

# IDAHO STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## REFERENCE SERIES

### CALDRON LINN HISTORIC DISTRICT CULTURAL RESOURCES

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A stretch of Snake River gorge below Milner contains a varied abundance of cultural resources that justify recognition as a historic district. These relate to a series of episodes there, ranging from prehistoric Indians to nineteenth-century Chinese miners and twentieth-century reclamation projects.

Evidence of archaeological interest has been discovered in a number of rock shelters and deposits that need evaluation. An exceedingly curious misadventure that brought all kinds of trouble to Wilson Price Hunt's exploring party of Astorian fur hunters in 1811-1812 brought national attention to that area. A group of historic sites including Caldron Linn relate to that incident. Except for passing by on their way to other destinations, subsequent trappers avoided that area. But Oregon Trail emigrants came by in large numbers after 1840, and traces of their road still can be observed in that district. This route has become a national historic trail.

After 1870, discoveries of Snake River fine gold attracted miners to a number of deposits in this district. A number of Chinese cabin sites and evidence of mining around and above Dry Town contribute to interest in several parts of this district. These locations range from around Milner at least as far as Murtaugh bridge.

Milner Dam and its irrigation canals that line both sides of Snake River are of national significance because this project had far greater success than any other state managed reclamation venture authorized under congressional legislation of 1894. Some of these resources clearly are eligible for National Register recognition, and all of them, including historical archaeology resources in Milner townsite, need evaluation for inclusion in a Milner-Caldron Linn historic district.

**(This information has not been edited.)**

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