NPS Form 10-900
(Revised Feb. 1993)

OMB No. 10024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Gusman, James E and Emma, Ranch

other names/site number

2. Location

street & number South Mountain Road, six miles southeast of Jordan Valley, Oregon N/A not for publication

city or town Jordan Valley X vicinity

state Idaho code ID county Owyhee code 073 zip code 97910

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

Susan P. Neitzel 10/28/99

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

SUSAN P. NEITZEL, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is: Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

✓ entered in the National Register.
___ See continuation sheet.
___ determined eligible for the National Register.
___ See continuation sheet.
___ determined not eligible for the National Register.

___ removed from the National Register.

___ other, (explain:)

for Carson H. Beall 12/9/99

Gusman Ranch
Name of Property

Owyhee County, Idaho
City, County, and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- X private
- ___ public-local
- ___ public-State
- ___ public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

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

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
12	3	buildings
	0	sites
1	0	structures
	0	objects
13	3	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling
AGRICULTURE/animal facility
AGRICULTURE/agricultural outbuilding

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling
AGRICULTURE/animal facility
AGRICULTURE/agricultural outbuilding

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: CRAFTSMAN/cottage

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE/sandstone
walls WOOD/plank, board and batten, shingle; STONE/sandstone; CONCRETE
roof WOOD/shingle; METAL/steel; COMPOSITION
other

Narrative Description

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

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

Gusman Ranch
Name of Property

Owyhee County, Idaho
City, County, and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" on one or more lines for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

x A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

___ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

___ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

___ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" on all that apply.)

Property is:

___ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

___ B removed from its original location.

___ C a birthplace or grave.

___ D a cemetery.

___ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

___ F a commemorative property.

___ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

AGRICULTURE

Period of Significance

1884-1948

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

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

X See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 8

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography
(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

___ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested

___ previously listed in the National Register

___ previously determined eligible by the National Register

___ designated a National Historic Landmark

___ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____

___ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

x State Historic Preservation Office

___ Other State agency

___ Federal agency

___ Local government

___ University

___ Other

Name of repository:

X See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 9

Gusman Ranch
Name of Property

Owyhee County, Idaho
City, County, and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 6.4 acres

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
A	1/1	5/0/0/0/4/0	4/7/5/2/5/2/0	B	1/1	5/0/0/1/4/0	4/7/5/2/5/2/0
C	1/1	5/0/0/0/4/0	4/7/5/2/7/8/0	D	1/1	5/0/0/1/4/0	4/7/5/2/7/8/0

Verbal Boundary Description
(Describe the boundaries of the property.)

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

Boundary Justification
(Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Dale M. Gray
organization Frontier Historical Consultants date 08/15/98
street & number 10446 Poppy telephone 208-323-0435
city or town Boise state ID zip code 83710

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- Continuation Sheets
- Maps: A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

  A Sketch map for historic districts and/or properties having large acreage or numerous resources.
- Photographs: Representative black and white photographs of the property.
- Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Property Owner

name Carl Fretwell
street & number Box 253 telephone 208-583-2280
city or town Jordan Valley state OR zip code 97910

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

The James E. and Emma Gusman Ranch is located six miles southeast of Jordan Valley, Oregon, on the South Mountain Road in Owyhee County, Idaho. The ranch lies in a large green valley in the Owyhee Mountains, close to the banks of Jordan Creek at an elevation of 4,500 feet. The portion of land being nominated is the original homestead claim. The farmstead plan is a scattered one in which there are buildings situated on both sides of the road, near the foothills on the east side and the creek on the west side.

The western grouping of buildings includes the granary/barn and associated corrals, well house, metal shop, and a woven willow corral. This complex is flanked on the north and south sides by two homes and associated structures. The granary/barn and willow corral represent the earliest period of ranch life: 1885-1900. The Harry Gusman house, outhouse, and fences on the south side were built circa 1920. The house north of the barn is a 1970s prefabricated home built to replace the former Francis Gusman home that burned down in the 1960s. The metal shop was built in the 1950s. The prefabricated house and the metal shop are non-contributing resources. Though not all the buildings and structures are individually eligible, as a group they represent various time periods and changing technology related to ranching in the region.

The eastern grouping includes the James Gusman house and bunk house addition, built circa 1885. Attached to the house on the north side is a 1964 mobile home. To the west of the house and bunkhouse are a root cellar, milk house, ice house, and smoke house. A stable/garage with a chickencoop attached to it and a blacksmith shop lie in a pasture south of the outbuildings. All of these structures date from circa 1885 and represent various ranching and homemaking activities related to the time period. Only a portion of the James Gusman house and mobile home are still occupied as a residence; all the other buildings are presently unused. The mobile home is a non-contributing resource.

In addition to the buildings inventoried below, the ranch complex includes the landscaping, objects, and structures from a range of the ranch's history, 1885 to present. These contribute to the ranch's historic landscape. Several different types of fencing, gates, ditches, pastures, orchards and ornamental plantings date prior to World War II. The post-World War II structures represent technological impacts on agricultural and rural properties -- an above-ground gas tank, metal shop, mobile home, prefabricated house, and a satellite dish. A piece of folk art decorates the former Francis Gusman lawn. It is a swing made out of an old wagon axle, horse shoes, iron wheels from farm equipment, and hand-forged pieces of metal. Numerous pieces of discarded agricultural equipment from various time periods are located near the buildings and in the pasture area. The buildings themselves also contain historic artifacts of various kinds related to farming and ranching.

Inventory of Buildings and Structures:

1. **Main House:** James E. and Emma Gusman home Contributory
Built Circa 1885
Remodeled: several times over the years

The Main House is a one and one-half story, wood frame building with a gable roof and lateral facade. The walls are of board and batten siding later covered with wooden clapboards; the roof is covered with composition shingles. Its foundation is composed of rough-cut uncoursed sandstone rubble. The floor plan matches the folk hall-and-parlor tradition. Its dimension are 26 feet wide by 30 feet long with a 6 by 24 foot porch on the west side.

The west side gable contains a five-panel door, with two single-paned double-hung sash windows flanking it. The door is offset from the center of the building. Crowned molding top the door and windows; plain barge boards (once painted red) cover the corners and eaves. A screened-in front porch measuring 24 feet wide and six feet deep runs the full length of the west facade. Part of the porch has been enclosed and attached to an adjoining mobile home. Portions of an old picket fence run in front of the home; ornamental plantings of lilacs, berries, and pioneer roses surround the building.

A double-hung sash window is located in the south facade. One double-hung sash window is located on the south end of the lean-to addition.which runs the full length of the east side gable. It has three over three lights in each section. A similar window is located on the north side of the lean-to addition. The north facade is attached to a mobile home. The back of the lean-to addition is badly burned and the roof is sagging. The ruins of a wood panel door is located in the middle of it. The main house is in fair to poor condition. The house is no longer used as a dwelling. The owner utilizes it for storage. The structure is connected to a 1964 mobile home on the north side.

2. **Bunk House** Contributory
Built 1900 - 1915
Attached to House: Unknown

A bunk house is attached to the east side gable of the James Gusman house by a storeroom. The bunk house is a one-story, gabled roof structure consisting of a single room. It is of wood frame construction with board and batten siding and a wood shingle roof. Its foundation consists of rough-cut uncoursed rubble. Its dimensions are nine feet long by twelve feet wide. The only intact window is located in the north facade; it is a double hung sash of three over two lights and plain

board trim. Next to the door on the south facade is the remains of a similar window. The central doorway is covered with a three-panel wood door. The structure is in poor condition.

3. Root Celler Contributory
Built circa 1890
Remodeled: 1950s

The root cellar is a one-half story structure dug into the ground. A concrete entryway constructed in the 1950s covers rough-cut sandstone rubble forming the sides and walls. Remnants of a wooden door are attached to the concrete entryway. The floor to the entryway and cellar are dirt; the roof is also dirt with some stone. The interior walls are finished with concrete and form a single room. Posts and beams reinforce the ceiling. The root cellar is attached on the south facade to the milk house. The structure's dimensions are nineteen feet wide and twenty-one feet long. It is in fair condition.

4. Milk House Contributory
Built circa 1890

The milk house is constructed of sandstone rubble with coursed sandstone facing. The sandstone is square cut, with rough quoins decorating the corners of the building. It is a one-story structure with a wood shingle roof covering composition sheeting. The eaves and roof are framed with wood; square wooden shingles are located in the face of the west facade. Barge boards enclose the eaves. Its floor plan consists of a single room. the strucutre is in poor condition; its stone walls are falling apart. Its dimensions are fourteen feet wide by fifteen feet long. [Note: the intials JG, JL, HG are carved in some of the stones.]

5. Ice House Contributory
Built circa 1890

The ice house is a one-story, gabled roof building constructed with wood framing. Wood shingles cover the roof; the foundation is not visible. Ruins of a screen door are centrally located in the west facade. Shiplap siding covers the front wall, board and batten covers the sides. The structure contains no windows; straw insulation can be seen in the roof area. Its condition is fair to poor.

6. Smoke House Contributory
Built circa 1885

The smoke house is a small square structure of one and one-half stories. Its dimensions are seven feet by seven feet. The structure has a gable roof; both the roof and walls are covered with wooden slabs constructed in a loose board-and-batten fashion of siding. A flush hinged wooden slab door is located in the north facade. The door latch is made of hand-forged iron; square nails hold the structure together. In the interior, two ceiling joists form a cross and rope hangs from their intersection. The smoke house's condition is poor.

7. Granary/barn Contributory
Built circa 1890
Remodeled, date unknown

The main portion of the building is one and one-half story, with a gable front and wood external frame construction. Both the heavy floor and ceiling beams extend beyond the side walls; external vertical boards are mortised and tenoned to the floor and ceiling joists. Wood shingles cover the gable roof and larged raised wooden platform acts as a foundation for the building. A wooden false front of board-and-batten siding covers the main section of the east facade. Large double swinging ledge-and-braced wooden doors are located in the middle of the east facade. No doors or windows are located in the west facade. The interior area is partitioned off into various areas of grain storage and preparation. Old harness, saddles, tack, cowboy boots, a grain grinder and traps lay on the floor and line the board-and-batten interior walls.

Two shed-roofed additions run the full length of each side of the barn. Their roofs are covered with ridged metal sheeting; board-and-batten siding coves the exterior walls. the north lean-to addition is presently used as a tack room and horse pen. The south lean-to was locked and inaccessible. Double hinged wooden doors are located on the east facade of each lean-to addition. The entire building's dimensions are thirty-three feet wide by thirty-nine and one-half feet long; it is in fair condition.

8. Well House Contributory
Built: date unknown

The structure is one story with a gable roof and concrete foundation. The walls are framed with wood and covered with shiplap siding. Boards topped with tarpaper presently cover the roof.

Straw insulates the ceiling. Barge boards cover the eaves and corners of the building. A two-panel door provides and entryway to the west gable front. The building covers a well lined with rough-cut uncoursed rubble. Its dimensions are five feet wide and seven feet long. The building is in fair condition.

9. Stable/Coop Contributory
Built circa 1890
Renovated at an unknown point in time

The building is a one story, wood frame structure with a gable roof and concrete foundation. The ruins of a shed roof chicken coop addition extends to the south. The stable is fifteen feet wide and the coop thirteen feet wide; both are sixteen feet long. The structures are in poor condition. The walls of the stable are covered with board-and-batten siding and the roof with wooden shingles. A wooden false front front was added to the west facade. The interior consists of one unfinished room with no ceiling and a dirt floor. A sliding wooden door covers a large entryway in the west facade.

Ruins of a shed-style chicken coop are attached to the south side. There were two screen windows in the south facade. Remains of a wood ledge-and-brace door covers an entryway into the west side of the coop.

10. Blacksmith Shop Contributory
Built circa 1885

The blacksmith shop is a one-story wood frame structure with a gable roof and lateral facade. An open entryway is located in the north facade; a window opening is located on the south facade. An open entryway is located in the north facade; a window opening is located on the south facade. The walls consist of vertical slab timbers, tied together with wood framing. Boards and tar paper cover the roof and the single interior room has a dirt floor. Its dimensions are seventeen fee wide and fourteen feet long. The building is in poor condition.

11. House -- Harry Gusman home Contributory
Built circa 1920
Remodeled: dates unknown

The house is a one-story wood frame structure with a pyramidal hipped roof. Concrete covers the original rough-cut uncoursed rubble foundation, composition shingles cover the roof. It has the square massing and vernacular floor plan of an American foursquare house. The walls are covered with clapboard siding with corner boards; plain barge boards and moldings enclose the eaves and surround the windows.

An open porch runs two-thirds the length of the east facade. A central four-panel wood door is flanked by double-hung sash windows with single panes. Similar windows are found on the house's north facade. Two original double-hung sash windows remain on the south side, but a newer single-paned, fixed sash window recently replaced an older one. A partial lean-to porch addition is located on the house's west facade. The porch roof is covered with ridged metal sheeting. A wooden stoop leads to an off-set laminated wood doorflanked by screened windows.

The house's dimensions are 24.5 feet wide by twenty-four feet long with a 10 by 12 foot shed roof porch on the west side. It is in fair to good condition. Wire mesh fencing surrounds the house's lawn and its entryway is marked by a small wooden bridge and wire and metal fence. Large aspen trees are located inside the fence line all around the house. An old apple orchard and pasture lie to the north of the house and lawn area

12. Outdoor Toilet Contributory
Built circa 1920

The outdoor toilet is associated with the Harry Gusman house. It is a one-half story, wood frame structure with a shed roof and concrete foundation. Clapboard siding covers the walls and the board roof is missing its original shingles. An offset five-cross panel door is located on the east facade. A small screened window is placed towards the top of the south facade. The building's dimensions are approximately four feet by four feet.

13. Metal Shop Non-contributory
Built circa 1950

The shop is of prefabricated pole construction, with ribbed metal siding and heavy metal framing. It is a one and one-half story with a low-pitched gable roof and gable front facade. Central sliding double doors cover a central entryway to the shop. One fixed, sash, twelve-light window is located on the south side of the east front facade; another fixed, sash window of six lights is located in the front eaves. The shop's metal walls are hinged tothe top of the framing, allowing them to be

lifted up or slid out of the way. Its dimensions are fifty-four feet wide and sixty feet long. An above-ground gas tank on a metal platform is located directly behind (west) of the shop. The shop is in good condition and will become a contributory element of the site once the requisite fifty years have passed since its construction.

14. **House**; on former Francis Gusman home site — Non-contributory
Built circa 1970s

The house is a double-wide mobile home with a metal skirt surrounding its foundation. It is placed on the former home site of the first Francis Gusman house, which burned in the 1960s. A post-and-pole fence surrounds the lawn and encloses tall aspen trees. An older iron and mesh gate marks the entryway to the fence. A television satellite dish is located on the south end of the mobile home. A small metal storage shed sits in the northeast corner of the lawn on a concrete slab. A handcrafted swing constructed from an old wagon axle, iron tractor wheels, wood, and horse shoes sits in front of the shed.

15. **Corrals, Loading Chutes and Fences** — Contributory
Built 1885 to present

A complex of corrals is attached to the granary/barn. The majority of the corrals are post and pole or post and board. One loading chute is located north of the barn. An older strucutre sits to the southwest of the barn. It is a round willow and pole corral roughly twenty-five feet in diameter, dating to the earliest period of ranching activity on the property. Peeled thin willow poles are stacked and interwovern between large vertical posts dug into the ground. The vertical poles are placed side by side in a circle, with an opeingin into the other corrals on the north side. A small portion of the fence near the Harvey Gusman house also consists of woven willow infill.

Except for fences delineating the lawns and houses, the majority of the others are composed of barbed wire, posts, and poles. Traditional rock "fence jacks," anchor the corners. The anchors consist of poles or posts forming a platform that attaches to the bottom of the corner post. In the middle of the latform are stacked rocks--these rocks form the weight to help keep the corner post straight and the barbed wire taut.

16. Mobile Home Non Contributory
1964

A modern mobile home measuring 51 by 10 feet is located on the north side of the James and Emma Gusman home. The mobile home and historic house share an internal doorway connection.

Attached site map shows the location and number of each building and structure.

Narrative Statement of Significance

The Gusman Ranch is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its contribution to local history. The ranch was established in 1873 in the fertile Pleasant Valley with the present ranch complex originating in 1884. The Gusman /Fretwell family has operated the ranch from 1873 until the present. The ranch provided meat to the early mining towns of Silver City, DeLamar and Dewey. When these boom towns faded, the ranch, like others in the area, began shipping cattle around the world by driving steers to the railhead in Murphy, Idaho. The ranch contains several structures dating from first occupation, while other architecture reflects the changing needs of ranching in subsequent years. With most of the historic structures in place, the ranch retains a high degree of integrity as a historical site. The ranch has retained high values of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. While there are several modern structures in the site, they were erected as a result of historical processes that have continued into the present.

Owyhee County Cattle Industry

The history of the Owyhee County cattle industry is intertwined with the nearby Silver City mines. Gold and silver were discovered in the Owyhee Mountains in 1863 by a prospecting party out of Boise Basin. This triggered a mining boom and soon thousands of miners were working the Owyhee Mountains in and around Silver City. With supplies several days ride to the northwest at Auburn near present day Baker City, Oregon, the cost of flour, meat and coffee reflected the high cost to transport them up the Columbia by steamer and then overland from Walla Walla. By the time the supplies made it to Silver City, flour cost $13.00 per 100 pound sack and bacon was sold for $11.00 per 20 pounds.[1] With food prices much higher than back at home, people realized they could make a fortune by supplying the mining camp.

While little information is available on the source of the first cattle to come into the Owyhee Country, they most probably came up the Columbia with other supplies needed by the miners. Initially, the miners lived on salt pork and wild game, but the first cattle were used to provide the miners with milk. Shipping live cattle up the Columbia was an expensive business. While the Owyhee mines were only a short distance from the South Alternate of the Oregon Trail, which was referred to as the Old Emigrant Trail by the miners, the Civil War had reduced the flow of emigrants to a trickle.[2]

The Civil War did prove instrumental in bringing the first big herds into Idaho. During the war, the cattle of Texas had been allowed to run wild and had filled the Texas plains. These herds of

nearly wild cattle became the source for the post-Civil War cattle industry in the western plains from Texas to Canada and from Nebraska to the semi-arid basins of eastern Oregon.

In the Spring of 1867, Con Shea left Silver City for Texas to obtain a herd of cattle. He arrived at Oreana, about 20 miles northeast of the Owyhee mines in the fall of 1867. From there he sold his beef in the various mining camps receiving from $36 to $40 per head from the miners.[3]

While Shea was traveling to Texas, George Miller gathered a herd of Spanish cattle from California and English cattle from Oregon. The winter of 1867/68, he settled in the upper Owyhee plateau and drove cattle periodically to Silver City to sell in the Opposition Meat Market. Because many of his customers were miners who bought on credit, Miller made little money. Both Shea and Miller returned to Texas for herds in 1870. In 1873, Dave Shirk, Miller's former partner returned to Texas for another herd. In 1872, Con Shea moved the base of his operation from near Oreana, Idaho to near present-day Jordan Valley, Oregon .[4]

From these beginnings, cattle barons began to take up the land in eastern Oregon, southwest Idaho and Northern Nevada (ION). In eastern Oregon, barons such as Peter French and John Devine controlled the great herds. The Owyhee region was controlled by George Miller, Pick Anderson and Miller & Lux. The great drives from Texas ended in the mid 1870s as the ION ranges began meeting the needs of the miners with local herds. From 1871 to 1876, the American market was glutted with Texas beef. This resulted in a rapid drop in price of beef on the hoof. However, by 1876, prices were on the rise with the opening of new external markets. American beef began to be exported to the British isles in such quantity that English investors, sensing an opportunity, invested heavily in the American cattle operations. English and other investment capital diverted Texas herds to stock the northern Great Plains. Cattle barons filled the west with Texas cattle grazing the grass once cropped by the buffalo.[5]

In 1876, the first of the ION herds were trailed to Cheyenne, Wyoming to be sold to eastern markets. Without the onus of "Texas Fever," the ION herds were able to fetch favorable prices. With access to Oregon cattle, the stockmen in the ION region were among the first to begin upgrading their cattle with an infusion of English bloodlines. The English cattle were both more resistant to the northern cold and matured in two years as opposed to the four years required to get a Texas steer to market.[6]

The 1880s brought an end to the open range of the ION. Miners, dissatisfied with the hard and dangerous life underground, returned to their agrarian roots and began to take up relatively small

ranches under a variety of homesteading laws. The cattle barons found their ranges broken up by these smaller homestead-based ranches and nearly all of the valuable river bottom lands taken up and fenced off. While many of the new ranchers bought their breeding stock, many got their start utilizing unbranded cattle collected off the open range on lands previously controlled by the barons. The period from 1880 to 1883 was a strong market for cattle with prices ranging from $20 to 25 per head. Miners-turned-ranchers were able to prosper with good grass and good prices. However, the saturation of the northern plains with cattle brought a rapid drop in prices. The situation was made worse by a drought that began in 1886 and lasted until 1891[7].

Poor range conditions in the summer and fall of 1888 left cattle in poor condition throughout the West. The cattle in the ION were thin and poor prices had resulted in the range being overstocked by cattlemen who awaited better prices. The blizzard of 1888/1889 proved a water-shed for ranches throughout the west. The Owyhee ranches proved no different. While the English stock proved more resistant, the herds of the cattle barons were decimated. While beef prices shot up, the ranges were empty and the surviving ranchers had to rebuild their herds. In the ION area, giant herds of sheep covered the hills where once Texas cattle grazed.[8]

The Owyhee cattlemen struggled to rebuild their herds in the early 1890s. While the drought broke in 1891, the repeal of the Sherman Silver Purchase Act in 1892 closed the silver mines in the Owyhees --substantially reducing the local market for beef. The Panic of 1893 caused prices to drop on a national level. While Boise, Nampa and Caldwell to the north provided an alternate market, there was no easy way to get the herds to the market because the Snake River effectively blocked the way. As a result, herds from the northern ION were driven to Vale, Oregon to connect with a spur line of the Oregon Short Line. Herds from the southern ION were driven to Winnemucca to connect with the Union Pacific. In 1898, the Boise, Nampa and Owyhee Railroad completed a bridge across the Snake River south of Nampa and established a railhead at Murphy. From that point until 1947, Owyhee cattle were driven to market at Murphy. For many years Murphy shipped more cattle and sheep than any other point in the Pacific Northwest. With the closure of the Owyhee Mines in the early 1910s, external markets became the source of income for local ranchers. In 1914, over half a million dollars in livestock were shipped from Murphy. After World War II, the use of cattle trucks driven directly to the ranches ended the practice of driving herds to market.[9]

Gusman Ranch

The Gusman Ranch is one of the earliest ranches in Owyhee County and has been held in the same family, the Gusman/Fretwell family, since it was established in 1873. The ranch complex,

which dates from 1884, has been shaped and altered to meet the changing needs and historic processes at work in the Jordan Valley ranching community. The existing buildings and structures of the ranch complex reflect local ranching history from its inception. The first Gusman homestead entry was made only one year after Con Shea drove the first herds into the Jordan Valley Area and while Dave Shirk was heading for Texas for the last cattle drive to the Owyhees. With its location only a short mile from the Jordan Valley to Silver City Road, the ranch was ideally situated to supply agricultural products to the miners. The early corrals were made of locally available willow and junipers while the family dwelling was constructed of milled lumber which was readily available at Silver City. In the late 1880s, as the number of ranches in the area grew in number while conversely decreasing in size, the Gusman ranch became one of many ranches in the area to supply local miners while driving herds to market at the railhead in Winnemucca, Nevada. When the railhead was established in Murphy in 1898, the herds were then trailed the shorter distance over the ridge north of Silver City to Murphy. Following the close of World War II and the abandonment of the railroad between Nampa and Murphy, the Gusman ranch adapted to truck transport by erecting a loading chute on the west side of the South Mountain road which bisects the ranch complex.

The ranch was established by James E. Gusman in 1873 when he filed a homestead of 160 acres in portions of sections 4 and 12 as well as the southwest quarter of the southwest quarter of Section 1 of Township 6 South, Range 6 West along the course of Jordan Creek in what was known as Pleasant Valley. He paid $1.25 per acre on March 1, 1873 and received certificate No. 166.[10]

In 1880, James Gusman, 42, was listed on the census for 1880 in Enumeration District #29. Members of his household included his wife Emma L. Gusman, 27, and children Jeannie B. Gusman, 4, and Harry J., 2. James was listed as having been born in Virginia while his wife was born in New York. James' occupation was listed as "Farmer." No clue is given as to how he came to farm in Owyhee County.[11]

Around 1884, James Gusman established his permanent ranch headquarters along the South Mountain Road. Gusman filed for the east half of the southwest quarter of section 1, where the Gusman ranch complex is located on February 12, 1884.[12] This claim was relinquished on May 13,1898 and the claim #1479 refiled under the Desert Land Act the same day.[13] Gusman obtained title certificate #435 for 80 acres for $1.25 per acre on October 10, 1902.[14]

In 1885, the main house was built along with cellar and slab-sided smoke house. Slightly apart from the house and other outbuildings, Gusman built a blacksmith shop, presumably to be close to the well. While the house was a frame structure with lap siding, the out buildings were constructed

of rough vertical slab siding with battens. The root cellar was dug into the slightly rising ground behind the house utilizing native sandstone to support the sides. Willow corrals were built across the road from the house.[15]

The ranch saw another boom in building in the 1890s. A frame stable/chicken coop was built near the blacksmith shop. Between the cellar and the smoke house lie a frame ice house and a sandstone milk house. Across the road from the house a barn/granary was built.[16]

After the turn of the century, a small bunkhouse was built between the house and the milk house. In 1913, Francis Gusman built a two story house on the west side of the road and a short distance to the north of the James Gusman House. In 1919, Harry Gusman, son of James, built the house and associated outhouse south of the corrals and on the west side of the South Mountain Road. He utilized siding from the historic Dewey Palace from nearby Dewey which was torn down for salvage at that time. Harry Gusman planted trees around the house and an orchard between the house and the corrals.[17]

Since World War II, a metal barn and a loading chute have been added to the west side of the road.

The ranch complex and surrounding land is now the property of Gusman Livestock Co. which is run by Carl Fretwell and Forest Gusman, who are great-nephews of Harry Gusman.

ENDNOTES

[1] Michael Jordan, "Diary of Michael Ignatius Jordan," Owyhee Outpost 5, (April, 1974), pp 9-23.

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] Mike Hanley and Lucius Ellis, Owyhee Trails; the West's Forgotten Corner, (Caldwell: Caxton Printers, 1973).

[4] Byron DeLos Lusk, "Golden Cattle Kingdoms of Idaho," 1978. Manuscript on file at the Idaho Historic Library; Omer Stanford, "Cattle Drives," Owyhee Outpost. 2, (1971); and Hanley and Ellis Owyhee Trails.

[5] Lusk, "Golden Cattle Kingdoms of Idaho"; and Michael P. Malone and Richard B. Roeder, Montana: A History of Two Centuries, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1976), pp 112-113.

[6] Lusk, "Golden Cattle Kingdoms of Idaho."

[7] *Ibid.*

[8] Stanford, "Cattle Drives"; and Hanley and Ellis, Owyhee Trails.

[9] Stanford, "Cattle Drives"; Lusk, "Golden Cattle Kingdoms of Idaho"; Malone and Roeder, Montana; and Dale M. Gray, "Owyhee Railroads," Owyhee Outpost 20, May 1989. pp. 99-100.

[10] Bureau of Land Management, General Land OfficeRecords, "Homestead Entry Certificate #166," March 1, 1873.

[11] Idaho Geneological Society, Idaho Territorial Federal Population and Mortality Schedules - 1880. (Boise: Williams Publishing,1976), p. 873; and Bureau of Land Management, General Land OfficeRecords, "Homestead Entry Certificate #166," March 1, 1873.

[12] Bureau of Land Management, General Land OfficeRecords, "Homestead Entry Certificate #598", February 12, 1884.

[13] Bureau of Land Management, General Land OfficeRecords, "Homestead Entry Certificate #598," February 12, 1884; "Homestead Entry Certificate #1479," May 13, 1898.

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[14] Bureau of Land Management, General Land OfficeRecords, "Desert Lands Certificate #435," October 10, 1902; and Carl Fretwell, interview with Madeline Buckendorf at the Gusman Ranch, October 21, 1994.

[15] Fretwell "Interview with Madeline Buckendorf."

[16] Fretwell "Interview with Madeline Buckendorf"; and Owyhee County Assessor's Office "Gusman Livestock" property records.

[17] Fretwell "Interview with Madeline Buckendorf"; Fretwell "Interview with Dale M. Gray at the Gusman Ranch," July 17, 1998; and Owyhee County Assessor's Office "Gusman Livestock" property records.

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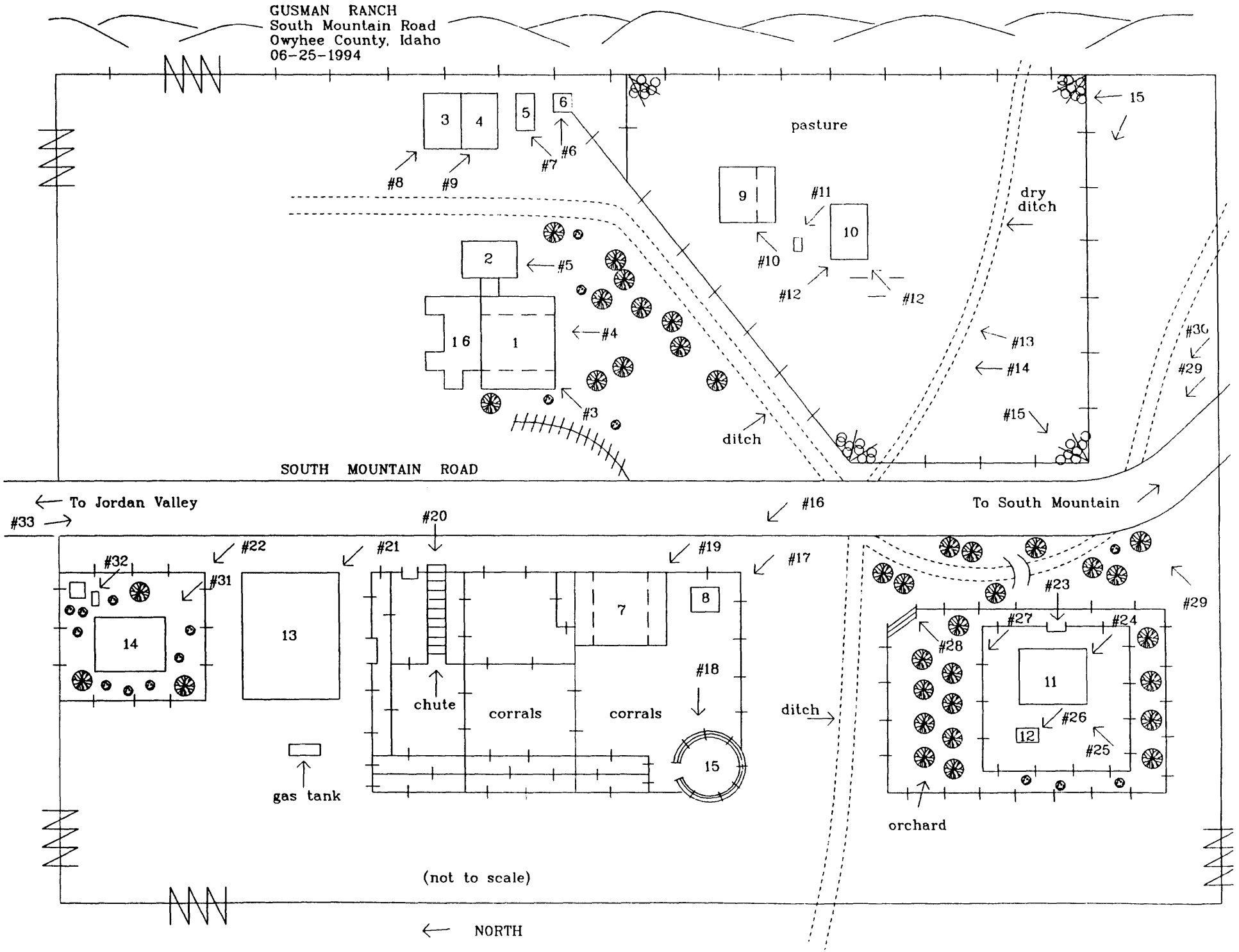
VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

W 1/2, NE 1/4, SW1/4, Section 1, Township 6 South, Range 6 West

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The Gusman ranch complex extends 50 meters on either side of the South Mountain Road from the Francis Gusman home on the north to the Harry Gusman house to the south. The east boundary includes outbuildings such as the cellar, ice house, milk house, smoke house, blacksmith shop and garage on the east side of the road. On the west side of the road, the boundary includes the backyard of the Harry Gusman house, corrals and orchard. The northern border is the northern yard fence of the former Francis Gusman home site. The southern border of the site is the south yard fence of the Harry Gusman home. This boundary includes all the buildings, yards, corrals and orchards that comprise the Gusman ranch complex.


GUSMAN RANCH
South Mountain Road
Owyhee County, Idaho
06-25-1994
pasture
dry ditch
ditch
SOUTH MOUNTAIN ROAD
To Jordan Valley
To South Mountain
chute
corrals
corrals
gas tank
orchard
(not to scale)
NORTH
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
#3
#4
#5
#6
#7
#8
#9
#10
#11
#12
#12
#13
#14
#15
#15
#16
#17
#18
#19
#20
#21
#22
#23
#24
#25
#26
#27
#28
#29
#29
#30
#31
#32
#33

Gusman Ranch
Owyhee County, Idaho
Dale M Gray
July 17, 1998
Idaho SHPO, Boise, Idaho
Bunkhouse to the North
Roll 1, frame 5

Gusman Ranch
Owyhee County, Idaho
Dale M. Gray
July 17, 1998
Idaho SHPO, Boise, Idaho
James and Emma Gusman House to the northeast
Roll 1, frame 3

Gusman Ranch
Owyhee County, Idaho
Dale M Gray
July 17, 1998
Idaho SHPO, Boise, Idaho
James and Emma Gusman House to the north
Roll 1, frame 4

Gusman Ranch
Owyhee County, Idaho
Dale M Gray
July 17, 1998
Idaho SHPO, Boise, Idaho
Smokehouse to the east
Roll 1, frame 6

Gusman Ranch
Owyhee County, Idaho
Dale M Gray
July 17, 1998
Idaho SHPO, Boise, Idaho
Ice House viewed to the northeast
Roll 1, frame 7

Gusman Ranch
Owyhee County, Idaho
Dale M Gray
July 17, 1998
Idaho SHPO, Boise, Idaho
Root Cellar viewed to southeast
Roll 1, frame 8

Gusman Ranch
Owyhee County, Idaho
Dale M. Gray
July 17, 1998
Idaho SHPO, Boise, Idaho
Stable, garage, Coop viewed to the northeast
Roll 1, frame 10

Gusman Ranch
Owyhee County, Idaho
Dale M Gray
July 17, 1998
Idaho SHPO, Boise, Idaho
Blacksmith shop viewed to the northeast
Roll 1, frame 12

Gusman Ranch
Owyhee County, Idaho
Dale M Gray
July 17, 1998
Idaho SHPO, Boise, Idaho
Barn/granary viewed to the northwest
Roll 1, Frame 17

Gusman Ranch
Owyhee County, Idaho
Dale M Gray
July 17, 1998
Idaho SHPO, Boise, Idaho
Milkhouse as viewed to the southeast
Roll 1, frame 9

Gusman Ranch
Owyhee County, Idaho
Dale M Gray
July 17, 1998
Idaho SHPO, Boise, Idaho
Willow Corral viewed to the west
Roll 1, frame 18.

Gusman Ranch
Owyhee County, Idaho
Dale M Gray
July 17, 1998
Idaho SHPO, Boise, Idaho
Wall house viewed to the north west
Roll 1, frame 19

Gusman Ranch
Owyhee County, Idaho
Dale M Gray
July 17, 1998
Idaho SHPO, Boise, Idaho
Harry Gusman House viewed to the northwest
Roll 1, Frame 24

Gusman Ranch
Owyhee County, Idaho
Dale M Gray
July 17, 1998
Idaho SHPO, Boise, Idaho
Outdoor toilet viewed to northwest
Roll 1, Frame 26

Gusman Ranch
Owyhee County, Idaho
Dale M Gray
July 17, 1998
Idaho SHPO, Boise, Idaho
Former Francis Gusman home site viewed to the
North, northwest

Gusman, Ranch
Owyhee County, Idaho
Dale M Gray
July 17, 1998
Idaho SHPO, Boise, Idaho
Gusman Ranch Overview to south
Roll 1, frame 00

Gusman Ranch
Owyhee County, Idaho
Dale M Gray
July 17, 1998
Idaho SHPO, Boise, Idaho
Gusman Ranch overview to North
Roll 1, frame 0

Gusman Ranch
Owyhee County, Idaho
Dale M Gray
July 17, 1998
Idaho SHPO, Boise, Idaho
Gusman Ranch overview to west
Roll 1, frame 1

Gusman Ranch
Owyhee County, Idaho
Dale M Gray
July 17, 1998
Idaho SHPO, Boise, Idaho

Gusman Ranch overview to east
Roll 1, frame 2

Gusman Ranch
Owyhee County, Idaho
Dale M Gray
July 17, 1998
Idaho SHPO, Boise, Idaho
"Water Pump as viewed to the Northwest
Roll 1, frame 11

Gusman Ranch
Owyhee County, Idaho
Dale M Gray
July 17, 1998
Idaho SHPO, Boise, Idaho
Agricultural equipment viewed to the Northeast
Roll 1, frame 13

Gusman Ranch
Owyhee County, Idaho
Dale M Gray
July 17, 1998
Idaho SHPO, Boise, Idaho
James Gusman complex as viewed to the north
Roll 1, Frame 14

Gusman Ranch
Owyhee County, Idaho
Dale M Gray
July 17, 1998
Idaho SHPO, Boise. Idaho
Fence jack (aka rock jack) viewed to southwest
Roll 1, frame 15

Gusman Ranch
Owyhee County, Idaho
Dale M Gray
July 17, 1998
Idaho SHPO, Boise, Idaho
Barn Corral Complex to the northwest
Roll 1, frame 16

Gusman Ranch
Owyhee County, Idaho
Dale M Gray
July 17, 1998
Idaho SHPO, Boise, Idaho
Loading chutes viewed to the west
Roll 1, frame 20

Gusman Ranch
Owyhee County, Idaho
Dale M Gray
July 17, 1998
Idaho SHPO, Boise, Idaho
Metal shop viewed to the northwest
Roll 1, frame 21

Gusman Ranch
Owyhee County, Idaho
Dale M Gray
July 17, 1998
Idaho SHPO, Boise, Idaho
Harry Gusman House gateway to the west
Roll 1, frame 23

Gusman Ranch
Owyhee County, Idaho
Dale M Gray
July 17, 1998

Idaho SHPO, Boise, Idaho
Harry Gusman House - Back porch viewed to the north
Roll 1; frame 25

Gusman Ranch
Owyhee County, Idaho
Dale M. Gray
July 17, 1998
Idaho SHPO, Boise, Idaho
Old Apple Orchard viewed to northwest
Roll 1, frame 27

Gusman Ranch
Owyhee County, Idaho
Dale M Gray
July 17, 1998
Idaho SHPO, Boise, Idaho
View Gusman Ranch to the south
Roll 1, frame 33

Guisman Ranch
Owyhee County, Idaho
Dale M Gray
July 17, 1998
Idaho SHPO, Boise, Idaho
folkart swing detail
Roll 1, frame 32

Gusman Ranch
Owyhee County, Idaho
Dale M. Gray
July 17, 1998
Idaho SHPO, Boise, Idaho
F. Gusman / Fretwell home viewed to the west
Roll 1, frame 31

Gusman Ranch
Owyhee County, Idaho
Dale M Gray
July 17, 1998
Idaho SHPO, Boise, Idaho
Overview of the Ranch Complex viewed to northwest
Roll 1, frame 30

Gusman Ranch
Owyhee County, Idaho
Dale M Gray
July 17, 1998
Idaho SHPO, Boise, Idaho
Overview of Ranch complex to the North
Roll 1, frame 29

Gusman Ranch
Owyhee County, Idaho
Dale M Gray
July 17, 1998
Idaho SHPO, Boise, Idaho
Stacked willow fencing viewed to North
Roll 1, frame 28

Gusman Ranch
Owyhee County, Idaho
Dale M. Gray
July 17, 1998
Idaho SHPO, Boise, ID
Bunkhouse, Board + Batten siding. N
R#2 F1

Gusman Ranch
Owyhee County, Idaho
Dale M Gray
July 17, 1998
Idaho SHPO, Boise, ID
Bunk house caves, W
R #2, F 2

Gusman Ranch
Owyhee County, Idaho
Dale M Gray
July 17, 1998
Idaho SHPO, Boise ID
Bunkhouse N
R#2, F3

Gusman Ranch
Owyhee County, Idaho
Dale M Gray
July 17, 1998
Idaho SHPO, Boise, ID
Ice house, NE
R #2, F4

Gusman Ranch
Owyhee County, Idaho
Dale M Gray
July 17, 1998
Idaho SHPO, Boise, ID
Smokehouse, NE
R#2, F5

Gusman Ranch
Owyhee County, Idaho
Dale Gray
July 17, 1998
Idaho SHPO, Boise, ID
Smokehouse / ice house NE
R#2, F-6

Gusman Ranch
Owyhee County, Idaho
Dale M Gray
July 17, 1998
Idaho SHPO, Boise, ID
Chicken house (collapsed) NW
R#2 F 7

Gusman Ranch
Owyhee County, Idaho
Dale M Gray
July 17, 1998
Idaho SHPO, Boise, ID
Garage Board + Batten NW
R#2, F 8

Grusman Ranch
Owyhee County, Idaho
Dale M. Gray
July 17, 1998
Idaho SHPO, Boise, ID
Blacksmith shop slab siding, S
R#2, F9