

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

NATIONAL
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Vocational-Agriculture Building

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 1170 Elmhurst Street

not for publication N/A

city, town Lovelock

vicinity N/A

state Nevada code NV

county Pershing

code 027

zip code 89419

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>4</u>	buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>4</u>	Total

Name of related multiple property listing: _____

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register None

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Ronald M. James
Signature of certifying official

9/6/91
Date

Division of Historic Preservation and Archeology

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. 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.

Christieth Lee

10/21/91

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:) _____

for Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Education/School

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Education/School

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Modern Movement/Moderne

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete
walls Concrete
roof Wood
other _____

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Social History
Architecture

Period of Significance

1941

Significant Dates

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Mills, Russell

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

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 # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Less than one acre

UTM References

A

1	1
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3	6	8	2	2	5
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4	4	5	6	0	0	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

 Zone Easting Northing

C

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B

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 Zone Easting Northing

D

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the Vocational-Agriculture building is shown on the accompanying map entitled "Vocational-Agriculture building property, Lovelock, Nevada."

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the property historically associated with the Vocational-Agriculture building.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ronald M. James, Michelle McFadden
 organization Historic Preservation and Archeology date March 1, 1991
 street & number 123 West Nye Lane, Room 208 telephone (702) 687-5138
 city or town Carson City state Nevada zip code 89710

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The Vocational Agricultural Building of Lovelock, Nevada, was constructed in 1941 to house the vocational education programs of Pershing County, under the auspices of the National Youth Administration. Fifty years later, the freestanding Moderne style structure still serves the same purpose for which it was constructed. Little is known about the Reno architect, Russell Mills, who designed the building. The Vo-Ag Building has received virtually no exterior or interior alterations since original construction; the integrity of this structure is excellent.

Located on a Elmhurst Street in central Lovelock, the Vo-Ag Building is surrounded by various public, commercial, and residential structures, including a school, and shed for school buses, and residences. The Vo-Ag school, which faces west, sits on a rectangular shaped lot with four other, non-intrusive Pershing County buildings. These one-story, non-contributing buildings include a church (stucco over wood frame) to the north and three sheds, one of which is used for bus maintenance. The Vo-Ag building is set back from the street approximately 40'. The west facade has a metal pipe fence and landscaping, grass and small shrubs, between the fence and the west wall. The other three elevations do not have landscaping or fencing and are surrounded by a dirt surface.

The Vo-Ag Building is a one-story, rectangular (80' wide by 40' deep) structure. The foundation is constructed of reinforced concrete and the walls are stucco over wood frame. The double-arched roof, hidden behind a low, corbelled parapet, is a wood-framed truss system covered with asphalt shingles. Two chimneys are located along the east slope of the roof. The roof framing is visible from one of the storage rooms. Lovelock's newspaper, in an article on the construction of the Vo-Ag Building, stated the building will be "so constructed that it can be moved in case that should be desirable in the future."¹

The function of the building, which required a large shop area, may have influenced the architect's choice of an asymmetrical facade. The primary elevation is divided into nine bays; the

¹Review-Miner (Lovelock, Nevada) January 16, 1941.

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entrance is located between two windows to the south and six to the north. Inside, a vestibule provides access to two offices in the southwest corner and a classroom in the southeast corner of the building, and storage rooms, including a bathroom, which separate the vestibule from the large shop area which occupies the northern half of the school. A contemporary description of the interior noted that:

[The] inside will be plaster over cellotex or similar material. The floor will be concrete. Ample lighting is provided and doors [will be] large enough to admit heavy machinery. It will be electrically wired. There will be a stack for a forge and chimney for heating.²

The building is a simple statement of the Moderne style in rural Nevada. Popular after 1930, the Moderne style is a stripped-down version of Art Deco; simplicity and horizontality characterize the Moderne in contrast to the earlier emphasis on decoration and verticality of Art Deco. The smooth wall finish, the horizontal incised bands (speed lines) which run across the south, west, and north elevations, the flat parapet, the simple, fluted piers which flank the projecting entrance and adjacent, quarter-round piers which tie the entrance to the west facade, the semi-circular porch roof, and the large, metal-framed, windows with horizontally-oriented lites are all typical features of this style. The outline of the semi-circular porch roof is echoed in the low, semi-circular steps which lead to the double door entrance of the building. The doors are surmounted by a multi-lite transom window; above the porch roof, and between the astylar piers, an inscription reads "PERSHING CO. SCH. DICT. VOCATIONAL AG. BLDG." The fixed windows are 4 x 6 (6' square) lite at the corners, and 3 x 6 lite (4' x 6') otherwise. The north elevation has a large double door instead of a window between the corner windows, and the bays in the east facade are composed entirely of windows.

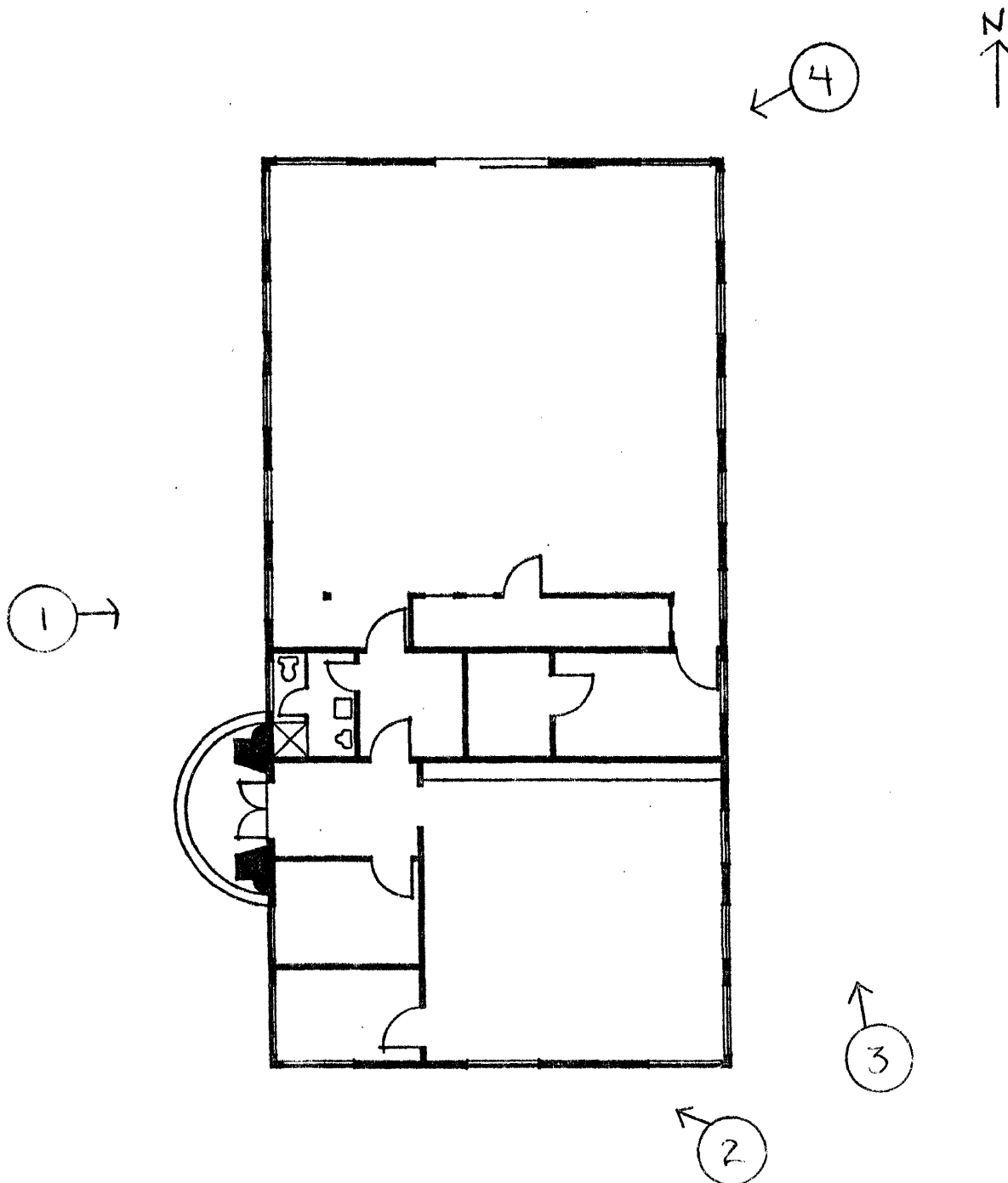
The building is in excellent condition.

²Ibid.

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Photo List

Vocational-Agricultural Building, Lovelock, Pershing County, Nevada

Gail Morris, Photographer

February 1991

Original Negatives on file at: Ganthner, Melby, Lee
Architects & Planners
5190 Neil Road, Suite 231
Reno, Nevada 89502

1. Photograph No. 1
Facade
Camera facing east
2. Photograph No. 2
South elevation
Camera facing north
3. Photograph No. 3
East elevation
Camera facing west
4. Photograph No. 4
North elevation
Camera facing south

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Statement of Significance

The Vocational Education Building of Lovelock, Nevada is significant as one of two of the only known surviving examples of National Youth Administration (NYA) activity in Nevada. It is eligible under criteria A and C for association with this New Deal program and for the building's design. Built in 1941 at the end of the program's duration, the Vocational Education building is a rare surviving example of a Moderne Single building in Nevada and one of the few surviving buildings known to have been designed by prominent Reno-based architect, Russell Mills.

Setting:

Lovelock was founded in 1868 in Humboldt County, North Central Nevada. It originally served as a stop on the transcontinental railroad, providing a mercantile center for the various mining districts and small communities in the vicinity. It grew slowly until it developed a solid agricultural basis built upon alfalfa cultivation, the railroad providing ready access to distant markets. Lovelock was incorporated in 1917 and soon began to agitate for a split of Humboldt County. Winnemucca, the county seat to the north, was only slightly larger than its southern neighbor and was not successful in fending off Lovelock's political maneuvering. In 1919, the state legislature created a new county with Lovelock as its seat of government. The new county was named after the then-popular General "Blackjack" Pershing, commander of American forces during World War I. Based on it is upon rural agricultural, Lovelock has maintained a stable population size and economy.¹

National Youth Administration - Criterion A:

The NYA was inspired largely by Eleanor Roosevelt who once said that "I have moments of real terror when I think we might be

¹Russell McDonald, "The Development of Lovelock," Nevada Historical Society Quarterly 19:4 (Winter 1976) 261-275. See also Myron Angel, History of Nevada (Oakland, California: Thompson and West, 1881; reprinted Berkeley, California Howell-North, 1958) 453-455.

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losing this generation."² While the Civilian Conservation Corps was created to care for the most desperate cases, those young people who no longer attended school and were dropping out of society, the NYA was organized specifically to assist young people who were in school and yet were threatened with the need to drop out because of lack of funds. Created on June 26, 1935 by executive order, it was initially attached to the Works Progress Administration.

There were two divisions of the NYA, one of which dealt with student work. This program provided funding for students, chiefly from relief families who needed support to stay in school. The second program was designed to assist young people who had dropped out of school. This program provided training to these young people so that they could assume their place in the labor market as qualified workers.

Audrey Williams, who became the head of the new agency, decided that the national office would impose only the most general guidelines on the program to enable state and local officials to tailor the program to fit local needs. John Salmond points out that "By early 1937, more than 400,000 young people were receiving assistance, and the monthly number rarely dropped below 300,000 thereafter. By the time the program was terminated in 1943, more than 2 million young people had received assistance."³

Initially the NYA worked on parks projects and community efforts which required little capital but a great deal of labor. This approach was largely abandoned by 1937, replaced by one which called for more technical training, since this was more in keeping with the spirit of the NYA. In 1939 the NYA began yet another transition as it postured itself in the federal effort to prepare for war. Increasingly the youth were trained in the defense industry and as Salmond points out, "From mid-1940, its nondefense function were progressively shed until by 1942 it was

²John Salmond, "National Youth Administration" from Otis L. Graham, Jr., ed., Franklin D. Roosevelt: His Life and Times, An Encyclopedic View (Boston: G. K. Hall and Co., 1985) 278.

³Ibid., 279.

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involved solely in the war effort."⁴

Nevada's participation in the NYA was minimal. Although the New Deal was generally effective in Nevada, minimal participation was generally the rule due to limited population and to the fact that the state suffered less from the Great Depression than others.⁵ It consistently ranked at the bottom in the nation for the number of schools and students participating and for the amount of funds expended. The Final Report of the National Youth Administration: Fiscal Years 1936-1943 points out that between 1939 and 1940 only 38 Nevada schools and colleges participated in the NYA Student Work Program. At the same time, Nevada had only 301 students participating--213 in the School Work Program and 88 in the College Work Program. In comparison, Delaware, the next highest state, had fifty schools and 507 students involved. In 1940-41, for further contrast, Illinois had 25,466 students participating and Pennsylvania had almost 30,000. During the fiscal year 1941-42, Nevada's enrollment dropped to 218 and by the following it diminished to 31, reflecting the national process of phasing out the NYA. Similarly, the Nevada Out of School program employed 227 young people in 1940, 268 in 1941 and 187 in 1942. Between 1936 and 1943, \$373,742 was distributed in Nevada through the NYA for both programs. This represents the smallest amount given to any state. Delaware, recipient of the next largest amount, received \$794,928, while Pennsylvania, which received the most, was awarded \$47,998,272.⁶

The NYA in Nevada supported college students at the University of Nevada campus (located in Reno) who were employed to grade papers and to help professors. It appears that the program designed to employ young people not enrolled at the University took a variety of forms, but the specifics of the program are not documented in

⁴Ibid.

⁵See Harold T. Smith, New Deal Relief Programs in Nevada, 1933-1935 (Reno, Nevada: University of Nevada, Reno, unpublished dissertation, 1972).

⁶Federal Security Agency: War Man Power Commission, Final Report of the National Youth Administration: Fiscal Years 1936-1943 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1944) 242-250.

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the State.⁷

The building constructed by the NYA in Lovelock provides an excellent opportunity to understand how the program was implemented in Nevada for non-University students. Although construction of buildings was not one of the more commonly funded goals of the NYA, between 1937 and 1942 more than thirteen hundred vocational farm shops were erected by NYA youth working under qualified supervisors across the nation. These buildings were typically built in small communities and were approved and co-sponsored by the state boards of vocational education.⁸ The building in Lovelock falls into this category. Only other known example of the NYA building program in Nevada: in Mesquite, Nevada, the NYA funded the construction of a Museum/Library building also in 1941.

Construction on the Lovelock, Vocational Agricultural building was initiated in 1941. Plans were provided by Reno architect Russell Mills who estimated the costs at \$8,000. Materials for the building were estimated at about \$5,000. The NYA provided \$2,000 in cash for materials and furnished paid student labor to assist in the construction. The additional \$3,000 needed for materials was provided by the Pershing County School Board. Students who worked on the project were allowed 50 hours per month and were paid \$16.00. Supervision was provided by two instructors, one from the State Vocational Department and the other from the NYA. Apparently between eleven and sixteen young men were employed by the project which was estimated to take from January to June, 1941.⁹

⁷Personal communication (1/24/91) with Russell R. Elliott, Professor Emeritus, University of Nevada, Reno, History Department who was enrolled at the University of Nevada during the late 1930s.

⁸Federal Security Agency, Final Report, 152-153.

⁹Lovelock Review Miner (Lovelock, Pershing County, Nevada), January 16, 1941, 1:8. See also the cornerstone on the building. Photograph on file in the Division of Historic Preservation and Archeology, Carson City, Nevada.

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Russell Mills and Art Deco and Moderne architecture in Nevada-Criterion C:

Russell Mills, the architect of the Vocational Agricultural building in Lovelock, was a Reno architect who designed several buildings in Northern Nevada from approximately 1935 to 1955. Originally from Berkeley, California, Mills apparently moved to Nevada in the mid-1930s. Documentation on his training is not readily available, but he was a member of the Nevada State Association of Architects. From his work, it appears that he was influenced by modern architectural styles, including the Art Deco and Moderne styles. In 1940, Mills designed the Sparks City Hall. Other of his Nevada projects include private houses in the Lake Tahoe Basin (Carnelian Bay), Reno and Elko. He also designed a country club in Reno in the mid-1950s (which burned one year after construction), a fraternity house associated with the University of Nevada in Reno and the Brown Elementary School south of Reno.¹⁰ In the 1950, Mills completed the design for the Pershing County High School in Lovelock which was constructed near the site of the Vocational Agriculture Building, the subject of this nomination. In 1955, Mills was elected to the Reno City Council. It appears that his career ended about that time.¹¹

Art Deco and Moderne architecture is rare in Nevada, usually assuming modest proportions and simple application. Examples of these modern styles in Nevada include several structures in Reno which experienced a minor building boom during the 1920s and 1930s. These buildings include the El Cortez Hotel constructed

¹⁰See the Oral history of Edward S. Parsons (1907-), Charrette! The Life of an Architect, Mary Ellen Glass, interviewer (Reno, Nevada: University of Nevada, Reno, 1980-1981) 101-102, 109-111, 161, 207, 252, 297.

¹¹Oral History of Gordon A. Simpson (1881-1980), Memoirs of a Canadian Army Officer and Business Analyst, Mary Ellen Glass, interviewer (Reno, Nevada: University of Nevada, Reno, 1967) 484-485. In addition, see plans for the Pershing County High School, Pershing County School District, Lovelock, Nevada, and see Richard D. Adkins, "Nevada Architects and Builders," William G. White and Ronald M. James eds., Nevada Comprehensive Preservation Plan (Carson City, Nevada: Historic Preservation and Archeology, second edition, 1991).

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in 1931 and listed on the National Register in 1984 and the Mapes Hotel-Casino, constructed in 1947 and listed on the National Register in 1984. Additional in Nevada include the Art Deco Nevada State Supreme Court Building in Carson City, designed in 1935 and listed on the National Register as part of the Frederick DeLongchamps thematic in 1987, and the Mayan Revival Art Deco style Las Vegas High School, constructed in 1931 and listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1986. In addition the Lincoln County Courthouse of Pioche, Nevada, constructed in 1937, displays modest Moderne design elements.

The Sparks City Hall (1940) and the Pershing County High School display Mill's interest in the Moderne style, a simplified version of Art Deco. As with the Vocational Agriculture Building and many of the other period buildings in Nevada, Mill's Moderne designs include restrained references to the style of architecture. The Vocational Agriculture Building displays linear detailing and simple, limited ornamentation, typical of Mill's other buildings. It is, therefore, an excellent expression of how this style of architecture manifested in Nevada and of this architect's career.

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Secondary Sources:

- Richard D. Adkins, Ronald M. James, and Richard A. Bernstein, "Nevada Architects and Builders," from William G. White and Ronald M. James, eds., Nevada Comprehensive Preservation Plan (Carson City, Nevada: Historic Preservation and Archeology, 1991, second edition).
- John Salmond, "National Youth Administration" from Otis L. Graham, Jr., ed., Franklin D. Roosevelt: His Life and Times, An Encyclopedic View (Boston: G. K. Hall and Co., 1985).
- Harold T. Smith, New Deal Relief Programs in Nevada, 1933-1935 (Reno, Nevada: University of Nevada, Reno, unpublished dissertation, 1972).

Primary Sources:

- Federal Security Agency: War Man Power Commission, Final Report of the National Youth Administration: Fiscal Years 1936-1943 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1944).
- Russell R. Elliott, Professor Emeritus, University of Nevada, Reno, History Department: personal communication, 1/24/91.
- Lovelock Review Miner (Lovelock, Pershing County, Nevada), January 16, 1941, 1:8.
- Edward S. Parsons (1907-1991), oral history: Charrette! The Life of an Architect, Mary Ellen Glass, interviewer (Reno, Nevada: University of Nevada, Reno, 1980-1981).
- "Pershing County High School - Plans", Pershing County School District, Lovelock, Nevada.
- Gordon A. Simpson (1881-1980), oral history: Memoirs of a Canadian Army Officer and Business Analyst, Mary Ellen Glass, interviewer (Reno, Nevada: University of Nevada, Reno, 1967).

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BLOCK O

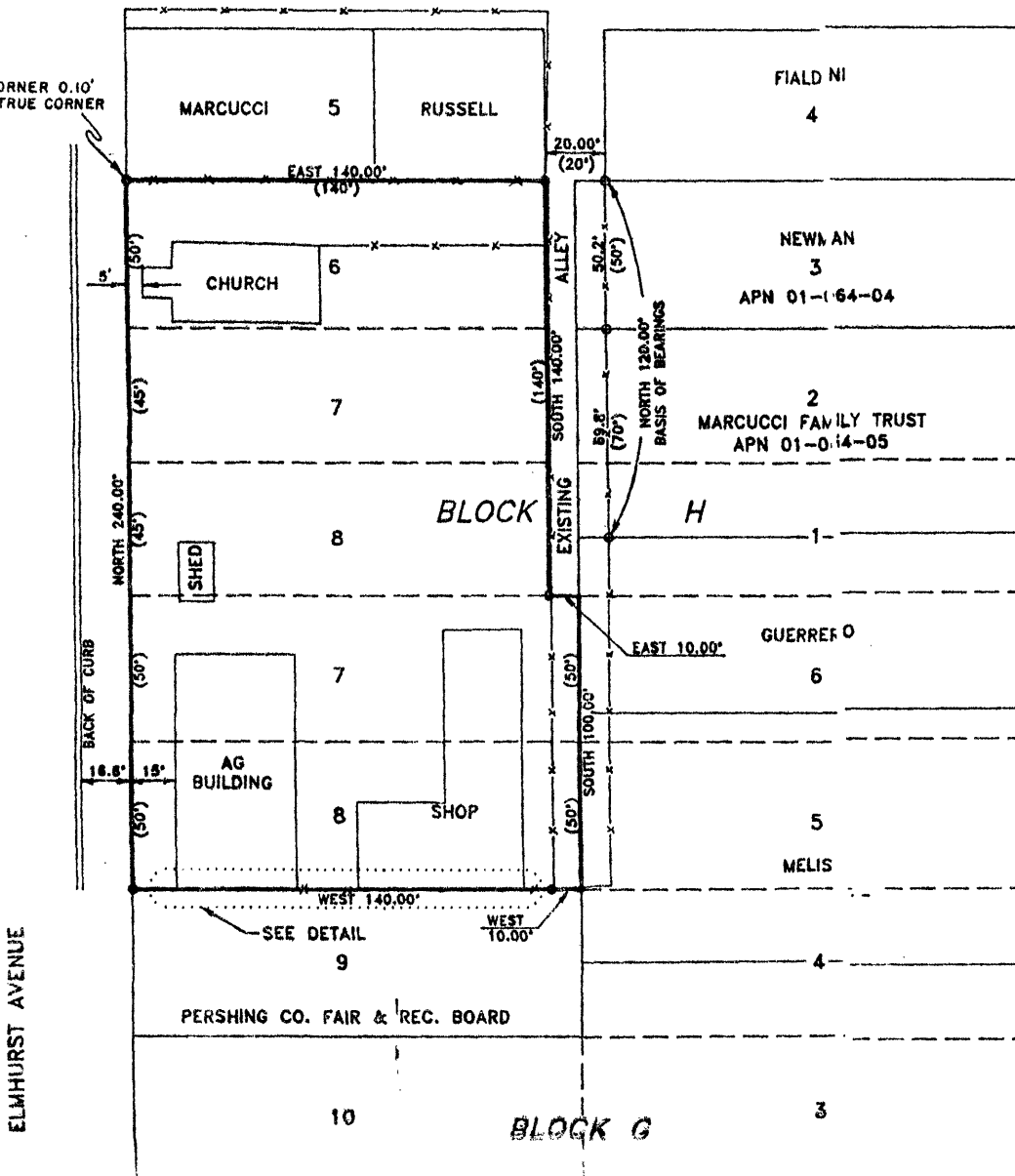
Vocational -Agriculture Bulding property
1170 Elmhurst Avenue
Lovelock, Nevada 89419

1 1/4" = 50'



TAYLOR PLACE

WITNESS CORNER 0.10'
SOUTH OF TRUE CORNER



ELMHURST AVENUE

CELESTIAL AVENUE

BLOCK G

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SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 91001528 Date Listed: 10/24/91

Vocational-Agricultural Building
Property Name

Pershing NV
County State

N/A
Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

Autumnette Lee

Signature of the Keeper

10/29/91

Date of Action

=====
Amended Items in Nomination:

Description: The materials should be changed to read walls: stucco and roof: asphalt.

This information was confirmed with Michelle McFadden of the Nevada state historic preservation office.

DISTRIBUTION:
National Register property file
Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)