

Date of Action

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Historic Agricultural Resources of Twin Falls County, Idaho: 1860 to 1970
 Name of Multiple Property Listing

Idaho

State

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Provide narrative explanations for each of these sections on continuation sheets. In the header of each section, cite the letter, page number, and name of the multiple property listing. Refer to *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* for additional guidance.

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- Tier 1: 60-100 hours (generally existing multiple property submissions by paid consultants and by Maine State Historic Preservation staff for in-house, individual nomination preparation)
- Tier 2: 120 hours (generally individual nominations by paid consultants)
- Tier 3: 230 hours (generally new district nominations by paid consultants)
- Tier 4: 280 hours (generally newly proposed MPS cover documents by paid consultants).

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E. Statement of Historic Contexts

Summary Statement

The Twin Falls County Historic Preservation Commission has documented agricultural-related resources in a series of inventory projects conducted over the past decade. This documentation, combined with the results of other surveys within the county boundaries conducted to National Park Service Standards and filed with the Idaho State Historic Preservation Office, was used to complete this Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF).

The purpose of the MPDF is to assist property owners in listing agriculture-related resources in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The MPDF includes two historic contexts. The first “A History of Agriculture in Twin Falls County, Idaho: 1860 to 1970” provides a brief chronological history of the development of agriculture in the county, including the importance of the development of irrigation, agricultural research, and cultural diversity. The context is divided chronologically into subchapters, beginning with “History to 1860” which covers indigenous occupation and use of the land, early exploration, and the years of overland migration when emigrants traversed the future county via the Overland Trails to Oregon and California. “Miners, Ranchers, and Settlements (1860 to 1890)” covers the years when mining booms in what became Idaho and Montana, combined with continued overland travel to Oregon, brought the establishment of passenger and freight stage lines with their associated rest stations, the discovery of good grazing attracted stockmen from Texas and California, and the call of gold lured miners to search for it in the Snake River Canyon. In the 1880s, when railroad lines were extended across southern Idaho, the shifting transportation network influenced the location of new settlements generally away from the arid lands of what was then the west half of Cassia County. “Irrigation Age (1890 to 1910)” tells the story of the development of irrigation, leading up to the Twin Falls South Side Irrigation Project, probably the most successful irrigation project under the Carey Act in the nation, which brought an influx of settlers and resulted in the establishment of numerous new communities and the creation of Twin Falls County. “Boom and Bust (1910-1929)” covers the years of World War I and the agricultural depression that followed it. “The Great Depression (1929-1941)” includes information on the migrant farm-labor pool created by Dust Bowl farm refugees and the growing need for seasonal farm labor. “World War II (1941-1945)” discusses the expansion of producing crops for the war effort as well as the challenges of finding sufficient farm labor, including the use of Japanese Americans interned at Minidoka Relocation Center. “Mid-Twentieth-Century Agriculture in Twin Falls County (1946-1970)” brings the story from the years immediately after the war through the middle of the twentieth century with the new challenges facing agriculture, including farm consolidation, economic issues, technological change, and the effects of urbanization.

The second context, “Agriculture-related Construction Materials and Techniques,” discusses materials and methods used in the construction of agricultural resources, providing background for the Property Types presented in Section F.

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1. A HISTORY OF AGRICULTURE IN TWIN FALLS COUNTY 1860-1970

Introduction

Twin Falls County, created in 1907 from Cassia County, covers an area of more than 1,900 square miles near the center of the Snake River Plain in southern Idaho.¹ The county extends from the Snake River on the north to the Nevada state line on the south and from Cassia County on the east to Elmore County on the west. On the north, across the Snake River, Jerome County borders Twin Falls County on the northeast, while Gooding County borders it on the northwest. The climate is dry, averaging about 10 inches of precipitation each year. The county's location on the Snake River Plain is the key to its climate as well as the source of its bountiful agricultural production.

The Snake River Plain stretches in a broad arc 400 miles across southern Idaho from Wyoming to Oregon. Twin Falls County is near the point where the plain bends up and continues in a northwesterly path to the Oregon border. Drivers following Interstate 84 from the east see only miles of a dry flat plain and sagebrush, punctuated by expanses of irrigated farmland with views of snow-capped mountains far off to the north and south. These twenty-first-century travelers might share the opinion of many nineteenth-century travelers who viewed the broad expanse as an obstacle in their long journey across the continent, not a place to settle.

The Snake River Plain is much more than empty space. It is the product of multiple periods of volcanic activity, spread over millions of years, which resulted in deposits of rhyolite and basalt. Time and geologic activity also produced deep canyons such as the Snake River Canyon (500 feet deep) near Twin Falls, and the lower Salmon Falls Creek Canyon (300 to 600 feet deep) near Castleford, both created by the rushing waters of the Bonneville Flood about 15,000 years ago. The basalt, the rhyolite, and the canyons can be passed by in the blink of an eye if a traveler continues to drive on the interstate, but anyone taking an exit heading south to cross the Snake River Canyon will find the canyon walls offer stunning displays of basalt pillars and blocks. Closer up, the dry sagebrush and cheat grass-covered plain is traversed by numerous canals and lateral ditches, which bring quantities of water to the huge green fields and the extensive dairy and beef cattle operations that now occupy the plain.²

For thousands of years native peoples traversed the arid area, camping and fishing along the rivers and streams of the Snake River Plain, hunting deer and other game, and gathering a variety of roots, berries, and other foods. In the mid-nineteenth-century, overland trails crossed the plain and brought thousands of people through modern Twin Falls County as they headed west toward Oregon and California. The

¹Modern Twin Falls County was originally encompassed in Owyhee County, created in December 1863. From December 1863 until February 1879, the county seat was Silver City. Cassia County was created from the eastern portion of Owyhee County in 1879. Albion was the county seat of Cassia County. "Idaho," *Atlas of Historical County Boundaries*, an online resource of the Newberry Library's Dr. William M. Scholl Center for American History and Culture, edited by John H. Long, et al. <https://publications.newberry.org/ahcbp/pages/Idaho.html> accessed April 2020.

²David W. Ault and Donald W. Hyndman, *Roadside Geology of Idaho* (Missoula, Montana; Mountain Press Publishing Company, 1989), pp 234-247.

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difficult terrain and arid climate did not entice the emigrants to remain. The mining booms of the 1860s, stock raising, and the development of transportation networks were the first activities to bring in more permanent settlement. A few hardy farmers came and established small farms near water sources, developing their own ditches to move water to the fields, but the limited water supply helped keep the future county from attracting many permanent settlers. Growth and development of the area's agricultural potential were finally made possible after the turn of the twentieth century, when large-scale irrigation systems involving private investors, state governments, and federal laws came in to play. In 1900, the population of Cassia County was 3,951. Ten years later, the population of Twin Falls County, created in 1907 from the western portion of Cassia County, was 13,543, the result of the completion of several major irrigation projects and large-scale promotional campaigns by those who built the irrigation projects.³

A. History to 1860

Archaeological evidence places the presence of hunters in the area now encompassed by Twin Falls County to approximately 15,000 B.P. These Late Pleistocene people hunted camel, sloth, and musk ox. Later, as the climate changed and former prey became extinct, technologies were adapted to create tools for hunting smaller game and fish. The Snake River Plain provided Shoshone, Bannock, and Northern Paiute people with game as well as grasses and plants to be collected and used for food. At Shoshone Falls on the Snake River, a barrier to the migration of salmon and other fish upriver, the people gathered to fish and camp.⁴

The first Euro-American incursion into the area occurred early in the nineteenth century, when the Wilson Price Hunt party explored the area for fur-trade possibilities on behalf of John Jacob Astor. In 1811, Hunt's crew met disaster at Caldron Linn Falls. The Snake River, deceptively calm at its headwaters, was navigable by Hunt's canoes traveling west. The party entered what is now Milner Gorge and negotiated the treacherous rapids. Seven miles downstream, they reached Caldron Linn, a treacherous waterfall, and were unable to avoid the drop. The company's canoes and equipment were strewn along the river banks and one man lost his life.⁵

One member of the Hunt party, Donald Mackenzie, continued to return to the Snake River Plain to explore for the Hudson's Bay Company. Other trappers, traders, surveyors, and explorers followed: Jedediah Smith, Alexander Ross, Peter Skene Ogden, Captain Benjamin L.E. Bonneville, artist George Catlin, Nathaniel Wyeth, and missionary Jason Lee were among many who recorded the Snake River Plain landscape, established overland routes often based on Native American trails, and assessed

³ Population statistics are from U. S. Census Bureau publications for the decennial census 1870-1970, <https://www.census.gov/library/publications>, accessed June 2020.

⁴ Laurie Mauser and Madeline Buckendorf, "Cultural Resources Survey and Evaluation for Twin Falls Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration Project, Perrine Coulee and Rock Creek at Twin Falls, Idaho, Project No. W68SB43106-8491, prepared for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Walla Walla District, 2004. Digital copy on file at TAG offices, Boise, Idaho.

⁵ Jim Gentry, *In the Middle and on the Edge: The Twin Falls Region of Idaho* (Twin Falls: College of Southern Idaho, Twin Falls Centennial Commission, 2003), pp. 28-29.

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possibilities for hunting, trapping, mining, and settlement. As early as 1839, Oregon Trail emigrant Thomas Jefferson Farnham saw the Snake's Shoshone Falls as a future power source for machines when others saw it as a remarkable feature of beauty or an impediment to river travel.⁶

During the mid-1840s, John C. Frémont directed government-sponsored cartographic surveys to map the Snake River's problematic landscape. Frémont's reports suggested land-use probabilities that eventually drew settlement attention to the Twin Falls region.

The first large party of emigrants traveled what became known as the Oregon Trail in the spring of 1843. Lured by reports of the fertility of the Willamette Valley in western Oregon and looking for better opportunities in the wake of economic depressions in the late 1830s and early 1840s, farmers from Ohio, Illinois, Kentucky, and Tennessee organized into groups and began the Great Migration. Thousands of people travelled across the territories and as-yet-unorganized areas of land to settle in Oregon. Those who followed the Snake River on the south side crossed through land that is now part of Twin Falls County, stopping to rest along the way at campsites near water, like Rock Creek.

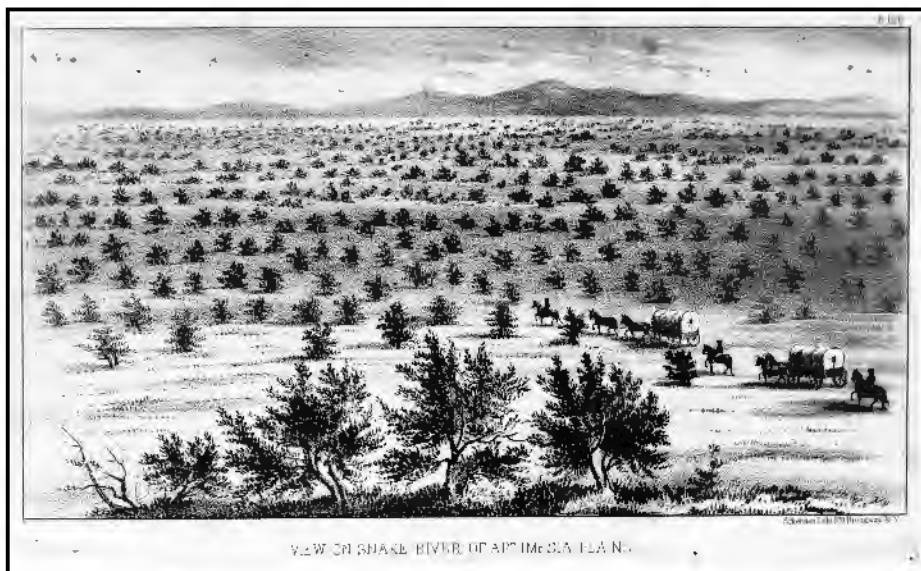


Figure 1. The Oregon Trail across the Snake River Plain, 1849. From the journal of Major Osborne Cross.

Courtesy Idaho State Historical Society, 61-81.1

B. Miners, Ranchers, and Settlements (1860 to 1890)

Miners and Settlers

The discovery of gold in north Idaho in 1860 near present-day Pierce, followed by subsequent discoveries further south, brought trickles and then floods of people into what became Idaho Territory in 1863. By 1870, miners were working placers and prospecting for gold along the Snake River from Fort Hall to Shoshone Falls. Although some gold was produced from the Snake River placers, and mining on a small scale continued for years, it did not appear that Snake River mines would establish any

⁶ Ibid., pp. 30-37.

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permanent populations. Mining activity attracted others to the area to provide services to miners, and traffic along the emigrant trails continued as people moved through to settle further west in Oregon and California.

In 1864, entrepreneur Ben Holladay won the mail contract for delivery from Salt Lake City to Walla Walla, Washington Territory, and established a series of stations on his new route, including a “home” station at Rock Creek where travelers could stop for meals. The following year, James Bascom and his partner, John O. Corder, established a store at the home station, the only store between Fort Hall, about 120 miles to the east and Fort Boise, 140 miles to the west. Their log store building remains standing today at the Rock Creek Station/Stricker Homesite historic site near Hansen, the oldest extant building in Twin Falls County.

Development of Cattle and Sheep Ranching

Cattle were brought to southern Idaho in the late 1860s by James Q. Shirley, who drove a herd from Texas to his ranch near Fort Hall. When the Fort Hall Indian Reservation was created in 1868, Shirley relinquished his Fort Hall ranch and in exchange received six sections of land on Raft River at the mouth of Cassia Creek. The bottomlands along Raft River, Goose Creek, and Rock Creek provided an abundant supply of tall native grasses and white sage suitable for grazing. Cattle herds in southern Idaho increased after the transcontinental railroad was completed in 1869.⁷

In 1871, partners Arthur D. Norton and Milo G. Robinson brought 400 head of Texas cattle into the Rock Creek Valley, driving them to Idaho from Cheyenne, Wyoming. Norton and Robinson established their ranch headquarters about twelve miles south of present-day Twin Falls but grazed their cattle on Rock Creek.⁸

Cattle arrived not just from Texas, but also from California. By 1870, Andrew Jasper “Barley” Harrell, a successful cattle rancher from Visalia, California, had trailed cattle over the Sierra Nevada for grazing near the Nevada-Idaho border. In 1872, after meeting Norton and Robinson near Cottonwood Creek, James Bower, Harrell’s foreman, traveled into the Rock Creek area and discovered good grazing, which he reported back to Harrell.⁹

Cattle ranchers faced competition from sheep ranchers who were developing herds east of Rock Creek. A German sheep rancher named Helgaer brought a band of about 3,000 sheep from Nevada. They perished during heavy snowfall in the winter of 1874-75. This episode, coupled with large numbers of cattle, kept sheep out of the area for about ten years.¹⁰

⁷ Daniel J. Hutchison and Larry R. Jones, *Emigrant Trails of Southern Idaho* [Boise, Idaho]: Bureau of Land Management, Idaho State Historical Society, 1992, pp. 147-148.

⁸ Gus Kelker, *A folk history of Twin Falls County* (Twin Falls, Idaho: Standard Printing, 1974), p 19.

⁹ Edna B. Patterson, Louise A. Ulph, and Victor Goodwin. *Nevada's Northeast Frontier*. Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1991), p. 380.

¹⁰ History of the Sawtooth National Forest, 1942.

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When sheep were brought back in, competition for grazing land grew. By 1887 Cassia County sheep numbered 50,000. Sheep utilized winter range efficiently, leaving little feed for cattle, and creating friction between the cattle and sheep ranchers which eventually led to range wars. Earlier, in 1875, cattle ranchers convinced the Idaho legislature to pass the so-called "Two Mile Act" making it illegal in specific counties for sheep to be grazed or herded onto the "possessory claims" of others or to be grazed within two miles of any dwelling. This law was strengthened in 1887 with the passage of a priority-rights law making it illegal to range sheep where cattle had grazed.¹¹

According to an unwritten rule, sheep were to graze in the eastern part of Cassia County and cattle to the west. The dividing line, known as "Deadline Ridge," separated Goose Creek, which flowed northeast into the Snake near the present town of Burley, from Deep Creek and the Salmon Falls River, which flowed northwest into the Snake in the Hagerman Valley.¹²

Although cattlemen had come to the area because of the abundance of feed for their herds, droughts combined with overgrazing depleted the supply of forage. Stockmen gradually realized that it would be important to start putting up hay to feed their animals in the winters. The *Idaho Statesman* (Boise) reported:

"Here in Idaho, sections that a few years ago afforded seemingly unlimited winter range for stock are...becoming narrowed down and eaten out. All this suggests that a change must be made in stock raising, and that herding in summer and feeding in winter is the remedy...."¹³

With the livestock industry in slow decline because of the shrinking availability of reliable grazing, irrigated cultivation became a desirable option if water could be delivered. Farmers and stockmen began to call for irrigation across the arid west.

First Railroad to the Region

Idaho's railroad history dates to 1871 when the Utah Northern Railroad, organized by members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS or Mormons) in Utah, chartered construction of a line from the Union Pacific Railroad's (UPRR) main line at Ogden, Utah, north thorough Idaho and Montana. The first section was intended to be a 130-mile line connecting Ogden to Soda Springs, but limited funding only supported construction of approximately 75 miles of track, which reached Franklin, Idaho. In 1881, the Union Pacific entered southern Idaho through ownership of the Oregon Short Line Railway (OSL). The OSL was created as a means of continuing to expand the UPRR system into the Northwest.¹⁴

¹¹ U.S. Forest Service, Intermountain Region, *History of Minidoka National Forest*, ([Ogden, Utah]: U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, 1944).

¹² David H. Grover, *Diamondfield Jack: A Study in Frontier Justice*, (Caldwell, Idaho: Caxton Press, 2008).

¹³ "Stock Ranges Eaten Out," (*Boise Idaho Tri-Weekly Statesman*, Feb. 10, 1887).

¹⁴ Kimberly Williams-Brackett "Curious Mind: Railroad History in the Magic Valley" Times-News (Twin Falls) October 16, 2012.

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Shoshone, one of the first towns in south central Idaho, was laid out in 1882 in preparation for construction of the OSL. The tracks reached Shoshone in 1883, and by November 1884, crossed the Snake River at Huntington, Oregon, to connect Idaho and the eastern states with Oregon. The rail system provided impetus for interest in irrigation, as the railroad made it easier to transport crops to market.

Farming in the Early Years

Before the ranchers brought their cattle and the earliest settlers moved into the Rock Creek area, Mormons had been building irrigation systems for their communities in Utah south of the Snake River Plain, since their arrival in the 1840s. As part of an effort to secure the LDS Church's area of influence, church president Brigham Young directed the settlement of colonies throughout northern Utah, and further north as well. In 1855, when members of the church established Fort Lemhi on the Lemhi River in future Lemhi County, the new colony's infrastructure included an irrigation ditch. Fort Lemhi was abandoned in 1858, and the church itself ceased to require colonization by its members, but for the next thirty years Mormon settlers continued to establish communities in southeastern and southcentral Idaho. In the 1870s, communities were set up at Marsh Basin (later Albion) and Goose Creek (later Oakley) in what was then eastern Owyhee County but is now in Cassia County. Both incorporated irrigation systems into community development.¹⁵

During the 1870s, young men such as Charles Walgamott and Frank Riblett came to the area to visit relatives, tried their hand at mining, and then found other reasons to stay. Walgamott became interested in the idea of promoting Shoshone Falls as a tourist destination, a whim that became a goal for him. Riblett, at the young age of 19, began to consider the possibilities for developing irrigation on a larger scale, a dream he nurtured as he supported himself first as a teacher and later as a surveyor. Gold mining attracted James and Anna Iverson to the area from Denmark in 1870. Like many others who followed that call, they discovered that they could support themselves by providing for the miners and ran a restaurant near Springtown, a mining camp in the Snake River Canyon. Later they moved to a ranch, along with John Iverson, James's brother.

In 1876, John F. Hansen, another Danish immigrant, headed to Rock Creek from Indianapolis, Indiana. Hansen, whose health was poor, decided to move after reading a letter in a Danish-language newspaper from James Iverson describing Rock Creek. The next year Hansen's brother, Laurence, arrived in Rock Creek along with his wife and children and his wife's sister. According to local lore, Swedish immigrant Lars Larson and his wife and children who were headed to Oregon from Utah, stopped to rest at Rock Creek, and decided to stay. These new residents established small farms and ranches where they raised a few cattle and grew hay for feed as well as a few vegetables for their own consumption, selling any extra to the miners and travelers that passed by. Settling close to streams, the early farmer/ranchers developed ditches to bring the water to their fields, but unlike the Mormon settlers to the east in Marsh Basin and

¹⁵ Merrill D. Beal and Merle W. Wells, *History of Idaho*, (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1959), Vol. II, pp. 119-126; Gentry, pp. 84-85.

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on Goose Creek, they did not develop cooperative or communal irrigation systems.¹⁶

Toward the end of the 1870s, the population in eastern Owyhee County had grown large enough that residents began to agitate for a new county, with a county seat located a little nearer than Silver City. Petitions were circulated and submitted, and in February 1879, the territorial legislature created Cassia County. The residents of the new county selected Marsh Basin, renamed Albion, as the county seat.

Initially, settlers in the new county established claims to their land by living there—squatting—without legal title. They constructed buildings, built fences, dug ditches, planted small vegetable gardens, and grazed their livestock on the land. This casual claim worked well if there were few settlers and the county seat was distant, but it created a bit of uncertainty about their ability to defend their legal rights. Once it was clear that more people would be staying and establishing homes, formalizing ownership gained importance. Congress had been encouraging westward expansion for decades with laws passed to facilitate land ownership. The Homestead Act, passed in 1862, made land available to any person who was a citizen of the United States or had filed a declaration to become a citizen. The law provided 160 acres of land free to each individual, with the requirement that the property was occupied and improved for five years. If the claimant preferred to pay for the land, it could be purchased for \$1.25 per acre after six months. Charles Trotter, who was the home station manager and hotelier at Rock Creek Station, filed his claim under the Homestead Act and received his patent in 1878. Patrick Garety, an Irish immigrant, received his patent under the Homestead Act in 1882. Both men claimed land near Rock Creek.¹⁷

In 1873, Congress passed the Timber Culture Act, an attempt to encourage tree planting, particularly “on the western prairies.” The original act provided that after ten years, a settler could claim title to a quarter section that included forty acres planted in trees spaced not more than twelve feet apart if the trees were kept growing for the full ten years. The act also stated that homesteaders who remained for three years with one acre of trees under cultivation for two years of the time would be given patents. The act was amended in 1878 reducing the acreage requirement from forty to ten acres. Although meeting the provisions might have been challenging in southern Idaho, Patrick Garety and Laurence Hansen both filed certificates for acreage under the Timber Culture Act.

The Desert Land Act was passed in 1877 to promote settlement on the arid land of the western states and territories. The act provided that a settler could purchase a section, or 640 acres, of land, with a deposit of 25 cents per acre at the time of filing, and an additional \$1.00 per acre paid when final proof was filed. Rancher A.D. Norton and Herman Stricker, the Rock Creek storekeeper, both filed Desert Land Entry claims for portions of their land.

The Desert Land Act encouraged interest in irrigation and created some excitement but did not result in drawing large numbers of people to dry lands. No one at that moment had the capabilities—economic or

¹⁶ Gentry, pp. 81-88.

¹⁷ Information about the public land acts is from Roy M. Robbins, *Our Landed Heritage: The Public Domain 1776-1936*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1942), pp. 218-219; certificates for the settlers named in each example were found on the U.S. Bureau of Land Management website, “General Land Office Records,” <https://glorerecords.blm.gov/>, accessed April 2020.

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technological—required to build and operate extensive irrigation systems, or an understanding of how desert soils would respond to the delivery of water.

West of the settlement at Rock Creek, Deep Creek Meadows (later renamed Rogerson) was homesteaded in 1880. Deep Creek settlers immediately began constructing irrigation delivery systems that included reconfiguring Deep Creek itself, an example of the settlers' attempts to manage land with minimal water. Throughout the area, settler water filings increased along creeks, their expressed intent being to develop dams, ditches, and diversions for agricultural and domestic use.¹⁸

These early efforts to bring water to more land, and more settlers to farm it, did not achieve their goals. A catalyst was needed. In 1884, a young man stopped at the tent hotel Charles Walgamott had set up on his land at Shoshone Falls. He introduced himself as Burt Perrine and said that he had about twenty-five dairy cows he would like to turn out in the Snake River Canyon for the winter. Years later, Walgamott recalled the event and was impressed when the young man (Perrine was 23 at the time) told him that without permission to bring the herd in, he had left them behind. Walgamott told Perrine to water his herd then come back for dinner and to stay the night. Then, remembered Walgamott, "my wife and I...sat down with him and at that midnight meal formed our first acquaintance with Burt Perrine, whom providence had brought to us, and who for several years was our nearest neighbor." The next day the two men drove the cattle down to an area in the canyon known as Blue Lakes.¹⁹

Ira Burton "Burt" Perrine was born in Delaware Township, Ripley County, Indiana, in 1861, the oldest of ten children born to George Wilson Perrine and his wife, Sarah Burton Perrine. In about 1883 Burt left home and headed west, stopping in Idaho Territory to visit his mother's sister and brother-in-law, Mary and Archelaus Lingo, who were in Bullion, a mining camp near Hailey in the Wood River Mining District. He tried his hand at mining but soon realized that he would have to supplement his income with other work. Eventually he purchased a small herd of dairy cattle and sold milk to the miners. He learned that cattle could be overwintered in the Snake River Canyon and in the fall of 1884 headed there, where the meeting with Charles and Lettie Walgamott changed all their lives. Burt recognized that Blue Lakes was not just a good place to graze cattle, it was a promising location for raising fruit and vegetables that could be sold to miners and others in the area, and he had soon established himself there. He was successful in setting out an orchard and raising vegetables as well as hay for livestock. Like others in arid southern Idaho, he dug ditches and brought the water to his orchard and fields. He added to his land holdings, and planted more trees, berries, and vegetables, delivering produce to miners and other settlers from the Wood River Valley to Albion and Oakley. By the time Idaho became a state in 1890, I.B. Perrine had already started discussing ideas about irrigation on a larger scale with close friends, although not all of them could see or understand his vision.

¹⁸ Hugh Lovin, "Water, Arid Land, and Visions of Advancement on the Snake River Plain," *Idaho Yesterdays* 35/1 (Spring 1991); "1899 Survey of Idaho Counties," Papers of Governor Frank Steunenberg, Idaho State Archives, Boise, Idaho; Gentry, pp. 132-149.

¹⁹ Charles Walgamott, *Six Decades Back... (a Series of Historical Sketches of Early Days in Idaho)*, Caldwell, Idaho: Caxton Printers, 1936) pp 410-412.

<https://play.google.com/books/reader?id=7gNkDQAAQBAJ&hl=en&pg=GBS.PT413>, accessed April 2020.

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C. Irrigation Age (1890-1910)²⁰

By the 1890s the flow of people moving west had slowed, and most arable non-irrigated land in the West was settled. Lands easily watered by streams and rivers had long been taken; from the start, water-right filings far exceeded the availability of water. Much of the vast arid land of the West remained relatively empty, including hundreds of thousands of acres comprising the Snake River Plain. Despite difficult economic conditions created by the Panic of 1893, the push to advance irrigated agriculture continued through the decade.

The Carey Act

The 1894 Carey Act, named for its sponsor, Wyoming's Senator Joseph Carey, allowed the federal General Land Office (GLO) to turn over to each western state up to a million acres of public land with the condition that the lands be developed for irrigation. In turn, the states reviewed and approved private investor-driven proposals for planning and construction of irrigation projects. Nine states took advantage of the opportunity, but only Wyoming and Idaho requested the initial allocation of acres, and both states later asked for additional land. Idaho had the most endeavors--officially sixty-four.²¹ In response to the Carey Act, the 1895 Idaho Legislature passed a series of laws defining its state-federal role in irrigation development. The laws were written by Boise attorney and former State Attorney General Samuel H. Hays and D.W. Ross, soon to be Idaho's State Engineer under the new law. Both had prior history in irrigation development, and their expertise proved useful. Hays served as a board member and attorney for many proposed irrigation projects, including those that became the Twin Falls projects. Ross assisted in the initial surveys of several proposed projects, including the one that later became the Twin Falls South Side Project.²²

The onslaught of irrigation-project proposals under the Carey Act began in 1900. Governor Steunenberg appointed D.W. Ross State Engineer. Ross received, reviewed, evaluated, and proposed project submissions to the State Land Board for its approval. The State Land Board served as the review board for the state and usually accepted the State Engineer's evaluation.²³

Investors were notified of approval and the projects proceeded, with progress monitored by the State Engineer. Twin Falls-area projects were among the first and the largest projects accepted by the state. The Twin Falls South Side Project, the largest Carey Act irrigation project in the United States, was considered successful and became a model for other states to follow.

²⁰Text throughout this section on the history of the Carey Act and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation was provided by Pam Demo, M.A.

²¹ Historian Hugh Lovin published extensively on the Carey Act in Idaho and problems with fraudulent irrigation schemes, see "Free Enterprise & Large-Scale Reclamation on the Twin Falls North Side Tract, 1907-1930," *Idaho Yesterdays* 29 (Spring 1985); "How Not to Run a Carey Act Project: The Twin Falls-Salmon Falls Creek Tract, 1904-1922," *Idaho Yesterdays* 30 (Fall 1986); and "The Carey Act in Idaho 1895-1925: An Experiment in Free Enterprise Irrigation," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 78 (1987).

²² Frank W. Hunt AR05 Box #129679/20070011, Idaho State Archives, Boise; J. Gentry, Gentry, pp. 132-139.

²³ Idaho Department of Lands, Carey Act Files.

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Carey Act regulations failed to anticipate the reality of massive undertakings and their multitude of unforeseen economic, chronologic, fiscal, and environmental issues. Indeed, “environment” was not recognized in terms of weather, true water availability, soils science, geology, or the impact of human presence and use of the arid landscape.

Instead, states such as Idaho were quickly overwhelmed to find solutions and grant exceptions to over-extended tracts, under-developed or never developed infrastructure, failure to meet timelines, and failure of developers to meet water-delivery guarantees to entrymen. It took several decades, many failures, and ongoing litigation to eventually resolve water-delivery shortcomings and close the door on the Carey Act in 1996.²⁴

During the refinement of construction and delivery, financial investors and bondholders were repaid and made a profit—or suffered losses—on their investments from the sale of water rights to settlers. Investors submitted their completed projects for state approval. Once the state deemed project work complete and approved, investors relinquished ownership to the tract patentees who took controlling ownership and managed it as a canal company. Investor profit hinged on water sales; therefore, it was vital to attract settlers to their projects as the works began, and occasionally before.

In its conception, the aims of the Carey Act seemed straightforward and do-able. However, it became clear with the first tract openings that it was wrought with unforeseen difficulties.²⁵ With the exception of warnings from John Wesley Powell about the potential limits of irrigation in the arid regions of the American West, members of the U.S. Congress, the GLO, investors, and potential farmers (known as “entry men”) did not foresee, nor did the tract surveyors fully understand, the environmental hardships imposed in transforming the Snake River Plain into an ‘irrigated Eden’. Early lessons learned by investors and farmers included, among others, that the force of stored water could cause a new dam to leak, upriver water users could acquire all the water before it had a chance to flow downstream, and that even when all things were equal and the dam did not leak and the water flowed downstream, evaporation, low precipitation, or too many claims on too little water meant some farmers were left out when the water was delivered. The following decades challenged investors, the federal government, and hard-pressed entry men to negotiate the environmental, social, and political snarl.

The Twin Falls Carey Act Projects

Twin Falls-area irrigation history is a mix of realized ambition and failure as well as political and economic drama. The story of the Twin Falls irrigation projects began in 1900 with the initial surveys of the vast desert lands of Owyhee and Cassia counties south of the Snake River and arid lands in Lincoln County, across the Snake River and lying directly north of what is now Twin Falls. Along with other community visionaries, Burt Perrine set out to transform the southern Idaho desert into irrigated farmland. Perrine, a man of reputation and force of personality, eventually pulled together entrepreneurs from across the nation to invest in irrigation projects authorized by the Carey Act. Early visions for the

²⁴ John Rosholt, “The Carey Act,” *The Advocate* 53 (Nov/Dec 2010), pp 25-26; Fiege, pp.213-214, note 7.

²⁵ The word “tract,” an area of land defined by boundaries, was a term commonly used to describe irrigation project areas.

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Twin Falls area included a national park, waterpower, and irrigation. Perrine and his partners advocated waterpower and irrigation. By 1900, he and his investors began developing regional irrigation projects that would establish irrigated agriculture, which would in turn bring commerce, industry, improved transportation, hydropower, settlement, and growth. To that end, towns were platted in each segregation (the land set aside for irrigated agriculture) in anticipation of newcomers who would file as entrymen and others who would provide goods and services.

Between 1903 and 1910, Perrine and various investors submitted at least nine projects covering the Twin Falls/Lincoln/Cassia/Owyhee counties area. The investors included Easterners deeply invested in construction, banking, and real estate. Major participants included Twin Falls South Side investors Stanley Milner of Salt Lake City, and Frank Buhl and P.L. Kimberly, both of Sharon, Pennsylvania. Ultimately, agricultural growth and rural small-town settlement became realities in successful projects as well in those that failed. Most of the towns remain; their names reflect those who invested in the projects: Buhl, Milner, Hollister, Wendell, and Kimberly, among others.

Perrine's investors and his political connections would create the most Carey Act segregations in the area and the most successful of all Carey Act projects across the country: the Twin Falls South Side Project, owned and managed by the Twin Falls Canal Company. Two structures associated with the projects are now listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Milner Dam, built in 1905 to serve both the Twin Falls North Side and Twin Falls South Side tracts was listed in the National Register in 1986. The Twin Falls Salmon River Tract, managed by the Salmon Falls Canal Company since 1924, is home to the 1911 Salmon Falls Dam, built by engineer A.J. Wiley. It was listed in the National Register in 2009.²⁶

Despite the promise of the success of the South Side Project, as the years progressed, the state, investors, and the federal government learned that adjustments were critical in project development. Entrymen's and patentees' complaints were first quiet and polite but eventually took the form of vocal protests and years of litigation against bondholders. Suits brought because of failure to abide by schedule, delivery, construction and maintenance, and water-payment agreements were constant for decades. Bondholders wanted a return on their struggling investments; farmers wanted agreements met despite intervening variables such as weather, the national economy, war, and the underestimated conservation impacts of land-use strategies at the time. By the mid-1930s, major legal issues were settled, and local canal companies proceeded to manage their districts and look to the future.

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation

Historic episodes of drought, harsh winters, economic depression, and shifts in agricultural and ranching focus were prevalent from the beginning of irrigation development. Unmet time schedules, water delivery failures, and the unforeseen environmental consequences of irrigated agriculture tested those who stayed on the tracts. As agricultural communities took root, they diversified crops and farming

²⁶Dale Gray, Salmon Falls Dam, Twin Falls County, Idaho, National Register of Historic Places Nomination, 1990.

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methods to meet dictates of weather and water availability. In return, the original water delivery systems were transformed to meet both demand and conservation.

The Newlands Reclamation Act of 1902, signed into law on June 17 by President Theodore Roosevelt, provided federal funding for irrigation projects. Under the terms of the new law, Secretary of the Interior Ethan Allen Hitchcock established the United States Reclamation Service (USRS), now the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR), in July 1902 to carry out the planning, financing, and construction of irrigation projects by the government.

The new agency's Snake River projects included Minidoka (1904-06), Jackson Lake (1906-07, replaced 1911-1916), and American Falls (1907) dams. The Milner Dam was periodically the focus of BOR work in the decades after its 1905 construction. These federally funded projects not only provided a more reliable water supply but also led to laws creating irrigation districts (cooperative, self-governing corporations with the power to collect taxes used to support the supply and distribution of water within the defined boundaries of the district).

Agricultural Science in the Irrigation Age

Farmers on the irrigation projects benefited from the services of the University of Idaho's Agricultural Experiment Station, which had existed from the earliest days of Idaho's statehood, as the creation of the University of Idaho predated statehood by more than a year. The university was established by a bill passed in the Idaho Territorial Legislature in 1888 and signed into law by the governor on January 30, 1889. A few months later, in July, when the constitutional convention met in Boise, the Latah County delegation was able to have the location of the University at Moscow included in the new state constitution. Shortly after, the University's Board of Regents completed the process to qualify for federal land-grant funding, which would have an impact on agriculture in Idaho. Land-grant colleges were the result of passage by the U.S. Congress in 1862 of the Morrill Act, which provided 30,000 acres of public land per member of Congress to be sold or used for profit as a way to fund the establishment of public universities where agriculture and the mechanical arts (engineering) would be the focus of study. Related legislation, the Hatch Act, was passed in 1887. The Hatch Act provided funds to establish agricultural experiment stations at land-grant schools and to disseminate information about the studies. The University of Idaho created its experiment station, the first in the state, in January of 1892, before the first semester of classes, which began in October of that year. Although there were many stops and starts, by the time the first Carey Act projects were initiated in southern Idaho, the University of Idaho had been studying issues in agriculture and working to find improved methods for growing crops and raising livestock for more than a decade. In 1914, the Smith-Lever Act provided funds for the Cooperative Extension Service, which supported a collaboration between the land-grant schools and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The two would provide field demonstrations and disseminate information from their research in agriculture and home economics to rural people who did not attend the college. The programs initiated by these various acts for the land-grant college continue to provide information to the agricultural community today.²⁷

²⁷ Keith C. Petersen, *This Crested Hill: An Illustrated History of the University of Idaho*, (Moscow: University of

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An article published in the *Twin Falls Weekly News* on April 14, 1905, introduced Alexander McPherson as the Twin Falls South Side Project's Agricultural Inspector, who had previously served as the Idaho State Horticulturist and who would serve as a guide for the new farmers. He was assigned to administer the newly laid out Experimental Farm and provide information about his experiences with various crops. McPherson's connections to the University of Idaho Experiment Station were touted as an advantage to the settlers. He began providing information on possible crops and advice on how to grow them, providing frequent updates through newspaper articles and presentations. His first detailed report, published in the newspaper on November 24, 1905, encouraged the planting of wheat, alfalfa, melons, and fruit trees.²⁸

The Twin Falls Irrigation Projects

Two of Burt Perrine's projects impacted agricultural development in Twin Falls County: The Twin Falls South Side Project and the Twin Falls Salmon River Tract.²⁹ The success of the South Side Project has been noted. The far less successful Salmon River Tract, originally intended to cover 128,000 acres, is supplied by water from the Salmon Falls Reservoir.

In June and July of 1900, Perrine posted and filed for water rights on the Snake River in both Cassia County (south side) and Lincoln County (north side), a preliminary step in applying for a Carey Act project. He then began to secure funds from his investors, beginning with Stanley Milner, a successful mining investor based in Salt Lake City. Milner provided the funds for the preliminary survey of the proposed project area. Once the preliminary survey was complete, Perrine and a group of investors organized the Twin Falls Land and Water Company to raise the money needed to build the irrigation system. In addition to Perrine, the company included Milner and his business associate Frank Knox and two Idaho-based investors, J.W. Lowell of Boise, and A.K. Steunenberg of Caldwell. Lowell had been involved in developing the Riverside Canal in Ada County. A.K. Steunenberg was a newspaper

Idaho Press, 1987), pp. 18-20, p. 29; National Research Council, *Colleges of Agriculture at the Land Grant Universities: A Profile*, (Washington, DC: The National Academies Press, 1995), pp. 8-9.
<https://doi.org/10.17226/4980>, accessed April 2020.

²⁸*Twin Falls Weekly News*, "Agricultural Inspector for Twin Falls Tract," April 14, 1905, p. 3; "Turning Sod on the Company's Farm," April 21, 1905, p. 1; "Half-Year's Work on the Experimental Farm," November 5, 1905, p. 1.

²⁹"Salmon River" in this use refers to Salmon Falls Creek, which originates in the Jarbidge Mountains in Elko County, Nevada and flows northward to empty into the Snake River northwest of Buhl. The name "Salmon Falls Creek" was officially adopted by the U.S. Board on Geographic Names in 1972 (recorded in 1979), although the stream had been known historically in the Twin Falls County area and Elko County, Nevada, as "Salmon Falls River," "Salmon River" and "Little Salmon River." Despite requests from some residents in both Idaho and Nevada to make the official name "Salmon River," the Board settled on Salmon Falls Creek to avoid confusion with the Salmon River in central Idaho. Historic references to the stream and companies which were formed to develop and manage irrigation projects, such as the Salmon River Canal Company, retain the name adopted before the 1972 US Board on Geographic Names decision. [Feature Detail Report, Geographic Names Information System, U.S. Geological Survey, accessed July 2020.

https://geonames.usgs.gov/apex/f?p=138:3:::NO:3:P3_FID,P3_TITLE:395878,Salmon%20Falls%20Creek

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publisher and banker. He was also the brother of Frank Steunenberg, whose term as governor of Idaho was coming to an end. The new development company officially incorporated in September.

The application to the State Land Board was moving ahead when it was almost upended by a proposal to create a national park in the Snake River Canyon. With the help of newly elected Governor Frank Hunt, Idaho Congressman Edgar K. Wilson, and Senator George L. Shoup, the interests of irrigation development prevailed, the national park proposal was withdrawn, and the Twin Falls project moved ahead.³⁰

Perrine inadvertently set up another obstacle to smooth progress when he began to promote a hydroelectric power project, an idea that faced opposition from other investors. The disagreement became serious. As a result, Perrine, Milner, and Knox bought them out. Perrine now needed to find other investors. With help from Witcher Jones, another Salt Lake mining connection, and Walter Filer, a mining engineer who had joined the project at Milner's request, Perrine was able to arrange for Frank Buhl to come from Pennsylvania to tour the project. Buhl, impressed by Perrine and the project, agreed to make an investment. The Twin Falls Land and Water Company was reorganized with Buhl and Filer as the controlling partners, and once again things moved forward.

Construction of Milner Dam, which provided water to both the Twin Falls South Side and the separate Twin Falls North Side project, began in January of 1903, and was completed by March of 1905. While the dam and the canal system were under construction, Perrine and his business associates began a promotional campaign. An initial opening was held on July 1, 1903, in Shoshone. Sixty thousand acres were available at \$25.50/acre for up to 160 acres—\$25.00 for the land and \$.50 for the water right. Only \$.25/acre was required to hold the land, the settler gaining title after three years if at least twenty acres was under cultivation and the settler had built a home and lived on the land during that time. Work on the irrigation project could be used to pay off the water right in that time. Despite enthusiastic support and Perrine's strong belief in success, the first offering attracted only fifty-seven people, a disappointing start. Yet the excitement was real, and interest grew as progress was made on Milner Dam and the canal system.

Perrine and his investors realized that establishing and promoting a new town might be the key to bringing the large numbers of settlers they needed. One of Buhl's Pennsylvania investors, Peter Kimberly, became interested in the project and, with Buhl, formed the Buhl-Kimberly Corporation which brought more funds to invest in the Twin Falls Land and Water Company. Then Buhl, Kimberly, Filer, and another investor, Martin B. DeLong, purchased a section of land and formed the Twin Falls Townsite Company in June of 1904, turning over their land rights to the company. The same day, Perrine and others incorporated the Twin Falls Investment Company to promote and sell land held by the Twin Falls Land and Water Company. Now everything was in place. The town lots were being sold, buildings were under construction, advertising across the United States had generated a great deal of interest, and land sales on the project were increasing. When a second opening for 100,000 acres of agricultural land was held, the crowd was large, and the sales were brisk. By the time Milner Dam was officially completed in 1905, there was a community in Twin Falls and settlement was spreading out

³⁰Gentry, pp. 137-142.

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across the irrigated acres.

Following the establishment of Twin Falls, other towns were organized and platted—all named for the people who had invested in the project: Filer, renamed in 1906, after it was established in 1905 as “Sucker Flats” after early settlers from Illinois, Buhl (1906), Hansen (1908), and Hollister (1909). Some other older communities were revitalized and renamed, including Castleford, west of Twin Falls, which had long been known as a crossing on the Kelton Road; Drytown, a mining community on the Snake River in 1869 which became Murtaugh; and Deep Creek Meadows, settled in 1880, renamed Terminal City when the railroad reached it in 1909, then renamed again the following year for Robert Rogerson, a successful sheep rancher who built the Rogerson Hotel.³¹

The new irrigation towns and their rapidly growing populations were located sixty miles or more west of Albion, the Cassia County seat. In 1879, before Owyhee County was divided to create Cassia County, residents of the few tiny settlements in the future Twin Falls County were burdened by having to travel almost 200 miles to take care of any county business in Silver City. Sixty miles to Albion seemed much less of a hardship. But many of the new twentieth-century settlers perceived a benefit in establishing a new county, with one of the new towns as county seat. The push to create a new county began in 1905, with efforts focused on introducing legislation in the 1907 session of the legislature, which at the time met biennially. Residents of the city of Twin Falls embarked on a campaign to win the county seat in a new county to be named “Carey County” in honor of Senator Joseph Carey. Later, according to Twin Falls attorney M. J. Sweeley, the suggested county name was changed to Twin Falls, as that name was already associated with the successful promotion of the Twin Falls irrigation projects. Although there was broad support for the idea, not everyone was on board, especially if Twin Falls was to be the county seat. Residents of Buhl pushed back, suggesting that the creation of a new county would place unbearable and unnecessary tax burdens on farmers who were just getting established. They also argued that more settlement would occur and that towns to the west of Twin Falls might become major population centers deserving of the crown of county seat. The push to create the new county with its seat at the city of Twin Falls succeeded when the proposed legislation passed in both houses and was signed into law by Governor Frank R. Gooding on February 21, 1907.³²

D. Boom and Bust (1910-1929)

By 1910, the population of Twin Falls County was 13,543. Ten years later, the 1920 census recorded 28,398 residents in the county, more than twice the 1910 number. Large scale irrigation made agricultural production possible in the county. Farmers who moved to south Idaho from other agricultural regions learned how to grow crops under irrigation, and what crops would sell in the available market. At first, wheat, oats, barley, and alfalfa were the principal crops. Within a short time of Twin Falls County’s creation in 1907, wheat, oats, barley, alfalfa, clover, potatoes, beans, onions, and a variety of other vegetables were under production. Orchards produced apples, pears, Italian plums, apricots, grapes, and cherries. The active promotion of the new county by the irrigation developers continued to attract many

³¹Gentry, pp. 161-174.

³² *Idaho Statesman*, January-February 1907, various dates, articles reporting on the activities of the legislature.

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farmers eager to achieve success on irrigated acreages.

The First Twin Falls County Dairies

The dairy industry was introduced to Twin Falls County in the 1910s with the arrival of a group of dairy farmers from Tillamook, Oregon, led by Gustave Kunze. Attracted to a place where the land was inexpensive and alfalfa could be grown locally, Kunze bought a section of uncleared land near Buhl. There he built a 100-cow dairy, a cheese factory, and his home. In addition to the milk from his own dairy, Kunze also purchased milk from fellow farmers to process at his Clover Leaf Creamery. Gustave Kunze's children were also involved in the dairy industry. His son, Rudolf, worked at the creamery and ran a small herd of his own. Kunze's daughter Lennora married Arnold Tannler, who moved to Buhl from Tillamook in 1911. Daughter Frieda married Kunze's hired hand Arthur Maxwell.³³

Buhl farmers imported Jersey cows for milk production. The cattle were fed with the local alfalfa supplemented by corn silage. University of Idaho extension agents provided information on the construction of concrete silos to store the silage. Soon the landscape was dotted with large dairy barns and their silos.³⁴

Gustave Kunze and other Twin Falls County farmers became state leaders in the dairy industry. Kunze was active in the Idaho State Dairyman's Association, serving as president in 1917. He was a frequent speaker at dairy and agricultural conventions and spoke on a number of subjects from hay storage to cooperative dairies.³⁵

Kunze retired from the dairy in 1918 and sold his cheese factory to E.T. Sandmeyer. After five years, Sandmeyer leased the dairy to a local farm cooperative. Eventually the former Clover Leaf Creamery was leased to the Sego Milk Company. Sego used it as a test market for their products until they built a new factory and the cheese factory ceased operation.

Small family dairies were numerous in Twin Falls County until the 1980s when dairy prices dropped. Some family farms and dairies were sold to out-of-state-investors, mainly from California. These new farmers were attracted, like Gustav Kunze long ago, by the relatively inexpensive land prices but also the relaxed regulatory environment in Idaho.

³³ Information related to Gustave Kunze in this section is primarily based on Madeline Buckendorf, Buhl Dairy Barns, National Register Nomination Form. 1983, pp. 3-5.

³⁴ "Buhl District Land of Milk and Honey," *Idaho Statesman*, September 25, 1914, p.6.

³⁵ "1200 Convene in Pocatello," *Idaho Statesman*, January 16, 1917, p. 6.

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Figure 2. Gottfried Sommer dairy barn and home, near Filer. A Swiss immigrant, Sommer arrived in Twin Falls County in 1906, proved up on his land by 1908 and established a successful dairy, which he sold in 1919 when he retired and moved to California.

Photo by Clarence Bisbee c. 1910, Courtesy Twin Falls Public Library.

Clover Seed, Potatoes, and Sugar Beets

Twin Falls County produced an abundance of clover seed. The Courteen Seed Company, headquartered in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, built a seed house in Twin Falls in 1916. Agents from the county had been purchasing alfalfa clover seed from local farmers for several years. As the production of seeds expanded, the company needed a branch warehouse to store the seed.³⁶

Row crops—potatoes, sugar beets, beans, and corn—were also important to the county's economy and suited to its soil and climate. Potatoes were first grown in Idaho by Henry Harmon Spalding, a Presbyterian missionary at Lapwai, in what would eventually be north central Idaho in 1837. Mormon settlers at Franklin in southeast Idaho planted potatoes in 1860; by 1882, 2,000 acres were planted in potatoes. Potato production continued to expand, and in 1904, Idaho harvested 17,000 acres of potatoes. In the 1890s, the University of Idaho and the United State Department of Agriculture experimented on potatoes at branch stations at Moscow, Nampa, and Idaho Falls. By 1910, Twin Falls County was one of the three top potato producers in the state with more than 300,000 bushels produced. Only Bingham and Fremont counties exceeded that number.³⁷

As the production of potatoes expanded, there was a need for better potato storage. According to historian Madeline Buckendorf, before 1910 farmers stored potatoes in barns or root cellars, but later cellars were developed specifically for potato storage by the USDA and agricultural experiment stations. Technical bulletins provided plans for potato cellars. The most common during the period between 1910 and 1920 was the "Western Dugout" cellar. This simple cellar was dug three or four feet below ground,

³⁶Idaho Historic Sites Inventory Form 83- 019420; Gentry p. 186.

³⁷ United States Census Bureau, Thirteenth Census, 1910, volume VI, Agriculture, Alabama-Montana, p. 396-98,

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framed with sawn lumber or round timbers, and roofed with the excavated dirt.³⁸

Sugar beets were another prime crop in Twin Falls County. Sugar beets were introduced to the United States in the 1880s and 1890s in Wisconsin, California, Nebraska, and Utah. Mormons who migrated from Utah to southeastern Idaho established sugar-beet factories in Bonneville and Fremont counties. Test acreages were planted in Twin Falls County around 1909. The Twin Falls Commercial Club reported the results of test acreages planted by farmers at Kimberly, Twin Falls, and Murtaugh in a government study published in 1910. It was reported that the area was conducive to raising beets, but the market value was only \$4.50 a ton compared to the going rate for alfalfa hay of \$6.00 to \$14.00 per ton. The report concluded that until the price of sugar beets increased, farmers would continue to raise hay. In 1916, the Amalgamated Sugar Company, founded by Utah entrepreneur David Eccles, built a factory at Twin Falls and sugar beets became part of the county's farm crops.³⁹

Sugar beets required more farm labor in the fields than was available locally. Amalgamated Sugar and its rival, the Utah-Idaho Sugar Company, which had plants in Bonneville and Bingham counties, needed workers. The companies began to recruit workers from Mexico to plant and harvest the crop. In 1917, the United States signed a contract-labor agreement with Mexico to bring in more workers as American men were leaving to fight in World War I. The short-lived agreement ended shortly after the war, but Mexican workers continued to travel to Idaho.⁴⁰

Agriculture in Twin Falls County and Idaho overall thrived between 1910 and 1919. Idaho prospered during World War I as many farmers and ranchers were encouraged to expand production to meet the increased demands of European markets. Banks extended credit to farmers and encouraged them to purchase machinery and more land for agricultural crops. The state's economy boomed. But there was a drastic change after the war ended. The combination of a rapid agricultural expansion, rising costs, farmers with extensive debt, and the loss of overseas markets plunged the nation's agricultural sector into an economic downturn. Idaho's farming regions, including Twin Falls County, were hit severely between 1922 and 1929.⁴¹

E. The Great Depression (1929-1940)

On October 24, 1929, the stock market crashed, and the Great Depression began. The agricultural depression of the 1920s merged with the economic depression of the 1930s. The personal incomes of all Americans declined from \$83 billion in 1929 to \$46 billion in 1933. As many as 13 million people were unemployed after 1933. Idaho was one of six states most adversely affected by the severe economic downturn; the others were Mississippi, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Oklahoma. All were

³⁸Madeline Kelley Buckendorf, "Selected Potato Cellars of Twin Falls County, Idaho: A Reconnaissance Survey Report and Brief History of Their Evolution" Idaho Historical Society Inventory No. 241, 1997.

³⁹Charles F. Saylor in U.S. Department of Agriculture, *Progress of the Beet-Sugar Industry in the U.S 1909* (Washington: Government Printing Office) 1910 p.58.

⁴⁰Errol D. Jones, "Latinos in Idaho, Making Their Way in the Gem State," in *Idaho's Place: A New History of the Gem State*, edited by Adam Sowers, Seattle, University of Washington Press, 2014)

⁴¹Leonard Arrington, *History of Idaho*, Volume 2, (Moscow: University of Idaho Press, 1994), pp. 19-37.

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heavily dependent upon agriculture and had not recovered from the post-war agricultural depression.⁴²

Although it originated in the United States, the Great Depression had an impact on almost every country in the world. The United States emerged from World War I as the major creditor and financier of postwar Europe. Economies of European countries were weakened by war and war debts. When the American economy fell and investments in Europe stopped, European prosperity slumped. Deeply in debt to the United States, countries such as Germany and Great Britain experienced high unemployment.⁴³

Between 1929 and 1931 the value of agricultural land in Idaho dropped by 49.4 percent causing a drop in production and prices. Twin Falls County farmers faced the same issues as other farmers did. County farmers who raised potatoes and sugar beets faced challenges. The economic decline and dry years impacted the sugar-beet industry. 1933 was an extremely dry year where Twin Falls County had only 3.97 inches of moisture. The Twin Falls sugar beet plant did not open, and farmers had to send their beets to the Burley factory. Leonard Arrington, whose family had a farm east of Twin Falls recalled when the price for potatoes dropped from \$1.50 per bushel in 1929 to ten cents per sack in 1932. Arrington's father purchased an additional sixty acres of land at \$300 per acre when the price of potatoes was high and still had to make payments when potato prices dropped.⁴⁴

Dust Bowl Refugees

The economic depression of the 1930s was compounded by one of the longest and most severe droughts on record. In the United States, four distinct drought events—1930-31, 1934, 1936, and 1939-40—hit hard, especially in Kansas, the Oklahoma Panhandle, and adjacent counties in Texas, New Mexico, and Colorado. This region was identified as the “Dust Bowl” when the relentless dry conditions, combined with high winds created huge dust storms which blew the topsoil away. Millions of people were forced to leave their farms in search of work. Although many travelled to California in hopes of finding work in a milder climate, thousands of displaced farm families scattered to other western states, including Idaho. Reports in the Twin Falls newspapers indicated that relief programs provided some money and food to transients—families and individuals—the emphasis was to help them, but hire local workers first, and encourage the “transients” to move on.⁴⁵

In 1934, reports from an emergency drought-relief committee organized by Governor C. Ben Ross estimated that the general average water supply was only 60 percent of normal. Crop losses were estimated at \$22.4 million. Farmers lost crops of potatoes, beets, beans, peas, and hay. The state's

⁴²Arrington, pp. 41-45.

⁴³Pells, Richard and Christina Romer, “Great Depression,” *Encyclopedia Britannica*, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Great-Depression>, accessed May 2020. Numerous stories in the Twin Falls newspapers reported on transient farm workers, efforts made to assist them, and also arrests of many for theft and vagrancy.

⁴⁴Gentry, pp. 266-271; Arrington, vol. 2, pp. 41-45.

⁴⁵National Drought Mitigation Center, “The Dust Bowl,” University of Nebraska, National Drought Mitigation Center, <https://bit.ly/3gydwqO>, accessed May 2020.

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economic problems increased when destitute families from the drought-stricken Great Plains region began migrating to Idaho and surrounding states.⁴⁶

The Twin Falls Migratory Farm Labor Camp

The Farm Security Administration (FSA) was created within the U.S. Department of Agriculture following the passage of the Bankhead-Jones Farm Tenant Act in 1937. The FSA replaced the Resettlement Administration (RA), which President Franklin Roosevelt had created two years previously through an Executive Order. The FSA continued programs established by the RA, which included, but were not limited to, low-interest loans for farm and equipment purchases, resettlement of displaced farmers in newly created communities, education in farming methods with an emphasis on soil conservation, and the provision of sanitary labor camps for migratory farm workers.⁴⁷

The FSA constructed two permanent migratory farm labor camps in Idaho—one in Twin Falls and one in Caldwell, in Canyon County in Southwest Idaho. The labor camps were intended to assist displaced farmers by providing family living quarters in barracks-style buildings and small houses. Even more important, residents of the camps received services such as health care, education for children and adults, sanitary living conditions, and opportunities for community activities such as church services and dances. The camp at Twin Falls had its own water-supply system and an irrigation system to provide water for garden plots behind the single-family homes. In addition to providing safe and clean camps for families, the FSA camps were “self-governed.” The agency provided a camp manager, but each camp had a board made up of residents that passed bylaws and camp regulations, as well as planning social and recreational events. Everyone at the camp was required to volunteer a certain amount of time each week to camp service and maintenance.⁴⁸

The Twin Falls County complex was developed in 1939 and 1940 on land purchased from local farmers J.H. and Grace Seaver, who operated an orchard at the site, located southwest of Twin Falls. The buildings and the landscape were designed by architects in the FSA San Francisco office, including Burton D. Cairns, Vernon DeMars, and Garrett Eckbo. Cairns, who served as the director of the San Francisco architecture team until his death in December 1939, designed the buildings, including the farm-worker houses, the row shelters, and other associated buildings. Later design work was completed by Vernon DeMars, who took Cairns’s place in early 1940. The landscape plans and designs were developed by Garrett Eckbo. The camp was constructed in two phases. The first phase (July-December 1939) included construction of twenty-four single-family dwellings, a manager’s house, thirty-six barracks for seasonal workers, a community center building, a central utility building with laundry and shower facilities for men and women, three comfort stations, an isolation ward with a clinic building and several isolation units, two basketball courts, a baseball diamond, and a sewage-disposal plant. The second phase (completed in 1940) resulted in an additional twenty-three single-family dwellings, several

⁴⁶Arrington, p. 53.

⁴⁷Sidney Baldwin, *Poverty and Politics: The Rise and Decline of the Farm Security Administration*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1968), p.

⁴⁸(Twin Falls) *Idaho Evening Times*, 5/9/1939, p. 1.

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multiple-car garages, and twenty-three tool sheds.

Farm Labor in Idaho

By the early twentieth century, agriculture had become a larger part of the state's economy. Expanded railroad access in the late nineteenth century, along with the successful implementation of irrigation projects, allowed farmers to market their products more effectively and to grow more crops. Peas and sugar beets were two crops that led to a need for more farm workers. By the 1920s, the Utah-Idaho Sugar Company had plants in Lincoln (near Idaho Falls), Sugar City, Blackfoot and Shelley and their rival, Amalgamated Sugar, had opened plants in Burley, Buhl, Nampa, and Twin Falls.

During the years of the Great Depression, the sugar companies continued to bring in Mexican workers, even though residents protested the practice. The original purpose of the FSA Farm Labor Camps was to provide housing and services for displaced American farmers, to give them assistance in finding work and perhaps a path toward farm ownership. Before the camp opened, Walter Duffy, the regional FSA director, reassured residents that preference would be given to local workers first, then to displaced American farmers, and that Twin Falls would not be a haven for transients but a home for families.⁴⁹

F. World War II (1941-1945)

The attack by Japan on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, brought the United States into World War II, effectively bringing an end to the Great Depression and setting the nation on the path to an economic recovery. Almost 60,000 men and women from Idaho served in the military during the conflict. The USDA announced "production goals" in 1941, encouraging farmers to increase production to meet them. The goals were updated in January 1942 and thereafter increased annually throughout the war. Idaho's farmers came through and provided massive quantities of beef, pork, turkey, mutton, chicken, eggs, potatoes, beans, onions, corn, apples, peaches, and prunes, as well as milk, cheese, and butter which were added to the food supply for the military.⁵⁰

In Twin Falls County, the seed industry, which had already been an important part of the local economy, exploded as the demand for seeds increased dramatically with the increased farm production and the widespread planting of victory gardens by citizens. The United States increased production of dry beans by 40 percent between 1941 and 1944. Idaho participated by planting more acres in beans each year of the war. Milton J. Vaught, chairman of the Agricultural Adjustment Agency's committee for Idaho, which helped establish production goals for agriculture, told the Twin Falls newspaper in 1944 that the Magic Valley area produced about 90 percent of the dry beans grown in the state during the war years.⁵¹

Sugar beet production was increased dramatically, not only for food purposes, but because beet sugar was used in the production of industrial alcohol, munitions, and rubber. Although work was being done

⁴⁹(Twin Falls) *Idaho Evening Times*, January 29, 1940.

⁵⁰Clifton E. Anderson, *History of the College of Agriculture University of Idaho*. [Moscow, Idaho]: [University of Idaho] p. 93; Arrington, p. 80 -81.

⁵¹Gentry, p. 305, sources: *Twin Falls Times News*, 8 July 1945, p. 7, 5 March 1944, p. 9.

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on developing equipment to facilitate tasks associated with growing and harvesting sugar beets, during the war, thinning, weeding, and harvesting of sugar beets was done by hand. Contemporary newspapers are filled with accounts of the need for more farm labor to handle these tasks.⁵²

War Labor⁵³

On February 19, 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066, which allowed the forced removal of people from areas designated as military zones. Although ethnicity was not specified, this order was used to target Japanese Americans and Japanese nationals on the West Coast. In April, Governor Chase A. Clark announced that a concentration camp would be established near Jerome. Construction proceeded quickly and by August, incarcerated were arriving. Early in 1943 the population of the Minidoka War Relocation Center (or Hunt Camp) was over 9,000.⁵⁴

Due to the war and subsequent incarceration, Japanese Americans were not trusted by Twin Falls County farmers who were suspicious of their motives and loyalty. However, because of labor shortages, farmers reluctantly accepted workers from the camp to help harvest their crops. Early efforts to recruit incarcerated faltered. The imprisoned Japanese Americans were understandably concerned for their safety while working for people by whom they were so clearly viewed as enemies. Despite their reluctance, some farm workers were eventually recruited from the camp. People who lived at and worked from the Twin Falls Agricultural Labor Supply Center would be accepted into a program which allowed them to register for contractual labor. The reward would be freedom from the camp to move inland as part of the resettlement program. They would not, however, be allowed to return to their former homes on the west coast. In a 2016 interview, James Tanaka, who at the age of eight was incarcerated at Minidoka with his father and mother, remembered the working conditions:

The workday might be eight to ten hours. My mother wore a bonnet to provide shade from the sun. You brought your own water and lunch to the field. Restrooms did not exist in the field then. For men it was easier than for women. Face away from the people; find a tree, shrub, or a ditch to use as the toilet.⁵⁵

Japanese American incarcerated were later acknowledged for their role in agricultural production when industry leaders, including those in sugar beet cultivation and production, publicly thanked these workers for their contribution to the war effort. While farmers and permanent residents of Twin Falls County initially distrusted them, sentiments towards these new arrivals improved as Idahoans witnessed

⁵²For example: "Mexican Labor Urged in Sugar," 30 January 1942, p. 2; "Clark Guarantees Labor to Harvest Idaho Beet Crops", 17 February 1942, p. 1; "Clark Approves Japs as Laborers," 4 May 1942, p1, *Twin Falls Times News*.

⁵³Text in this section regarding Executive Order 9066 and its consequences was contributed by Hanako Wakatsuki of the National Park Service and Dan Everhart, Idaho State Historic Preservation Office, and reflects preferred terminology, phrasing, and clarification.

⁵⁴Gentry, pp. 302-304.

⁵⁵Darryl Mori, "From Beets to the Battlefield: How WWII Farm Workers Helped the War Effort," *Discover Nikkei*, <http://www.discovernikkei.org/en/journal/2016/11/18/from-beets-to-battlefield/>

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the hard work of fellow citizens of Japanese descent.

Japanese American citizens and resident Japanese nationals who were forcibly removed from their homes were imprisoned in Idaho as civilians. German enemy combatants who were captured on the front lines were brought to the Magic Valley as prisoners of war. There were 13 prisoner of war camps located throughout Idaho. Nearest to Twin Falls, Camp Rupert (located near Paul), held German prisoners of war, and in 1944, the county extension agent, Al Mylroie, arranged for some of them to pick potatoes and sugar beets and do other farm labor.⁵⁶

Farm Labor

As the United States began to mobilize for the war effort, the FSA was put under the authority of the Wartime Civil Control Administration (WCCA), a sub-agency of the War Relocation Administration (WRA). The role of the FSA was expanded to include coordination of farm labor supply in case of a wartime shortage. The Emergency Farm Labor Supply Program developed procedures for recruiting farm labor from a variety of sources. The sugar-beet-processing companies put pressure on the government to allow the use of Japanese American incarcerated for agricultural work, and through the U.S. Farm Labor Agreement, the Emergency Farm Labor Supply Program provided the necessary procedures and plans for doing so. The agreements made by the United States with Mexico, which resulted in the *braceros* program that brought in many Mexican workers during and after the war, were coordinated by the program. In addition, the federal government signed agreements with the government of Jamaica, providing farm laborers from that country to assist in agricultural activities. Each of these groups provided workers in the Twin Falls area who were quartered at the Twin Falls Agricultural Labor Supply Center, formerly the Twin Falls Migratory Farm Labor Camp, as well as at temporary camps in the area.⁵⁷

To assist in the distribution of laborers and coordinate responsibility for the workers who were brought in through the Emergency Farm Labor Supply Program, the USDA's county extension agents worked with local farmers and other interested parties, such as the sugar manufacturers, to organize non-profit groups that would pay for the services required by the farm workers, including food and lodging. Known as "Farm Labor Sponsoring Associations," these groups were organized on a county or local basis. Farmers paid membership fees based on the number of acres farmed, and the money collected was used to pay for the food and lodging provided to the workers. The workers were charged rent for their quarters, which was supposed to help with camp maintenance. The Twin Falls County Farm Labor

⁵⁶C. Anderson, p 98. Mexican and Jamaican laborers were temporary residents who returned to their homes when the harvest emergency was over; some Japanese internees remained in the area for a few years after the war, but based on census information, most had left the area by 1950.

⁵⁷Veronica Martinez-Matsuda, *Making the Modern Migrant: Work, Community, and Struggle in the Federal Migratory Labor Camp Program, 1935-1947*. [Austin, Tex.]: [University of Texas], 2009.
<https://repositories.lib.utexas.edu/bitstream/handle/2152/ETD-UT-2009-12-546/MARTINEZ-MATSUDA-DISSERTATION.pdf>, p. 9.

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Sponsoring Association was incorporated in 1943.⁵⁸

The four years of conflict brought both hardship and prosperity to Twin Falls County, along with the rest of the nation. The resulting economic boom propelled the county into an extended period of growth and modernization.

G. Mid-Twentieth-Century Agriculture in Twin Falls County (1946 to 1970)

Modernization and expansion marked the post-war years. Machinery evolved as farmers demanded labor-saving devices to increase farm production to meet the needs of a prosperous country. New devices helped modernize and increase production at dairy farms and increased chicken and livestock production. Advances in irrigation technology had come in the 1940s when groundwater irrigation brought the water up to the fields from deep wells. Various sprinkler systems were devised to place the water at the proper heights and density to raise healthy crops. In 1952, Nebraska farmer Fred Zybach patented a new system he named the center pivot system. He came up with the idea after observing a neighbor move a long pipe, outfitted with sprinkler heads, across his field with a tractor. Zybach worked on his design for several years before coming up with one which he patented. In this system the sprinklers move themselves in a circular pattern around the field:

Placing the pump at the center of the field next to a well, irrigation pipes supported by trusses were mounted on wheeled towers that could make a circuit of the field under their own power, leaving that distinctive circle pattern. Gun-style sprinklers sprayed water out from the pipes at set intervals, with smaller nozzles closest to the pivot and the largest nozzles at the end of the line.⁵⁹

The pivot irrigation system eventually made its way to Idaho, but at least through the 1960s, most irrigated farms in southern Idaho were still using the original canals and laterals to flood irrigate their fields—the “gravity” system. Sprinkling systems were gaining in popularity, however, combined with the use of wells and pumps to access groundwater rather than using the canal system. Although the use of groundwater expanded rapidly, some farmers still use the gravity system if it works with the topography and soil composition of their fields.⁶⁰

Changing technology was reflected in the construction of potato cellars that were converted to modern storage facilities covered with corrugated metal and wider double doors to accommodate larger trucks.⁶¹

⁵⁸Harry A. Elcock, “Farmer Sponsored Labor in Idaho, 1943,” in *Proceedings of the Eastern Slope and Intermountain Regional Meeting*, American Society of Sugar Beet Technologists, 1944, accessed online <https://www.bsdf-assbt.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/FarmerSponsoredLaborinSouthernIdaho1943.pdf>

⁵⁹Joe Anderson, “How Center Pivot Irrigation Brought the Dust Bowl Back to Life,” *Smithsonian Magazine.com*, September 10, 2018, <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/innovation/how-center-pivot-irrigation-brought-dust-bowl-back-to-life-180970243/>

⁶⁰S.A. Goodell, *Water Use on the Snake River Plain, Idaho and Eastern Oregon*. US Geological Survey Professional Paper 1408-E (Washington, D.C.: US Govt Printing Office, 1980), p. E 11; <https://pubs.usgs.gov/pp/1408e/report.pdf>

⁶¹ Madeline Buckendorf, “Selected Potato Cellars of Twin Falls County, Idaho: Reconnaissance Survey Report

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Farm Labor

In 1947, the Farm Security Administration was abolished, and the USDA directed that the farm labor camps be sold. Although both the City and the County of Twin Falls expressed interest in buying the Twin Falls camp, they were unable to negotiate a price. The camp was purchased by the Twin Falls County Farm Labor Association in 1950 and used as temporary housing for migrant farm laborers and their families, who during this time were Mexican Americans, predominately from Texas, with a few families from Mexico. The Association operated the camp until 1988, when it was sold to the Idaho Migrant Council.⁶²

Soil Conservation in Twin Falls County

The USDA's Soil Conservation Service (SCS) was created through the 1935 Soil Conservation Act, passed by Congress, and signed into law by President Roosevelt on April 27, 1935. Created in response to the severe droughts and terrible dust storms of the 1930s, the SCS was charged with conducting research on soil conservation and education and demonstration of methods for achieving it. Following the passage of the federal law, states passed legislation to create local conservation districts. Idaho's first districts were established in 1940.⁶³

At the request of southern Twin Falls County farmers, the Twin Falls Soil Conservation District (TFSCD) was established in 1951 with a general goal to 'promote conservation farming on every acre in the district and thereby build a more stable and prosperous agricultural community.' In 1953, the district was active in not only land-leveling and range improvement but also in reorganizing irrigation systems and storage and designing irrigation structures and pipelines. From 1963 to 1967, the district's Cedar Creek Watershed Project replaced the miles-long original wood flume, replaced five miles of the main canal, and rehabilitated the Cedar Creek Reservoir south of a late Carey Act segregation, Roseworth. The district work crews kept meticulous written and photographic records of the undertaking. Project dedication took place at the reservoir on a hot summer day in 1967 with a crowd that included Idaho Senator Frank Church. It was an example of the district's attention then and now to replacing and modernizing old irrigation systems and structures to meet contemporary needs. The districts continue to provide direct, community-involved, hands-on programs to address the multitude of environmental and practice issues that evolve with human use of the desert landscape.⁶⁴

and Brief History of Their Evolution." IHSI Survey Report #240, p. 15, 1997

⁶²*Twin Falls Times News*, various dates 1948-1950: Laurie Mercier, "Idaho's Latin Americans, in *Idaho's Ethnic Heritage: Historical Overviews*, Idaho Ethnic Heritage Project, 1990.

⁶³"Soil Conservation Act, 1935", *The Living New Deal*, <https://livingnewdeal.org/glossary/soil-conservation-act-1935/>; "Honoring 85 Years of the NRCS, a Brief History," USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/about/history/?cid=nrcs143_021392. The SCS became the Natural Resources Conservation Service in 1994.

⁶⁴Renee Guilliery and Sharon Norris, *Serving people and the land: a history of Idaho's soil conservation movement*. Meridian, Idaho (1118 W. Franklin, Meridian, 83642): Idaho Association of Soil Conservation Districts, 1985.

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2. Agriculture-Related Construction Materials and Techniques

The oldest extant building in Twin Falls County is the Rock Creek/Stricker Store, a log building constructed in 1865 by James Bascom at the site of the Rock Creek Stage Station on Ben Holladay's stage line from Salt Lake City, Utah, to Walla Walla, Washington. Timber was available in the forests of the South Hills, about twenty miles to the south. For most of the few settlers who arrived in the area before 1880, logs were the answer for constructing shelter. A few relied on primitive dugouts until they were able to acquire logs. Charles Walgamott, who arrived in the area in 1875, decided to establish squatter's rights to land on the south side of the river near Shoshone Falls, which, at the age of 19, he decided would be a fine tourist destination. He fenced the land, then set up housekeeping in a dugout furnished with a bed and a cookstove. Robert Brose and his brother, Frank, immigrants from Germany, arrived in the Rock Creek area in about 1886. Abandoning their plan to continue to Washington Territory, the two young men settled on a location on Rock Creek, where they built a dugout to live in until they could build a cabin.⁶⁵



Figure 3. Undated photo of Stricker Store.

Courtesy Friends of Stricker, Inc.

Settlers on the irrigation projects in the early years of the twentieth century often set up temporary quarters in tents or rough wooden shacks, known as "prove-up shacks" or "homestead shacks" which they could use to fulfill the residence requirements of the public land acts. Later, when more permanent houses were built, the shacks might be incorporated as rooms in the new buildings or left on the property and used for other purposes.

⁶⁵ "Ranch Homesteaded by Robert Brose in 1886 Preserves His Old Log Cabin," *Twin Falls Times News*, May 31, 1959.

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Wood

Timber was available to the early settlers in the Twin Falls County region from the South Hills on the south and the Shoshone Basin to the southwest. Before milled lumber became available regionally, logs were used to build residences, barns, and outbuildings. By the time of the inrush of settlers to the area with the development of irrigation, milled lumber was easily available, shipped to Pocatello and Shoshone, before the construction of the Minidoka and Southwestern Railroad line to Twin Falls from Burley was completed in 1907. Even with the convenience of a railroad for shipping, in the early days demand exceeded supply, and impatient settlers found themselves waiting for the materials until local lumber yards and planing mills were established.

When the Twin Falls irrigation project lands were opened for settlement, balloon framing was commonplace. When materials were available, builders could put up houses, barns, and outbuildings quickly.

Stone

Basalt, commonly called "lava rock" in southern Idaho, was the most readily available native stone to use for building construction. Southern Idaho's relatively recent volcanic past left the stone on or near the surface. A farmer with lava rock under the farm fields had a source of construction material close at hand. The challenge was to find ways to cut the stone and use it. In her research for the thematic group nomination "Lava Rock Structures in South Central Idaho," Marian Posey Ploss specifically concentrated on resources in Lincoln and Jerome counties, but the same volcanic activity left abundant basalt fields in Twin Falls County. Although farmers built their own buildings stacking rock or using rudimentary techniques for stone construction, Posey Ploss identified several masons who specialized in working with basalt, and it is possible that their work is represented among the farmhouses, barns, and outbuildings constructed of basalt in Twin Falls County. No agricultural buildings or structures of cut stone or river rock have been documented to date in Twin Falls County. Quarried stone was available for sale in most towns and was used for churches, banks, and other commercial buildings, but the record does not indicate that rural agricultural buildings or structures were constructed of cut stone.⁶⁶



Figure 4. Settlers on the Twin Falls South Side Irrigation Project.

Clarence Bisbee Collection, Courtesy Twin Falls Public Library.

⁶⁶Marian Posey Ploss, "Lava Rock Structures in South Central Idaho," National Register of Historic Places Nomination, 1983.

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Figure 5. Lava rock milk house, Urie Ranch.

Photo by Dale Gray.

Metal

Corrugated metal was invented in the mid-nineteenth century. By the time Twin Falls County was established in 1907, it was in common use on the farm. Iron and steel sheets were also used beginning in the early twentieth century, with iron falling out of favor and steel becoming more popular around the time of World War I. Sheet metal could be used to patch existing buildings as well as construct new ones. It required less maintenance than other building materials and had the added benefit of being fireproof. It provided an inexpensive way to patch roofs and walls if they deteriorated, and it was also used for sheds and outbuildings. Prefabricated buildings such as grain bins became available in the 1910s, and technology and time have increased the availability of all kinds of metal farm buildings.⁶⁷

Metal shortages during World War II limited the supply available for farm buildings. After the war, many surplus metal buildings such as Quonset-style buildings, which had been used by the military for barracks, offices, and hangars, were adapted for farm use. Quonset is the name of the Rhode Island community where all-steel kits were created to provide various types of buildings for the United States military during World War II. The convenience of the kit type and the structural sturdiness of these buildings led to the creation of a market for steel kit buildings for other uses after World War II. Quonset buildings were sold locally in Twin Falls County beginning in 1947 and were popular not only for farm buildings but for offices and homes as well.⁶⁸

⁶⁷Susan Granger, Scott Kelly, and Michelle M. Terrell. "Building Materials," *Historic Context Study of Minnesota Farms, 1820-1960*. [Minnesota]: [Minnesota Dept. of Transportation], 2005, pp 35-49

⁶⁸"Hunt Firm to Handle Steel Houses Here," *Twin Falls Times News*, February 23, 1947, p. 5; "It's Open House at Mitchville," advertisement, *Times News*, June 8, 1947, p. 5.

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Figure 6. Metal bins and sheds at an abandoned farm in southern Twin Falls County.

Photo by Dale Gray.



Figure 7. Advertisement for the Quonset buildings published in the *Twin Falls Times News*, March 31, 1947

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Section number E Page 31Concrete

Improvement in concrete technology in the early twentieth century led to its widespread use in construction. Concrete-block machines, which made it possible to create pressed concrete bricks with ornamental faces, became available in about 1906. Twin Falls County resident Robert Brose acquired one almost immediately and used it to build his new home near Rock Creek. Concrete was quickly adopted for barn construction. In a study completed in the 1980s, Madeline Buckendorf documented the work of master builder Henry Schick, who was not only a carpenter, but by 1912, had become expert in using concrete. Schick used concrete for the foundation and base for several of the barns he built. Reinforced concrete was critical to the development of the tower silos that became popular among Twin Falls County farmers in the 1910s.⁶⁹



Figure 8. Henry Schick's barn and silo, 2009.
Since this photo was taken, the buildings have
suffered serious wind damage.

Photo by Elizabeth Jacox.

⁶⁹Madeline Buckendorf, "Buhl Dairy Barns," National Register of Historic Places Nomination, July 1983.

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F. Associated Property Types

(Provide description, significance, and registration requirements.)

Agriculture and technology together were vital elements in the settlement and growth of Twin Falls County. Before the initiation of large-scale irrigation projects, farming was limited by the lack of easy access to water. During this time, cattle and sheep ranching developed and farms were small and produced crops for a local market. Hard winters and overgrazing eventually had a negative impact on cattle ranching. The passage of the Carey Act, and the successful organization of investors to build irrigation systems and distribute the land and the associated water rights brought a flood of would-be farmers to the area. By the time Twin Falls County was formed in 1907, farmsteads complete with barns, houses, and associated outbuildings dotted the countryside.

In Twin Falls County, regional resources such as potato cellars, may be individually eligible if they retain most of the aspects of integrity and the documentation provides enough information to support their individual significance. With those exceptions noted, the individual elements of a farmstead will not usually have the significance to support individual nomination.

Registration Requirements

The registration requirements are based on the seven aspects of integrity, as defined by the National Park Service: location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. It is not unusual for farm buildings to retain a majority of the seven aspects of integrity but to have been modified for changing technologies as the farmer/rancher sought to improve and modernize their production facilities. Modifications may provide additional historical information and illustrate the changing patterns of agricultural practice over time.

Farmstead/Ranch Districts

Although the terms “farm” and “ranch” are often used interchangeably, traditionally there is a difference in their meaning as it pertains to some regions of the American West. A farm is generally identified as 320 acres or fewer with an emphasis on growing row crops. A farm might also accommodate poultry and a few cows, but the focus is on crop production. A dairy farm is similar in size, but the products are milk, butter, cheese, etc., with a herd of dairy cattle enough for that production. A ranch is a larger acreage, supplemented with additional grazing land, possibly using public lands with a permit. Although orchards were sometimes referred to as “fruit ranches” and the term “ranch” was sometimes used loosely in describing a county resident with a small herd of cattle or horses, in general, a ranch is devoted to growing cattle or sheep, with some field production of hay. Other specialized farms found in Twin Falls County include orchards and fish farms.

A farmstead or ranch is eligible for listing in the National Register if it retains at least three historic primary resources, not including secondary resources such as fences, chutes, and feeding troughs. A contributing farmhouse is not needed to determine eligibility. The boundaries of a farm or ranch nomination do not need to encompass farmland, although including historic acreage is encouraged,

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particularly for a specialized farm such as an orchard or a vineyard. Most buildings and structures must retain their historic integrity, with few major alterations. Additional justification for eligibility is required if contemporary features outnumber historic features on a property. Resources should date from 1860-1970 with limited representation from the post-1970 period.



Figure 9. Farmstead with buildings dating from c1916 through c1970.

Photo by Kerry Davis

Primary Farm Resources

Barns

Barns dot the countryside in Twin Falls County, although many are in poor condition. High winds have destroyed even substantial barns since the earliest days of settlement, and the difficulty of maintaining the large buildings when they are no longer vital to farm operations has led to the loss of many iconic barns. But barns are an important element of agricultural history, even when they are in less-than-perfect condition. Barns may be classified by their roof type and/or construction, their function/use, or their ethnic associations. For the purposes of this document, classification will be based on their roof type/construction or function/use. A previous multiple-property study, "Buhl Dairy Barns," completed by Madeline Buckendorf, provides information about barns in the vicinity of Buhl constructed for a particular use and provides the registration requirements and significance for barns constructed specifically for dairying. Although several ethnic groups (Danish, Swedish, Czech, and Basque, for example) have periodically settled in the Twin Falls area, ethnic influence does not appear to be significant to the construction of barns and other farm resources.

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Barns classified by their roof types generally include:

Gable The building has a single ridgeline, both sides are evenly pitched.

Broken Gable An enclosed or open lean-to added to one or both sides of the roof to the eaves creates a "broken" roof slope.

Figure 10. This gable roof barn has an extended hay hood.

Photo by Kerry Davis.



Gambrel The symmetrical roof has two slopes on each side. English gambrel indicates that the eaves extend straight beyond the walls. On a Dutch gambrel roof, the eaves flare slightly at the end. The gambrel roof allowed more space for hay storage.



Figure 11 (left).
English gambrel roof.

Figure 12.
Dutch gambrel roof.

Photos by Elizabeth Jacox

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Monitor

Monitor roofs feature a raised center section with gable ends, with the side sections extending out from the center.



Figure 13. Barn with
monitor roof.

Photos by Elizabeth Jacox



Figure 14. Half monitor
roof, chicken coop.

Photo by Kerry Davis.

Half-monitor

Also known as semi-monitor, one roof slope ends about one foot below the other, which features windows across. These barns are usually smaller and intended for poultry or hogs.

Round

The roof line extends in a single curving arch. Gothic arch barns are slightly peaked at the top.



Figure 15. Barn with
Gothic arch roof.

Photos by Elizabeth Jacox

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Other Barn Types

Other barn types, identified not by roofline, but by other aspects of their form or construction, include banked barns, round barns, Quonset-style barns, and pole barns.

Banked barns are two-story barns built into a hillside or an embankment with entrances on both levels. No banked barns have been documented to date in Twin Falls County.

Round barns were promoted during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as an efficient for sheltering dairy cattle and storing silage. No round barns have been documented in Twin Falls County.

Quonset-style buildings were used as barns, machine sheds, shops, and residences, and were observed at many locations, although few have been recorded in Twin Falls County. Quonset is the name of the Rhode Island community where all-steel kits were created to provide various types of buildings for the United States military during World War II. The convenience of the kit type and the structural sturdiness of these buildings led to the creation of a market for steel kit buildings for other uses after World War II. As previously noted, Twin Falls area farmers were able to purchase Quonset buildings locally following World War II through the 1960s.

Figure 16. Quonset barn,
near Rogerson.

Photo by Barbara Perry



The term “pole barn” is a common term for post-frame construction. “Pole barn” came into general use during the Great Depression when telephone poles were re-purposed for construction, often for farm buildings. Post-frame construction uses posts spaced evenly through a grid to support the building frame. The posts, now commonly made of engineered wood, are anchored into the ground below the frost line and the framing is attached to them. This construction does not require a concrete foundation and is viewed as a cost-effective method. Pole barns are sided with metal, wood, or engineered wood.

Barns might display similar exterior characteristics, but because of their different uses have different interior configurations. General farm barns are common on small farms, where a few livestock could be held, along with equipment and feed storage. Gable roofed barns known as English barns were often used for this purpose. The interior of an English barn is divided into three bays or sections. Rather than

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doors on the gable ends, the barn is entered through a door centered on the eave side. The wide entrance leads into the central bay which served as a driveway. The bays on either side are used for the stock pens and hay storage.

Stock barns are intended to house numbers of animals and their feed. They generally feature a central driveway, with stock pens or stanchions on either side and a hayloft above. Stock barns generally have few windows, but there are doors in the gable ends to allow loading of hay using a system of ropes and pulleys that was attached under an extension of the roof called a hay hood.

The dairy industry in Twin Falls County began to develop in the 1910s when a group of dairy farmers from Tillamook, Oregon, moved into the area. The history of the industry and the construction of several dairy barns influenced by advancing building technologies is documented in "Buhl Dairy Barns," a multiple-property study by Madeline Buckendorf completed in 1983. Dairy barns were constructed for the milking and feeding of dairy cattle, and the opening of Twin Falls County to settlement under the Carey Act coincided with the emerging technologies of scientific dairy farming and barn construction. The new barns featured more windows and ventilation, as well as concrete floors to provide more sanitary conditions for the cattle and for milk production. The barns often featured gambrel roofs, which added space to the upper hay storage area and added room for air circulation. Concrete manufacturing and construction techniques were evolving too, and one area builder, Henry Schick, became expert in building barns from concrete and wood.

By the mid-twentieth century, farmers no longer needed to build large barns to store hay and shelter animals. Technology improved, and the introduction of the baler allowed that rather than cutting hay and lifting it into a hay loft in a barn, hay was cut and stored in compact rectangular bales or large rolls. Research had shown that cattle were fine if they lived most of their lives outside of four walls. Some farmers constructed three-sided barns called loafing sheds, which allowed stock to enter and leave shelter as they pleased. The loafing sheds were often built near a small milking barn or dairy parlor, arranged so that the cows could walk through for milking, then move on outside.

Significance

Barns are an important element of agricultural history both because of their practical function—to store farm animals and their feed—and their cultural significance as substantial symbols of the importance of agriculture to the growth and development of the United States. For prosperous farmers, a large, well-constructed barn represented success, perhaps even more so than a large home. Many of the barns that remain standing today, after almost a hundred years, survived because of the power of their symbolism. Modern owners invest significant resources of time and money to maintain them, even though they are no longer important to the functioning of a farm or ranch.

Registration Requirements

Barns may be individually eligible under this MPDF under Criterion A for Agriculture or Criterion C for Architecture. To be listed as a contributing feature to an eligible farmstead it should meet the following conditions. Like other farm buildings, barns may have been modified or repairs through the years to

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support their continued use. Replacement and repairs to siding should be done with the same or similar materials. Glass in windows may have been replaced and frames repaired with wood, which is acceptable if the replacement and repairs do not stand out as different from surviving original windows and frames. Vinyl windows and doors and modern metal garage doors compromise the barn's integrity. Metal roofs are often added to protect barns and are acceptable provided they complement or blend in with original features.

Farmhouses

Settlers in the Twin Falls County region in the late nineteenth century built small log dwellings when timber was easily available or devised temporary shelter in tents or simple dugout structures. Even in the early days of the irrigation projects, tents, dugouts, and cabins were not uncommon as settlers moved onto their land. "Prove-up shacks, tiny shelters, typically constructed of wood, were also common as these structures were used to establish a land claim under the various public land acts passed to encourage settlement in the West. Most of these early structures were replaced or re-used when landowners established themselves enough to build more substantial dwellings.

Later, as more permanent residences were constructed, farmers and ranchers had access to milled lumber and other buildings supplies. Houses were built in the styles that were popular at the time. Although there are a few simple farmhouses based on the gable-front-and-wing or the four-square plan, the popular style most often found is the Craftsman Bungalow (1905-1930), with low-pitched gable roofs, open roof eaves with exposed rafter tails, triangular knee braces, and porches featuring substantial columnar supports. Other house styles found in rural Twin Falls County include the Tudor Revival style of the 1930s, Colonial Revival, and later the Ranch style. Building materials include logs, wood-frame, local materials like basalt, (colloquially called "lava rock"), concrete block, and brick.

Significance

Farmhouses contribute to the interpretation of a farm's history through their form and style, the presence of historic additions, and the materials and methods of construction. Prove-up shacks and small original houses may be found preserved and in continued use on farmsteads and ranches, sometimes because of the farmer's pragmatic tendency to use what is available and re-use it as needed, but sometimes because the original family, or even a later owner, appreciates the importance of the presence of an original or early home.

Registration Requirements

A farmhouse may utilize the MPDF for National Register listing if it is at least fifty years old and retains its historic integrity. Historic additions may contribute to eligibility as it was not uncommon for a farmhouse to grow with the family, but, as with all eligible properties, the farmhouse must retain a majority of the seven aspects of integrity. The use of incompatible materials such as modern siding or vinyl windows, as well as incompatible additions, may render a house ineligible.

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Figure 17. W.H. Harvey home near Buhl.

Clarence Bisbee Collection. Courtesy Twin Falls Public Library.



Figure 18. Craftsman Bungalow with side addition.

Photo by Elizabeth Jacox.

Storage

After barns and farmhouses, silos and potato cellars are the most substantial structures on farms in Twin Falls County. When functioning as a farmstead resource, silos are not likely to be individually eligible to the NRHP. Given the special circumstance of their regional development and importance to agriculture across southern Idaho, it is possible that a potato cellar could demonstrate the significance required to be individually eligible as well functioning as a contributing feature on an eligible farmstead.

Silos

Silos are air-tight structures built to store and preserve green feeds. The ability to store feed through the winter was instrumental in the growth of the dairy industry. Between 1870 and 1890 silos evolved from horizontal structures called pit silos to vertical round structures. Pit silos were originally built of wood or stone, dug partially or fully into the ground, and lined with materials such as wood or straw. The first vertical or tower silos, built in the 1880s, were square and of wood or stone construction. The square shape was structurally unsound and would bow outwards, which allowed air pockets to develop in the corners, causing the silage to rot.

During the 1890s, F.H. King of the Wisconsin State Agricultural Experiment Station developed the first successful round vertical silo, constructed of two layers of horizontally placed wood boards. The King silo, although of sound design, was difficult to build, requiring that the boards would be bent in construction. Farmers preferred a more easily built alternative and early experimentation included silos constructed of vertical tongue and groove, stacked round hoops, or vertical wooden staves, secured by steel binding rods tightened by turnbuckles. Wooden silos were prone to deterioration, so research

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continued into ways to improve their construction. Over time, silos were constructed of reinforced concrete, structural clay tiles, or cement staves. Reinforced concrete was developed in the 1860s and 1870s, but it was not widely adopted until 1900. By 1902, experts were urging farmers to install concrete floors in farm buildings to help keep them clean, reduce loss of feed, and make work more efficient.

In 1911, the Portland Cement Company published *Concrete Silos: A Booklet of Practical Information for the Farmer and the Rural Contractor*, providing detailed information on how to construct a concrete silo. Beginning about 1915, the University of Idaho Agricultural Extension Office hosted workshops to teach farmers construction methods. In April 1916, the Twin Falls Extension Office organized a tour of local farms where silos had been built. "A Dozen Autos with Fifty Men Drive to Buhl—Inspect Many Silos," was the headline in the *Twin Falls Times* on April 25, the day after the grand event. In later years, the crowds were smaller, but possibly because the farmers were convinced. Although technology and the demands of modern farming have made tower silos less popular, there are many still standing near barns or spaces where barns once stood throughout Twin Falls County.

Concrete blocks were available in the U.S. circa 1900 and were widely used for silo construction from 1900 through 1920. After their invention in 1905 by the S. T. Playford Company, cement staves were popular as an alternative to concrete blocks. Cement staves are masonry units about 30" long, 10" wide, and 2.5" thick. The staves are hooked together with interlocking edges, with mortar applied between the joints. Reinforced by flat or round metal bands or rods, the staves, help protect the silo against outward pressure. The inside of the silo was sealed by a thin layer of concrete.

In 1949, a new silo design appeared and gained acceptance. The design, created by A.O. Smith Company of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, was for a structure of fiberglass bonded to sheets of metal, which allowed it to be completely airtight. These silos, usually known by the trade name of Harvestore, could be unloaded from the bottom, unlike earlier silos which required unloading from the top. Harvestore silos were costly but gradually began to replace earlier models and came to symbolize efficient and modern farms.

In the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, the demand for faster loading and unloading of silage led to an increase in the use of other types of storage: pit silos, with earthen walls; bunker silos, with concrete walls and sometimes a protective roof; and silage piles, stored in long white plastic bags held in place with tires.

Significance

Silos are representative of the increasing importance of scientific research in support of agriculture in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Their use was promoted by the USDA through its Agricultural Extension Service. Through the cooperative programs run by the USDA and state universities, the benefits of silos were provided to farmers in pamphlets, classes, and workshops that featured tours of local farms.

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Figure 19. Steel silo.

Photo by Elizabeth Jacox.



Figure 20. Steel and fiberglass silos.

Photo by Elizabeth Jacox.

Registration Requirements

A silo is unlikely to be individually eligible to the NRHP unless it has some connection to the research and development of the technology of storage. Tower silos appear to survive generally unchanged from their original form, although they frequently have lost their roof covers. In general, if a silo is still standing on a farmstead, it will contribute to the eligibility of the property, but to be listed individually under this MPDF, it must at least retain its major features, including a roof cover.

Potato Cellars

Potatoes have been grown in Idaho since the early days of settlement, but with irrigated agriculture Idaho moved to the forefront of potato production in the early twentieth century. In 1910, Twin Falls County became one of the three counties leading potato production in the state. The agricultural depression that followed World War I led to lower production in potatoes, along with other crops, and Twin Falls never regained the lead it held before then. Although potatoes continued to be an important crop, Twin Falls County farmers diversified, growing potatoes but also beans, sugar beets, and other produce.

Potato storage studies began in the 1910s when the USDA and the University of Idaho began to cooperate on research. Before then potatoes, if they were stored at all, were usually placed in barns or root cellars.

When production began to increase, bigger storage capacity was required. Early cellars were simple dugouts built by farmers. The dugouts featured framed roofs. The interior ceiling was created by attaching chicken wire to the roof and filling the space with straw. On the outside the excavated dirt was shoveled over the top of the dugout.

A study of selected potato cellars in Twin Falls County conducted for the Twin Falls County Historic Preservation Commission in 1997 documented and described a number of potato cellars in the county

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constructed through the 1940s when Twin Falls potato production slacked off from its earlier high.⁶⁸ During the time that potatoes were an important crop in Twin Falls County, the dugout potato cellar was improved by research conducted by the University of Idaho's Agricultural Experiment Stations and the Agricultural Extension Office. Construction methods were refined, and a few builders developed specialized skills for building them. As potato production grew and southeastern Idaho counties began to lead the field, potato storage moved into large metal buildings with climate controls, and few farmers in Twin Falls County continued to grow potatoes. As Buckendorf noted, some cellars documented in 1997 showed signs of the more modern improvements with metal siding and interior fans, but by the late 1940s most farmers had diversified their farms in other directions.



Figure 21. Potato cellar with entrance vestibule.

Photo by Elizabeth Jacox



Figure 22. Potato cellar with gable roof.

Photo by Elizabeth Jacox



Figure 23. Potato cellar modified for use as equipment storage.

Photo by Elizabeth Jacox.

As potato cellars are beginning to disappear from the rural landscape with farm consolidation and residential development, it is possible that surviving cellars would be individually eligible under Criterion A/Agriculture or Criterion C/Architecture as examples of a type. Individual eligibility would require that a cellar be unmodified and retain its original entrance and interior support system. To be considered contributing to a historic farmstead, the cellar must retain some original materials on the exterior.

⁶⁸ Madeline Kelley Buckendorf, "Selected Potato Cellars of Twin Falls County, Idaho: Reconnaissance Survey Report and a Brief History of Their Evolution," Survey Report 240, on file at the Idaho State Historic Preservation Office.

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Secondary Farm Resources

Agricultural Production-Related

Poultry Houses	Tank/Pump/Well House
Hog Shelters	Corrals
Milk Houses	Troughs (Feeding and Watering)
Loafing Sheds	Bull Pens
Machine Sheds	Loading/Squeeze Chutes
Other Sheds	Hay Derrick
Water Tanks	Windmills

Farm Implements and Machinery Related

Machine and Implement Sheds	Fencing
Blacksmith Sheds	Irrigation Ditches
Sheds, miscellaneous	Orchards

(e.g., coal shed, tool shed, and so forth)

Residential-Related

Tenant Houses/Bunkhouses	Root Cellars
Wells/Pumphouses	Outhouses
Tank Houses	Auto Garage
Windmills	Windbreaks

Significance

These resources all added functionality to the farm's productive capacity or provided convenience and comfort for the farm family. Their presence on a farmstead will provide information about the focus of the farm's production as well as clues to the timeline of the farm's evolution.

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Registration Requirements

These secondary farms structures will not usually possess the significance necessary to support individual eligibility to the NRHP. Their supportive function contributes to the significance of the farmstead. Such structures may not retain their original purpose but should retain their basic forms and specific structural characteristics.

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G. Geographical Data

The modern boundaries of Twin Falls County, Idaho.



Figure 24. Location of Twin Falls County

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Figure 25. Detail, showing a portion of Washington Territory which encompasses the area of the future Twin Falls County. From "Map of the State of Oregon and Washington Territory, 1859" John B. Floyd, cartographer.

Library of Congress, Geography & Map Division. <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g4290.fi000104>



Figure 26. Detail, showing a portion of Owyhee County, Idaho Territory, which encompasses the area of the future Twin Falls County. From "Rand, McNally & Co.'s Idaho, 1878."

Library of Congress, Geography & Map Division.
<https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3700m.gct00314/?q=Idaho+Territory&sp=188>

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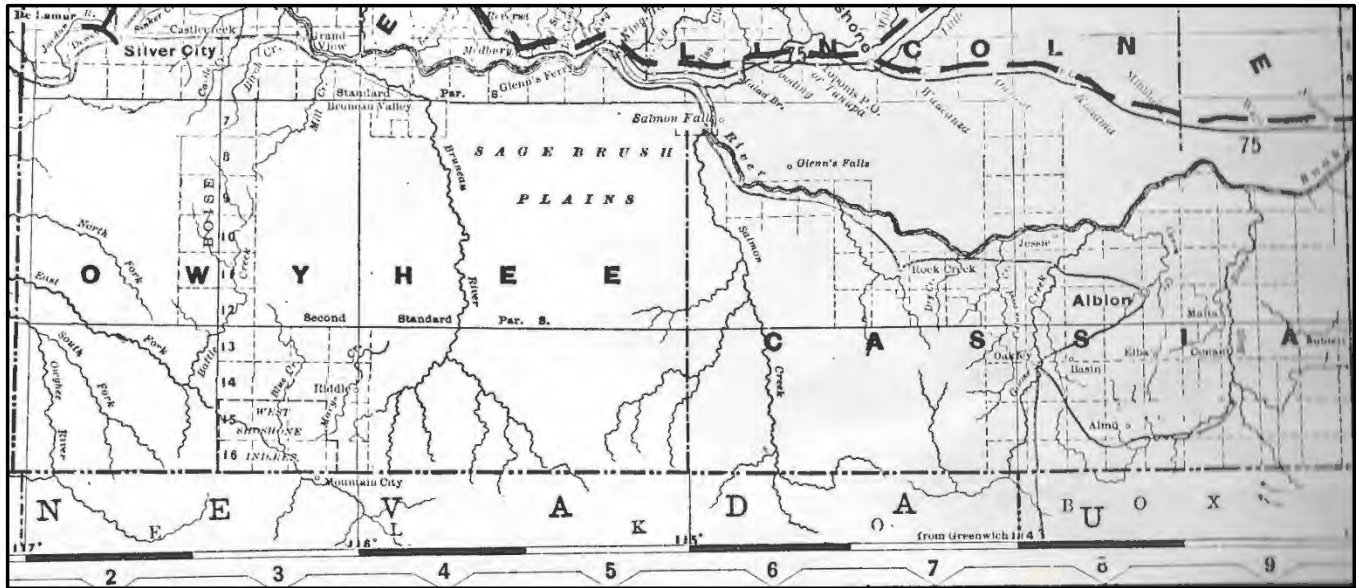


Figure 27. Detail, showing a portion of Cassia County, Idaho which encompasses the area of the future Twin Falls County.

From "Idaho, 1899 by George Crum," TAG research files.

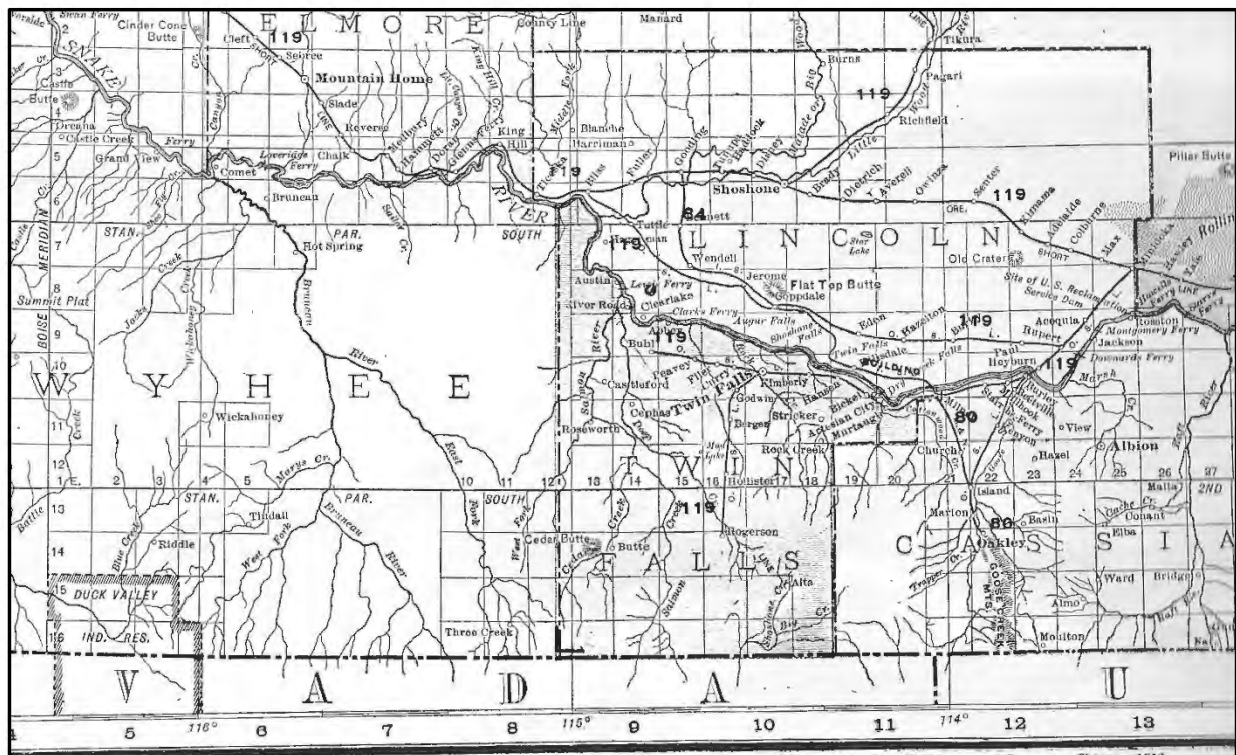


Figure 28. Detail, showing Owyhee, Twin Falls, and Cassia counties, Idaho.

From "The Rand McNally New Commercial Atlas of Idaho, 1912," TAG research files.

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H. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

This Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) is based upon surveys executed for the purpose of documenting historic agricultural properties in Twin Falls County. These were completed for the Twin Falls County Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) in 2009, 2010, and 2019. Additional resources were collected through a comprehensive record search conducted by the State Historic Preservation Office of the Idaho Historic Sites Inventory (IHSI) database for previously recorded properties. The MPDF, "Historic Agricultural Resources in Twin Falls County, Idaho," is meant to establish a shared context to assist the County and property owners in nominating properties that have direct associations with the contexts and property types established in this submission to the National Register of Historic Places.

Previous Surveys

In 1978 and 1979, Idaho State Historical Society (ISHS) staff Patricia Wright and Madeline Buckendorf conducted reconnaissance level surveys of selected properties in Twin Falls County, collecting basic information about several farmsteads and barns. In 1989, based on information collected in the previous survey, Buckendorf conducted a more intensive level survey of dairy barns in the vicinity of Buhl which resulted in the Multiple Property Study "Buhl Dairy Barns," and associated National Register of Historic Places listings for seven barns.

In 1983, a project supported by the Idaho Humanities Council, "Czechs in the Buhl-Castleford Area," including funding for a project to record the locations of farms in the vicinity of the two towns that were owned by Czech-American farmers. 103 farm locations were recorded on a map. No buildings or structures on those farm locations were photographed or recorded at the time

In 1997, a survey of selected potato cellars in Twin Falls County conducted for the Twin Falls County Historic Preservation Commission documented 20 potato cellars.

In 2009, a windshield survey of Twin Falls County determined that at the time, more than 1,000 agricultural properties with buildings more than fifty years old retained enough of their historic integrity to support a reconnaissance level survey. Follow up surveys in 2010 and 2012 focused on properties identified by the HPC and resulted in the recordation of 8 properties.

Current Survey

In 2018, the HPC developed a project to complete a Multiple Property Document Form based on a comprehensive record search of previously recorded agricultural properties in Twin Falls County. The results of the record search did not provide sufficient information on agricultural properties to support the multiple property study. As a larger representation was desired, after consultation with the HPC and State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), the 2018 project was refocused as a survey to be conducted in the spring of 2019.

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Fieldwork

A reconnaissance-level survey of the county was conducted March-June 2019. The county was broken into three sections for the survey:

Section 1 encompassed 3300 E from the Canyon south to 3000 N, east to the Cassia County line and River Road.

Section 2 was south from 3100 N, west to east, county line to county line, and south to the state line.

Section 3 was 4000 N to 3100 N, west to east, county line to county line.

Properties were selected for recording based on the presence of significant farm structures and buildings. The selection was made during field work and might be based at the time on the presence of an historic barn or potato cellar in addition to a farmhouse of historic age or additional outbuildings. The fewest number of buildings recorded at any site was one: the largest sites recorded encompassed ten buildings. The total number of properties recorded in 2019 was twenty-four; combined with the results of the previous Twin Falls County surveys and the SHPO record search, more than fifty properties provide the basis for the MPDF.

Archival research

In addition to the documentation of property types and the evolution of land use, research focused on the preparation of historical contexts for the period in which the survey area developed agriculturally and the identification of dates of construction. Preliminary research included a review of the results of the SHPO record search, including site forms and survey reports; discussion with the HPC about properties; and review of the Twin Falls County Assessor's property information online. The County Assessor's office prepared a preliminary map showing the location of previously recorded properties to help identify areas lacking information. Additional online research was conducted using the local history resources of the Twin Falls Public Library as well the resources of the Idaho State Archives, including both online and physical collections related to the history of Twin Falls County.

Establishing Dates of Construction

Construction dates were established or estimated by using a variety of resources, including plat maps, local history resources, previous survey information, historic aerial images, newspaper reports, and the architectural styles or construction details of individual buildings.

Compilation and Analysis of Data

The properties were recorded with field notes and digital photographs in the field, site maps were created using Google Earth, and site locations were located on USGS topographic maps. The information was entered into the Microsoft Access database used by the SHPO. The database provides fields for entering each building's historic and current functional use, physical features (e.g., plan, principal materials, architectural style and/or vernacular property type, roof type, and condition);

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architect and/or builder, if known; estimated or documented date of construction, legal description; presence of historic outbuildings; source(s) of historic information; and notes about the history of the property. As required by SHPO, pdfs of the site forms including the forms, maps, and photographs, were created for each recorded property, and included with the final survey report. The final documents were deposited with the SHPO and the HPC.

Context

The historic context covers the agricultural history of Twin Falls County through its agricultural property resources, including farmsteads or ranches and the buildings and structures of farmsteads or ranches. The period of significance is 1860 to 1970, covering the earliest years of settlement and first attempts at raising crops and livestock through the development of irrigation and the construction of large-scale irrigation projects to the modern era of industrialized agriculture and the changes brought to the county by those changes and the growth of urban development.

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