

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received APR 13 1987

date entered JUL 16 1987

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic New Fork

and/or common New Fork

2. Location

street & number 3 miles south not for publication

city, town Boulder x vicinity of

state Wyoming code 056 county Sublette 035 code

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> n/a in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> n/a being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Mr. Jep Richie

street & number P.O. Box 125

city, town Boulder x vicinity of state Wyoming

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Sublette County Clerk

street & number County Courthouse

city, town Pinedale state Wyoming 82941

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Sublette County CLG Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes x no

date 1985 federal state county x local

depository for survey records Wyoming SHPO Cultural Records Office

city, town Laramie state Wyoming 82071

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date <u>N/A</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The New Fork townsite is located about three miles south of Boulder, Wyoming on a low, level plain between the New Fork and East Fork Rivers (west and east respectively). The main buildings at New Fork all face eastward toward the Wind River Range which is visible in the distance. The immediate environs of the townsite are characterized by sagebrush and prairie grasses. Small to medium sized planted trees and shrubs surround an occupied ranch house. The land quickly falls off to the west into low-lying irrigated meadowland lined with willows. The surrounding region is characterized by rocky ridges, hills and buttes cut by ephemeral drainages and covered with low sagebrush and short prairie grasses. The New Fork townsite consists of several log and wood frame structures oriented on a north-south axis on the west side of U.S. Route 191. There are a total of nine buildings within the complex, eight of which are considered to be contributing elements of the complex. The oldest structure is a one-story hewn log store and residence built by the pioneer Danish settlers Louis Broderson and John Vible in 1888. In 1906, John Vible built the log store with false front which stands a short distance south of the original log store. The New Fork Dance Hall was built by Chris Brandt for John Vible in 1909-1910. This large frame building with false front stands at the northern perimeter of the New Fork townsite. The John Vible home lies between the dance hall and the original store. It was built by Vible in 1906. It was constructed with logs but has since been covered with clapboard siding. The remaining buildings in the New Fork townsite are outbuildings consisting of a frame outhouse for the dance hall, a leanto shed and log ice house associated with the Vible home, and log barns and a chicken coop west of the residence. There is one modern large frame garage covered with sheet metal which stands just south of the second Vible Store but is not included in the district. The remains of three log or frame structures stand in a row south of the garage. They are badly deteriorated and are not included within the nomination boundaries.

Today the New Fork townsite retains a high degree of physical integrity and integrity of setting. Only one modern building, the frame garage, has been added to the townsite in the last 50 years. The original store, the 1906 frame store, and the dance hall have received only minor modifications due to regular upkeep and utilization as equipment storage areas. The Vible home has received some modifications during its long occupancy, including clapboard siding and early additions (the kitchen, dining room and porches). However, these additions are believed to be at least 50 years of age. The New Fork townsite complex represents a late 19th-early 20th century commercial settlement and ranching operation which also had a post office and school. The remaining buildings preserve the early history of the settlement, from the first log store through New Fork's peak years when a larger frame store and dance hall were built. The buildings within the complex are described below; sequential numbers correspond with locations on the sketch map.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1888-1910 **Builder/Architect** John Vible, Louis Broderson, Chris Brandt

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The New Fork townsite represents one of the earliest settlements and commercial centers in the isolated upper Green River Valley. In 1888, John Vible and Louis Broderson sought to exploit the emigrant trade on the Lander Cut-off of the Oregon Trail by locating a store close to this corridor. Although the era of overland wagon emigration was drawing to a close due to railroad building, there are numerous documented sitings of emigrant wagon trains on the Lander Cut-off as late as 1912. Furthermore, the Lander Cut-off continued to receive regional and local use by settlers, ranchers, and trail drives after the partners located their store. Broderson and Vible family descendents recall from stories told by John Vible and Louis Broderson that Bannock and Shoshoni Indians accounted for a significant portion of the store's early trade. Large segments of the Lander Cut-off had been located along an existing east-west Indian trail which continued to be used by these tribes after reservations had been established for the Bannocks in Idaho and for the Shoshonis on the Wind River Reservation on the east side of the Wind River Range. The partnership also represents one of the pioneer cattle operations in the region and is therefore also tied to the cattle industry in Wyoming settlement history. The New Fork Townsite contains one of the earliest remaining commercial structures in what is now Sublette County, the Vible and Broderson store constructed in 1888. The early success of this commercial venture is represented by the larger false front store built by John Vible in 1906, the Vible residence built around 1906, and the Valhalla dance hall built in 1909-1910. This later construction period represents the peak of the New Fork community. Other businesses, residences, a post office, and a school were established at New Fork in the early 20th century but have been moved, torn down or exist in an advanced state of decay in an area south of the second store built by Vible. The remaining buildings are characterized by well crafted but modest structures generally devoid of ornamentation or architectural features that represent specific styles. They were constructed by John Vible or by locally prominent carpenters in his employ. These structures possess architectural significance as typical examples of late 19th-early 20th century regional rural building trends in an isolated region that never obtained direct rail service. The setting of the New Fork townsite has changed very little in the last century except for the building of U.S. Route 191 to the east of the townsite. The New Fork Townsite is therefore a fine representative of a late 19th-early 20th century commercial and social center for the surrounding ranching community, and in its early days, was a trading point for the region's indigenous people, the Shoshoni and Bannock tribes.

9. Major Bibliographical References

SEE ADDENDUM

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 7.46

Quadrangle name Boulder, WY

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A	<u>1</u> <u>2</u>	<u>6</u> <u>0</u> <u>5</u> <u>3</u> <u>2</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>7</u> <u>2</u> <u>8</u> <u>5</u> <u>8</u> <u>0</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

B	<u>1</u> <u>2</u>	<u>6</u> <u>0</u> <u>5</u> <u>3</u> <u>2</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>7</u> <u>2</u> <u>8</u> <u>4</u> <u>2</u> <u>0</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

C	<u>1</u> <u>2</u>	<u>6</u> <u>0</u> <u>5</u> <u>1</u> <u>2</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>7</u> <u>2</u> <u>8</u> <u>4</u> <u>2</u> <u>0</u>
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Verbal boundary description and justification

SEE ADDENDUM

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	<u>N/A</u>	code	<u>N/A</u>	county	<u>N/A</u>	code	<u>N/A</u>
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state	<u>N/A</u>	code	<u>N/A</u>	county	<u>N/A</u>	code	<u>N/A</u>
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Robert G. Rosenberg

organization Historical Consultant date July 31, 1986

street & number 55 I-25 Service Rd. East telephone (307) 632-1144

city or town Cheyenne state Wyoming

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Robert G. Rosenberg

title State Historic Preservation Officer date April 7, 1987

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

for William B. Bushong date 7/16/87
 Keeper of the National Register

Attest: _____ date _____

Chief of Registration

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The original Vible and Broderson store (No. 1) was constructed by John Vible and Louis Broderson in 1888. It is a one-story rectangular hewn log structure with a gable roof (37.5'x 21'). The wall logs have full dovetail notching and are now chinked with cement. The roof is supported by hewn log purlins and ridgepole and is covered with asphalt shingles. The structure is divided into two basic rooms by means of a log partition and has a wood floor. The front or east elevation has a wooden door and two flanking windows with 1 over 1-light double-hung wood sash and frames. There is a second boarded up entrance on the south elevation and a second window on the north elevation. A wood-frame coal shed with gable roof (10'x 10') was built onto the rear or west side of the store at an unknown date. The store is considered a contributing element to the district and does not appear to have received significant alterations since its construction and is in good physical condition.

The second store (No. 2) at New Fork is one-story log with false front and gable roof (41'x 25') built by John Vible in 1906. It is constructed with full logs with full dovetail notching at the corners. The logs have been rechinked with cement. The east elevation or front has a frame false front extending above the roofline covered with clapboard siding. There is a front porch with leanto roof covered with tarpaper and supported by square posts. There is decorative wood trim running along the eave of the porch roof. The gable roof is covered with metal sheeting. The building rests on a dry laid stone foundation. The interior is divided into two rooms by means of a log partition tied into the east and west walls with full dovetail notching and has a wood floor. The east elevation has a twin 4-light fixed window with wood sash and frames and a 2-light window, on the north and south side of the door respectively. The door has been modified into a hinged double wood door to accomodate farm equipment. A cement ramp has been poured in front for equipment access. The building is considered a contributing element to the district and is in good condition and has received no other significant modifications since its construction.

The Valhalla Dance Hall (No. 3) is the dominant structure in the New Fork townsite. This large rectangular frame building (100'x 28') was constructed in 1909 and 1910 for John Vible by Chris Brandt and Nels Christiansen, well known local carpenters. It is a 1-1/2 story false front building with a gable roof covered with asphalt shingles. The structure rests on a dry laid stone foundation. Exterior walls are covered with narrow clapboard siding painted white. The main entrance is on the east elevation and consists of double wooden doors with lights in the upper portions and 2-light transom. The doors are flanked by three banks of 4 over 4-light double-hung windows with wood sash and frames. The false front is stepped with a gable-shaped peak. Wood

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9) CHICKEN COOP/BARN/STOCK SHELTER (built: ca. 1890s)

Dimensions: 18' N-S x 32' E-W; adjoining open shed approximately
 60' E-W x 25' N-S.

Orientation: south

Walls: logs joined to vertical corner posts; mud chinking

Roof: gently sloping gable; ribbed metal sheeting

Stories: one

Rooms: two with log partition; eastern portion, chicken coop;
 western portion, tackroom and stable

Door: one wood door on east elevation; split wood door on south
 facade.

Windows: 2 over 2-light fixed

Note: There is a woodframe leanto stock shelter joined to this building on the west side. It is open on the south facade and covered with ribbed sheet metal siding. The construction date of this portion of the building is unknown.

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The small ranching settlement of New Fork was established by John Vible and Louis Broderson in 1888 near the New Fork and East Fork Rivers. Both men were Danish emigrants who had come to America in 1884. They met while working on the Oregon Shortline in western Wyoming and Idaho. The two men pooled their meager resources into an informal partnership. They planned to file on homesteads in the upper Green River Valley in order to raise cattle and to start a mercantile business by locating a store close to the Lander Cut-off of the Oregon Trail. They each filed on a 160-acre Homestead and Desert Entry resulting in a combined total of 640 acres. Land records show that each man patented a 160-acre Homestead Entry on 7/1/1903 (Broderson, HE Patent #879; Vible, HE Patent #880). The partners then built a small log structure which served as the store, trading post, and living quarters. The location became known as New Fork. The partners acquired cattle in Idaho and used the "Double B" brand (BB). A large portion of their early trade involved Shoshoni and Bannock Indians who regularly migrated through the region between reservations established for them east of the Wind River Mountains and in Idaho in 1868. The partners stocked their store by making regular wagon trips to Evanston for supplies. A post office was established for the New Fork community on March 1, 1888 in the home of Charles M. Donnelly. It was at first located about six miles from the Vible and Broderson store. However, on February 4, 1891, Louis Broderson became the postmaster and the post office was located at the New Fork location. In August 1888, New Fork was established as a polling place with an estimated 20 voters, and near the end of that year, the New Fork School District No. 17 was established.

In 1889, Louis Broderson's parents and his two sisters joined him at New Fork and on August 12, 1890, John Vible married Louis Broderson's sister, Charlotte Catherine, and soon built a separate home. The Vible-Broderson store continued to grow in the 1890s and had 130 regular customers by 1898. Business declined over the next three years, but then the store had a record 143 customers in 1903. In 1906, Louis Broderson sold a one-acre lot to Frank Seabolt who established a saloon at New Fork. In that same year, John Vible built a new home at New Fork which is the residence currently occupied by Carole Richie Bardin and her family. The partnership between John Vible and Louis Broderson dissolved sometime around 1906. At this time, Vible decided to build a larger store which still stands just south of the original building.

In 1905, the New Fork community school teacher was Madge Whistler. In 1906, Patty Neely was persuaded to take over the teaching chores. School was conducted in the John Vible bunkhouse until a separate building was constructed around 1908. Therefore, by the end of 1908, the town of New Fork boasted a school, a saloon, a hotel, a barbershop, a livery and a

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blacksmith shop, and a woodframe house with a bay window owned by the saloon keeper Frank Seabolt, in addition to the Vible stores and residence. The other buildings were located in a line south of the new Vible store and are no longer standing or are in an advanced state of ruin. In 1909-1910, John Vible contracted with Chris Brandt and Nels Chistiansen, locally prominent carpenters, to build a large frame dance hall. He named it Valhalla after the Norse Heaven populated by heroes slain in battle. It was built to the north of the Vible home and completed the array of buildings at New Fork. The dance hall became the focal point of community activity including dances and political rallies.

In 1910, John Broderson married the school teacher Patty Neely. Following her wishes, the pair left New Fork in 1911 and moved to Kentucky where her parents lived. Broderson sold his remaining land parcels and water rights to his old partner John Vible.

Vible had built his dance hall anticipating that New Fork would continue to grow into a major community. However, by August 15, 1918, the post office was discontinued and mail was then delivered to nearby Boulder. New Fork had gradually been eclipsed by other communities, including Pinedale which became the county seat when Sublette County was created in 1921. Transportation patterns had changed over the years, and the Lander Cut-off fell into disuse and became little more than a fading set of ruts across the rangeland. Railroad transportation never reached the upper Green River Valley, but the region benefitted by the Oregon Shortline which was built in 1882 and reached Opal, the nearest railhead. The Opal Wagon Road, located far to the west of New Fork, linked Big Piney, Daniel and Pinedale to this vital supply point. All of these factors contributed to the demise of New Fork, but the chief catalyst was a scarlet fever and diphtheria epidemic which struck the Vible family before the Christmas of 1915. The family home was placed under quarantine and the stricken members were treated by Doctor Lauzer of Rock Springs. John Vible, his daughter and two elder sons died within a period of two weeks. Only his wife and youngest son John Jr. survived the epidemic after extended illnesses. The store was closed after Mr. Vible's death, and the post office was moved to Boulder. The New Fork townsite, including the two stores and dance hall remained in the Vible family. John Vible Jr. and his mother ran the cattle ranch together until her death in 1947. John was married to Elva Pierce in 1950, and they continued ranching until 1957. The New Fork property was sold to Jep and Barbara Richie in the late 1950s. The dances at the Valhalla Dance Hall were started again by the Richies in 1977 and have been held on a regular basis in the fall of each year. The Vible home is occupied by Jep Richie's daughter Carole Bardin and her family, and the two stores are used for storage and farm equipment. The surrounding land is used for cattle grazing.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Interviews

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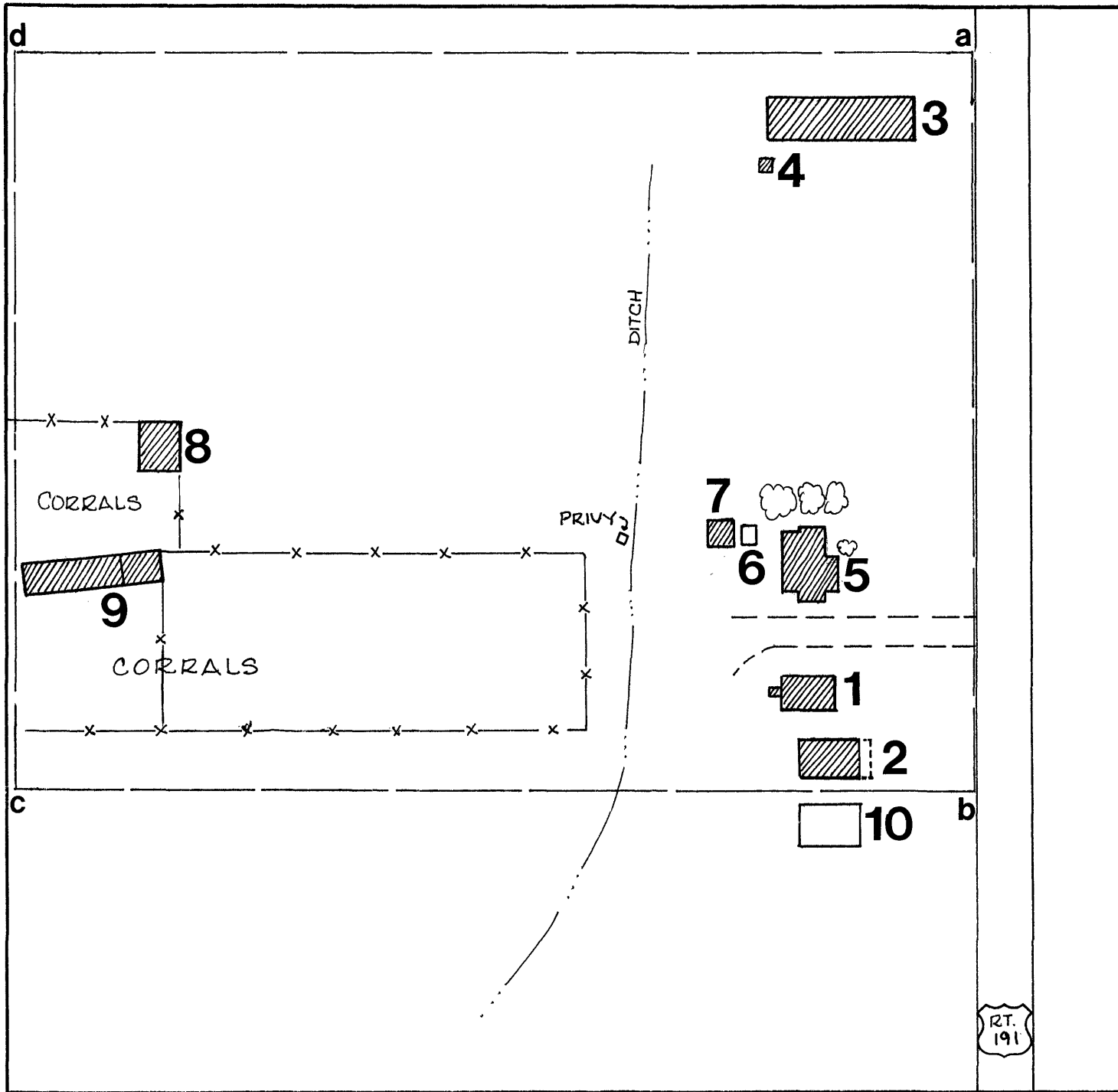
date entered

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Beginning at Point A (see accompanying map) about 800 ft due south (Az. 180°) of the northeast corner of Section 33 on the common line between Sections 33 and 34; proceed due south (Az. 180°) 500 feet to Point B. Proceed due west (Az. 270°) approximately 650 feet to Point C. (Point C is also about 135 feet south-southwest of the southwest corner of Building No. 9. It also corresponds with the southwest corner of the SE/NE/NE of Section 33.) From Point C proceed due north (Az. 0° or 360°) approximately 500 feet to Point D. From Point D proceed approximately 650 ft due east (Az. 90°) back to Point A.

This rectangular boundary encompasses all significant historic buildings that remain standing in the New Fork Townsite District. It utilizes established U.S. Government survey corners and section lines and U.S. Route 187 for the eastern boundary line. The southern boundary line passes between the second Vible store and the State Highway Department maintenance building in order to exclude the noncontributing structure. It also excludes the remains of three old building sites to the south of the highway building which are in an advanced state of decay and ruin. The west boundary line was drawn so as to include contributing stock barns and outbuildings associated with the Vible Ranch. The northern boundary was drawn to include the Valhalla Dancehall.



NEW FORK (48 SU 438, 48 SU 439)

1. ORIGINAL STORE (c. 1888)
2. "NEW" STORE (c. 1906)
3. VALHALLA DANCEHALL (c.1909)
4. LEAN-TO WOODFRAME OUTHOUSE
5. RESIDENCE
6. LEAN-TO SHED (NON-CONTRIBUTING)
7. LOG ICE HOUSE
8. LOG BARN
9. CHICKEN-HOUSE/STOCK SHELTER
10. HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE BUILDING
(Outside boundary)

