

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Johnson Stage Station
Other names/site number: Carr Ranch/5GN.6070
Name of related multiple property listing: N/A
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: 2.2 miles south on east side of Gunnison County Road 64 from the intersection with US Hwy 149
City or town: Powderhorn State: Colorado County: Gunnison
Not For Publication: n/a Vicinity: X

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,
I hereby certify that this X nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

 national statewide X local
Applicable National Register Criteria:
 X A B X C X D

Signature of certifying official/Title: **Date**

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property X meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official: Holly Kathryn Norton, Ph.D. **Date**

Title : Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government: History Colorado

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

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Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
District	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Site	<input type="checkbox"/>
Structure	<input type="checkbox"/>
Object	<input type="checkbox"/>

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>4</u>	<u> </u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u>1</u>	<u> </u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u>1</u>	objects
<u>6</u>	<u>1</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

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6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/ stage station

COMMERCE/TRADE/ restaurant

DOMESTIC/ multiple dwelling

AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/ agricultural field

FUNERARY/ graves/burials

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

WORK IN PROGRESS

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

OTHER/ Pioneer Log

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: WOOD/ Log

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

Located at the junction of several important wagon roads on land owned by the Bureau of Land Management, the property began as a stage station in 1884 and evolved into a ranch complex after 1890. The property lies at the mouth of Johnson Gulch, on the eastern floor of the Lake Fork of the Gunnison River Valley (the Lake Fork). An unnamed spring-fed stream flows northwest down the gulch and along the northern boundary of the property. Monsoonal flash floods have occurred within this drainage, impacting the residential area and leaving flood deposits in the agricultural field south of the cabins. Steep, rocky slopes rise to the north and east and are vegetated with small junipers, sagebrush, and xeric grasses. A rocky knoll is situated on the eastern slope approximately 100' above the residential area. A small family cemetery is located on the knob. The terrain opens and flattens at the base of these slopes and the residential complex resides here. Agricultural fields related to the ranching period of significance are located south and west of the residential complex and are vegetated with tall pasture grasses and rabbitbrush. Mature cottonwoods and willows grow alongside the stream. The residential area is overgrown with rabbitbrush, xeric grasses, and sagebrush. Non-native shrubs, flowers, and vines planted in the early 1900s still thrive today along the borders of the cabins (refer to photos #2, 6, and 8 for images of setting).

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The property is located at the former intersection of three heavily-used wagon roads, an ideal site for a station for stage and wagon traffic. The Saguache and San Juan Toll Road followed the Lake Fork Valley south to Lake City, a mining town in the eastern San Juan Mountains, and north to Sapinero, a transportation hub west of Gunnison. The Lake Fork and Ouray Toll Road extended northwest to Montrose and continued south to Ouray, which was a gateway into the northern San Juan Mountains. The Barnum and Sapinero Toll Road ascended to the east up Johnson Gulch and continued northeasterly to Gunnison, passing through the historic Gunnison Gold Belt townsites of Dubois and Spencer (Figure 3). Johnson Stage Station originally consisted of three vernacular log cabins, ultimately growing into a ranch headquarters of four cabins, a workshop, an auto garage, two privies, and two root cellars. The ranch also included a cemetery for members of the Carr family. The cabins, outbuildings, and cemetery occupy 1.9 acres. The district also includes an agricultural field 21.9 acres in area for a total of 23.8 acres within the nomination boundary.

Presently, the district retains sufficient physical integrity to convey its resource type, a stage station and ranch headquarters. The district features the original three 1884 stage station cabins, as well as a fourth cabin added around 1894. All stand intact and largely as-built, but without their roofs and window detailing. The workshop, garage, root cellars, and privies are in ruins but may yield important information found within the archaeological deposits of each. Historic barbed wire and split rail fences are partially intact, and the cemetery is evident though overgrown. The ruins are easily interpretable, conveying building function and form. The district includes an agricultural field 21.9 acres in area, which was historically cultivated for alfalfa. Overall, the standing buildings, ruins, and archaeological features reflect the property's history, function, and evolution over time.

Narrative Description

CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES

Johnson Cabin, Building (ca. 1884), photos 7-12

The original stage station residence (Figure 4, F1) is a south-facing log cabin with a low, arched roof. The building is 17' x 25' in plan, 7' high at the roof eaves, and 8' high at the roof crest. Presently, the walls and roof beams stand intact, but the roof decking and all doors and windows are gone. Charlie Johnson assembled the walls with V-notch joints, hewing flat the logs' interior and exterior faces. He used split log strips for chinking and applied a sifted mud daubing between the cracks in the chinking. The Carr family later patched outside areas with additional daubing and finished the inside with plaster. Cut nails were used for all primary woodwork and wire nails for later repairs.

A substantial support system held up a roof of plank decking that was covered with earth. A dual log ridge-beam extended along the building's length, with additional log beams paralleling the center beam. The decking, now fallen in, was laid over the frame and nailed to the beams. Collar ties spanning the building's width supported the beams. Remnants of a 5' deep awning porch supported by log beams sistered onto the roof beams is located at the front (south) of the building. The building stands on a foundation of log footers laid on a cut-and-fill platform.

The south, east, and west walls feature original door and window frames. No evidence remains of the style of doors or windows used. The south wall features a 32" x 73" door frame surrounded by 1" x 6" plank trimming. The east wall features a 30" x 72" doorframe and a 28" x 25" window frame. A pantry opening, resembling a small doorway, adjoins the window on the south side. The pantry's opening measures 13" x 60", and at one time had shelves and exterior and interior doors. Pantry items could be stocked from outside the cabin using the small exterior door and then accessed from inside the cabin using the interior door. The window and pantry unit are surrounded by 1" x 4" trim. The cabin's west side features two 34" x 33" window frames, surrounded with 1" x 4" plank trim.

The interior of the cabin is covered with earth from the collapsed sod roof and features few original elements. Structural artifacts related to the decomposition of the cabin are scattered about the interior of the cabin and it is likely that additional structural and domestic artifacts reside under the sod roofing material. The southeast corner contains evidence of 1" x 9" plank wainscoting, and the north half was divided into two rooms by plank walls. Each room was 8' x 9' in plan.

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Sod and roofing debris blankets the ground around the exterior of the cabin and thick brush surrounds the perimeter. Domestic artifacts and refuse are located around the entryways to the cabin and lesser amounts are located out in the fenced yard. Purple (amethyst) bottle fragments make up the majority of artifacts, which supports the historical references of Charlie Johnson's overuse of alcohol. Other surface artifacts include a full set of curtain rod mounting brackets, meat and food sanitary cans, remnants of a leather boot, and fragments of a wash tub. Sod and soil likely conceal additional archaeological deposits that could reveal important information about the function and period of use of Johnson Cabin and could verify and add to the historical record of the cabin.

Saloon, Building (ca. 1884), photos 7-9, 13

Johnson's saloon (Figure 4, F2) is located adjacent to the main residence. The building is side-gabled, 17' x 17' in plan, 7½' high at the roof eaves and 9' high overall. The walls consist of logs, with their interior and exterior faces hewn flat, and assembled with square-notch joints. Johnson used split log strips for chinking and applied a sifted mud daubing between the cracks in the chinking. The roof consisted of earthen-covered decking supported by a log ridge-beam flanked on each side by log stringers. The decking has collapsed and dumped earth into the cabin interior. Structural artifacts related to the decomposition of the cabin are scattered about the interior of the cabin and it is likely that additional structural and domestic artifacts reside under the sod roofing material. The walls stand on a foundation of log footers laid on the ground surface and remnants of a plank floor nailed to log joists is visible in the interior of the saloon. Cut nails are still evident in primary woodwork, although many have been replaced with wire nails.

Reflecting the building's function as a public space, each wall had a doorway. In the north wall (rear) the doorway measures 34" x 72", trimmed with 1" x 6" planks, and opens into a breezeway adjoining a separate guest cabin (Figure 4, F3). The east wall features a 32" x 72" doorway, later fitted with a 29" x 32" window surrounded by 1" x 6" trim. The window abuts the upper doorway frame and the lower portion is patched with 2" x 6" milled lumber planks. The south wall features a 31" x 72" doorway and a 24" x 60" window frame for a double-sash unit. The west wall has a 32" x 72" doorway opening into a breezeway connected to Johnson Cabin. Johnson planned the breezeway prior to construction, cutting the roof beams 6' longer than the building to create an overhang. All doors and windows are no longer intact.

Presently, debris surrounds the saloon and thick brush grows in the interior and around the exterior of the south and east sides. Domestic artifacts and refuse are located around the entryways to the cabin and lesser amounts are located out in the fenced yard. Artifacts include clear bottle glass fragments likely originating from liquor bottles, anthracite coal for heating, and severely deteriorated tin can fragments. Sod and soil likely conceal additional archaeological deposits that could reveal important information about the function and period of use of the saloon, changes in building use over time, and could verify and add to the historical record of the cabin.

Guest Cabin, Building (ca. 1884), photos 7, 8, 14, 15

A cabin (Figure 4, F3) built to house travelers stands adjacent to the streambed behind the saloon. The cabin is similar in construction, appearance, and orientation to the saloon but with a few functional differences. In overall form, the cabin is side-gabled, 13' x 15' in plan, 6' high at the roof eaves, and 7½' high at the arch peak.

The construction style is the same as the saloon, and three log beams support the roof. The foundation consists of log footers on an earthen platform, with several flat rocks bolstering the northwest corner. All walls except the east feature doorways or window openings. The south and west walls each have a 32" x 72" doorway, the south doorway also features 1" x 6" trim. The north wall features a 29" x 31" sliding window. All windows and doors are missing.

After the Carrs bought the stage station (1890), they added shelving and counters to the interior. All walls feature remnants of shelf mounts and other brackets. The north wall also has supports for a counter. Enameled cook stove parts are embedded in the earth that now blankets the interior and it is likely that additional domestic artifacts are buried in the soil. Other artifacts located in and around the exterior of the cabin (mainly by the entryway) include coal for heating, clear bottle glass fragments, and severely deteriorated tin can fragments. Sod and brush grows around all exterior sides but the north, and probably conceals additional archaeological deposits that could provide

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additional information regarding types of activities occurring in the cabin, changes in use of the cabin over time and types of clientele staying in the guest cabin.

East Cabin, Building (ca. 1894), photos 16 and 17

The eastern-most residence (Figure 4, F4) in the ranch complex is a log cabin similar to the others in form, materials, and workmanship. The building is south-facing, 13' x 16' in plan, with a low front-gabled roof 6' high at the eaves and 7½' high at the gable peak.

The walls consist of hewn logs joined at the northwest and northeast corners with square-notches. At the southeast and southwest corners the logs are joined with hog-trough construction, in which the ends of the logs have been sawn off and replaced by vertical 2" x 6" boards. To form a tight seal, the boards, similar to end-plates, are butted together. This style of construction was used at nearby mining camps where the cabins could be quickly broken down wall by wall and moved by wagon to another mining location. Gaps between the logs are chinked with the same combination of split log strips and mud daubing as in the other cabins. Wire nails have been used for all woodwork.

The cabin's date of construction is difficult to determine because of conflicts in material evidence. The similarity in form, materials, and workmanship suggest that Charlie Johnson may have built the cabin during the 1880s in association with the stage station, but the exclusive use of wire nails suggests a construction date after 1892, when wire nails had phased out cut nails for general construction. Because of the unique hog-trough style of construction, it is possible that Johnson erected the cabin elsewhere, and that the Carrs dismantled and moved it to its present location, rebuilding it with wire nails. During reconstruction, the southwestern and southeastern corners may have been found to be faulty, and were subsequently replaced with the hog-trough end-plates.

The walls stand on a foundation of log footers on an earthen platform with rock alignments supporting the north side. A plank floor was nailed to hewn log joists, but is now mostly buried with earth that washed into the cabin interior from flood events in the adjacent stream. The most recent flash flood occurred in 2010 and washed soils and debris against the east exterior wall of the cabin. Soils were also scoured out from below the sill log in the north wall but the rock alignment stayed intact and continue to support the north wall. The roof is similar to the Guest Cabin (F3), consisting of earth shoveled over plank decking supported by three log beams. The roof has been altered, possibly during the move and reassembly of the cabin and the original earthen covering has been replaced with corrugated sheet iron. The roof has since collapsed and the cladding lies on the cabin's east side, leaving the interior exposed. During roof replacement the Carrs sistered the log beams with southern extensions, providing a 5' deep awning porch over the entry.

All walls except for the northern have doorways or window openings surrounded by 1" x 6" trim. The east wall originally had a 30" x 64" window and was later refitted with a 28" x 35" single-sash window. The lower portion of the original window opening was filled in with 2" x 6" milled lumber planks and tar paper was tacked to the planks. The south wall (front) features a 33" x 73" doorway and the west wall a 28" x 30" window. All windows have been broken out and only the openings remain. The interior was later sided with plywood and planks were laid in front of the door, creating a crude deck. These alterations appear to have occurred in the early 1900s and may have been installed when the cabin was reassembled.

The location of the East Cabin adjacent to Johnson Gulch makes it prone to flash flood events during monsoon rainstorms and flood deposits are located in and around the north and east sides of the cabin. The most recent flood occurred in 2010 and soils around the base of the cabin were removed and replaced with stream gravels and loose vegetation. It is unlikely any subsurface archaeological deposits remain on the east and north sides of the cabin. However, the south and west sides of the cabin have not been impacted by flooding and surface artifacts including heating coal, purple and clear bottle glass fragments, and earthenware ceramic fragments are located in these areas. On the south side of the cabin, a mostly intact cast iron cook stove with a light green porcelain overlay is lying out in the vegetation. No maker's marks were present although it is similar to a 1920's model Wedgewood stove.

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Contributing Site (1884-1967)

The entire 23.8 acres of the nominated district is counted as one site. In addition to the 21.9-acre field that historically grew alfalfa, features within the site include the following:

Yard (ca. 1900)

A planted yard (Figure 4, F5) fenced from animals wraps around the south side of Johnson Cabin (F1) and the Saloon (F2) and the east sides of the Saloon and Guest Cabin (F3). The yard is L-shaped and the southern section is 18' wide and 65' long and the eastern section is 22' wide and 27' long. A series of fence posts, plank edging, and chicken wire outlines the area. The southern alignment consists of planks nailed to log posts and the eastern alignment consists of chicken wire. Gate posts presently stand in front of Johnson Cabin and the Saloon. A variety of non-native plants and shrubs still thrive and include hops vines, jasmine, poppies, and rhubarb.

Structural artifacts from Johnson Cabin and the saloon are scattered about the yard and mainly consist of cut and wire nails and lumber scraps. Domestic artifacts include purple and clear bottle fragments and deteriorated tin can fragments. Additional archaeological deposits are likely buried in the yard as this area is situated at the entrances to the saloon and Johnson Cabin where personal items from intoxicated clientele may have been dropped and left behind. In addition to bottle glass, expected buried deposits would include small items usually found in trouser and coat pockets (buttons and buckles, pocketknives, snuff and tobacco tins, and coins). These items could provide information on the types of clientele (gender, occupation, ethnicity, lifestyle, etc). Yard artifacts could also provide information about the activities carried out within the buildings and the changes in the use of the buildings over the period of significance: from stage stop to family ranch.

Root Cellar Ruin (ca. 1890)

The stage station had a small root cellar (Figure 4, F6) in the hillside north of the cabins, on the opposite side of the stream. The structure has collapsed and now consists of partial walls and structural debris in a depression. When intact, the cellar measured 8' x 12' in plan with a plank façade, plank walls retaining the earthen excavation, and a roof of logs covered with earth as insulation. The façade, assembled with planks nailed to log posts, has fallen outward, the west wall inward, and the roof has collapsed into the cellar. Very few surface artifacts are located within the root cellar and include mostly structural artifacts. Buried archaeological deposits related to food consumption and processing and storing cuts of meat could provide data on food preservation techniques, the use of hunted game versus livestock, fresh versus canned food use, and perhaps the seasonality of fresh foods.

Root Cellar Ruin (ca. 1900), photo 22

The Carr family constructed a substantial root cellar (Figure 4, F13) on the south side of Johnson Gulch, up-grade from and east of the cabins. Sinking the cellar into the north-facing slope provided maximum cooling. The cellar consists of an inner chamber 8' deep x 26' across lined with logs or lumber, and two log cribbing cells in front filled with back-dirt generated during excavation. A gap 3' wide x 5' high x 8' long between the cells provided entry. The builders added 9' long wings on the east and west ends to retain more back-dirt. Soil shoveled over various planks served as a ceiling, and a stovepipe provided ventilation. Residents assembled the cribbing and retaining wings with saddle-notch joints, and improved the entry with plank walls. The original lintel over the entry was replaced with a pressure-treated 8" x 8" timber. After abandonment, the inner chamber and east wall collapsed, leaving the log façade, entry, and a depression behind them. Very few surface artifacts are located within the root cellar and are mainly structural artifacts. Buried archaeological deposits related to food consumption and processing and storing cuts of meat could provide data on food preservation techniques, the use of hunted game versus livestock, and fresh versus canned food use. Variations in fresh food consumption between the earlier root cellar (F6) and the later could be revealed.

Privy Pit (ca. 1884), photo 20

A small privy (Figure 4, F7) serving the Guest Cabin is located behind the cabin. Residents excavated the pit in stream gravel and framed the collar with salvaged lumber, retaining the pit rim and serving as a foundation for the privy building. The collar is 5' x 6' in plan, and the pit, now completely filled with gravel from flash flood events, was approximately 4' x 5' in area. The collar, remnants of plank decking on the south side and the depressed pit are evident. Buried deposits are possible but flood events may have destroyed any subsurface integrity.

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Privy Pit (ca. 1890)

A larger privy (Figure 4, F9) is located adjacent to the garage on the north side of the stream. The toilet is represented by a pit 9' in diameter and 3' deep, rimmed with brush. Although humus blankets the floor and conceals most artifacts, a few cans are visible. Because of its larger size and deeper depth, it is likely that this privy served as the Carr family's main privy. Subsurface archaeological deposits are likely and could provide data on several aspects of daily life at the Carr Ranch. Privy pits were also used as secondary (or even primary) trash dumps and a wealth of information can be gleaned from the contents within a privy pit. This can include the use of medicinals and alcohol, canned food consumption, artifacts related to personal hygiene, and the presence or absence of women and children.

Workshop Ruin (ca. 1894), photos 18 and 19

The ranch complex included a workshop (Figure 4, F8) at the west end, close to the cabins and accessible from agricultural fields. In this crude facility, the Carrs repaired machinery and fabricated light hardware. The poorly constructed building has collapsed, leaving only the west and north walls standing. When intact, the shop was front-gabled, 12½' x 16' in plan, 6½' high at the eaves and 9' high at the gable peak. The walls consisted of little more than 2" x 6" stringers nailed to log corner-posts, sided with sawmill slabs. The roof was a series of 2" x 4" rafters and no ridge-beam, sided with planks. The doorway is in the now-collapsed east wall, and a workbench extended along the west wall. Presently, refuse and agricultural machine parts are scattered around the ruin, partially concealed by brush. Surface artifacts associated with the workshop are composed of industrial hardware and machine parts related to the agricultural, transportation, and lumber industries. It is likely that similar artifacts are located below the dirt floor of the workshop. Artifacts of this type can reveal changes in industrial technologies over time.

Garage Ruin (ca. 1930), photo 21

Charles Carr erected a garage (Figure 4, F10) on the north side of the stream, north of the workshop. The building has since completely collapsed. It measured 12½' x 20½' in plan, built on a foundation of doubled 2" x 6" footers. The footers surround a central depression measuring 5' x 8' in area that may have been a grease-pit for servicing the underside of vehicles. When intact, the walls consisted of various types of sheet iron nailed to cross-members, and the roof was composed of corrugated sheet iron over plank decking fastened to 2" x 4" and 2" x 8" rafters. Presently, the roof lies mostly intact over the foundation. Wall remnants are located to the south, with artifacts scattered around. Buried deposits will likely consist of small machine and auto parts.

Refuse Dump (ca. 1940s)

A domestic refuse dump is located on a raised tongue of ground on the drainage's north bank (Figure 4, F12). The refuse, primarily food cans, broken bottles, and few tableware items, is disbursed over a 20' x 30' area. Specific historic items include plain white earthenware fragments, canning jar lids, and women's corset hardware. More recent items including frozen pot pie aluminum pans and D cell batteries also reside in the dump. The dump is surficial in nature and has been impacted by a recent (2010) monsoonal flash flood. During the flood, gravel and debris were deposited on and around the dump and items from the dump were displaced from their original locations and piled up against debris. For these reasons, the dump is not considered to have any archaeological potential.

Lumber Planer (ca. 1900)

A lumber planer (Figure 5, photo 33) presently rests on the ground amid sagebrush a short distance west of the ranch complex. The planer was used to improve rough-cut boards into a finished product. The machine, approximately 2' wide x 3' long x 3' high, was belt-driven and bolted to a timber frame for portability.

Carr Cemetery (1908-1916), photos 23-27

Three Carr family members are buried in an organized gravesite (Figure 4, F14) on a prominent overlook above the ranch. The plot features an alignment of three graves and a modern polished granite headstone surrounded by a collapsed plank fence approximately 20' x 45' in area. The graves are oriented east-west and according to the headstone, Nathan Carr (1837-1908), Bruce Carr (1908-1916), and Easton Weston (1847-1911) are buried here. Each grave is outlined with cobbles, blanketed with gravel backfill, and overgrown with sage. A gap, possibly

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Charlie Johnson's burial, exists between Nathan and the other graves. The plank fence is severely deteriorated and there is no evidence of a gate. The fencing was likely installed in 1908 after Nathan Carr passed and later expanded to accommodate the graves of Bruce Carr and Easton Weston. Aside from the more recent headstone, the cemetery is in its original state and no other alterations have occurred.

Johnson Gulch Irrigation Ditch, Structure (1890)

On June 1st, 1890 water rights were granted for the Johnson Gulch Ditch for two cubic feet per second (c.f.s.) of water to irrigate 20 acres of land. Although a name is not associated with the water right, it can be assumed that Nathan Carr applied for and was granted the water right to irrigate his alfalfa fields. In the application, the ditch is described as being one foot wide, one foot deep, and ¼ mile in length.¹ The ditch begins at the intersection of Johnson Gulch and the access road (Figure 4), follows the contour of the slope running southwest out of Johnson Gulch and along the tongue of the knob on which the cemetery is located and finally out into the fields. The entire length of the ditch falls within the nominated site boundary. As stated in the water right, the ditch was abandoned in 1973. The majority of the alignment of the ditch is still visible today. The headwaters of the ditch has been impacted by flash floods and is filled with stream gravels but the lower portions of the ditch are still intact. If a head gate or other structure existed at the source of the ditch, no evidence of it exists today. Archaeological deposits are unlikely near the headwaters of the ditch but may exist outside of the flood zone. A layer of sediment is located at the terminus of the ditch. No water control features were discovered during field surveys.

NON-CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES

Cemetery Headstone, Object (1993), photo 25

In 1993, members of the Carr Family installed a polished granite headstone in the cemetery. The headstone measures 1' x 3' in area and 6" high and lists, left to right: Nathan C. Carr, 30 Nov. 1837 - 18 Jan. 1908; Bruce W. Carr, 29 July 1908 - 29 June 1916; Easton S. Weston, 11 Sept. 1847 - 3 Mar. 1911. The headstone is a modern feature of the site and is therefore considered a non-contributing object.

INTEGRITY

Despite the effects of time and natural deterioration, the stage station retains a high degree of integrity as it relates to location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Location

The location of the stage station has not changed, and within it, only the East Cabin was possibly moved from its original location and reassembled by the Carr family within the period of significance to a new location within the ranch headquarters.

Setting

The setting of the stage station has changed little since the period of significance. The landscape is dominated by the lush Lake Fork of the Gunnison River valley and the surrounding steep and rocky slopes. The high peaks of the eastern San Juan mountain range are visible to the south. The historic layout of the stage station and later ranch headquarters remains intact. The agricultural fields are still present and the Johnson Gulch Ditch used to irrigate the fields has deteriorated only slightly due to natural processes. The planned yard and gardens are present and vegetation planted within still thrives.

Design

The design of the district is evident upon entering the stage station headquarters. A cluster of small cabins is located in a sheltered area and faces south to maximize solar gain during the cold winter months. A spring-fed drainage

¹ Colorado Division of Water Resources. Retrieved from <http://water.state.co.us/SurfaceWater/SWRights/Pages/default.aspx>. No active water rights are located within the nomination boundary

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runs behind the headquarters and is lined with cottonwood trees. The stage station was constructed 700' east of the stage coach route providing privacy and relief from the dusty and smelly conditions of the road. After the stage station was converted into a working ranch in 1890, agricultural fields were established to the south of the headquarters and are easily accessible by foot or horse.

The contributing buildings of the headquarters area retain integrity of design through the vernacular construction techniques employed at each cabin. Although similar in construction, the cabins have variations in design making each unique.

Materials

Integrity of historic materials used in all aspects of construction is evident throughout the district. Cabins are constructed with locally harvested spruce logs and it is likely that any milled lumber used in construction was milled on the Carr family's portable saw mill. Fence posts and rails are also of locally available timber that have been cut to size and stripped of bark.

Workmanship

Integrity of workmanship can be seen in each cabin as well as in the split rail fencing and root cellars. Each cabin exhibits a variety of construction techniques and repairs or modifications. From the variety of notching to sparse interior features, every aspect shows the skilled workmanship needed to construct a dwelling in a remote setting without the convenience of a nearby town to provide supplies. Nails were used and re-used, the barbed wire fences have evidence of multiple repairs using bailing wire in a pinch, and cabin alterations (e.g., window alterations in East Cabin and Saloon) are crude but adequate and were constructed with any available materials.

Feeling

The sense of feeling at the Johnson Stage Station remains intact. The unchanged setting, location, and design convey the history of the district and are evocative of an era of early commerce and ranching.

Association

The Johnson Stage Station provides a glimpse into what life was like before modern amenities. The presence of the original log cabins, agricultural fields, and unchanged setting convey the historical nature and feeling of the property, giving a visitor a sense of what life was like in the early 1900s at a stage station and working ranch.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

TRANSPORTATION

ARCHITECTURE

AGRICULTURE

ARCHAEOLOGY/Historic – Non-Aboriginal

Period of Significance: 1884-1967

Transportation: 1884-1897

Architecture: 1884-1894

Agriculture: 1890-1967

Historic Archaeology: 1884-1967

Significant Dates

1884: Stage station begins operation

1890: The Carr family acquires stage station

1967: The Carr Ranch is sold and ranching stops

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

Euro-American

Architect/Builder

Johnson, Charlie

Carr, Nathan

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Johnson Stage Station is significant at the local level under Criterion A in the area of Transportation from 1884-1897 when it served stage traffic to and from the mining regions of Lake City and the Gunnison Gold Belt, and also in the area of Agriculture from 1890-1967, during which time it functioned as a ranch. The district also qualifies locally under Criterion C in the area of Architecture from 1884 to 1894, for its examples of Pioneer Log construction, and Criterion D for non-aboriginal Historical Archaeology from 1884-1967 for its potential to yield information. The district also includes a small cemetery specific to Carr family members. As a resource within the district that is not its focal point, the cemetery does not need to meet Criteria Consideration D. The period of the significance begins in 1884 when the stage stop began operation and ends in 1967 when the property was sold and ranching ceased.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

Criterion A: Transportation

Johnson Stage Station is locally significant under Criterion A in the area of Transportation from 1884 – 1897. Charlie Johnson established the station in 1884 to serve mostly wagon traffic traveling between the eastern and northern San Juan Mountains and the Gunnison Basin, where several railheads were located. He strategically sited

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the station at the mouth of what became known as Johnson Gulch, close to the intersection of roads to the above-named regions (Figure 3). The Saguache and San Juan Toll Road, built by Otto Mears in 1874, was a main artery and key freight route winding south along the Lake Fork to the mining town of Lake City, the gateway into the eastern San Juan Mountains. A second road, the Lake Fork and Ouray Toll Road, also built by Mears in 1876, crossed the river and continued northwesterly to Montrose and then south to Ouray, the gateway into the northern San Juan Mountains. The Barnum and Sapinero Toll Road ascended easterly up Johnson Gulch to Sapinero Mesa, where a northern leg extended to Sapinero and a northeastern leg to Gunnison, both settlements along the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad (D&RG). The road network funneled goods and machinery into Lake City and Ouray for distribution to regional mines and settlements. Ore and mill products flowed in reverse, to the railroad for shipment to smelters in Denver and Cañon City. Johnson Stage Station was well-situated to serve freight traffic, with wagons stopping overnight to refresh driver and team. The station and others like it were important for the movement of the immense tonnage of freight required for mining in the San Juan Mountains. Drivers rested and dined in safety, while their teams were watered, fed, and shod when necessary. The Carr family took over the transportation business in 1890 after Johnson passed away. Business at the stage station boomed between 1894 through 1896 when the Gunnison Gold Belt to the northeast experienced a major rush. By this time, the D&RG had graded its Lake City branch up the Lake Fork, passing by the station's western edge. The railroad established Tank Siding next to the stage station, an open-air loading point for passengers and freight. The construction of County Road 64 in the 1950s obliterated Tank Siding as well as the original wagon route. The Carrs also used the stage station as a base for their own wagon and hack service up Johnson Gulch to the Gunnison Gold Belt towns of Dubois and Spencer. The station served as an important node in the local transportation system, facilitating the movement of goods and people between the railroad and nascent mining industry in the Gunnison Gold Belt. By 1897 the Gunnison Gold Belt rush was over and wagon transportation up Johnson Gulch was reduced to a minimal amount of local traffic.

Criterion A: Agriculture

The stage station is significant at the local level in the area of Agriculture from 1890 - 1967. The Carr family homesteaded the property in 1890 and adapted it as headquarters for their ranching and lumber business, generating lumber, hay, cattle, and horses. The sawmill itself was located some distance away from the ranch and is not within the nomination boundary. Although mining was the economic foundation for the eastern San Juan Mountains, ranching was a close second. The Carrs provided necessary products including dray horses, cattle, fodder for livestock, lumber for construction, and vegetables in small amounts. The Carrs exported goods to surrounding markets such as the lively mining industries at Lake City, Creede, Crested Butte, Silverton, Telluride, and the Gunnison Gold Belt. Agriculture became an important industry in the region because of its stability and the income it brought into the area. Whereas mining had all but disappeared in the region by around 1919, the Carr Ranch and the regional agricultural industry supported the local economy into the 1960s. Ranching on the property ceased in 1967 when the ranch was sold.

Criterion C: Architecture

The stage station is locally significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. The three core buildings exemplify Pioneer Log stage station architecture of the early 1880s mining boom in the eastern San Juan Mountains. In 1884, Johnson built the residential cabin (Figure 4, F1) for his quarters, a kitchen, and a guest or two. He also constructed the saloon and second residential cabin (Figure 4, F2, F3) for travelers and teamsters. The buildings are small, low, vernacular log cabins with gently-pitched gable roofs which at one time were covered with earth which provided additional insulation. The cabins are vernacular as Johnson planned them in the field, used available materials, and constructed them with skills that he had learned. Johnson used locally harvested logs and some lumber, and assembled the buildings with traditional V-notch jointing. The three buildings retain good integrity relative to 1884. Although the Carr family acquired the station in 1890 and inhabited the buildings for decades, they made few substantial changes. Except for missing roofs, doors, and windows, the cabins exhibit their original appearance, construction, and workmanship.

Criterion D: Historic Archaeology

The stage station is also significant under Criterion D as buried archaeological deposits are likely to yield meaningful information upon further study. Many areas within the site contain intact archaeological deposits including the privy pits, the root cellars, and the areas around the entrances of the cabins where personal items could

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have been swept out the doorways. Shallow yard deposits immediately around the original stage station buildings in all probability possess artifacts that can enhance the present understanding of stage stations and associated activities in the eastern San Juan Mountains. Artifacts might convey information about diet, substance abuse, health, socio-economic status, ethnicity, and gender of 1880s freight teamsters, as well as information on transportation networks. Deposits may also provide additional information on the quality of accommodations provided at the stage station. Yard deposits and the privy pits (Figure 4, F7, F9) could also address similar areas of study, as well as use of materials and consumer goods specific to local, early twentieth-century ranches. Over time, the site was converted from a stage station to family ranch and archaeological deposits can reveal changes in the types of activities occurring within the buildings and locations of activity areas.

Two known flash flood events occurring in 1929 and 2010 have disturbed portions of the district and the archaeological deposits within the flood areas. Impacted areas include the east and north sides of the East Cabin (Figure 5, F4) and the smaller privy pit (Figure 5, F7). Despite these events, the majority of the district still retains the potential for buried deposits, primarily in and around the ranch headquarters.

Johnson Stage Station Historical Context

Evolution of the Lower Lake Fork Road System

Well before the 1870s, when silver and gold drew Euro-Americans to the eastern San Juan Mountains in number, Native Americans primarily belonging to Ute bands established a network of trails in the region. The principal trails followed the Lake Fork Valley because it was a natural transportation corridor, with feeder trails extending up major drainages, crossing Sapinero Mesa northeast to Gunnison Basin, and wandering westerly to the Uncompahgre River Valley. This system later became a template for wagon roads as mining traffic sought the best routes into the mountains.

Few Euro-Americans had explored the eastern San Juan Mountains prior to the gold and silver discoveries, and those who did came to know the trails. For example, in his 1873 U.S. Corps of Engineers reconnaissance of the region, Lieutenant E.H. Ruffner's party traversed the trail system in the lower Lake Fork Valley because it was the main thoroughfare at the time. Ruffner commented that the riverside willows and cottonwoods had "all been cropped close by recent large Indian camps," including a group of fifteen or twenty lodges with a trail crossing the river "evidently toward the Los Pinos agency." The main lower Lake Fork Indian trail, Ruffner wrote, "is now a broad double one, like a wagon-road, many trails coming into it from the mountains southwest, west and northwest."²

An important intersection evolved on the valley floor between what was later named Johnson Gulch and Indian Creek, two miles south, because the Lake Fork was easily forded at this point. The ford was essentially the union point between trails west and trails east. The North Branch of the Old Spanish Trail, in use as early as the 1830s (and designated as a National Historic Trail in 2002), or a possible variant of the trail, also took advantage of the ford on its westerly route from Sapinero Mesa over to the Uncompahgre River Valley.

The intersection assumed strategic importance during the mid-1870s with the discovery of silver and gold in the San Juan Mountains. Prospectors found a number of ore-bearing veins in the upper Lake Fork Valley and along its tributaries in 1873 and 1874, with entrepreneurs establishing Lake City on the river itself during the latter year. The nearest commercial and communication centers at the time were Saguache in the San Luis Valley far to the east, Del Norte on the Rio Grande River to the southeast, and Granite and Oro City on the Arkansas River to the northwest. The Brunot Treaty of 1873 effectively expelled the Utes, whose trails became the principal routes into the region. During the first several years after the discoveries, prospectors used the trails to travel up the river to Lake City, and crossed the ford on their way to the Uncompahgre River in the mountains' northern reaches. The trails were well-suited for foot and animal traffic, but too rough for wagons.

² Ruffner, Lieutenant E.H. *Reconnaissance in the Ute Country, Season of 1873, Corps of Engineers*. Washington, D.C: House of Representatives, 43rd Congress, First Session, Ex. Doc. No. 193, 1873.

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Enterprising Saguache businessmen, including Otto Mears, forecasted a growing mining boom and planned an ambitious 92-mile wagon road into the San Juan Mountains. Their hope was that a high-quality road would ensure Saguache as the main supply and transportation point, with Lake City and other outposts as dependents. Incorporated in March, 1874, the Saguache & San Juan Wagon Toll Road Company began with an existing 20-mile road from Saguache west across Cochetopa Pass to the Los Pinos Indian agency. From Los Pinos Creek, however, the proposed toll road entered unknown territory. Incorporators vaguely stated that the new road would extend "to some place near the head of Baker's Park in La Plata County."³ Within a year, Silverton grew in Baker's Park, and San Juan County was carved from La Plata County. To reach Baker's Park, the road had to first pass through Lake City.

Builder Enos T. Hotchkiss ultimately pushed the Saguache & San Toll Road from Los Pinos Creek westerly to Cebolla Creek on Sapinero Mesa, another five miles southwest to Indian Creek, and down Indian Creek to the Lake Fork Valley. At the mouth of Indian Creek, the Saguache & San Juan Toll Road intersected the intertwined Ute Indian trails that led south up the valley to Lake City, as well as the river ford of the North Branch of the Old Spanish Trail. Hotchkiss then adapted the Lake Fork trail system for the final approach south to Lake City.

The mining boom intensified in the San Juan Mountains, spreading to the upper Uncompahgre River area in 1875. At this time, prospectors established Ouray, another outpost community requiring connections with commercial centers. In 1876, Ouray businessmen raised \$10,000 to establish the Ouray & Lake Fork Wagon Toll Road Company, which adapted the Northern Branch of the Old Spanish Trail. The route began at an intersection with the Saguache & San Juan Toll Road, crossed the Lake Fork at what was probably the original ford, and continued west over Pine Creek Mesa (Figure 3). The area around Indian Creek became busier with traffic now flowing both to Lake City and Ouray.

With completion of the Saguache & San Juan and Ouray & Lake Fork toll roads, an overnight stage stop was established in 1878⁴ at the mouth of Indian Creek, two miles south of what was to become known as Johnson Gulch. The station was named Barnum in recognition of Lewis Barnum, a stage line superintendent who died of pneumonia in 1876. Barlow & Sanderson's Stage & Express Line used the station regularly for service between Saguache, Lake City, and Ouray. In addition to overnight accommodations, Barnum was equipped with corrals to change horses and a sizable log barn with a central entranceway large enough to accommodate stage coaches.

Civil War veteran "Captain" Benjamin Franklin Allen (1825-1892) acquired Barnum after several years, and the stage station became known as Allen's. Travel guide writer George Crofutt stayed at Allen's in the early 1880s, noting "The country immediately adjoining is good grazing ground and scattered along the river are numerous ranches where some vegetables and small grain are grown, and grass gathered for hay, all of which demands good prices in the mining camps to the southward."⁵

B.F. Allen operated Barnum in conjunction with a surrounding 440-acre ranch until 1887 when he sold it to F.M. Mendenhall. In turn, Mendenhall renamed the property Gateview Ranch and may have discontinued the stage station part of the operation. Subsequent owners were A.A. Arrington (1915), and Jack and Mary Carr (1936).

Johnson Stage Station (ca. 1884-1889)

Arrival of the D&RG in Gunnison Basin changed traffic patterns on the Lake Fork road system. The railroad crossed west over the Collegiate Mountains from the Arkansas River Valley and reached Gunnison in 1881. The next year, the Denver, South Park & Pacific Railway built tracks to Gunnison as well, while the D&RG extended its central mountain route farther west to Montrose. Both railroads established freight yards at Gunnison, while the D&RG also

³ Tucker, E.F. *Otto Mears and the San Juans*. Montrose, CO: Western Reflections, 2003, p16.

⁴ O'Rourke, Paul M *Frontier in Transition: A History of Southwestern Colorado*. United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, Colorado State Office, Denver, Colorado. Cultural Resources Series Number 10, p. 69.

⁵ Crofutt, George A. *Crofutt's Grip-Sack Guide to Colorado: A Complete Encyclopedia of the State*. Omaha, NE: Overland Publishing Company, 1885 [reprinted by Cubar Associates, Golden, CO: 1966], p.70.

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platted the hamlet of Soap Creek, later to become Sapinero in 1881⁶, near the confluence of the Lake Fork and Gunnison rivers. Sapinero functioned as a fuel and water stop on the railroad's Montrose line. The railroads provided travelers with quick transportation from Front Range cities, while also shipping freight at lower costs. Further, the railroads connected mining companies throughout the region with efficient smelters in Leadville, Denver, and Pueblo. The Sapinero and Gunnison stations quickly assumed strategic significance as centers for wagon and passenger traffic, rendering the Saguache & San Juan Toll Road less important than before. However, quality wagon roads had not yet been graded between Gunnison and the Indian Creek interchange, with a rough route sufficing as the main artery for a time.

Former Native American trails were once again resurrected as travel routes, one of which began at Barnum, descended north for two miles along the Lake Fork, and turned east up Johnson Gulch. The trail climbed to Sapinero Mesa and then continued north to the railroad station at Sapinero, with a branch to Gunnison. In 1882, famed Colorado toll road builder Otto Mears adapted the trail into the Barnum & Sapinero Toll Road. For project foreman, Mears employed Enos Hotchkiss and his son, Monette Hotchkiss, who had graded the Saguache & San Juan Toll Road in 1874. The new road from Barnum via an unnamed gulch (soon to be known as Johnson Gulch) was heralded as a boon to Lake City merchants and ore shippers because it shortcut the original route to Gunnison and Sapinero by ten miles.⁷

Despite early optimism about the Barnum & Sapinero Toll Road, complaints soon surfaced in local press concerning high tolls and extreme roughness. Also disappointing was the local stage company's reliance on old coaches and buckboard wagons rather than new, enclosed four-horse coaches as initially promised. The old traveling stock, according to Lake City newspapers, "is succumbing to the inevitable... breaking down on account of the long drives to be made between Barnum and Gunnison, and this place and Barnum."⁸ Concentrates from the Croke Smelter in Lake City were shipped via mule teams as far as Barnum and then switched to ox teams for the climb up Johnson Gulch. Much of the freight was hauled by S.T. Wicks, who ran Lake City's principal carrier.

Even when Mears completed the Barnum & Sapinero Toll Road up Johnson Gulch in 1882, he considered it only temporary. The D&RG began grading an ambitious 36-mile line up the Lake Fork Valley from Sapinero, which would render the road obsolete when finished. The Barnum & Sapinero road remained rough because further investment was unjustified, though the road actually remained vital for another seven years as the D&RG stalled in its efforts to lay track.

Meanwhile, Charlie Johnson had been working for Wicks as a teamster. Little is known about Johnson except that he came to the region during the late 1870s, may have hauled freight independently for a brief time, and then hired on with Wicks. During the early 1880s, he often hauled on the Barnum & Sapinero road and frequented Barnum during his trips. Around 1884, Johnson decided to retire from the rigors of freighting and determined that the Lake Fork road system had enough traffic to support a second stage station, in competition with Barnum. Johnson strategically chose the mouth of an unnamed gulch because it had much to offer. The location was directly on the Barnum & Sapinero road and close to the interchange of the Saguache, Ouray, and Lake City roads. The gulch also featured a permanent stream, while the mouth was sheltered and had plenty of flat land for livestock and hay. From this point on the gulch became known as Johnson Gulch.

The Johnson Stage Station thus went into business in 1884 or 1885, but it was not as grand as Barnum because Johnson lacked capital. Johnson's principal improvements were three small, dirt-roofed log cabins built adjacent to each other on the north side of the wagon road. He also erected a workshop shop and corral on the south side (since then washed away by a flashflood in 1929). Archival sources claim that one cabin was Johnson's living quarters, the second was a two-room saloon with overnight bunks, and the third was a one room guest cabin.

⁶ Santarelli family (no date given). *The Name Sapinero*. Retrieved from <http://oldsapinero.com/>.

⁷ Lozano, Bob *Sapinero-Barnum Toll Road* (unpublished manuscript), 2012.

⁸ *Silver World*, Lake City, Colorado. "Sapinero Shipping Point" September 16, 1882

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Johnson ran his stage station until he became ill during the late 1880s. He died in 1889. According to Lake City's *Hinsdale Phonograph* newspaper, the cause of his death was an excessive use of liquor: "Johnson was an old timer and straight dealer, but he concluded to run a saloon on his ranch and this proved to be his ruin and his death."⁹

A slightly different variation of Johnson's demise comes from the great-grandchildren of Nathan Carr, who arrived at the stage station in 1889 and cared for Johnson during his final days. According to Carr relatives, Johnson suffered from inoperable cancer. Confined in his cabin on a mattress, Johnson's solace was a whisky barrel arranged on a rack over his bed. Whisky from the barrel was supplied to Johnson day and night via tubing with a stopper.¹⁰

At the time of Johnson's death in 1889, the D&RG finally completed its Lake City line, with the track passing along the western edge of Johnson's hay field. Most people and freight then went by rail, greatly reducing traffic on the Barnum & Sapinero Road, which would have likely put Johnson out of business had he been alive. Johnson's burial site is uncertain, although he may be interred in an unmarked grave in the Carr family cemetery on the small knoll overlooking the stage station. Johnson never owned the land on which the stage station was built and it fell to his successor, Nathan Carr, to complete the homestead application.

Johnson Stage Station Evolves into Carr Ranch (1890-1967)

The Johnson Stage Station's next incarnation was as the Carr Ranch, developed during the 1890s by Nathan Carr and sons. Born in 1837 in Leesburg, Ohio, Nathan was one of ten children of Hezekiah and Esther Carr. Nathan married, moved to Kansas, and had three sons: Dudley, Emerson, and Charles Wesley. Carr's wife died in 1887 when the family was in Coffeyville, so Carr took his sons west. Dudley was twenty-one years old, Emerson was fifteen, and Charles only twelve. They became a team of tie hacks, producing finished railroad ties, which were in heavy demand as replacements on railroad lines. The family migrated to Colorado's Piedmont and then the Arkansas River Valley with their covered wagon and two oxen, one of which was named Whiskey.

In addition to being work animals, the oxen were much-loved pets of the Carr sons. The Carrs had been cutting ties for the D&RG's Calumet Mine spur near Salida, Colorado in late summer, 1888, when Whiskey suddenly became ill and died. Sorrow prevailed as Whiskey's carcass was left by the side of the road, but the boys were overjoyed the following day when the rejuvenated ox suddenly reappeared, very much alive¹¹. While at Calumet, Nathan averaged six to eight railroad ties per day, for which he was paid 14-cents each (for context, experienced tie hacks could produce as many as twenty per day).

After supplying the Calumet spur, the family worked their way into the Gunnison Basin and up the Lake Fork Valley in 1889, arriving at Johnson's Stage Station during Johnson's last months. The family headquartered at the station and cared for Johnson until his death later in the year. With no heirs to assume the station's ownership, Carr immediately completed a homestead application for the land, which included two 40-acre parcels now known as Carr Ranch. The homestead patent was officially granted six years later, on December 7, 1896.¹²

The Carr family ran a small lumber operation off-site from the ranch complex. A portable steam-powered sawmill was hauled to different timber sources in the area. The extant lumber planer was used to improve rough-cut boards into a finished product. Although the ranch continued to be the business headquarters, the Carrs moved the portable sawmill as needed so it would be near stands of trees. One of the family's favorite locations was Cherry Creek Basin, a small tributary of the Lake Fork next to a geologic formation known as The Gate, several miles south of the ranch. Dudley settled his own ranch at The Gate and married, but still worked the mill with his father and Charles.

⁹ *Hinsdale Phonograph*, Lake City, Colorado. "Obituaries" October 6, 1889.

¹⁰ *Carr Family Archives* (photographs, photostat copies, letters, receipts, genealogical background) Silver World offices and Hinsdale County Museum, Lake City, Colorado.

¹¹ *Carr Family Archives*

¹² *U.S. Land Patent Dept. of Interior General Land Office, 1896.*

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Middle brother Emerson grew restless during the 1890s and had a more checkered career, dabbling in horse rustling in the Montrose area. One day while he was assisting his father and brothers at the sawmill, a sheriff's posse unexpectedly arrived, and Emerson quickly hid in a pile of sawdust. After the posse departed, Emerson emerged and was whipped by his father, who insisted that he provide monetary retribution to the wronged horse owners. Emerson stayed in the Lake Fork Valley for a while and later moved to California where he lived out his days. An arbor at his retirement cottage displayed a small sign, "A Retired Horse Thief Lives Here."¹³

With Dudley at his own ranch and Emerson moving about, Charles increasingly influenced Carr Ranch's evolution. Although he and Nathan began pursuing agriculture and grazing, the ranch was still a node in the local transportation network. When the D&RG graded its Lake City branch past the property in 1889, the railroad built a pullout known as Tank Siding, (alternately called Madera; Spanish for lumber), as a water stop. The siding lacked a station building, but it did have a water tank, locomotive fuel, and took on occasional passengers as well as Carr lumber and cattle. Later, soda water from a natural spring on the ranch was piped to a concrete trough for thirsty travelers. Construction of Gunnison County Road 64 in the 1950s has since erased evidence of the siding, soda pipeline, and trough except for a partial foundation for the railroad water tank. The area is outside the stage station nomination.

The Carr Ranch resumed its role as a stage station for a few years during the mid-1890s when a new rush to the Gunnison Gold Belt again brought regular traffic to the old Barnum & Sapinero Toll Road passing through the ranch complex. In 1892, prospectors discovered gold near the confluence of Cebolla and Goose creeks, northwest on Sapinero Mesa. Other wealth-seekers came to examine the area in 1893, spreading east among the mesa's low granitic hills and finding yet more ore-bearing veins. The prospectors then established the new mining districts of Goose Creek, Powderhorn, Vulcan, and Poverty Gulch around the growing centers of activity. The 1893 Silver Crash abruptly wrecked Colorado's silver mining industry, throwing thousands out of work and destabilizing the general economy. Unemployed miners began congregating in the new districts while investors took interest in the gold for its constant price, all contributing to a rush in 1894. Prospectors found mineralized veins scattered from the head of Johnson Gulch all the way northeast into Gunnison Basin, with speculators promoting the region as the Gunnison Gold Belt. It should be noted that most of the veins were mineralized but devoid of gold, which prospecting ventures would soon realize.

Meanwhile, Nathan Carr and sons were among the forefront in prospecting Johnson Gulch. In a small tributary named Poverty Gulch, just a quarter mile east of their ranch, the Carrs staked the Cowboy and Bronco claims, and the Orphan claim in neighboring Spring Gulch. Like most other prospectors, the Carrs developed the claims as best as their limited capital and skills allowed, but did not become rich. Instead, the road traffic stimulated by the rush provided the family with good income.

Far from being in its twilight, the Barnum & Sapinero Toll Road passed directly through the Poverty Gulch district and connected the Lake Fork Valley to the boomtowns of Dubois, Goose Creek, Spencer, and Taliaferro, all on Sapinero Mesa. Rougher roads created by wagon traffic and a little grading extended to other districts and mining camps farther east. The Dubois *Chronicle* promoted the Barnum & Sapinero road as the main artery, noting in September 1894, that the route from Tank Siding to Dubois was four miles and required less than thirty minutes travel time. The Johnson Gulch route, the Dubois newspaper concluded, "is a boulevard compared with the other roads." The alternative route into the Gunnison Gold Belt, from Iola, was sixteen miles to Dubois, and "a tiresome overland drive in a second class wagon subjected to a five or six hour's drive in the wind, dust, storm or rain... at the end of which you are tired and covered with dust...all strangers wishing to visit the camp and Poverty Gulch should go as far as the 'Tank' on the Lake City branch," the newspaper concluded. "Mr. Carr will receive them in a courteous manner and carry them to the place where they wish to go at a fair price."¹⁴

As suggested by the *Chronicle*, the Carrs not only boarded travelers at the ranch, as Johnson did during the 1880s, but also provided wagon and hack service. Some of the business was on a custom basis to various towns, while most was to Dubois. Nathan Carr and Dubois entrepreneur William Gent established Carr & Gent in 1894 for daily trips,

¹³ Carr Family Archives.

¹⁴ *Dubois Chronicle* Dubois, Colorado, July 18, 1894

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and they operated a Dubois restaurant and mercantile offering meat, groceries, boots and shoes, and mining supplies. Apart from this, general road use and Tank Siding as an informal freight station also brought traffic to the Carr Ranch. Wagons shuttled ore down from scattered mines and hauled goods up to the various towns.

For a time, conditions even suggested that the ranch might become a townsite and ore treatment center in itself. The local press reported that Carr had offered a site at his ranch for a concentration mill, and in all likelihood a boomtown would develop in adjacent meadows. In June 1895, the *Gunnison Tribune* noted "it is learned there is serious talk of locating a townsite at Gateview, a water tank on the Rio Grande branch to Lake City. The belief exists that this new town would be the principal shipping point of ore from the Goose Creek district because it is the nearest railroad station. Should the townsite project materialize, Carr's Ranch would undoubtedly be utilized. Many of the prospectors are following the gold belt as far west as the Lake Fork and they are meeting with encouraging success."¹⁵

The Gunnison Gold Belt excitement slowed in 1896 and ended in 1897. The numbers of prospectors and speculators were out of proportion with the mineralized veins that actually contained gold, while most of the ore-bearing veins proved to be shallow and insufficient to repay the cost of development, let alone turn a profit. The miners of the Gunnison Gold Belt area moved on and traffic up and down the Johnson Gulch road once again diminished. Railroad passengers still used Tank Siding as an informal station, and the Carrs continued offering transportation services on a very reduced level.

Charles Carr worked his Poverty Gulch mining claims intermittently in subsequent years, but turned to the stability of his Lake Fork cattle and hay raising business. He married Maud Alice Weston (1879-1959) in Gunnison in 1900, and they had four children at the ranch: Jack (1901-1977), Ruth (1903-1956), Hazel (1905-1982), and Bruce (1908-1916).

Charlie Johnson's three closely spaced, dirt-roofed cabins remained the core of the ranch complex. Charles Carr and Maud connected them with drafty and uninsulated awning roofs and frame walls for additional interior space. They used the former saloon (F2) as a dining room and installed a McCormick cream separator, wood ice box, and shelves to display Maud's collection of ceramic and porcelain pitchers.¹⁶

The original residence cabin (F1) became the couple's parlor, furnished with a gun cabinet, a wood and coal stove, desk, and upright piano. Charles and Maud were very progressive in a technological sense, purchasing a cylinder phonograph and, later, a radio. The awning space between the cabins was transformed into a kitchen equipped with a Monarch wood burning cook range with warming oven. The couple's master bedroom was in a small frame addition at the back of the original residence.¹⁷ Nothing of this addition remains.

The third cabin (Figure 4, F3) in Johnson's original cluster was tied to the others with the same type of awning and walls. The Carrs rented the cabin and provided board to local teachers teaching at the small one room schoolhouse located ½ mile south of the ranch for \$25 per month.¹⁸ The ranch complex included a fourth log cabin (Figure 4, F4) where the Carrs' ranch hands lived.¹⁹

Between 1900 and 1930, Charles and Maud expanded their ranch holdings with cash and homestead entries, amassing a total of 1,000 acres. They also added outbuildings characteristic of ranches evolving over time. One was a root cellar (Figure 4, F6) dug into the hill behind the cabins and across the creek. Another was an auto garage (Figure 4, F10) with a corrugated metal roof. Grandchildren recall that within the garage was a cubbyhole desk which had originally accompanied Nathan Carr from Kansas. The garage has since collapsed and the desk is now gone.²⁰ Charles conducted blacksmithing and woodworking in separate shops. The blacksmiths shop is now in ruins (Figure 4, F8), while the woodworking shop is gone. The ranch complex included a few other outbuildings not

¹⁵ *Gunnison Tribune*, Gunnison, Colorado, June 21, 1895.

¹⁶ [Carr Family Archives.](#)

¹⁷ [Carr Family Archives.](#)

¹⁸ [Carr Family Archives.](#)

¹⁹ [Carr Family Archives.](#)

²⁰ [Carr Family Archives.](#)

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mentioned in archival sources. Among them were two privies (their pits are Figure 4, F7 and F9), and a second root cellar (F13).

Maud fenced a plot of ground in front of the cabins for a garden (Figure 4, F5). Some of the fence was picket, and the yard featured flowers, shrubs, jasmine, and hop vines, many of which continue to thrive. Domestic water was furnished from a 16'-deep water well accessed with rope pulley and bucket. The well's location is unknown.

The Carrs buried a few family members in a small cemetery (Figure 4, F14) on a knoll overlooking the ranch complex. Interred were Nathan Carr in 1908, Bruce Carr in 1916 when only age eight, and Easton S. Weston in 1911, father-in-law of Charles Carr. A granite headstone for all three was installed in 1993 by remaining members of the Carr family.

In 1929, a flash flood cascading down Johnson Gulch inundated portions of the ranch complex, destroying everything on the Barnum & Sapinero road's south side but sparing the cabins. Washed away were a horse barn, corral, Charlie Johnson's original blacksmith shop, the woodworking shop, and a vegetable garden. The flood also deposited a thick layer of sediment over the alfalfa field's upper portion.

End of Ranching (1946-1967)

Charles Carr continued ranching operations at the mouth of Johnson Gulch into 1945, when he died. His widow, Maud, transferred ownership to her eldest son, Jack Carr, in 1951, and he worked the land along with the rest of his extensive ranch holdings in the valley. Maud lived at the stage station seasonally for a few years and then died in Gunnison in 1959. She and her husband are buried in the Gunnison Cemetery. In 1967, Jack Carr sold the historic 1,000 acre ranch, including the stage station, to Stan and Jean Smock, whose interest was preservation. With the Boulder, Colorado based Conservation Fund acting as an intermediary, the Smocks in turn transferred the property to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in 1997. The BLM continues to maintain the ranch land's historic character, and has set aside funding for stabilization, repair, and rehabilitation of the stage station cabins. When completed, the site will feature one fully stabilized cabin (the saloon) and the remaining cabins will be partially stabilized. Interpretive panels will be installed as well as a designated walking trail through the site. Visitors will be able to safely tour through the site and walk away with a glimpse of what life was like in the late 1800s at a busy stage station.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository: History Colorado

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): 5GN.6070

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 23.8 Acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|--------------|------------|
| 1. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

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- | | | |
|-------------|------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Zone: 13 | Easting: 305492 | Northing: 4243920 |
| 2. Zone: 13 | Easting: 305647 | Northing: 4243920 |
| 3. Zone: 13 | Easting: 305813 | Northing: 4243802 |
| 4. Zone: 13 | Easting : 305729 | Northing: 4243738 |
| 5. Zone: 13 | Easting : 305744 | Northing: 4243508 |
| 6. Zone: 13 | Easting : 305556 | Northing: 4243520 |

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

The property boundaries encompass the stage station complex and an agricultural field extending to the west and to the south. See the attached map (Figure 2) for an illustration. The northern and eastern boundaries of the site follow abrupt topographic changes ranging from the flat gulch mouth to steep slopes. The southern boundary is a historic agricultural fence-line. The western boundary is a combination of another historic fence-line and Gunnison County Road 64.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries encompass all buildings, structures, and archaeological features directly attributable to the stage station and ranch headquarters. The boundaries also include an agricultural field that was clearly associated with the ranching operation.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Elizabeth Francisco, Archaeologist- Bureau of Land Management Gunnison Field Office; Eric Twitty, Archaeologist- Mountain States Historical; Grant Houston, Historian -Hinsdale County Historical Society

organization: Bureau of Land Management

street & number: 210 West Spencer, Suite A

city or town: Gunnison state: CO zip code: 81230

e-mail efrancisco@blm.gov

telephone: 970-642-4948

date: 3/22/2017

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

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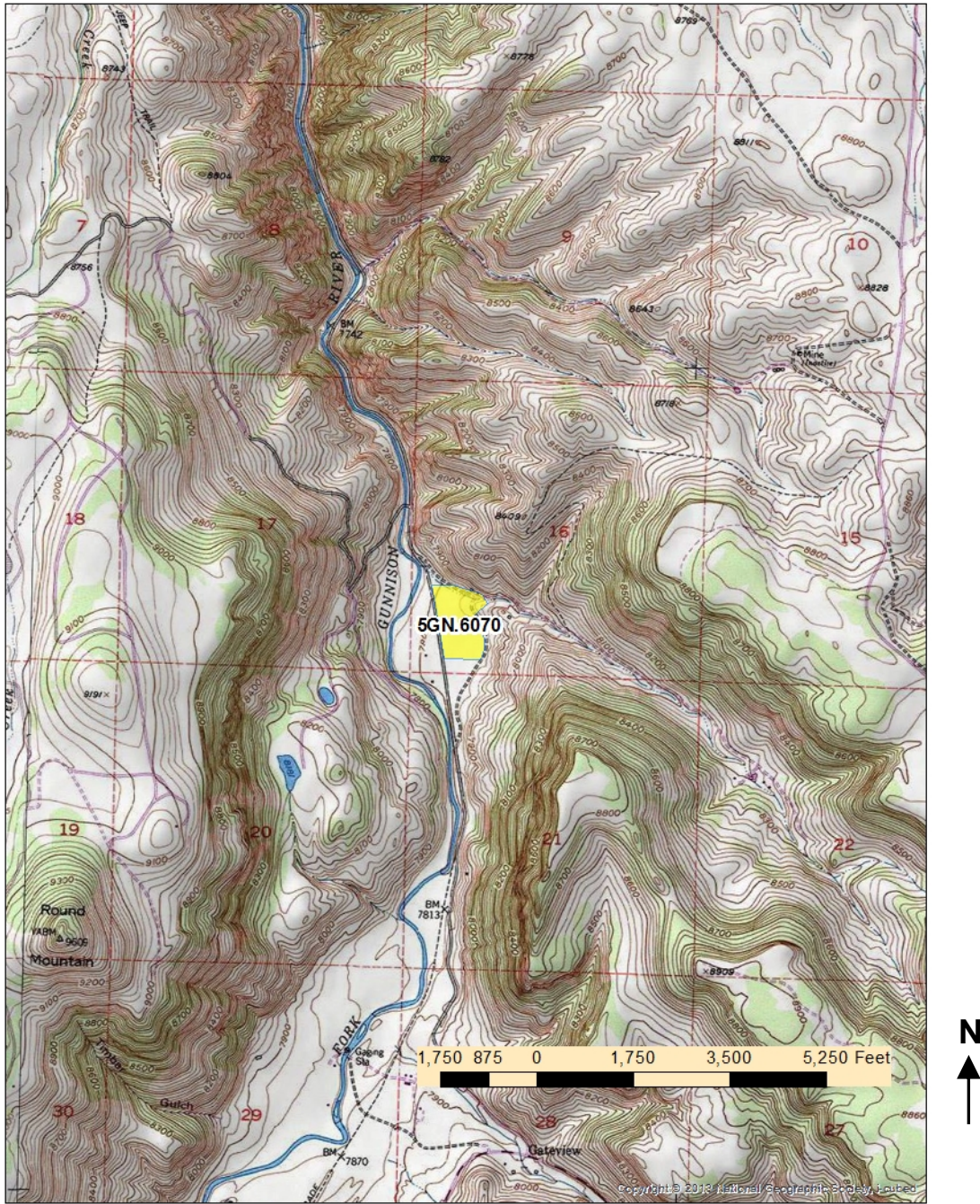


Figure 1: USGS Topographic Map Showing Location of Johnson Stage Station Site; Gateview Quadrangle

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Figure 2: Aerial Map of Johnson Stage Station Nomination Boundary

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. 13; 305492E 4243920N | 4. 13; 305729E 4243738N |
| 2. 13; 305647E 4243920N | 5. 13; 305744E 4243508N |
| 3. 13; 305813E 4243802N | 6. 13; 305556E 4243520N |

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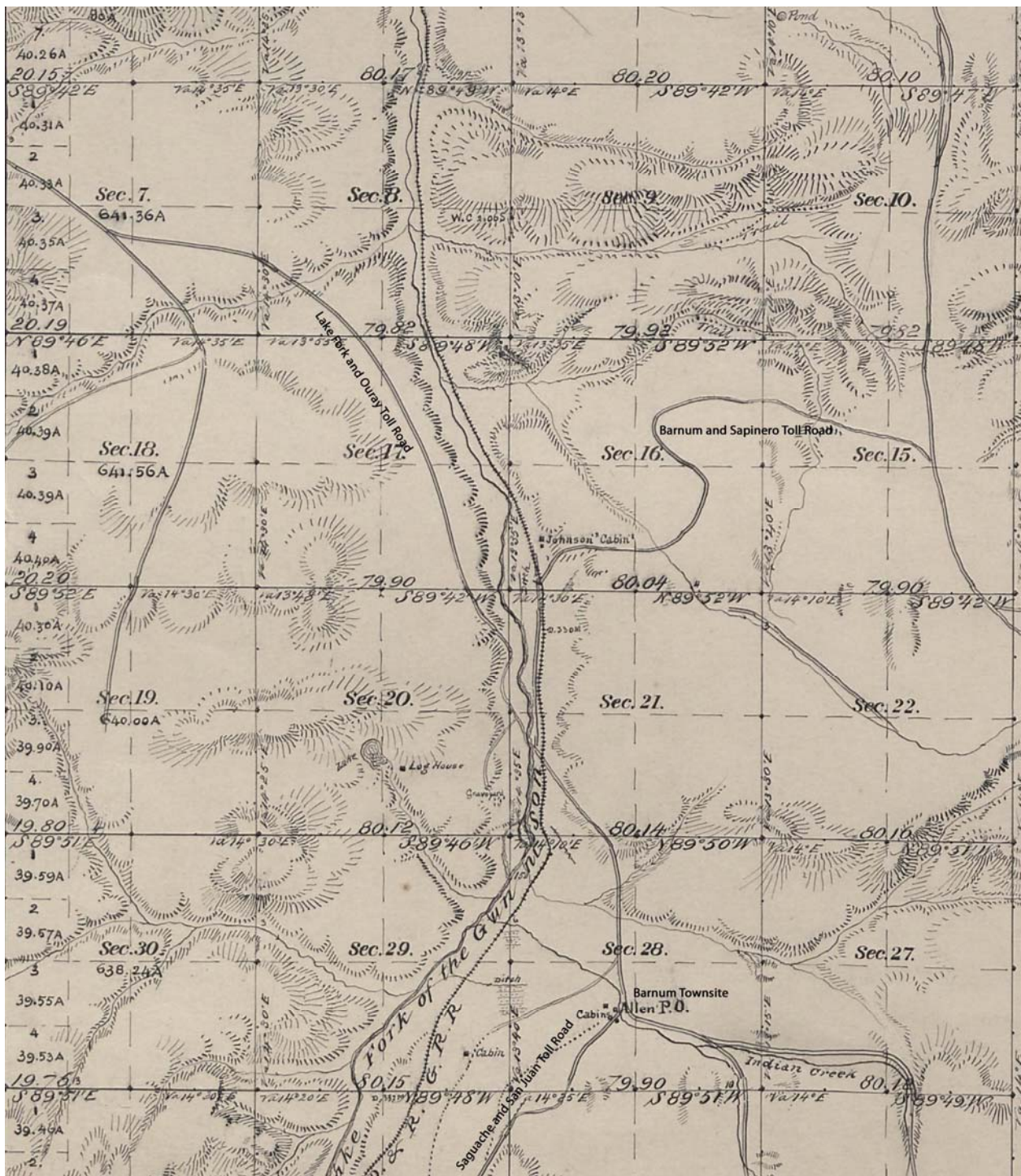


Figure 3: 1889 USGLO Plat showing general area and toll roads

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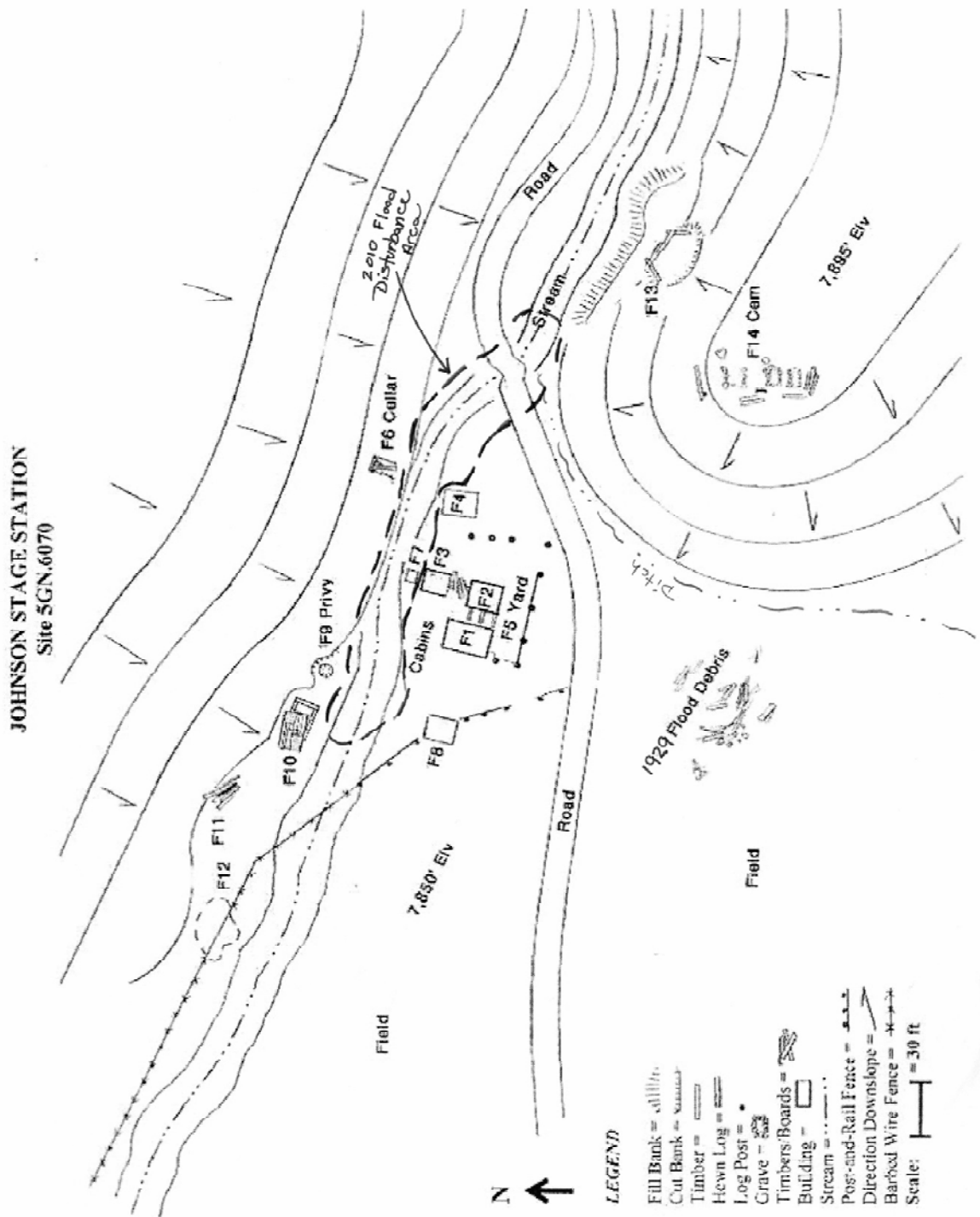


Figure 4: Detail Map of Johnson Stage Station with Site Features

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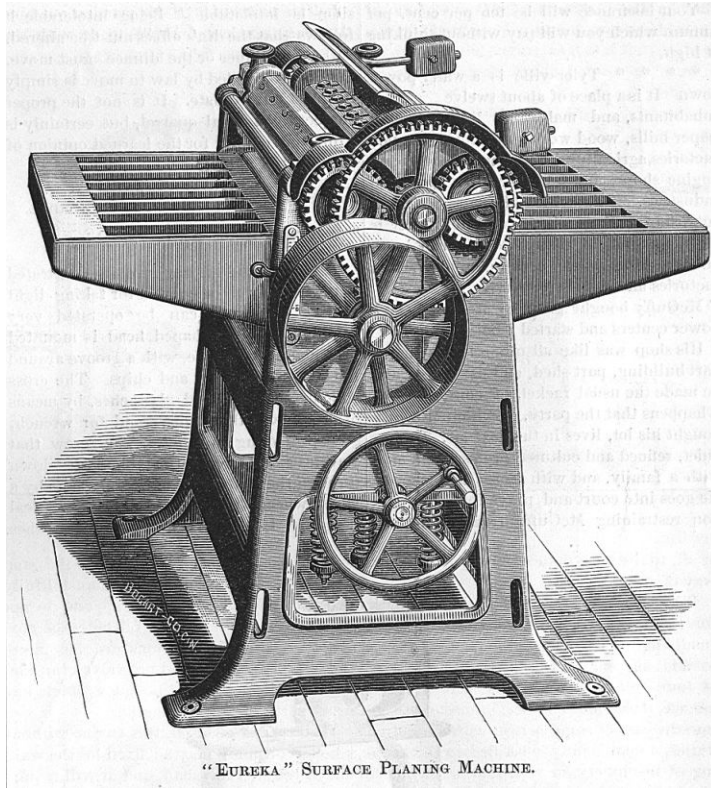


Figure 5: Example of lumber planer similar to the type the Carr family used.

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Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Johnson Stage Station/Carr Ranch
City or Vicinity: Powderhorn
County: Gunnison State: Colorado
Photographer: Eric Twitty
Date Photographed: August 2015

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

Photograph Number	Description of View	Direction Facing
1	In the east overview, the stage station is tucked into the mouth of Johnson Gulch, at exact center. Gunnison County Road 64 crosses lower-center, and the Lake Fork of the Gunnison River is at bottom. The alfalfa field on the road's far side is within the site.	East
2	In the east overview, the stage station is tucked into the mouth of Johnson Gulch, left of center. Gunnison County Road 64 crosses lower-center, and the Lake Fork of the Gunnison River is at bottom. The alfalfa field on the road's far side is within the site.	East
3	In the east overview, the stage station is tucked into the mouth of Johnson Gulch, at exact center. Gunnison County Road 64 crosses lower-center, and the Lake Fork of the Gunnison River is at bottom. The alfalfa field on the road's far side is within the site.	East
4	View northeast across the site's alfalfa field at the mouth of Johnson Gulch. The stage station is hidden amid the cottonwood trees at center.	Northeast
5	View east across the site's alfalfa field at the mouth of Johnson Gulch. The stage station is hidden amid the cottonwood trees at center.	East
6	View east at the stage station complex, in the cottonwood stand. The Johnson Cabin (F1) is visible at center, and the Carr Cemetery (F14) is on the knoll at right.	East
7	Northwest overview of the stage station complex. The roofless buildings are, left to right: Johnson cabin and saloon (F1, F2), guest cabin (F3), and guest cabin (F3). The cottonwoods grow along a streambed.	Northwest
8	Northwest overview of the stage station complex. The roofless buildings are, left to right: shop ruin (F8), Johnson cabin and saloon (F1, F2), guest cabin (F3), and guest cabin (F3).	Northwest
9	View northeast of the Johnson cabin (F1) at left, and saloon (F2) adjoining at right. The cabin was built around 1880 and the saloon shortly after.	Northeast
10	Southeast quarterview at the Johnson cabin (F1).	Southeast
11	View of the Johnson cabin's (F1) east wall. The window at right was enlarged with shelving for a kitchen pantry accessed from within and outside the cabin.	East
12	Northwest quarterview at Johnson's cabin, left, and his saloon, right (F1, F2).	Northwest

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13	Southwest quarterview at the saloon (F2). The boards at right are a partially intact awning.	Southwest
14	Southwest quarterview at the guest cabin (F3), right, and the saloon (F2), left.	Southwest
15	Southeast quarterview at the guest cabin (F3).	Southeast
16	Southeast quarterview at the second guest cabin (F4).	Southeast
17	Northwest quarterview at the second guest cabin (F4).	Northwest
18	North view of a shop ruin (F8), at one time a front-gabled building sided with sawmill slabs. The shop was erected circa 1900.	North
19	In the east view, the shop ruin (F8) is at right, and the Johnson cabin (F1) is behind. A rail fence extends left.	East
20	View southeast of the guest cabin's privy pit (F7), center. The guest cabin stands behind. The embedded timber at right was a footer for the privy building. The pit probably lacks meaningful deposits.	Southeast
21	View southwest at a garage ruin (F10), a shed built sometime after 1930. Remnants of the roof and walls remain.	Southwest
22	South view at the eastern root cellar (F13) built into the south side of Johnson Gulch's mouth.	South
23	In the east view, the Carr cemetery is on the knoll at center. The stage station is left and out of view.	East
24	View southeast at the Carr Cemetery (F14), on the summit of a knoll. Graves are in the brush at center.	Southeast
25	East view of the headstone marking the Carr Cemetery (F14). Names are: Nathan C. Carr, Bruce W. Carr, and Easton S. Weston. Their graves are behind.	East
26	View east at the southern, and best preserved, grave in the Carr Cemetery (F14). The grave was for Easton S. Weston.	East
27	View east at the northern grave, for Nathan Carr.	East
28	South overview from the stage station across the site's alfalfa field. The line of trees grows along the Lake Fork of the Gunnison River.	South
29	Southwest overview across the site's alfalfa field. The line of trees grows along the Lake Fork of the Gunnison River.	Southwest
30	View south along a fence bordering the alfalfa field's eastern edge.	South
31	Detail of a wagon axle lying in the stage station complex.	Detail
32	Detail of a belt-driven lumber planing machine abandoned west of the stage station complex. The machine remains from the Carr family's lumber business, circa 1900.	Detail

Historic Image Log

Number	Description	Source
H001	An early view of the complex of log cabins at Carr Ranch	Hinsdale County Museum courtesy Maud Carr
H002	Overview of Carr Ranch with Tank Siding in background. Remnant of the Old Spanish Trail (later the Ouray and Lake Fork Toll road) is visible on hillside	Hinsdale County Museum
H003	Nathan C. Carr (1837-1908)	Hinsdale County Museum
H004	Charles Wesley Carr (1876-1946)	Hinsdale County Museum

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H005	Extended Carr Family gathering in front of cabin used by Maud and Charles as a parlor. Right to left: Maud Carr with her son Bruce Carr, Maud's mother, Alice Spear Weston; Hazel Carr, Lillian Carr, Nettie Carr, Dorothy Carr, Ruth Carr, Charles Carr, unknown, unknown	Charles M Chidester (son of Hazel Carr)
H006	Children of Charles and Maud Carr, ca. 1907: Ruth, Hazel, and Jack. A fourth child, Bruce, is not pictured, he was born in 1908 and died in 1916	Hinsdale County Museum

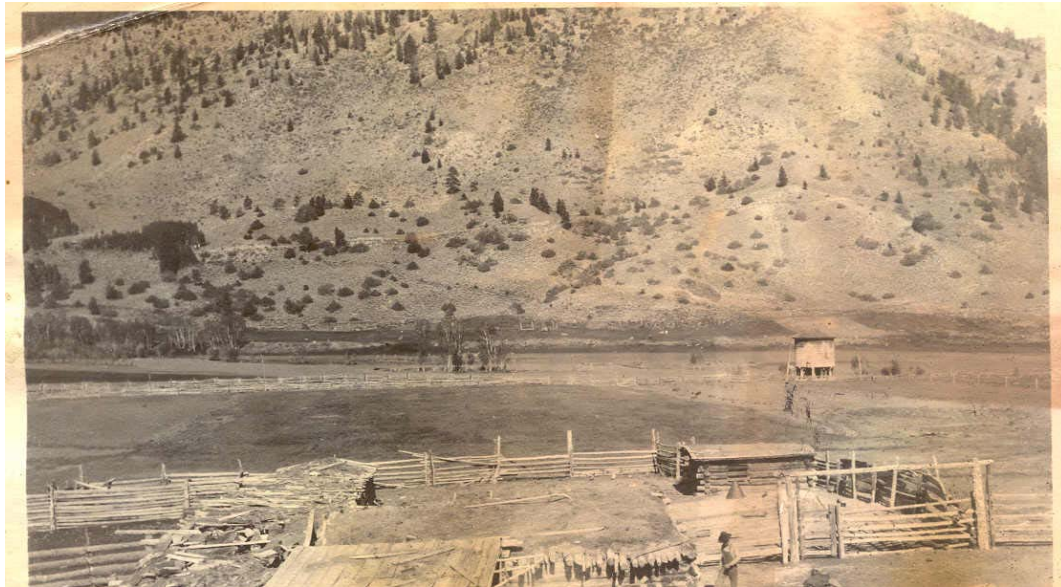
Historic Photographs



H001: An early view of the complex of log cabins at Johnson Stage Station, ca. 1889. Facing east, Johnson Cabin and the Saloon are to the left and Guest Cabin to the right

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H002: Overview of Carr Ranch with Tank Siding in background at right. Remnant of the Old Spanish Trail (later the Ouray and Lake Fork Toll road) or a possible variant is visible on hillside, unknown date. Johnson Cabin is visible in foreground and the workshop to the right



H003: Nathan C. Carr (1837-1908), unknown date



H004: Charles Wesley Carr (1876-1946), unknown date

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H005: Extended Carr Family gathering in front of cabin used by Maud and Charles as a parlor, ca. 1915. Right to left: Maud Carr with her son Bruce Carr, Maud's mother, Alice Spear Weston; Hazel Carr, Lillian Carr, Nettie Carr, Dorothy Carr, Ruth Carr, Charles Carr, unknown, unknown.

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H006: Children of Charles and Maud Carr, ca. 1907: Ruth, Hazel, and Jack.
A fourth child, Bruce, is not pictured; he was born in 1908 and died in 1916.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management. U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.