

4B no atm

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:	Oregon
COUNTY:	Malheur
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY DATE	NOV 1 1974

1. NAME

COMMON: Sheep Ranch Fortified House

AND/OR HISTORIC: McWilliams House

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: Arock vicinity W of R.R. Representative Al Ullman

CITY OR TOWN: Arock vicinity CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: Oregon's Second Congressional District

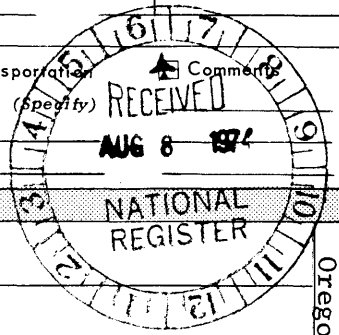
STATE: Oregon 97902 CODE: 41 COUNTY: Malheur CODE: 045

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure 	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both 	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered <input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious		
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific		



4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: Fred Eiguren

STREET AND NUMBER: Box 65

CITY OR TOWN: Jordan Valley STATE: Oregon 97910 CODE: 41

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC: Malheur County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Vale STATE: Oregon 97918 CODE: 41

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: Statewide Inventory of Historic Sites and Buildings

DATE OF SURVEY: 1970  Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Parks and Recreation Section

STREET AND NUMBER: Oregon State Highway Building

CITY OR TOWN: Salem STATE: Oregon 97310 CODE: 41

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Oregon

COUNTY: Malheur

ENTRY NUMBER: 1974

DATE: NOV 1 1974

FOR NPS USE ONLY

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

(Check One)

Excellent     Good     Fair     Deteriorated     Ruins     Unexposed

(Check One)

Altered     Unaltered

(Check One)

Moved     Original Site

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Sheep Ranch Fortified House was constructed in 1863 by a man named McWilliams, and was the first property to be permanently settled in the middle part of the Jordan Creek Valley of Southeastern Oregon.

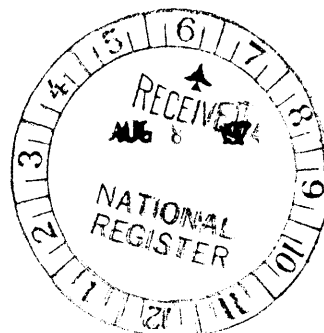
The sage brush terrain is typical of the Eastern Oregon country, with rolling foothills, rock outcroppings, and similar physical features. The house is set at the base of a long slope, with land to the west, south, and east opening onto a large, flat plain.

The Sheep Ranch house is a two-story structure with a T-shaped plan. Construction is quarried sandstone with a gabled shake roof. The three-foot thick semi-ashlar walls are laid in semi-regular courses with wattle and daub binding. Massive stone lintels over the second story windows are a distinguishing feature. The foundation is crumbling somewhat. Openings reflect a basically formal arrangement and the framements appear to date from later alterations. Presently, there are casement windows in the second story and double-hung sashes in the ground story openings.

Small gun ports in the ground story underscore the fortress quality of this building. The two chimneys projecting from either end of the front part of the building were at one time augmented by a third, possibly a kitchen chimney, placed off center on the rear face of the wing. All that remains of this chimney is part of the flue. There is presently one dormer off-center on each face of the roof of the main part of the house. The wood-work, both exterior and interior, seems to have been altered during successive ownerships. The upstairs interior is lined with knotty pine. The current arrangement of rooms includes two bedrooms and storage upstairs; and a living, dining, kitchen, and storage room on the ground floor. The building does not have a cellar or an attic.

The architectural character of the house might be ascribed to the founder of the ranch, McWilliams about whom little is known except that he came from the California gold fields in 1863 and claimed holding totaling 1100 acres. The census of 1870 lists a James McWilliams, a miner from Pennsylvania, in Jackson County, and a B. J. McWilliams, a farmer listed in the La Grande precinct of Union County, from New York. A tradition of building in stone is common to both Pennsylvania and New York. In any event, it appears that Sheep Ranch house is related to building practices of the Middle Atlantic states.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	Oregon	
COUNTY	Malheur	
FOR NPS USE ONLY		
ENTRY NUMBER	NOV 1	1975
DATE		

AUG 8 1975

(Number all entries)

SHEEP RANCH FORTIFIED HOUSE (CONTINUED)

2. Location

The Sheep Ranch Fortified House is located in the SW 1/4 Sec. 26, T. 30S, R. 42 E., of the Willamette Meridian, Malheur County, Oregon.

8. Significance

reportedly put up \$2,000 worth of hay for military establishments in the summer of 1866.

As early as 1869 the United States Government had treated with the Piutes, and the tribe was installed on the Malheur reservation on the north fork of the Malheur River. The Piutes were not to be permanently contained, however, for in 1878 the Bannocks, under Buffalo Horn, left Fort Hall reservation in Southern Idaho, striking for Oregon where they joined the Piutes under Cheif Egan and moved on with redoubled force into Grant and Umatilla counties. The uprising, involving related tribes, then spread over parts of southern Idaho, eastern Oregon, and adjacent areas in Nevada and Washington.

Sheep Ranch house played a part in the military response to this uprising. A telegraph station had been established in the house during the periodic Indian troubles of the '60s. It was from Sheep Ranch that General Oliver Otis Howard is reported to have announced the launching of one of the first military campaigns to counter the uprising of 1878. The house served as a kind of field headquarters for this district, and was a rendezvous point for volunteers and scouting parties. Local tradition adds that Sara Winnemucca, daughter of a Piute chieftain, started her legendary ride to the Steens Mountains from this point in order to warn of the Bannock attack and to persuade some of her people to return peaceably to the Ranch. Structural evidence that the farmhouse once served as a defense post consists of the gun ports.

Sheep Ranch is the site of several burials dating from the early days. One example dates from an incident preliminary to the Indian War of 1878. Captain R. F. Bernard stopped at the ranch en route to Silver City with Company G, 1st Cavalry. On learning that the stage from Camp McDermitt on the Nevada-Oregon border was overdue, the Captain dispatched a scout. The driver was found slain where the coach had been burned by Indians near the Owyhee River. The stage driver's body was brought to the ranch for burial. Such were the incidents of history which stormed about Sheep Ranch. (continued)

**8. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **1863**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation			

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

Sheep Ranch Fortified house has been a continuous part of Malheur County development from the earliest days of permanent settlement. In its various roles as ranch house, stagecoach stop, and fort, the house has played a part in the history of the vicinity. The owners of the ranch supplied grain to nearby military posts during the tentative days of Indian unrest and, after the establishment of Ontario as a railroad shipping center, provided stock for far-off markets. The house is of sociological interest because of its long ownership by Basque emigrants, a distinct cultural group in Southeastern Oregon.

During the period of overland migration, a branch route to the western reaches of the state ran along the Owyhee River and up the western bank of the Snake to a point opposite old Fort Boise--a Hudson's Bay Company post which had been abandoned in 1852. From this point the trail continued north through Malheur County, following the course of the Owyhee, tracing Willow Creek for several miles, and continuing north by way of Tub Springs and the Burnt River Canyon. Around 1862 gold strikes on the Powder River in Oregon and on the Wood River in Idaho attracted many pioneers from their claims in the Willamette Valley back along this route into eastern Oregon.

Traffic increased along the old immigrant trail in 1863 with the discovery of the mines near Silver City across the Idaho border near the present town of Jordan Valley. "Sheep Ranch" was to become a station on one of the first stagecoach routes through the country, the Winnemucca road, which was the route from the Idaho mines to San Francisco.

The house was constructed around 1863 by a "McWilliams" who migrated to the area from the California gold fields. Comprising of 1100 acres originally, Sheep Ranch was the first property settled in the middle part of the Jordan Creek valley.

Because the entire region was still vulnerable to attack from Piute and Bannock Indian tribes, settlement was curtailed for a time. Once military posts were established to check uprisings during the 1860s, settlers realized some measure of security and a steady income from supplying the posts. United States troops were garrisoned in Idaho and in Oregon at Camp Three Forks Owyhee, near the south fork of the Owyhee, and at Camp Lyon, on the north fork of Jordan Creek. In 1865 Sheep Ranch was bought from McWilliams by a James P. Merrill, a farmer, who (continued)

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

An Illustrated History of Baker, Grant, Malheur, and Harney Counties (Spokane; Western History Publishing Company, 1902), pp. 519-520.

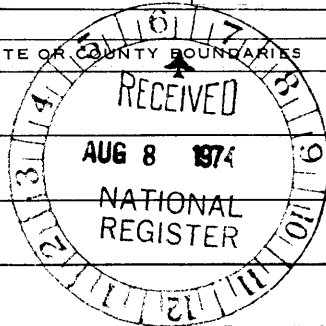
10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		42 ° 55' 11"	117 ° 32' 45 "	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 6

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE



11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:  
Paul Hartwig, Park Historian, and D. W. Powers III, Temporary Assistant

ORGANIZATION: Oregon State Highway Division

DATE: July 16, 1974

STREET AND NUMBER:  
State Highway Building

CITY OR TOWN: Salem

STATE: Oregon 97310

CODE: 41

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name: David B. Fuller

Title: State Parks Superintendent

Date: August 2, 1974

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

A. B. Montross  
Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 10/1/74

ATTEST:  
Wm. Montross  
Keeper of The National Register

Date: 10-29-74

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Oregon	
COUNTY Malheur	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	NOV 1 1974

(Number all entries)

SHEEP RANCH FORTIFIED HOUSE (CONTINUED)

8. Significance (continued)

The Basques began arriving in southeastern Oregon about 1890. The period of major immigration extended from ca. 1906 to 1926. It was in 1914, at the height of the Basques' influx to the Jordan Creek valley, that Pascual Eiguren bought Sheep Ranch. It has been under continuous ownership by the Eiguren family from that time to the present.

