

IDAHO STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

REFERENCE SERIES

SITE REPORT - TWIN FALLS-MINIDOKA IRRIGATED TRACTS

Number 618

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Historic-site reports contain information designed to assist in two preservation functions. One is preservation planning at the local level. The other is the work of federal agencies in carrying out their responsibilities to comply with historic-preservation requirements prescribed by federal statutes and regulations. These reports summarize local archaeological, historical, and geographical contexts; existing surveys of historic sites; architectural, engineering, industrial; and other cultural resources; and available maps and literature concerning each area. Natural geographical, rather than governmental, boundaries have been used to identify seventy-two areas that vary greatly in size. Site reports reflect a broad cultural and geographical disparity characteristic of diverse regional components found in Idaho, but the areas are designed to incorporate cultural elements of immediate local significance that need to be taken into account for preservation planning.

1. Geographical context: This extensive strip of flat Snake River plains is watered by a gravity system of irrigation canals which divert water onto lands that do not rise above upstream river sources. Ranging in elevation from above 4,200 feet near Minidoka dam to 2,888 feet at Thousand Springs, this area contains a series of lava flows (which relocated Snake River) covered mostly by windblown soil. Some of these flows have been reexposed by Bonneville flood erosion, which also finished cutting out a deep Snake River gorge west from Milner. Except for Snake River and farm lands provided by a series of major reclamation projects, this otherwise desert area differs but little from adjacent higher plain country which, aside from pump irrigation, continues to be desert. A series of major Snake River falls, including Shoshone (212 feet) and Twin Falls, provide spectacular scenic power sites.

2. Prehistory and significant archaeological sites: People have inhabited southern Idaho for fourteen thousand years or more. Until about eight thousand years ago they were noted primarily as big game hunters. Since then, they specialized more in camas, bitterroot, and other natural crops and seeds, as well as in smaller game. But they continued to hunt large game that

remained after earlier elephants, camels, giant sloth, and other ice age creatures left as climatic conditions changed.

3. Cultural resource surveys and archaeological literature:

4. Historical summary: Major historical episodes include

1. Exploration and fur trade, 1811-1840
2. Emigrant, freight, and stage roads, 1841-1899
3. Twin Falls and Minidoka project development, 1900-1919
4. Transportation improvement and farm depression, 1920-1933
5. New Deal and wartime adjustment, 1933-1945
6. Improved farm technology, 1946-

5. Historical documentation and literature:

6. Historic sites inventory:

7. Industrial archaeological and engineering sites summary:
Surface evidence of placer mining in this area offers opportunities for study of industrial procedures utilized in historic production. Hydraulic pits, patterns of dredging operations, or tailings that distinguish hill claims from stream claims--or that identify Chinese services--provide information of historic importance. Prospector's pits disclose gravels that were searched unsuccessfully for gold. Ditches, flumes, stream diversions, and similar evidence of water sources also are important.

8. Architectural resources:

9. United States Geological Survey Maps:

Acequia 1964
Albion 1968
Balanced Rock
Berger 1965
Bliss 1949
Buckhorn Canyon 1965
Buhl 1958
Burley Butte 1964
Burley NE 1964
Burley NW 1964

Burley SE 1964
Burley SW 1964
Clover 1950
Davis Mtn. (15') 1957
Dietrich 1971
Dietrich Butte 1971
Eden 1964
Falls City 1964
Filer 1950
Gooding 1971
Gooding Butte 1949
Gooding SE 1971
Hagerman 1949
Hazelton NE 1964
Hub Butte 1965
Hunt 1964
Jerome 1950
Kenyon 1964
Kimama 1972
Kimama Butte 1972
Kimberly 1964
King Hill (15')
Kinzie Butte
Lake Walcott (15') 1959
Mammoth Cave
Marion 1968
Marion SE 1968
Max 1972
Milner 1964
Milner Butte 1965
Minidoka 1972
Mount Harrison 1968
Murtaugh 1965
Niagara Springs 1949
Norland 1972
Owinza 1971
Owinza Butte 1971
Pagari
Perrine 1964
Richfield
Roseworth NE 1965
Rupert NW 1964
Rupert SE 1964
Rupert SW 1964
Senter 1972
Shoshone 1971
Shoshone Ice Cave
Shoshone SE 1971
Shoshone SW 1971
Star Lake 1971

Stricker Butte 1965
Summit Reservoir
Tapper Lake
Thorn Creek SE 1957
Thorn Creek SW 1957
Thousand Springs 1950
Ticeska 1948
Tikura
Tuanna Butte 1965
Tunupa 1972
Tuttle 1949
Twin Falls 1964
View 1964
Wendell 1971
Yahoo Creek

10. Cultural resource management recommendations: