roomy back porch on its east side, and was finished with some of the same decorative detailing used on the big house. It was torn down in 1980.

The Original Barn

This structure, the only original building on the farm that survives, was built in 1880. It consists of two grain bins sixteen feet square separated by a fourteen-foot drive-through and covered by a common gabled roof. The bins are constructed of lodgepole pine logs averaging eight inches in diameter, laid horizontally and saddle-notched at the corners. There are fifteen courses, resulting in walls 11 feet high. Inner and outer wall surfaces have been hewn roughly with an axe and the inner surfaces lined with random-width, rough pine lumber laid vertically and battened with the same material. These boards were all cut on a circular saw. The hewn exterior surfaces suggest that vertical board-and-batten siding was contemplated, but no evidence was found to indicate that it was actually applied. Spaces between logs were apparently not chinked. Some logs appear to have been peeled but surviving traces of bark indicate that others were not. At least two logs in the upper courses have been replaced at some point, but these repairs are not recent. Logs span the drive-through, connecting the eaves of the two bins. Rafters are four-inch logs, mitered at the apex, and there is no ridgepole. Roof boards are spaced, random-width rough lumber and are probably original, although the rafters appear to be replacements. The original roof was either board-and-batten lumber or shakes split from bolts of larch, probably the The gables at east and west ends of the building are enclosed with former. vertical board-and-batten lumber, with an access opening in each. These are provided with exterior ladders nailed to the outside wall. Interior bin walls facing the drive-through are not carried above the eave level. Wagons loaded with partially-filled grain sacks were driven from the combine to this building and pulled into the drive-through; the sacks were then emptied over the top log of the inner wall into the bin. Access openings that could be sealed are cut into these inner walls at waist level. Grain chutes were provided on the south wall of each bin. The west bin has a raised floor constructed of rough 2x12 lumber; similar flooring in the east bin is laid directly on the ground. The building occupies a space measuring 16 by 46 feet; overall height is 16 feet.

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Alterations

The building is in remarkably good condition, with minimal settling in spite of its age. There appears to have been no foundation other than the bottom log of each course, which is buried and presumably affected by rot. All other logs appear to be sound. Simple lean-to structures were originally provided on the north and south sides of the building; these were removed when the new barn was built in 1896. At about the same time double doors were fitted to the drive-through at both the north and south openings. The west bin is still used, as needed, for grain storage. The east bin has been fitted with a door in the south elevation, where the grain chute was originally located. This modification is relatively recent but utilizes old materials in keeping with the building. When the old shop was demolished, its contents, including the workbench, were moved to this room, where various artifacts of the farm are now displayed on the walls. The present roofing is corrugated iron, and was probably installed about fifty or sixty years ago.

The Granary

The granary is a pole-frame building measuring 15 by 32 feet. Framing consists of peeled pine logs averaging six inches in diameter. The sill log of each wall is notched to receive eight-foot vertical posts spaced on random centers (30 to 34 inches). These are tied together by a notched plate above. Joists, also of peeled logs are nailed to the plates and coincide with the posts. Rafters, which are also centered directly above the posts, are rough: lumber (two by four inches). The spaced roof boards are randomwidth one-inch rough lumber. The walls are lined on the inside with rough lumber laid horizontally (nominally one by twelve inches). A transverse partition divides the building into two bins. It is also pole-framed and is lined only on the west side. This partition is not carried above the joists. The building has a dirt floor; boards were probably laid on the ground when grain was stored here. East and west gables are finished with vertical board-and-batten lumber and provided with access openings. Overall height of the building is 14 feet. Exterior siding was not provided, and the exposed framing provides an interesting example of late 19th-Century farm building construction. It was built during the 1890's.

Alterations

The building is in generally sound condition. The south wall is hogged slightly due to settling but the other walls and roof ridges are still straight. A simple door of rough lumber has been fitted to the west end, in which the supporting posts act as the door frame. This is an old doorway but probably replaces a former grain chute. The west bin is currently used for general storage. Access to the east bin, currently used for storage of baled hay, is by a similar doorway provided in the north elevation. It is a relatively recent modification. The roof has been replaced with corrugated iron, probably at the same time as that on the original barn. This building appears to have no foundation other than the sill log.

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The Equipment Shed

This shed, built about the same time as the granary, is 40 feet wide, 18 feet deep, $11\frac{1}{2}$ feet high at the front and 8 feet high at the rear. The basic frame consists of twelve eight-inch peeled posts set in the ground. These are tied together with rough dimension lumber at the top, which is also used for headers across the front. Sidewalls and rear wall are framed with

rough two-inch lumber (horizontal cross member at top, bottom and center) and provided with rough vertical board-and-batten siding. The front is open to a height of $7\frac{1}{2}$ feet, with similar siding above that point. This arrangement provided four equipment bays and is of typical construction for its time and region. The original roof of this building has also been replaced with corrugated iron. Rafters are rough dimension lumber (2 by 10 inches); roof boards are also rough lumber (1 x 10).

Alterations

This building is sound but in need of repair. The roofline is uneven and the walls are no longer plumb, exhibiting the flexible but durable nature of single-wall construction. It appears that some posts have settled, or rotted below ground level, and that some of the bracing should be strengthened. One of the front posts has been removed in order to create a wider equipment bay and this modification has undoubtedly weakened the building. This is the only apparent modification to the original structure.

The Hay Barn

This very impressive building, constructed in 1896, measures 75 feet long by 68 feet wide and its height, from floor to ridgepole, is approximately fifty feet. It features a drive-through to load hay into the hay-mow, which is about thirty-five feet high and occupies the entire upper story of the building. Three quarters of the perimeter consisted of horse stalls, with the milking barn (a leanto structure added after the main barn was built) occupying the north side. The central area consists of storage rooms and granaries. A "Jackson Fork" hay loading system was installed. (For floor plan, see Appendix)

The barn is of traditional timber-frame construction, with pegged mortise-and-tenon joints. The timbers were cut by a circular saw and probably came from Vanderventer's mill. The timbers are remarkably knot-free, a reminder of the vast quantities of virgin timber still available at that time, and absence of the twisting and checking commonly seen in old timbers indicates that these materials were carefully seasoned and selected. Exterior walls are finished with vertical board-and-batten siding. The gambrel roof is provided with a cupola that serves as a central ventilator and openings are also provided in each of the two gables. The timber frame is set on stone piers. Its builder, Joe Henner, is listed in the 1899-1900 Directory as a farmer living on Rock Creek. He was obviously a man who knew how good barns should be built; the structural and functional intergrity of this example is outstanding. The ridgepole is still as straight and true as it was in 1896.

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The transverse drive-through was not centrally located but separated the eastern two-thirds of the barn from its western third. West of this alleyway were stalls for the horses, as mentioned above. A separator room was located in the northwest corner of the building. The central complex, or "core" of the barn, located east of the drive-through, consisted of two large storerooms and a small granary that was used for grain fed to the milk cows; its door opened into the milking area, referred to as the milking barn. At right angles to the drive-through and located about fifteen feet from the front (i.e., south) wall of the barn is another wide alleyway leading to the section known as the horse barn. Flanking it on the south side were more work horse stalls and another granary used for the horses. Each stall accommodated one team and each horse had his own grain feeding box and manger. There were usually between forty and fifty head of horses in residence but only the work horses were normally stalled, and then only during periods when the workload was heaviest. The milking barn section was approximately fifty feet long and twenty feet wide, with milking stanchions down its entire length so that cows could be milked on either or both sides. A silo (no longer extant) was located just outside the corner of the barn and held silage for the cows; its foundation survives. A new separator room was added later to the north side of the dairy section; it measures 23' by 15' and has a concrete floor. "Hay drops" were provided in the floor of the haymow and were located in the center of the dairy barn and in the alleyway of the horse barn.

The system used for loading hay into the loft was simple and effective. A track was mounted on the underside of the ridgepole timber and extended its entire length. A movable carriage operated upon this track and automatically locked in place above the center of the drive-through. A cable, attached to both fork and carriage, ran along the track and through the gable opening, where it passed through an attached sheave; it then ran down to the base of the barn, passed through another attached sheave, and was hooked to the single-tree harness of a horse. A second cable, attached to the other end of the carriage, ran down the track to the other end of the barn, where it too passed through the gable opening and through an attached sheave. It was then attached to a counterweighted sheave that was in turn attached to a third cable this ran at an angle from the top of the barn to the ground and was securely anchored. The loading operation began with the carriage, from which the fork was suspended, locked in place above the center of the alleyway. A wagonload of hay was positioned beneath it and the man on the wagon then pulled a trip-rope, lowering the fork onto the hay. He would then set the times of the fork into the load of hay and give a cry to the man with the horse outside the This man then attached the cable to the horse and moved the horse ahead. barn. The loaded fork was accordingly drawn up to the top of the loft, where it released the carriage and allowed it to move along the track. Upon a cry from a third man in the loft, the loader would pull the long rope attached to the Jackson Fork, tripping it and releasing the hay where it was wanted. At the same time, upon hearing the cry, the man outside stopped his horse and disconnected the cable. The counterweight then pulled the carriage back down the track, where it locked automatically in position above the drive and the loading operation was repeated. This setup could be reversed to load the loft on the other side of the drive. The track and carriage are still in place.

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The barn is essentially as built, with few modifications. In 1982 the cow barn section was gutted of all the stanchions and milking apparatus and four calving pens with swinging metal gates were installed in their place. These pens are used during calving when a cow needs help giving birth, and for any cow-calf pairs that require special attention. In 1984 four of the large work horse stalls were gutted and enclosed, and roll-up doors were installed in their outside walls. A large roll-up door was also installed at the south end of the drive-through, replacing the double doors originally fitted. One of the interior rooms was partially eliminated to install a large ramp leading to the hay-mow areas over the former milking barn and horse barn sections. The exterior, except for the three new metal doors, remains in its original state. It was originally painted red, with white trim, and the battens were also painted white. This dazzling scheme has proven impractical to maintain and the building is now painted red with white trim at the windows. It is in excellent well-maintained condition.

8. Significance

Period prehistoric 1400–1499 1500–1599 1600–1699 1700–1799 1800–1899 1900–	Areas of Significance—C archeology-prehistoric archeology-historic agriculture architecture art commerce communications	conservation	Iandscape architectur Iaw Iterature	e religion science sculpture social/ humanitarian theater transportation other (specify)
Specific dates	1880-1917	Builder/Architect	nknown	

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The James O. Maxwell Farmstead in the Powder River Valley in the vicinity of Haines, Baker County, Oregon, is comprised of an ensemble of seven interdependent buildings dating from 1880 to 1900, together with barnlot, associated pasturage and orchard central to the historic farming operation. The centerpiece of the 3.67-acre nominated area is a two-story, late Queen Anne style farmhouse with Eastlake detailing which was constructed in 1900 near the site of the first farm residence, which had burned. The house was designed to accommodate the large numbers of persons needed for the efficient operation of the farm. It also housed relatives and the ten children of James O. Maxwell and his wife, the former Nancy Hand. In addition to the fine exterior detailing, the house is embellished on the interior with hand-painted grained-finish woodwork which is in excellent condition. A 1 1/2-story cold cellar and bunkhouse is attached to the back of the house. Other contributing features include a smokehouse and washhouse contemporaneous with the farmhouse; the original log barn (1880), a pole-frame granary and an equipment shed of the 1890s, and a large hay barn, built in 1896. The farmstead is locally significant under National Register criterion "c" as a well-preserved and unusually complete late 19th/early 20th Century farm ensemble in which individual buildings are fine and, in some cases, rare examples of their architectural types. The farmstead is significant also for its association with James and Nancy Maxwell, who developed one of the prosperous large-scale farming operations in Baker County at the turn of the century. In addition, Maxwell was widely recognized as a public-spirited member of the community. The period of significance is drawn from the earliest building construction date represented in the ensemble to the death of James Maxwell (1853-1917), but the farm continued to prosper under the direction of Nancy Maxwell until 1937, and it has remained in family ownership to the present day.

The attached and dependent structures of the Farmstead are architecturally significant within the historic context of their setting and are important survivals in that they are well maintained and clearly identifiable in terms of original function. The log barn is one of very few remaining pioneer structures in the region and is a sound, well maintained example of log-built frontier architecture. It has been in constant use since 1880 and is not neglected. The large hay barn of 1896 is an outstanding example of late 19th Century timber-framed barn construction, unusual in terms of size and overall condition. Barns, once universal in the rural areas of northeastern Oregon, are rapidly disappearing. This is particularly true of the large structures. The shift from

(continued)

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10. Geographical Data

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ame/title	John W. Ev	ans	·····	
rganizati	ion N/A		date	March 12, 1986
treet & n	umber 806 Main A	venue	telept	hone (503) 963-4719
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Attest: Chief of Registration

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horses to mechanized traction, and the emphasis of beef rather than dairy cattle, have made the barn an anachronism in an area of very few dairy operations. The majority of surviving examples in eastern Oregon are no longer in use and, as a result, are either in a state of deterioriation or are being demolished. The Maxwell barn is being preserved, is well maintained, and is being adapted where necessary in order to insure its continuation as a functional component of the farm. The farm is itself of historic significance in that it has been operated by one family from its beginning, with ownership following a direct line of descent that covers a period representing all but seventeen years of the entire period of settlement and development of northeastern Oregon. The farm complex is a living history of that process in which all its stages are represented, and in which the past survives in harmony with the present and the future. (Continued)

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Historical Background

The Old Oregon Trail, or Great Emigrant Road (1843-1884), crossed Baker Valley on its way to the Willamette Valley. Although the settlers were impressed by the beauty of eastern Oregon's valleys and recognized their agricultural potential, the isolation of this region was a deterrent to settlement. It was not until the discovery of gold in the area now occupied by Baker and Grant Counties that actual settlement began. The initial strike, at Griffin's Gulch in 1861, was followed by others and within a short time numerous camps were flourishing. The miners were soon followed by farmers and stockmen, who settled the agricultural land, established themselves, and provided hay, grain and produce for the camps. Progress was steady for the next decade, but was hampered by lack of access to outside markets.

In 1869 Henry Villard, pioneer Oregon railroad builder, organized the Oregon Railway and Navigation Company and began to extend a line eastward from Portland along the south bank of the Columbia River. Its purpose was to intercept northern transcontinental lines then under construction. He later arranged for a link with the Union Pacific Railroad, which agreed to build a branch westward to meet Villard's. It was called the Oregon Short Line. Villard's section of the link branched off at Hermiston and crossed the Blue Mountains. Construction was expedited by both companies and the rails were joined at Huntington during the fall of 1884.

Arrival of the railroad, which traverses the Baker Valley, largely eliminated the isolation of this area and greatly increased the number of markets available for products of the region. A long period of prosperity ensued.

James O. Maxwell

James O. Maxwell was born near Rocheport, Boone County, Missouri November 25, 1853. His parents were Samuel W. Maxwell, born 1826, and Sally Boggs Maxwell, born 1832; his paternal grandparents, also of Rocheport, were John Maxwell, born 1803, and Jane Anderson Maxwell, born 1806. The Maxwell family maintained a large plantation near Rocheport and, when their slaves were freed, many took the Maxwell name. James Maxwell had two full brothers, one full sister, and two half brothers. There is still an extensive branch of the family living in Missouri. James left Missouri in 1875 to seek his fortune and went first to California, where he worked for wages and, among other things, herded sheep. He was a serious, ambitious man who saved his money. He came to the Baker Valley in 1879, intending to work for the railroad; finding that actual construction of the line would not occur for several years, he purchased land from the Oregon Railway and Navigation Company instead and, as noted elsewhere in this nomination, was successful enough to become one of the area's leading farmers by 1900. James married Nancy A. Hand January 23, 1887, in Haines. James, or Jimmy as his wife was to call him, was a devout member of the Baptist Church in

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Baker. In 1886 he requested permission to withdraw his membership from that congregation (his letter of dismissal is still in the possession of his youngest daughter Olga) and then organized the Haines Baptist Church with thirteen charter members. He contributed largely toward construction of the new church in Haines which, according to one source, (13) was erected in 1890. Reverend E. P. Waltz, who was to build James Maxwell's new house in 1900, was its first pastor. James also contributed to the community in many other ways. He purchased, and donated to the city, the land where the Haines Cemetery is now located. The first general store in Haines was owned by Davis Wilcox. James purchased it from him sometime prior to 1899; the 1899-1900 Directory lists it as "Maxwell G. M. Co., J. K. Romig, manager." Romig was a businessman from La Grande. James then reorganized the business as a cooperative, owned jointly by the farmers of the area. In 1905 a large two-story granite building was constructed near the south end of Haines' main street to house it. The building is still extant. After about ten years of operation it became evident that the business could not suceed as a farm cooperative and James bought the shares of the other members so that his neighbors, who could less afford to subsidize a failing enterprise, would not be hard pressed. The Haines Mercantile was not a profitable investment, and was kept in operation with income from Maxwell's farm. In 1913 he purchased a cattle ranch near the Snake River in Idaho but kept it for only a few years, as it was too difficult to manage from so far away.

James Maxwell was an industrious and progressive man. He was also an astute manager and businessman, as any successful large-scale farmer must be, and he built an unusually efficient agricultural operation. Local individuals who worked for him as hired hands have said that it started every day at 4:00 a.m. and ran like clockwork. He was an independent man who never exercised his homestead right, and no outside capital of any kind was ever invested in the farm. He insisted on making his own way. He maintained a high standard of living for his family and still found time for community projects. In his later years he was a consistent contributor to McMinnville College, now known as Linfield College, and several of his children attended that institution--not a common practice among farm families of the time. The stadium and football field at Linfield are named Maxwell Field in his honor. (14) He owned the first 1915 Cadillac in Baker County; it had electric lights and a "self-starter." Maxwell was always a vigorous and energetic man, and it was said that he once drove a team and wagon home from Pine Valley in one day. That is a full fifty-mile trip today, over a modern paved highway. As his descendants put it, he must have started awfully early in the morning.

James Maxwell's sudden death at age 64, in 1917, was a shock to the entire community. "The Haines section lost one of its most influential and highly respected citizens this evening, with the passing of James O. Maxwell, who died after a short illness of throat trouble, pneumonia and complications. Mr. Maxwell was a man whose demise will be greatly mourned.....He was a progressive, practical man who took deep interest in public affairs and whose influence was great and always excercised in what he deemed to be the just cause." (15)

There is a brief biographical sketch of James Maxwell in the <u>Illustrated History of</u> Baker, Grant, Malheur and Harney Counties (1902). The biographical sections of these

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subscription works are usually heavily larded with puffery, but the anonymous editor spoke only the truth of James Maxwell when he stated that "in addition to the excellent improvements that adorn and enhance the value of the agricultural portion of Mr. Maxwell's estate, he has one of the most beautiful and comfortably and tastefully furnished residences in the county, in which good cheer abounds and joy adds its grace to the material comforts of competence." (p.276-7)

Nancy A. (Hand) Maxwell

Nancy A. Hand was born in Illinois in 1860 and was the daughter of James and Elizabeth Hand. Her father was killed in the Civil War. She came to Baker County over the Oregon Trail, with her widowed mother, when she was two years old. They were accompanied by her brothers and sisters and by her grandfather, Mr. Beatty. The family settled in the Wolf Creek area, near the North Powder River. This is about five miles north of the Muddy Creek area. During the years following her marriage to James Maxwell on January 23, 1887, she bore him ten children: Lena A. (1887); James W. (1889); Myrtle E. (1891); John E. (1893); Rosaltha A. (1895); Charles D. (1898); Omer O. (1899); William J. (1902); Olga N. (1904); and Glen H. (1906).

Nancy was an efficient, well-organized person who managed her household as effectively as James managed the ranch; it, too, "ran like clockwork," and it required a great deal of energy and stamina. Her remarkable skill in coordinating meals and other activities has already been noted. The marriage was obviously an ideal partnership. Following her husband's death, she proved to be as astute and efficient a farmer as he, and she managed the family business with equal ability and dedication. It has been mentioned earlier that she added a dairy operation and developed the Rock Creek Reservoir. She also bought a farm in Pine Valley about 1922. This farm was operated by her daughter and son-in-law, Rose and Cary Bishop, until she sold it about 1929.

Nancy Maxwell died in 1937. She was a remarkable woman.

The Architect

The architect who designed James Maxwell's house in 1900 has not been identified. The possibility that it may have come from a commercially-available plan book is, in this writer's opinion, ruled out by the unusually complex and in some ways unconventional floor plan and the careful attention to detail. This assessment is supported by the arrangement, size and location of pantry, kitchen and dining room. They would seem to be unhandy, too small for their functions, and inconveniently laid out. Although foreign to the modern homemaker, they were actually designed for efficiency and were very efficient by the standards of their time and place. Nancy preferred a compact, well organized work area. The pantry was admirably equipped for food preparation, which was its primary function; it was provided with counters, cupboards and bins, and utensils were hung on one wall, ready to hand. The kitchen proper seems to us to be "all doors and windows," but it was designed for smooth traffic flow and for

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convenient access to the rest of the house and also to and from the garden and outbuildings. The stove and sink were the only fixtures, and the sink was convenient both for washing up before meals and for washing the dishes and utensils afterward. This reflects a personal system and Nancy was doubtless responsible for the specifications. The dining room must have been crowded, but it did seat the maximum number of diners who could be served comfortably at any one setting. The second floor arrangement would also appear to reflect personal preferences of the owners, particularly in the configuration of the hallway. Moreover, James and Nancy Maxwell were not people who would have accepted a standardized mail-order design; they would have engaged the services of an architect who could design the kind of house they wanted, and they would have provided him with clear and well thought out requirements.

The most probable candidate for this assignment was Michael P. White, an architect who practiced in Baker City from before 1890 until after 1920. Comparatively few of Baker's Victorian buildings have been firmly identified as White's work; the finest identified example is a large, two story Queen Anne tower house executed in brick and built about 1890.* It is well proportioned with excellent detailing and is a most impressive Currently undergoing restoration, it testifies that its architect was a dwelling. very competent member of his profession. A more remote possibility is John V. Bennes (1867-1943), a Chicago-trained architect of Bohemian extraction who came to Baker in 1900 and built many of Baker's finer Colonial Revival homes, at least one commercial building, and other structures. His most impressive work in Baker is the St. Francis de Sales Cathedral (1906). Bennes moved from Baker to Portland in 1906 and became one of Portland's best-known architects. However, one source states that Bennes did not arrive in Baker until the fall of 1900, which would tend to rule him out as the designer of Maxwell's farmhouse; and the design of Maxwell's house is not characteristic of Bennes' work. (16)

Many early account books and other papers survive at the Maxwell farm and are currently in storage. Analysis of these may provide a positive identification of the architect.

*Kolb-White House, 1503 Second Street, Baker (17)

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- 11. Portland Morning Oregonian, February 5, 1914.
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- 13. Baker Record Courier, July 2, 1936.
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River northwesterly of the community of Haines, Section 24, Township 7 South, Range 38 East and Section 19, Township 7 South, Range 39 East, Willamette Meridian, in Baker County, Oregon. The nominate area is more particularly described as follows:

Beginning at a point 100 feet east of the SW corner of the NW_4^1 of the SW_4^1 of Section 19, Township 7 South, Range 39 East, Willamette; thence west 400 feet; thence north 400 feet; thence east 400 feet; thence south 400 feet to the point of beginning. Area enclosed: the south 400 feet of the west 100 feet of the NW_4^1 of the SW_4^1 of Section 19, Township 7 South, Range 39 East, Willamette Meridian, and the south 400 feet of the east 300 feet of the NE_4^1 of the SE_4^1 of Section 24, Township 7 South, Range 38 East, Willamette Meridian, in Baker County, Oregon, containing in all 3.67 acres, more or less.











