

NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION SUMMARY SHEET

Property: Matus/Mesa House

Location: 856 W. Calle Santa Ana, Tucson, Pima County, Arizona

Ownership: San Ignacio Yaqui Council, Inc.

Nomination Prepared By: Linda Gregonis, Archaeological Consultant

Description: The Matus/Mesa House, constructed circa 1926, is located in the Yaqui village of Old Pasqua, which is presently a part of Tucson, Arizona. The property is the best remaining example of Yaqui vernacular architecture and construction from the 1920s period, and represents the Yaqui exodus from Mexico in the wake of cultural persecution. The property consists of a one-story adobe and masonry house with adjacent storage rooms and a cross within an adobe walled yard. House construction, as viewed by the Yaquis, was seen as a process, rather than a one-time endeavor. The Matus/Mesa House clearly reflects that process.

Significance: The house and yard are typical of those structures built during the 1920s in Old Pasqua, a subdivision created by the City of Tucson in 1921. Old Pasqua is the oldest of the Yaqui communities in the Tucson vicinity. The Matus/Mesa House and property is significant under Criteria "A" for its association with the social and ethnic history of the Yaqui Indians in southern Arizona. The property is also significant under Criterion "C" for its representative architecture and layout.

Suggested Level of Significance: Local, because the Matus/Mesa House is the best remaining example of a Yaqui property in the village of Old Pasqua. The property represents the evolution of Yaqui culture from the time of their exodus from Mexico through their settlement in southern Arizona.

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National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

FINAL

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Matus, Antonio, House and Property
other names/site number Mesa, Elisa, House and Property

2. Location

street & number 856 W. Calle Santa Ana N/A not for publication
city, town Tucson N/A vicinity
state Arizona code AZ county Pima code 019 zip code 85705

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>1</u>	<u> </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>1</u>	<u>4</u> objects
		<u>4</u>	<u>6</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: _____
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Theresa Kerner 6/4/91
Signature of certifying official Date
State Historic Preservation Officer
State or Federal agency and bureau 00

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of commenting or other official _____ Date _____
State or Federal agency and bureau _____

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:
 entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
 determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
 determined not eligible for the National Register.
 removed from the National Register.
 other, (explain:) _____

FINAL
JUNE 2011
FROM SHPO

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)
Domestic, single dwelling

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)
Domestic, single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

Other: Yaqui with Mexican additions

foundation Earth
walls plastered adobe
plastered masonry
roof wood
other _____

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Summary

The Antonio Matus house, built around 1926, is located in the Yaqui village of Pascua, which is now part of Tucson, Arizona. The property is typical of Yaqui houses and yards constructed in Pascua during the 1920s. It consists of a one-story adobe and masonry structure with adjacent storage rooms within a walled yard (see Map 1). Alterations to the original three-room adobe structure include the addition of a plastered masonry porch and bedroom, a plastered masonry "closet," and a small hallway. The yard in front of the house maintains the character of yards in the early village. Vegetation and a wooden cross were most likely placed in the yard by Yaquis. The storage rooms, shrines, and the wishing well in the yard probably postdate Yaqui use of the residence. An adobe wall surrounding the yard replaced a fence that once outlined the Matus property. The changes to the house and yard are in keeping with Yaqui (and Mexican) vernacular architecture and do not detract from the structure.

House construction in Pascua is looked at by Yaquis (and Mexicans) as a process rather than an end result. The Antonio Matus house clearly reflects that process. It is representative of the ethnic heritage and social history of the village of Old Pascua, for which the house and property are considered significant.

House

The house is at the north end of the Matus property. The portion of the house built around 1926 is adobe and consists of three rooms (a kitchen and two bedrooms), with a low-pitch, gabled, hewn-timber roof and a concrete floor (see Map 1 and Figures 1 and 2). The pitched roof is specifically a Yaqui building trait. The original structure measures 26 feet east-west by 14.5 feet north-south (outside dimensions). Walls of the structure are about 8 feet high and interior ceilings are low. It is of indigenous Yaqui style.

Additions to the original structure include a bedroom on the southwest corner, a "closet" on the northwest side of the house, an enclosed porch with a dirt floor, and a hall-like storage area on the east side of the house (see Map 1 and Figure 1). These additions are made of masonry and are flat-roofed. Their construction date is unknown, but the best

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estimation is that the additions date to Mexican occupation of the house, which began some time between 1950 and 1962. The flat roof on the addition is a good indicator of Mexican, rather than Yaqui construction. The two rooms on the south side are 28 feet east-west by 12 feet north-south (outside dimensions). The main entry into the structure is an arched doorway that opens into the enclosed porch.

Window frames in the original structure are hand-made of 1 x 4s nailed together to form a box. The house interior has several built-in niches, a wood-burning kitchen stove, and several hand-made counters and cabinets. Although the exact date of construction of the interior features is unknown, they may date to the 1920s. There is a river-rock fireplace in the southwest corner of the added bedroom and a wagon wheel has been set into the front porch wall to serve as a window.

The house has been subjected to some vandalism. It needs rewiring, replastering around windows and doors, and proper plumbing. (The kitchen sink, the only water into the house, currently drains onto the ground outside the north window.) The house is in fair to poor condition, primarily due to lack of funds for improvement and repair.

The small size of the house is typical of those built in Old Pascua in the 1920s. Traditionally, builders would start small and add on as the need arose, often when members of an extended family came together to live in the village. The houses in Pascua reflect the skills of the builders and the materials, funds, and labor available.

Site and Landscaping

From the 1920s until recently, Yaqui household activities were centered outside, in fenced yards that usually contained ramadas and kitchens. Since the 1920s, many other houses in the village have been added on to, razed, or rehabilitated. This has resulted in the loss of yards as a working and living space in the traditional Yaqui manner. The spacious, shaded dirt yard within the 7-foot adobe wall surrounding the Matus property reflects the original character of yards in Old Pascua.

The yard measures 45 feet east-west by 90 feet north-south. On the south side of the yard are four shrines and a wishing well, probably constructed by the final resident, Elisa Mesa, a Mexican. In the center of the south side of the yard is a cross, most likely erected by Yaqui residents and maintained by Mrs. Mesa. In the southeast corner of the yard is a rectangular, trash-filled pit and another circular pit that is probably a filled-in well (see Map 2) used from the 1920s until the 1970s (when Old Pascua got a piped-in water system). The south end of the yard is bounded by a chain-link and wood fence with a large wooden gate. Plantings in the yard, including a huge prickly pear, a mesquite tree, a palo verde tree, and carrizo, could date to

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the 1920s. They are typical plants grown and used by Yaquis in Arizona and in Mexico. The adobe wall most likely was built by Eliseo and Elisa Mesa, the final occupants. The date of construction is unknown. The wall replaced a fence, probably built of scavenged materials, that once surrounded the yard.

West of the main house are storage rooms (measuring 34 feet north-south by about 13 feet east-west at their widest), which have been built against the west wall yard, creating a small, patio-like space between the house and the sheds. The storage rooms are also of plastered masonry. At the north end of these detached rooms is a functioning wood-frame and cement block outhouse. (Although it has been hooked up to a water line, the house has never been hooked up to a sewer.) Construction dates of these additions are unknown, but probably are later than 1937.

Integrity

The additions to the house and yard, probably made by the Mesa family, do not detract from the Yaqui house. Original portions can be distinguished easily from the additions. The house is similar to other houses in the village, which also were built by accretion as more room was needed. The Matus property is one of four or five remaining in Old Pascua and neighboring Barrio Belen that were not torn down, replaced, or drastically altered in the 1960s and 1980s.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Ethnic Heritage, Native American

Social History

Architecture

Period of Significance

1926-1941

Significant Dates

1926

Cultural Affiliation

Yaqui

Significant Person

Architect/Builder

Antonio Matus

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Summary

The Matus house and property are significant under Criterion A for its association with the social and ethnic history of the Yaquis in southern Arizona and under Criterion C for the architecture and layout of the property. The house and yard are typical of structures built in the 1920s in Old Pascua, a Yaqui village established as a Tucson subdivision in 1921. Old Pascua is the oldest organized community of Yaquis in the Tucson area. The village was begun in response to Anglo efforts to organize the Yaquis into a recognizable social entity. The history of the Matus property since 1926, including its transference to other Yaquis and eventually to a Mexican couple, and the architectural changes to the property are characteristic of building and ownership patterns in Old Pascua.

Historic Context

The local historic context applicable to the Matus Property is the establishment and development of the Yaqui village of Pascua.

The late nineteenth and early twentieth century were turbulent times for the Yaquis of Sonora, Mexico. Persecuted by the Mexican government, which had developed an official "relocation" policy in the early 1880s, many Yaquis left their homeland. From the 1880s until 1915, it is estimated that between 2,000 and 3,000 refugees came to the United States. Many settled in the Tucson, Phoenix, and Yuma areas, where they became railroad workers and farm laborers. Although the U.S.-Mexican border was open at the time, and movement was unrestricted, the Yaquis feared deportation back to Mexico. Because of this, they often hid their cultural identity, suppressing their cultural and religious customs and occasionally changing their names to better blend in with the Mexican population in the United States. The actual number of Yaquis who arrived in the United States is unclear because of the hidden nature of their travels.

See continuation sheet

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The United States government did not formally declare the Yaqui to be political refugees, but in essence took the position of granting the people political asylum. Once the Yaquis trusted that they were not going to be deported, they began to revive their religious customs and identify themselves as Yaqui; and they began to informally organize themselves into Yaqui communities.

In the early 1900s, there were four areas of Yaqui settlement in the Tucson area: Mezquital on the east bank of the Santa Cruz River, five miles south of Tucson; Barrio Anita on the north edge of Tucson; Tierra Floja, a large, irrigated area north of Tucson where Yaquis lived as farm workers; and Ili Hu'upam (Little Mesquite, called Kampo Burro in Spicer), a farm camp in Marana, a town north of Tucson. Today, Mezquital and Tierra Floja are gone. Barrio Anita is, as it always has been, a mixed community of Tohono O'odham, Mexicans, and Yaquis. It is primarily Mexican in population. Barrio Anita was impacted in the late 1950s and early 1960s by the construction of Interstate 10. Ili Hu'upam is now known as Yoem Pueblo. About 20 families live there. Barrio Libre, another area of Yaqui settlement in Tucson, which dates to the early 1920s, is also a mixed Yaqui-Tohono O'odham-Mexican community. (Several neighborhoods have been known as Barrio Libre, including Barrio Historico, a National Register district on the edge of downtown Tucson. Today's Barrio Libre is south and west of Barrio Historico.)

In 1920, A.M. Franklin, a Tucson real-estate operator, offered to provide 40 acres of land on the northwest outskirts of Tucson as a village where Yaquis could establish the center for a "Yaqui Nation" in Arizona. The idea of the village was promoted by Kirk Moore, a Tucson lawyer, and Juan Muñoz "Pistolá," a Mayo Indian, who was seen by Tucson's white community as a "leader" of the Yaquis. (The Yaquis never recognized him as such.) The purpose of the village was to bring all of the Yaquis of southern Arizona together in one place. Thus, Pascua became the first organized community of Yaquis in the Tucson area.

The majority of Tucson-area Yaquis were not interested in the plan, as they feared surveillance by U.S. government officials. But about 20 families moved to Pascua (named that because the idea was supposed to have been conceived on Easter Sunday). The families built their houses and yards on lots that had been platted out by Franklin, but they did not always follow the exact lot designations. (For example, the Matus property is 1 1/2 lots in size.) As the Yaquis became aware that government activity in the new village was casual, more Yaqui families moved there, primarily from Tierra Floja and Barrio Anita. One basic incentive for many of the families was the opportunity to build a structure that was more permanent than the lean-tos and shacks they had been living in along the Santa Cruz River. Most of the Yaquis squatted on the land, rather than purchasing it.

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Pascua quickly became a center for ceremonial practices, of which the best known (to the Anglo community at least) are the Easter Week ceremonies. By the 1930s, about 450 people were living at Pascua.

Also in the 1920s, another subdivision was established to the south of Pascua. Called Barrio Belén, it was occupied at first by Mexican families. Within a short time, however, some Yaqui families moved into Barrio Belén and a few Mexican families into Pascua. There was some intermarriage between the groups, so a few households today reflect a dual Yaqui-Mexican heritage. The majority of households in the Pascua subdivision remain Yaqui.

In 1959, Yaquis in Pascua sought to improve their houses through assistance from various sources. In deciding on the proper course of action, community members hit upon the idea of relocating on available federal land southwest of Tucson. The Pascua Yaqui Association was formed, and a bill pushed through Congress to transfer about 200 acres of land to the Yaquis. A federal grant from the Office of Economic Opportunity followed, and by the late 1960s, New Pascua had been established. New Pascua has since been declared officially as a reservation, and the Yaquis were granted official status as an American Indian tribe in 1978. About a third of the residents of Old Pascua (as it is now known) moved to the new settlement.

Today, about 45 families, averaging 5 people in number, live in Old Pascua full-time. Many Yaquis spend their time between Old and New Pascua, or between Old Pascua and Yoem Pueblo, as family and ceremonial needs demand.

Property History

Antonio Matus built his house and dug a well some time around 1926. Matus, who held a ceremonial post at Pascua, lived alone throughout his stay in the village. Like many other Yaquis, he may have worked for the railroad, or as a farm worker in the cotton fields, and he was often gone from his residence. In 1936 and 1937, when Edward and Rosamond Spicer lived in Pascua doing ethnological research, they mapped the village, marking the Matus house as "unoccupied" (see Map 2). In the Spicers' field notes, a list of occupants notes Matus as "not home," implying that the house was vacant only temporarily.

In 1937, the house was given by Matus to his niece, Julia A Valenzuela (also known as Julia Acuña). She retained title to the property from 1937 until at least June of 1950. Other residents of the property during that period included Salamina Valenzuela, Jesús Valenzuela (possibly

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Jesusa Valenzuela--Salamina's sister--or Jesús Valencia--Salamina's husband), Nacho Tavichi, and Luis Acuña, all of Yaqui descent. These people were undoubtedly related to one another. The method of property transfer, through giving rather than selling, is typical in Pascua.

Some time between 1950 and 1962, the property was transferred to Eliseo and Elisa Mesa, a Mexican couple. Eliseo Mesa died in 1968, and Elisa Mesa in 1988. She gave the property to the San Ignacio Yaqui Council of Old Pascua.

Architectural Context--Local

The original houses built in Pascua were small, constructed of material available to the builders, including adobe, tin, and cast-off boards. The focus of family life was the fenced yard surrounding the house. The yards usually had outdoor cooking areas, ramadas, and ramada-like storage sheds. Each yard also contained a moveable cross, the focus of household ceremonies and a symbol to protect the household from harm. It was typical for extended families (parents, children, copadres, comadres, grandparents, aunts and uncles and their children) to live together in one compound, so the size of the houses and yards often reflected the size and nature of the families.

The Matus property is a clear example of an early Pascua house and yard. The significance of the property under Criterion C lies in the way the house and yard reflect the structural arrangement of a 1920s and 1930s Yaqui compound (see photocopies of plates from Spicer 1940), in the original construction of the house, and in the typical Yaqui-Mexican way in which rooms have been added to the structure.

Integrity

Most of the older homes in Old Pascua have been demolished, and many have been replaced with low- or no-cost-to-the-owner housing as a result of Community Block Development Grants and assistance from Habitat for Humanity. Houses and compounds on the east and west side of the Matus property (see Map 2) that dated to the 1930s or earlier have been demolished, and on the north side replaced with new housing. A yard enclosed by a sheet-metal fence remains on the west side of the Matus property, but only an open shed remains on that property. The Matus property is one of four or five residences in Old Pascua and Barrio Belen that retain characteristics of the 1921 to 1940 village.

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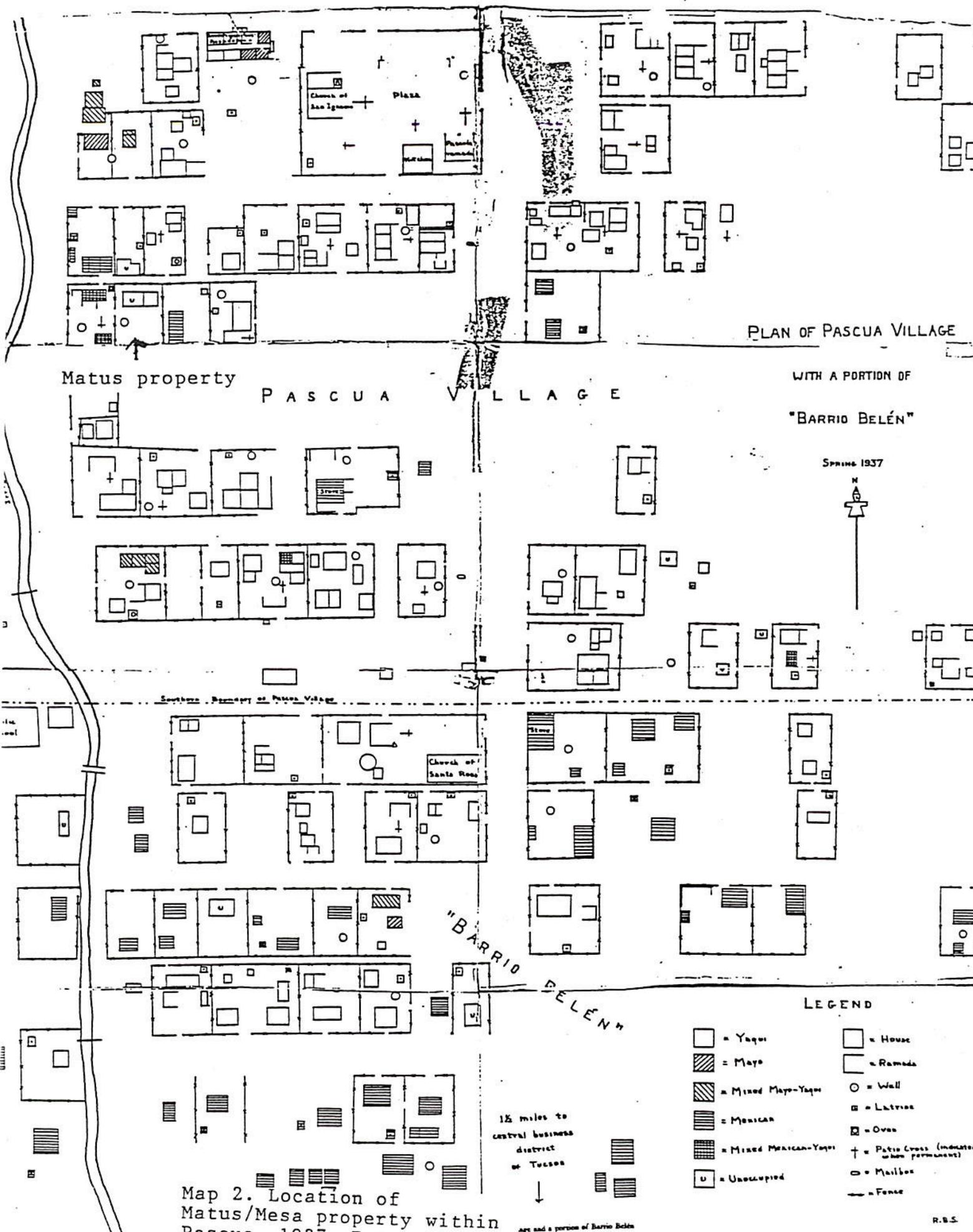
Section number 9 Page 2

Edward H. Spicer, The Yaquis: A Cultural History. The University of Arizona Press, Tucson, 1980.

Rohn Eloul, "Report: Evaluation of a CDBG Housing Rehabilitation Project in Old Pascua, Tucson, 1983." Bureau of Applied Research in Anthropology, University of Arizona, Tucson, 1984.

University of Arizona Department of Architecture Building Survey, Architectural Drawings of Elisa Mesa Residence, 856 W. Calle Santa Ana, Pascua Neighborhood, Tucson. On file at Pascua Neighborhood Center, 785 W. Sahuaro, Tucson, 1988.

Discussions with Rebecca Ponder (Supervisor of Pascua Neighborhood Center) by Felipe Molina (oral historian, Yaqui Family Literacy Program), and Ernie Quiroga (historian, Pima Colelge), in March 1991.



PLAN OF PASCUA VILLAGE

Matus property

PASCUA VILLAGE

WITH A PORTION OF
"BARRIO BELÉN"

SPRING 1937

Southern Boundary of Pascua Village

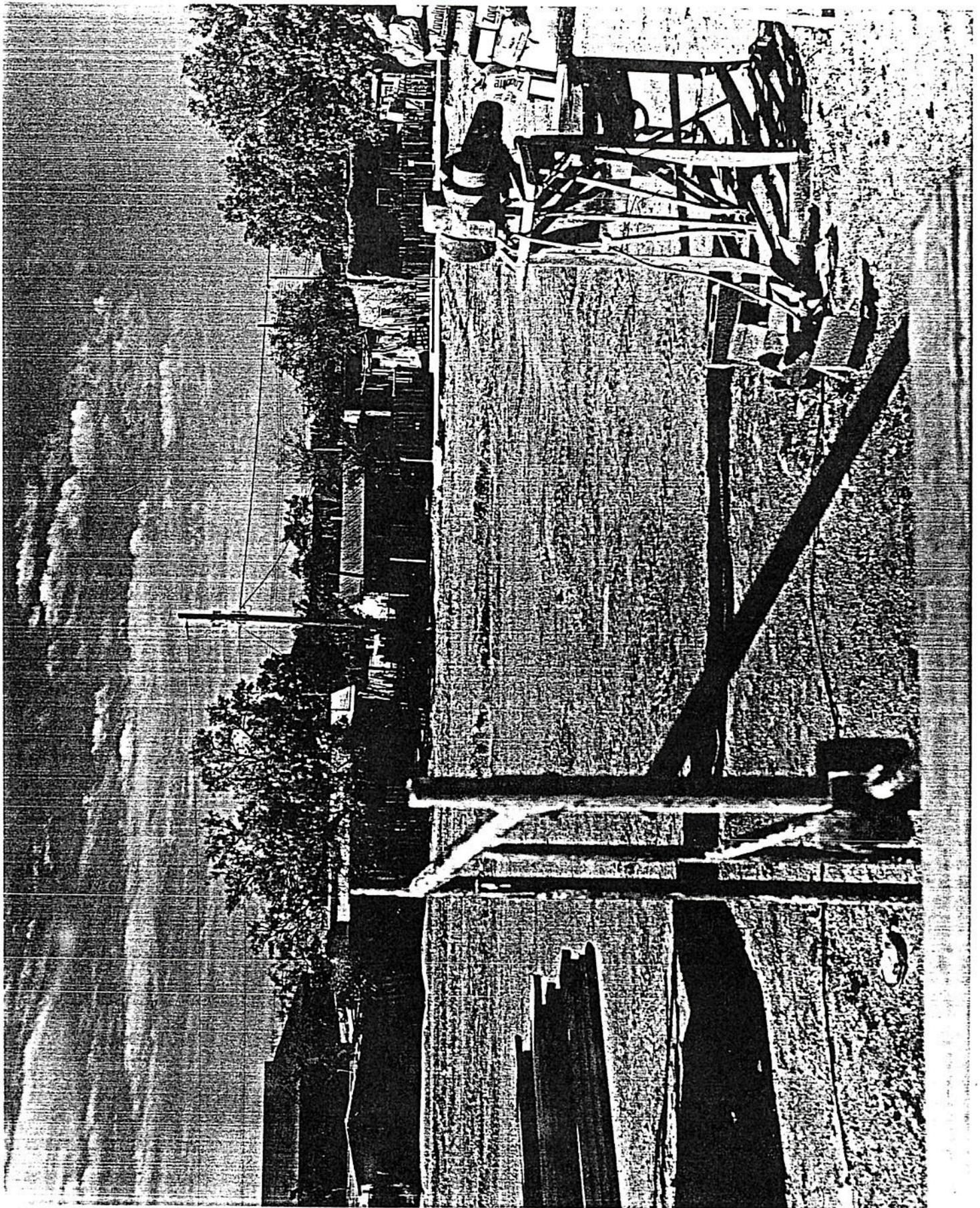
"BARRIO BELÉN"

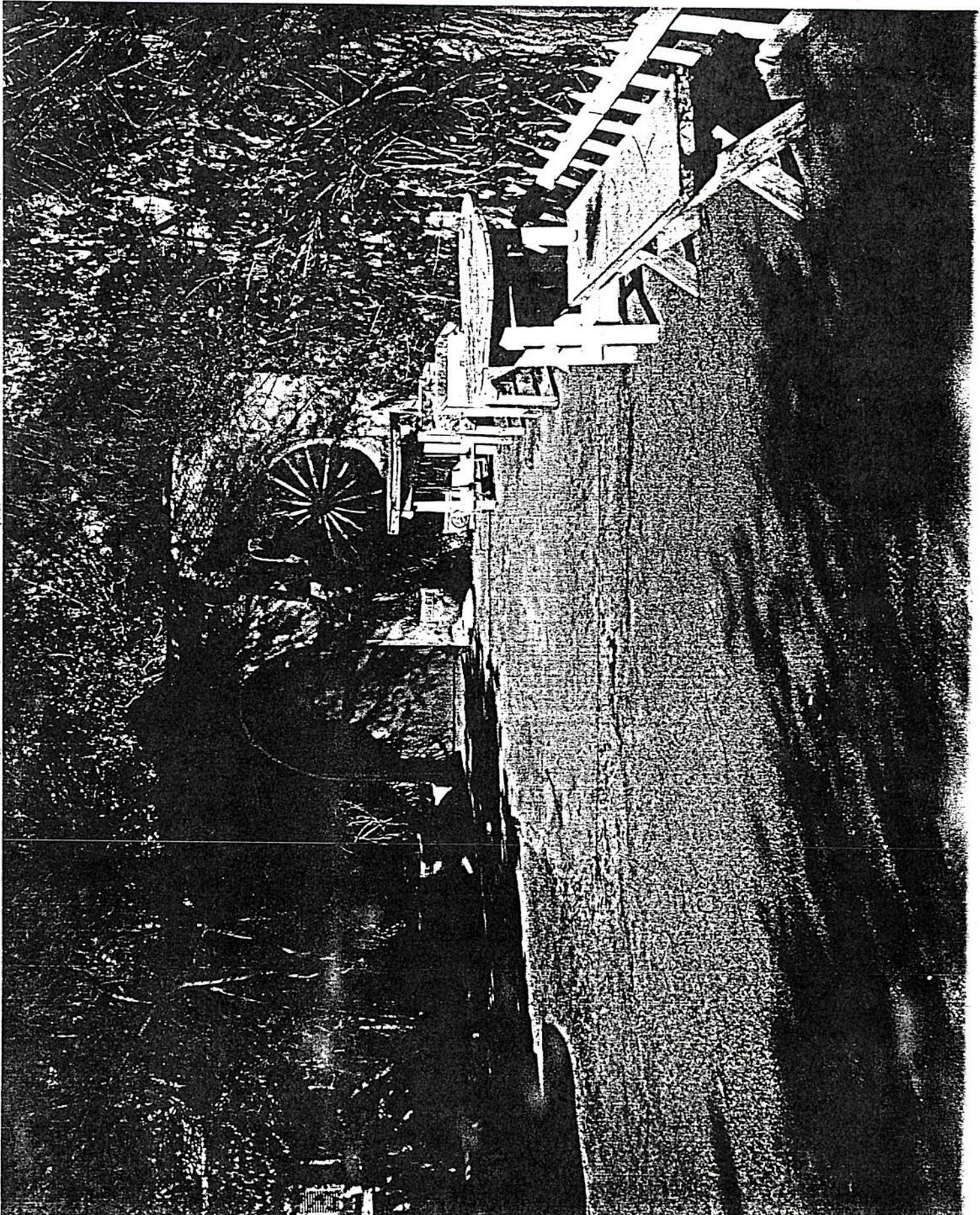
LEGEND

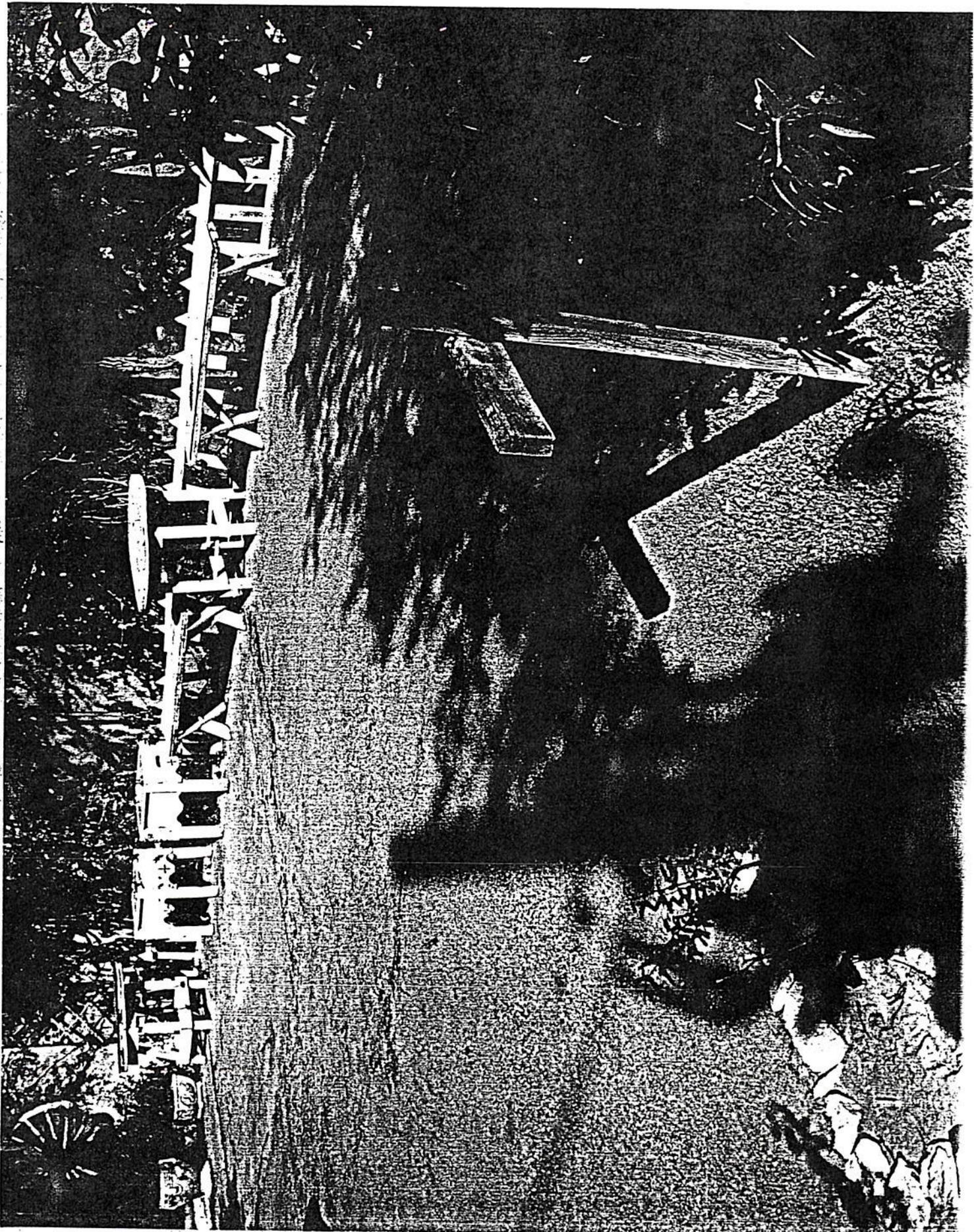
- = Yaqui
- ▨ = Mayo
- ▩ = Mixed Mayo-Yaqui
- ▧ = Mexican
- ▦ = Mixed Mexican-Yaqui
- (with U) = Unoccupied
- (with H) = House
- (with R) = Ramada
- = Wall
- ▣ = Lattice
- ⊠ = Oven
- ⊕ = Patio Cross (indicator when permanent)
- ⊙ = Mailbox
- = Fence

15 miles to
central business
district
at Tucson
↓
age and a portion of Barrio Belén

Map 2. Location of Matus/Mesa property within Pascua, 1937. From









EVALUATION SHEET

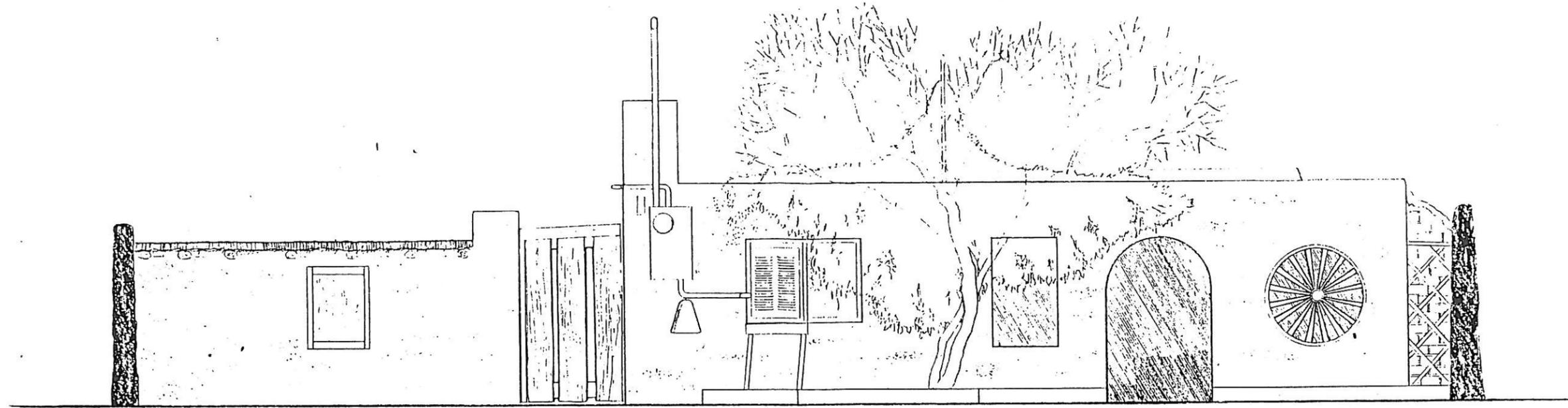
Matus/mesa House

Nomination Name

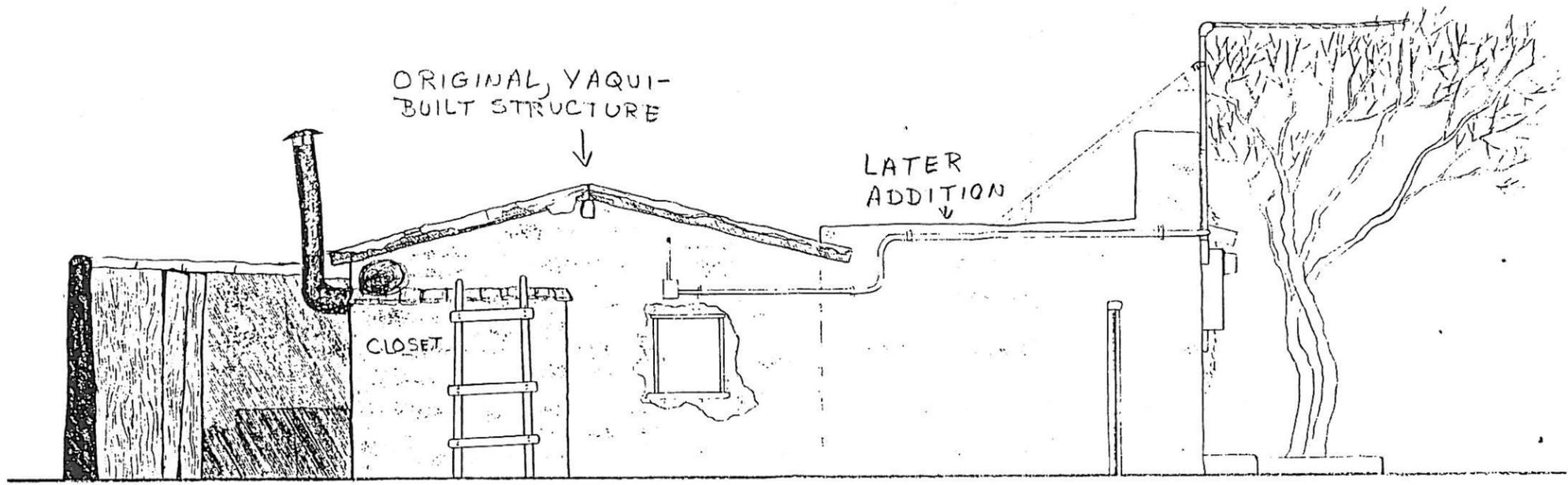
SUBSTANTIVE REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Does the property name accurately reflect historic ownership? *yes*
2. Does the narrative accurately reflect the boxes checked for condition? *yes*
3. Are important features of the property identified in the Description Section? *yes*
4. Is the Description clear and complete? *yes* If the property has been altered, is the difference between the original (or historic) and the current condition and appearance clear? *yes*
5. Have alterations (if any) been adequately described? *yes* Has an evaluation of their impact on the integrity been made? *yes* Has an evaluation been made on whether they have achieved significance on their own over time? *yes* Have the evaluations been justified in the text? *yes*
6. Does the narrative clearly represent and convey the Period and Area of Significance checked? *yes* Have they been justified in a specific discussion within the Statement of Significance? *yes*
7. Does the specific date or date range provided reflect the property's period of historic significance? *yes*
8. Does the Area of Significance checked reflect the significance of the property, not just its function? *yes*
9. Is the Statement of Significance written in a clear and complete manner? *yes* Are summary paragraphs concise yet complete? Is the context fully described? *yes*
10. Have the applicable criteria been identified and documented within the statement of significance? *yes*
11. Are any criteria exceptions (if applicable) justified according to their specific requirements? *NA*
12. Does the significance context of the property justify the local, state, or national level of significance chosen for the property? *yes*
13. Does the integrity relate to the overall property, not its features and parts? *yes*
14. Does the Description convey the significant qualities of the property? *yes* Through what features, for example? Do these features retain integrity? *yes*
15. Have contributing and noncontributing features been identified? *yes*
16. Have the boundaries been drawn to include all features directly related to the significance of the property? *yes* Have the boundaries and acreage been justified? *yes*
17. If the property is a district, does the Verbal Boundary Description include information about the setting, environment, and/or surroundings? *yes*
18. Is the proper level of significance checked? *yes*

FIGURE 10



SOUTH FACADE, SHOWING PLASTERED MASONRY ADDITIONS



WEST FACADE

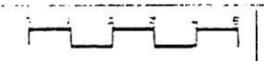
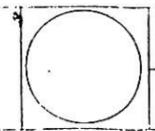
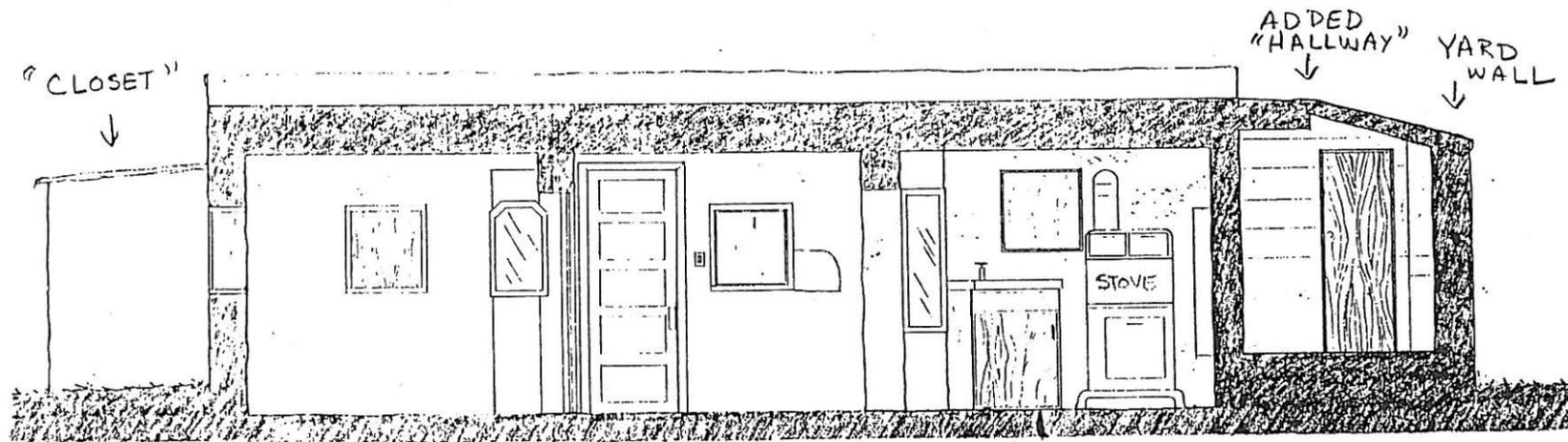
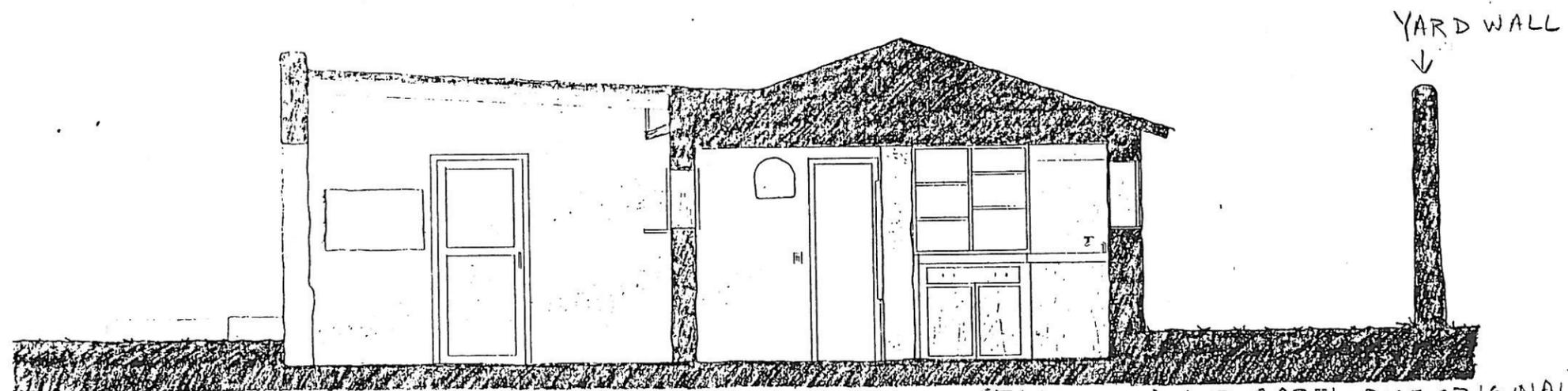


FIGURE 2.



AA INTERIOR CUTAWAY, WEST-EAST, SHOWING ORIGINAL ROOMS

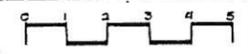
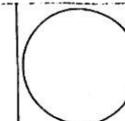


BB INTERIOR CUTAWAY, SOUTH-NORTH, SHOWING ADDITION (FLAT ROOF) AND GABLE-ROOF ORIGINAL

ANTONIO MATUS/
ELIZA MEZA RESIDENCE

856 W CALLE SANTA ANA ST. PASCUA NEIGHBORHOOD TUCSON, ARIZONA

UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE
BUILDING SURVEY

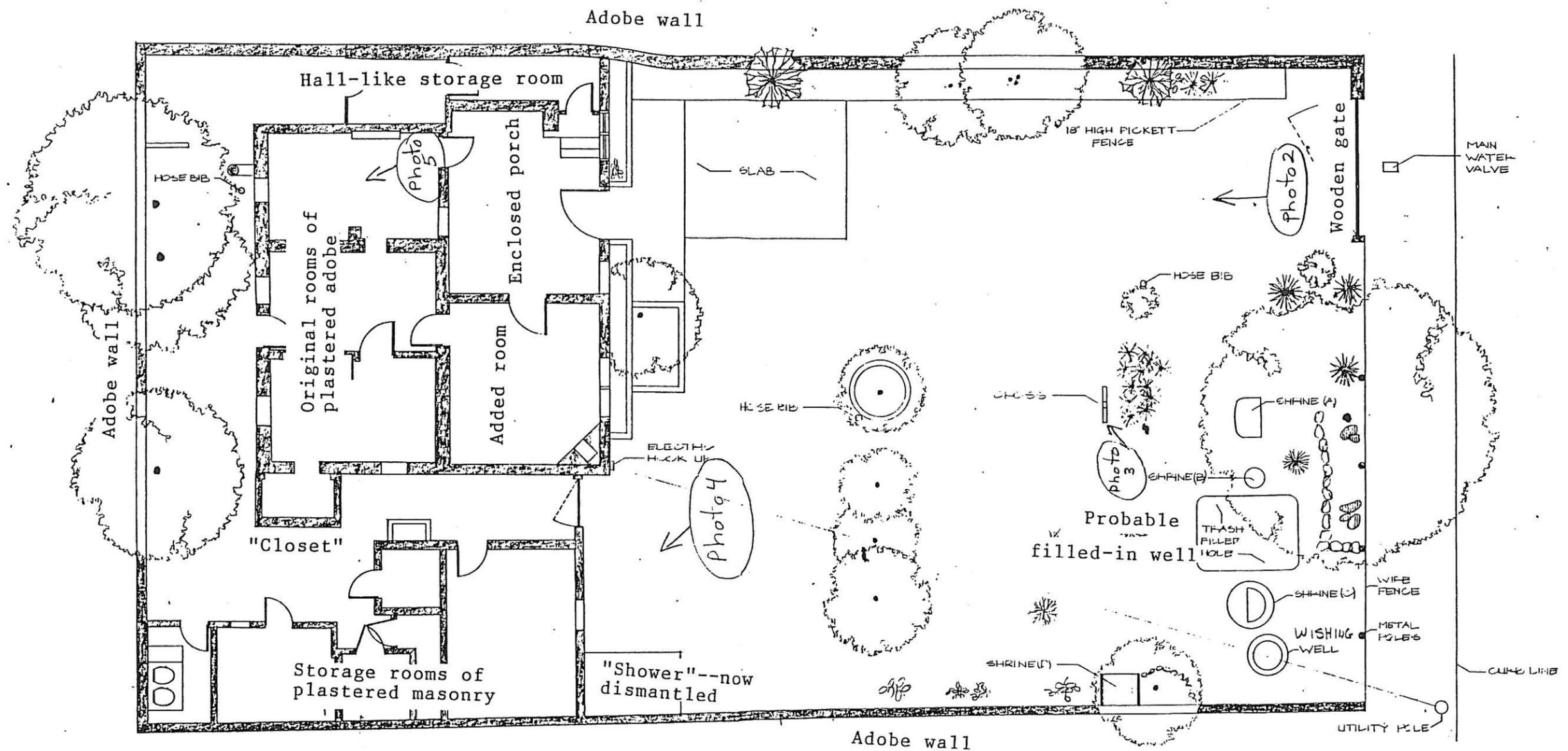


SECTIONS

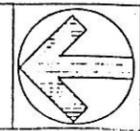
1/2" = 1'-0"

SHEET 3
OF 4
SHEETS

Map 1. Architectural plan of Matus/Mesa house and property



- Contributing Features are:
- House
 - Yard--especially layout and vegetation
 - Probable filled-in well
 - Yard cross
- Noncontributing Features are:
- Storage rooms
 - Adobe wall around yard
 - Shrines and wishing well



3748.1 SE
(JAYNES)

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

