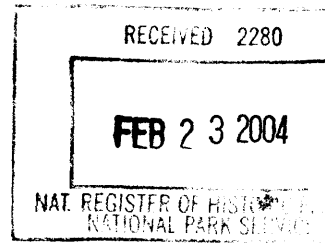


United States Department of the Interior National Park Service National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determination for individual properties and districts. See instruction in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an 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. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Powell and Blair Stone Ranch

other names/site number Spring Valley Ranch; Blue Ranch; 5LO478

2. Location

street & number Approximately 1 mile north of the junction of U.S. Highway 138 & 65 Road [N/A] not for publication

city or town Proctor [X] vicinity

state Colorado code CO county Logan code 075 zip code 80751

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 [] nationally [] statewide [X] locally. ([] See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Margarita Cortez State Historic Preservation Officer 12/16/03
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, Colorado Historical Society
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property [] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria. ([] See continuation sheet for additional comments.)
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the 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 [] See continuation sheet.

for Signature of the Keeper Edson H. Beall Date of Action 4/6/04

Powell and Blair Stone Ranch

Name of Property

Logan County / Colorado

County/State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- [] private
[X] public-local
[] public-State
[] public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- [X] building(s)
[] district
[] site
[] structure
[] object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not count previously listed resources.)

Table with 3 columns: Contributing, Noncontributing, and Resource Type (buildings, sites, structures, objects, Total). Values: 3 buildings, 0 sites, 0 structures, 0 objects, 3 Total.

Name of related multiple property listing.

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register.

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Function

(Enter categories from instructions)

- DOMESTIC/single dwelling
DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/agricultural

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

- VACANT/NOT IN USE

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

- Late 19th and Early 20th Century
American Movements
Other: American Foursquare

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

- foundation Sandstone
walls Sandstone
Weatherboard
roof Asphalt
Shingle
Tin
other Brick

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Powell and Blair Stone Ranch
Name of Property

Logan County / Colorado
County/State

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.)

Property is:

- 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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Exploration/Settlement

Agriculture

Periods of Significance

1897 – 1924

Significant Dates

1897

1907

1924

Significant Person(s)

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above).

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Colorado Historical Society

Powell and Blair Stone Ranch
Name of Property

Logan County / Colorado
County/State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 14.5

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1.	13	672585	4520599	(NAD27)
	Zone	Easting	Northing	
2.	13	672907	4520614	
	Zone	Easting	Northing	
3.	13	672939	4519784	
	Zone	Easting	Northing	
4.	13	672620	4519782	
	Zone	Easting	Northing	[] See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kristine Hoehn / Principal
organization Hoehn Architects P.C. date August 29, 2003
street & number 50 Pennsylvania Street telephone 303-282-3884
city or town Denver state Colorado zip code 80203

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional Items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Parker Water and Sanitation District
street & number 19801 E. Main Street telephone (303)-841-4627
city or town Parker state Colorado zip code 80138

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. 470 *et seq.*)

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet****United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**Powell and Blair Stone Ranch Logan County, Colorado Section number 7 Page 1

Narrative Description

The Powell and Blair Stone Ranch is located approximately 1¼ miles north of the South Platte River and one mile north of the town of Proctor in Logan County, Colorado. The flat topography at the site of the ranch house, bunkhouse, and stone outbuilding contrasts with gently rolling ground that rises to the northwest on the north side of the Powell and Blair Ditch. Accessed by a gravel road along the east side of Proctor, the ranch house faces south toward town and is a prominent feature that is visible from afar. The natural rural landscape of prairie grass surrounding the buildings retains little of its original historic character.

The ranch house is a stone masonry building that reflects the most common version of the American Foursquare type. A bunkhouse and stone outbuilding, built of stone similar to the house, are located to the north and northeast of the house respectively. The house is in fair condition, due to its recent occupancy, while the outbuildings are in poor condition, a result of their exposure to the weather. The house is now vacant, with window and door openings protected with wood coverings.

Ranch House

The ranch house is two stories in height, with a one-story wing on its north side. The two-story stone portion, with square plan, measures approximately 33 feet wide by 37 feet long. It has a character-defining low-pitched hipped roof, which was previously finished with wood shingles (visible at the roof edge) but is now covered with asphalt composition shingles. Other features that reflect the Foursquare type include a single hipped roof dormer with shingled sides on the south elevation and the single-hung windows. The one-story wing consists of two rectangular appendages, each measuring approximately 13 feet wide by 27 feet long and 10 feet wide by 19 feet long. The smaller, northernmost wing is centered on the larger, southernmost wing; both are centered on the two-story portion's north wall. The wing is also constructed of stone masonry and has hipped roofs that step down to the north. A wood-framed shed-roofed canopy, supported by three columns, protects the east rear entry door on the one-story wing. The exterior walls, constructed of solid uncoursed stone rubble, are approximately 24" thick at both the south two-story section of the ranch house and the north one-story wing.

There are three masonry chimneys that penetrate through the hipped roof of the two-story ranch house. All three chimneys were originally constructed of uncoursed stone rubble to match the exterior walls. The north chimney retains the most original historic fabric, with much of the original stone rubble still intact. Brick masonry was added to the top of the former stone chimney on the west face of the roof. Little remains of the original stone chimney on the east side of the roof.

The south elevation contains an entry door, centered on the wall, with two single-hung wood windows symmetrically located on both sides of the door. Similar single-hung windows are located directly above the first-floor door and windows on the second floor, resulting in a balanced elevation. A hipped-roof dormer is centered on the roof above the entry door. The main entry was once protected by a wood-framed one-story porch (See Figure 2). The porch was centered on the south wall and was composed of three open bays, framed by turned wood columns with solid brackets reflecting late-Victorian styling. The entry to the porch was through the center bay, directly in front of the main entry door; the bays on either side of the entry opening had wood handrails with turned decorative balusters. The three open sides of the porch's flat roof were also protected with a similar handrail. A photograph

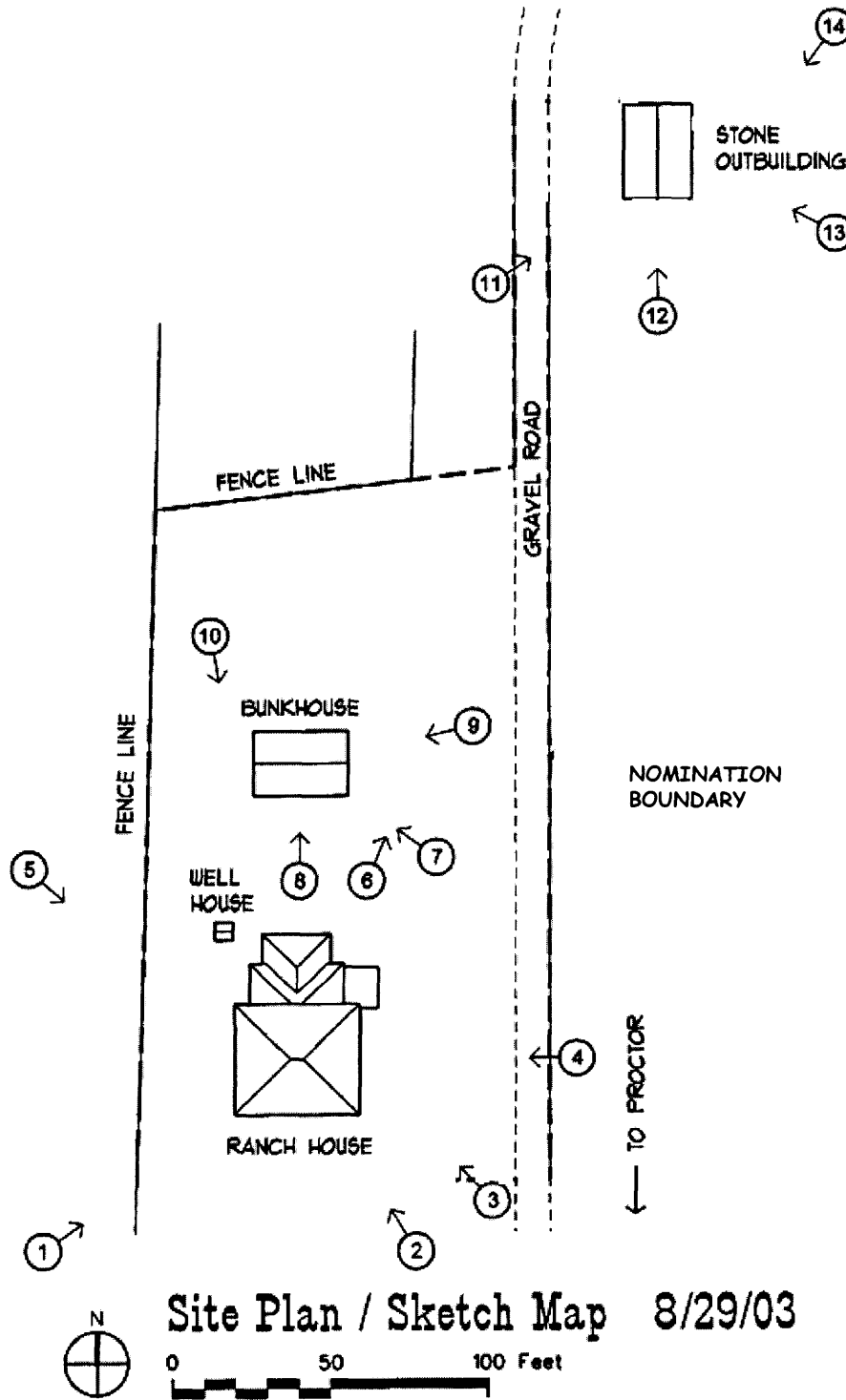
National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Powell and Blair Stone Ranch Logan County, Colorado

Section number 7 Page 2

Figure 1



Powell and Blair Stone Ranch
Proctor, Logan County, Colorado

**National Register of Historic Places
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National Park Service**

Powell and Blair Stone Ranch

Logan County, Colorado

Section number 7 Page 3

Figure 2. This photograph of the ranch house was taken around 1903 and shows the original design of the front entry porch, with painted turned wood columns and decorative balusters. (Photo from *Four Score for Dave Hamil* by Bud Wells)

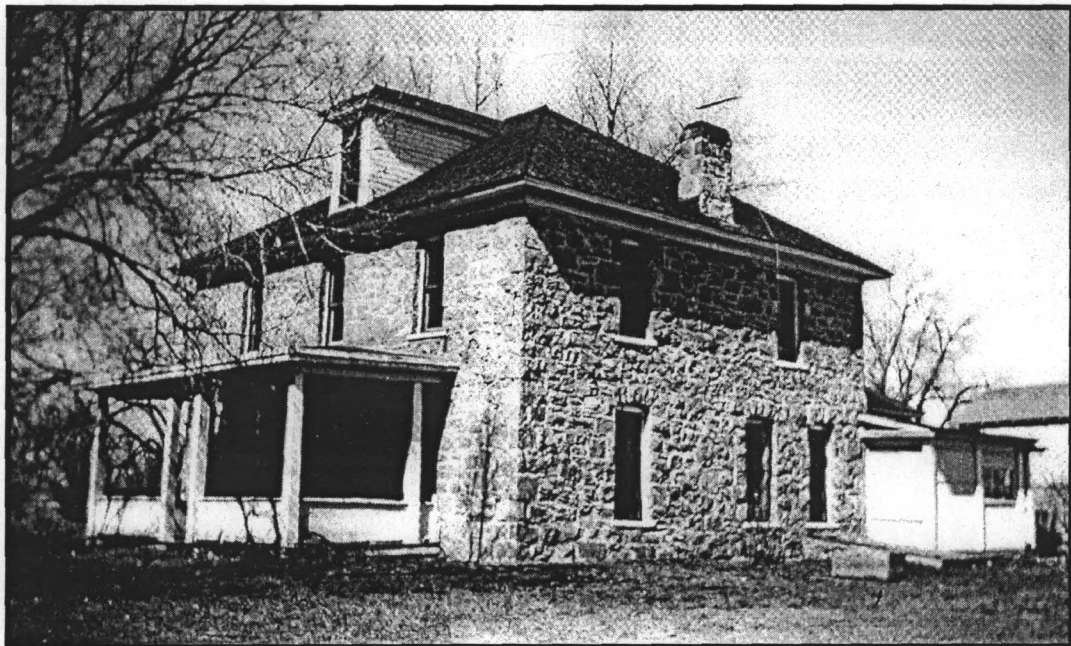


Figure 3. A circa-1940 photograph of the ranch house reveals the change in design of the front entry porch, with simple wood porch columns and solid wood railings. Later this porch would be removed to reflect its current appearance. (Photo from C.Y.L. Portfolio "Logan County History 1939-40" by the students of District 50, Amen School)

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet****United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**Powell and Blair Stone Ranch Logan County, Colorado Section number 7 Page 4

of the house taken in 1907 indicates that the original porch had been removed by this time. Sometime before 1940, another porch was constructed with simple wood porch columns and a solid wood railing (See Figure 3). The porch's column spacing was changed, with four columns across the front and the center two columns located close to one another, opposite the house's main entry. The porch roof also appears to have been modified to a shallow shed configuration. By 1976, the porch had been removed in its entirety. The front door remains unprotected from the weather today.

The east elevation consists of three single-hung wood windows on the first floor, with two similar windows symmetrically placed on the second floor. The southernmost second-floor window is located directly above the southernmost first floor window. Remnants of a former stone chimney rise above the roof at the center of the east wall. The portion of the one-story wing adjacent to the two-story house contains an entry door and a single-hung wood window. The door is protected with a wood-framed shed-roofed canopy, supported by three columns. A 1940 photograph of the house reveals that the canopy is a replacement for a former enclosed porch, with its entry on the north wall and windows provided along the east and south walls (See Figure 3). The porch's columns and solid wood railing were similar to those of the Prairie-styled front porch, suggesting that the rear entry porch may have been constructed or reconfigured at the same time as the construction of the circa-1940 front porch. The portion of the one-story wing at the north end of the house has no door or window openings on its east wall.

The north elevation contains two single-hung wood windows on the one-story wing and two single-hung wood windows on the second floor. Similar to the south elevation, these windows are located equidistant from the corners of the house, resulting in a balanced elevation. A stone chimney that once served the cooking stove in the kitchen is located off-center closer to the northwest corner of the house.

The west elevation of the two-story house contains two pairs of vertically stacked single-hung wood windows on the first and second floors that are located equidistant from the house's corners. A third chimney, formerly built of stone and reconstructed in brick, rises above the roof at the center of the wall. The southernmost one-story wing contains two windows; one window is an aluminum replacement window while the other one is covered inside so its construction could not be determined. The northernmost one-story wing has no door or window openings.

The interior of the two-story portion of the ranch house contains four rooms at the corners of both the first and second floors. The first-floor rooms include a Parlor, Dining Room, and two additional rooms that may have functioned as bedrooms, since they each contain closets. Four bedrooms are located on the second floor. The one-story wing originally contained a large kitchen, a walk-in pantry, and a washroom. The interior was renovated to accommodate modern requirements with gypsum wallboard installed over the existing plaster walls and suspended ceilings added to the first-floor rooms. A laundry room and interior stair to the cellar were added, while the washroom was converted to a bathroom. A cellar containing two rooms once served as a storage area for fresh produce and canned items; the lower level is also accessible from outside at the east side of the house. The second-floor rooms remain the most intact of all the interior spaces (Refer to Figures 4, 5, and 6).

With the exception of the removal of the porches, the reconstructed brick chimney, and the boarding up of door and window openings, the ranch house retains much of its original historic fabric and appears similar to when it was first constructed.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

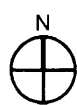
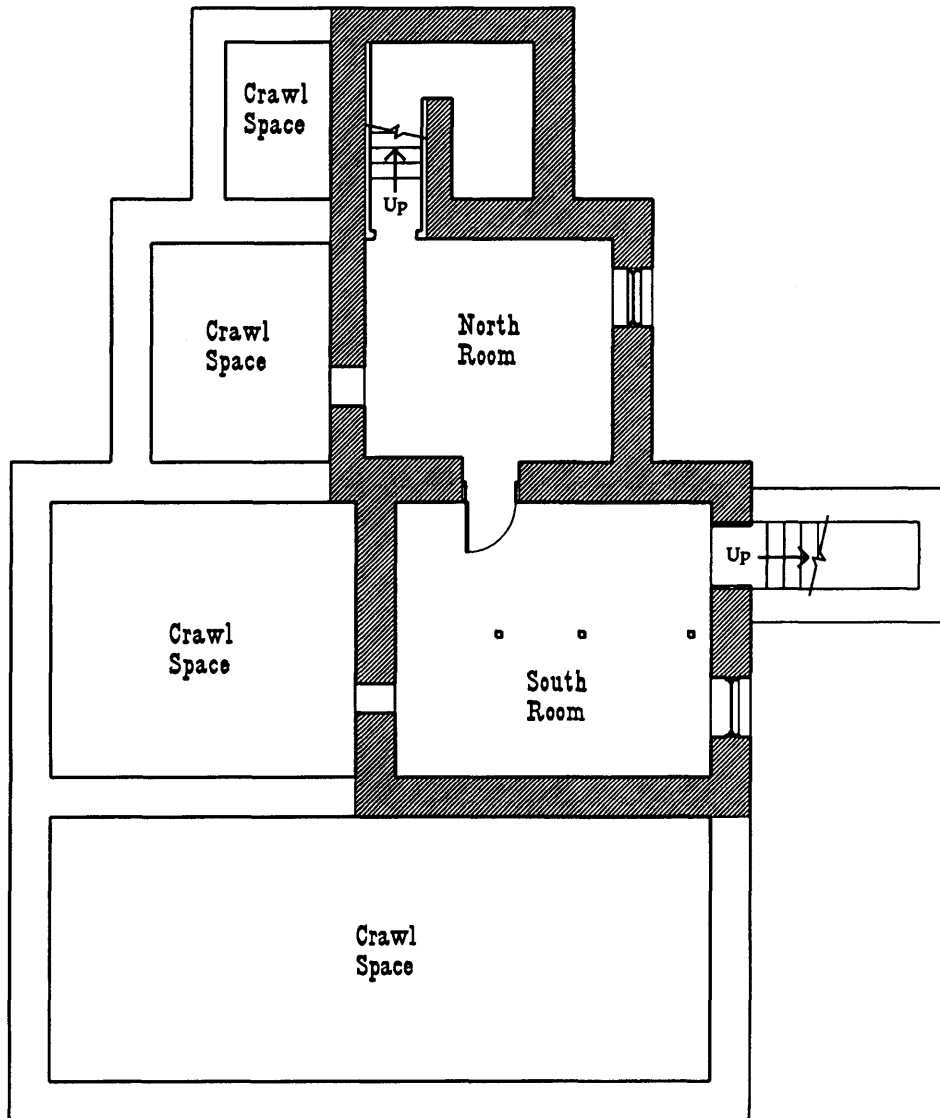
United States Department of the Interior
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Powell and Blair Stone Ranch

Logan County, Colorado

Section number 7 Page 5

Figure 4



Cellar Floor Plan 8/29/03



Powell and Blair Stone Ranch
Proctor, Logan County, Colorado

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

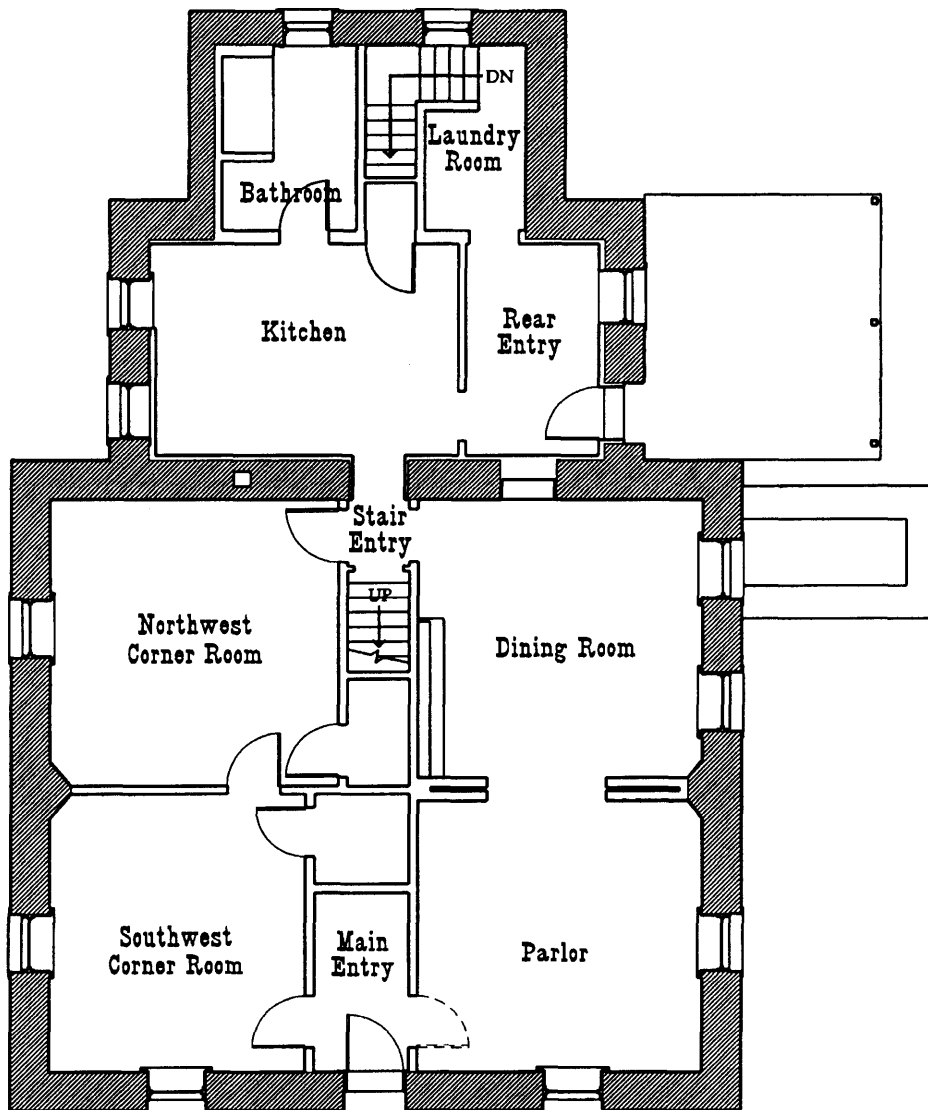
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Powell and Blair Stone Ranch

Logan County, Colorado

Section number 7 Page 6

Figure 5



First Floor Plan 8/29/03



<p>Powell and Blair Stone Ranch Proctor, Logan County, Colorado</p>

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

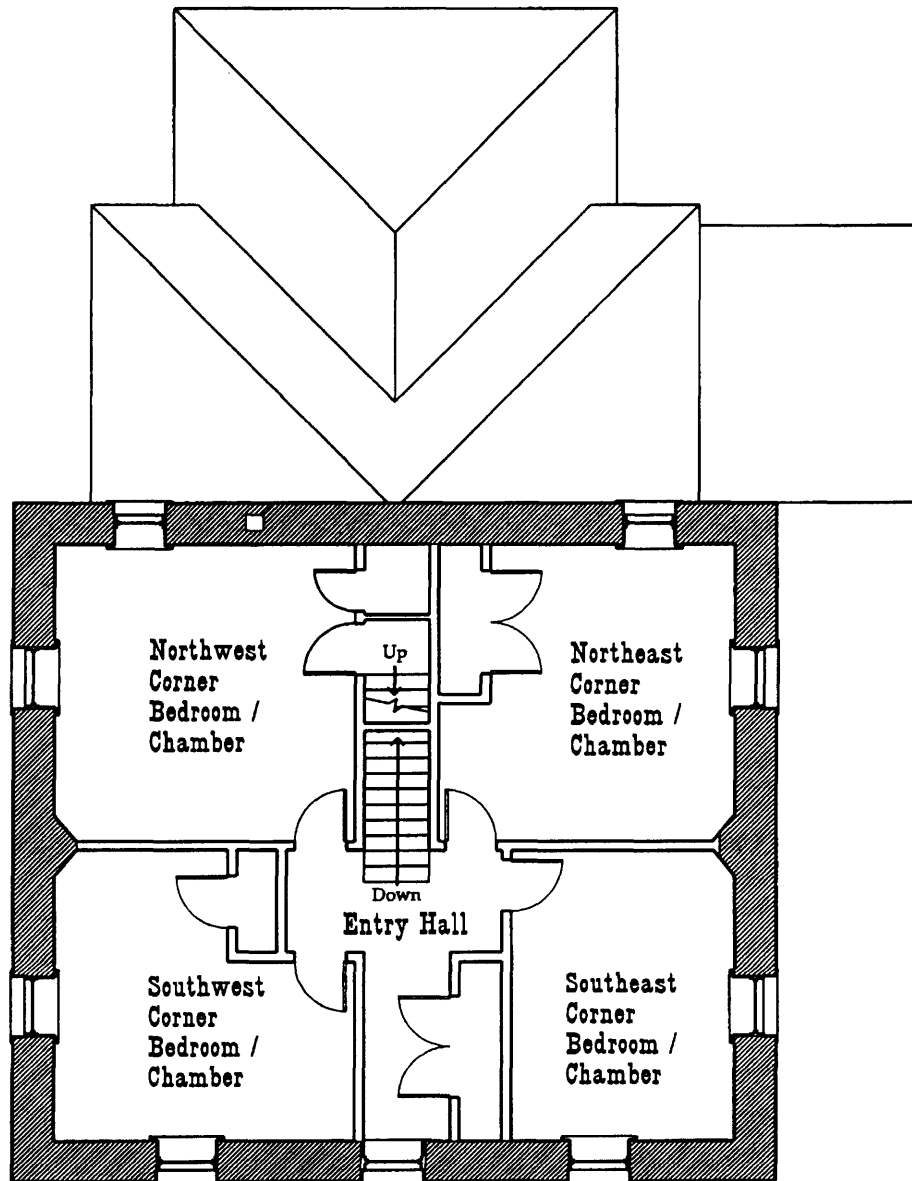
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Powell and Blair Stone Ranch

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Figure 6



Second Floor Plan 8/29/03



Powell and Blair Stone Ranch
Proctor, Logan County, Colorado

**National Register of Historic Places
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Bunkhouse

The Bunkhouse is a two-story rectangular building, measuring approximately 18 feet wide by 28 feet long. The first-floor and foundation walls are constructed of solid uncoursed stone rubble that are approximately 18" thick and extend at least four feet below grade at the east half of the structure. The second floor is framed in wood, with horizontal tongue and groove wood siding on the exterior side of the wall and plaster for the interior finish. The side-gabled roof is framed with 2 x 6 wood rafters that are exposed to view along the north and south roof eaves. Remnants of the original spaced wood sheathing boards and wood shingles are visible on the roof surface; the roof and interior are damaged from significant water intrusion.

When originally constructed, the east half of the first floor was utilized as an icehouse, with the floor located approximately four feet below grade. The ice could be stacked to a height of ten feet, with approximately two feet of wheat straw insulation around the perimeter of the room. The primary function of the ice was to cool the refrigerator, once located in a corner of the ranch house's enclosed back porch. The west half of the first floor was used for the storage of coal. A fifty-gallon kerosene tank was also previously stored in the coalhouse (Refer to Figure 5). The second floor was devoted to living quarters for the hired help on the ranch and consists of two rooms, each accessible by doors located on the north side of the bunkhouse. The west room was heated with a stove. The east room had no stove and was reserved for additional hired help during the summer months; the room was not used during the winter due to its lack of heat. Harold Hamil, in his book *Colorado Without Mountains*, describes the stair that once existed on the north side of the structure: "The bunkhouse area was reached by an outdoor stairway that was equipped with a marvelous handrail, well-rounded, splinter-free and practically friction-free against the blue denim seats of our overalls." The ghost marking of one of the former handrails can be seen on the west side of the west door opening on the north elevation.

The south elevation contains two door openings on the first floor that provide access to the icehouse and the coalhouse. The east elevation includes a single window with stone lintel and sill, centered on the first floor, and a window centered on the second floor gable end. The north elevation contains no door or window openings on the first floor, but has two doors and two windows on the second floor that provide entry to the separate living quarters. The north elevation is balanced, with the doors and windows located equidistant from the corners of the building. The west elevation contains a single window on the second floor, centered in the gable end, and a window opening on the first floor that does not appear to be original.

Alterations to the bunkhouse have been minimal, with the exception of the removal of the exterior stair on the north side of the structure. Due to the building's exposure to the weather, much of the second floor's original lath and plaster interior finishes are missing and the northwest corner of the first floor has collapsed.

Stone Outbuilding

The stone outbuilding is a one-story rectangular building, measuring approximately 20 feet wide by 28 feet long. The exterior walls, including the foundation walls, are constructed of solid uncoursed stone rubble that are approximately 18" thick. The side-gabled roof is framed with 2 x 6 wood rafters that bear upon the east and west stone walls; 2 x 4 wood collar ties act as the support framing for the former interior wood lath and plaster ceiling. Corrugated metal roofing attached to wood sheathing

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

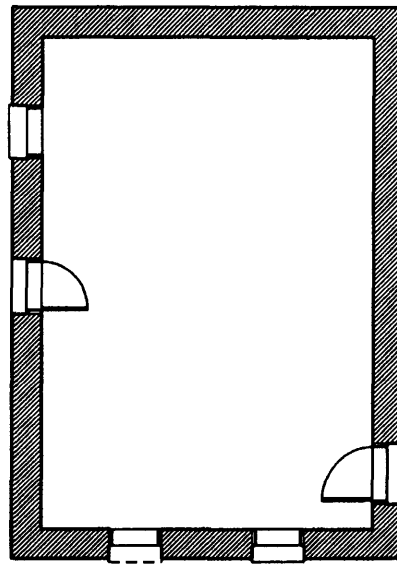
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Powell and Blair Stone Ranch

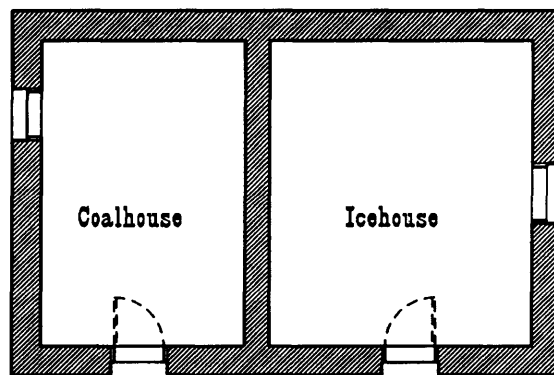
Logan County, Colorado

Section number 7 Page 9

Figure 7



First Floor Plan - Outbuilding 8/29/03



First Floor Plan - Bunkhouse 8/29/03



Powell and Blair Stone Ranch
Proctor, Logan County, Colorado

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boards act as the roof finish. Much of the roof enclosure, including the wood framing, is damaged or missing due to water infiltration over the years.

The west elevation contains an entry door and a window opening, located at the north end of the wall. Another door opening is located at the south end of the east elevation. The entry doors are Dutch doors, constructed of tongue and groove wood over wood framing and contain hardware of forged iron. Ghost markings of former hinge locations, visible at both door openings, indicate that the Dutch doors are not original historic fabric. The south elevation contains two large window openings that are symmetrically located on the wall, while the north elevation has no door or window openings. The interior consists of one large room that formerly had plaster walls and a plaster ceiling. Due to the building's exposure to the weather, most of the original interior finishes are missing (Refer to Figure 5).

The original function of this outbuilding is not known, but it is believed to have formerly served as the blacksmith shop for the ranch. Harold Hamil describes in *Colorado Without Mountains* how stone masons from Cheyenne came to the ranch "to build the house, the blacksmith shop, the chicken house, the stone portion of the bunkhouse-coal house-ice house and the foundation of the water tank". The author also described two fenced garden tracts that were located within 300 feet of the house. One corner of the gardens was "sheltered from the north winds by the blacksmith shop", suggesting that the blacksmith shop was located near the ranch house. The stone outbuilding's location relative to the house fits this description; it has soot-covered interior plaster, yet the exposed ceiling framing shows no evidence of exposure to an uncontrolled fire. This indicates that the soot may have been the result of blacksmithing activities that occurred within the plaster walls and ceiling of the building; the plaster finishes may have been applied to protect the combustible ceiling framing from fire. However, there are no roof penetrations for stove flues. The blacksmith was the "handyman" on the ranch who made nails, hinges, hoes, axes, hooks, and other tools; he also began taking over the farrier's work of horseshoeing in the mid-1800s. The wood posts are still visible inside the building may have once been part of horse corrals.

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet****United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**Powell and Blair Stone Ranch Logan County, Colorado Section number 8 Page 11

Narrative Statement of Significance

The Powell and Blair Stone Ranch is eligible for the National Register under Criterion C for its architectural significance. The ranch house, built between 1897 and 1898, is representative of the most common version of the American Foursquare, with its simple square plan, low-pitched hipped roof, and symmetrical façade. This style was popular beginning after the Silver Crash of 1893, when more somber styles were favored. The house, bunkhouse, and stone outbuilding are significant for their use of locally quarried stone, with walls laid of solid irregularly coursed stone rubble. The use of locally available building materials was necessary due to the site's lack of timber at this time and the fact that the railroad had not yet reached Proctor, allowing materials to be easily transported from distant locations.

The property is also eligible under Criterion A in the areas of *Exploration/Settlement* and *Agriculture*. William J. Powell and his family were early settlers in Logan County, arriving in the area in the mid-1870s. Powell and his mother-in-law later accomplished two 160-acre homestead claims north of Proctor in 1890 that would become the nucleus of the Powell and Blair Stone Ranch. Stone Ranch was developed between 1895 and 1898 and was considered one of the most modern self-contained and self-maintained ranches in the region at that time. Irrigation was important to the development of agriculture in northeastern Colorado, and Stone Ranch was well known for its system of irrigation ditches and canals. In 1907, the ranch was sold to the Logan County Development Company of Cedar Rapids, Iowa. J.D. Blue was the company's principal holder, who purchased over 4,000 acres of the ranch land. The development company dedicated the town of Proctor for public use in 1909 and persuaded the Union Pacific Railroad to purchase a tract of land in Proctor and build a station there. The period of significance begins in 1897 with the construction of the ranch house and extends through 1924, to include the period during which James Newton Hamil was ranch manager for the Logan County Development Company and the period during which the ranch reached its peak productivity.

Ranch Development

William J. Powell moved to Colorado from Alabama in 1874 with his sister, Missouri Powell, and her husband, Sidney Propst. Propst had been part of an expedition organized in the southern United States for men to travel west and take advantage of the Timber Culture Act of 1873. Under this act, a timber claim of 160 acres could be made if forty acres were set aside for planting timber. The expedition promoted the "beautifully landscaped" town of Buffalo, located near present-day Merino. Propst found the open plains along the South Platte River near Buffalo to be appealing with greater opportunities than Greeley, Denver, and Golden, which he had also visited. Consequently, Propst laid claim to 160 acres and returned to Alabama to marry Missouri Powell and to move her and her brother, William, to northeastern Colorado.

William married Selma Fleming Draxler in 1879 in Fort Sidney, Nebraska after establishing a concession exchange store there to serve the troops at the fort. Selma had been married previously and had a daughter, Victoria Draxler, from the earlier union. In 1890, William Powell established a 160-acre homestead claim north of Proctor. Powell's mother-in-law, Christina Fleming, acquired a similar claim during the same year that was contiguous with Powell's land. The present ranch house, bunkhouse, and stone outbuilding are located on these two quarter sections of land.

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Powell and Blair Stone Ranch Logan County, Colorado Section number 8 Page 12

Victoria Draxler Powell attended Sterling High School, graduating in 1894. While there, she met Frank Howard Blair, the assistant principal, who came to Colorado after graduating in 1891 from the University of South Dakota (Refer to Figure 8). One year after Victoria's graduation, she and Frank Blair were married and Blair joined his father-in-law, William Powell, in creating the Powell and Blair Stone Ranch. Both the Powell and Blair families lived together on the ranch. (Refer to Figure 9.)

The development of agriculture in northeastern Colorado and Logan County is closely linked to the irrigation of the high plains landscape. The earliest settlers who pursued agricultural interests found the land along the lowest elevations or "bottom lands" of the Platte River to be the most desirable due to the availability of water for irrigation. In 1872 and 1873, the first irrigation ditches in Logan County were constructed. Due to the lack of cash and little interest by outside promoters, the settlers organized small ditch companies in which a share of stock was given for a certain number of days' effort in ditch development. As the population grew, the need to provide irrigation water to higher ground increased, even though this meant more labor and greater cost. Between 1875 and 1886, new ditch companies were organized that resulted in the construction of six additional irrigation ditches. During the 1890s, more than a dozen more ditches were built to serve the area. William Powell and Joseph Dillon built and incorporated the Powell and Dillon Ditch around 1891, which served the Powell and Dillon Ranch, located approximately three miles northeast of Iliff. In 1895, after Powell formed a second ranching partnership with his son-in-law, Frank Blair, they extended the ditch with a team of horses and hand scrapers to serve the Powell and Blair Stone Ranch; the ditch was then renamed the Powell and Blair Ditch. The ditch still remains, although it has been modernized. A second ditch, called the Iliff and Platte Valley ditch, served the ranch to a lesser extent; the Ranch's rights to this ditch's water were exercised by its release of water into the Powell and Blair ditch for final distribution.

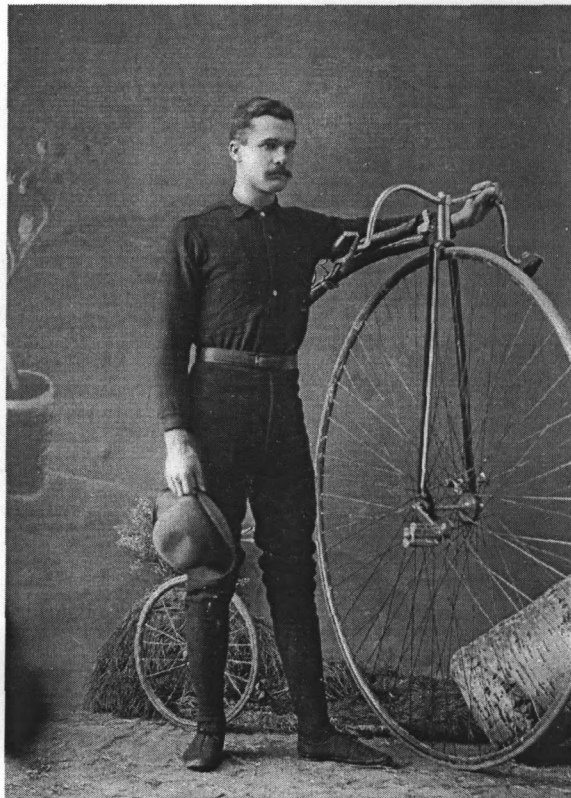


Figure 8. Frank H. Blair, 21 years of age, surprised Sterling residents in 1891 by riding this bicycle through town. Blair was a graduate of the University of South Dakota and was assistant principal of Sterling High School at the time. He would later form a ranching partnership with his father-in-law, William J. Powell, in 1895 and develop the Powell and Blair Stone Ranch. (Photo courtesy of the Overland Trail Museum; Sterling, Colorado)

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Powell and Blair Stone Ranch

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Figure 9. This photograph of the "haying crew" at the Powell and Blair Stone Ranch was taken around 1902. William J. Powell is standing at top left; Frank Blair is holding his son, Harrison, and is seated in the middle row, third from the left; and son William Powell Blair is seated in the bottom row, third from the right. (Photo from *Forgotten People – A History of the South Platte Trial* by Nell Brown Propst)

Cattle ranching in northeastern Colorado had become a major enterprise by the late nineteenth century, due in part to the outcome of the Civil War. Texan ranchers could not sell their cattle to Confederate markets because the Union Army had taken control of the Mississippi River. Consequently, the supply of cattle increased in Texas while the value of the herds decreased. Meanwhile, beef cattle were selling in the North at inflated prices. Enterprising individuals took advantage of the situation by purchasing and herding the cattle from Texas to Colorado; there they were left to graze or sent by railroad to the East Coast. The landscape of natural prairie grass was ideal for cattle feed because it survived cattle trampling, drought, and winter weather. The railroad's arrival in 1870 to Denver ensured greater profitability for the cattle industry. And the land located along the South Platte River provided ideal range land for cattle, with water readily available. William J. Powell apparently saw the benefit of cattle ranching and drove 1,350 head of cattle from Idaho in 1896 that became the nucleus of the Powell-Blair herd. He would later influence the Union Pacific Railroad to establish Powell Station, located three miles northeast of Iliff; hay, grain, sugar beets, and cattle were transported by rail from here.

Stone Ranch, considered to be the first self-contained ranch in Logan County, was developed between 1895 and 1898 (Refer to Figures 10 and 11). Typical structures found on the ranch included barns, corrals, sheds, and windmills. Stone Ranch was also equipped with a carpentry shop that contained a one-cylinder International gasoline engine with large flywheels to power a set of shafts and pulleys

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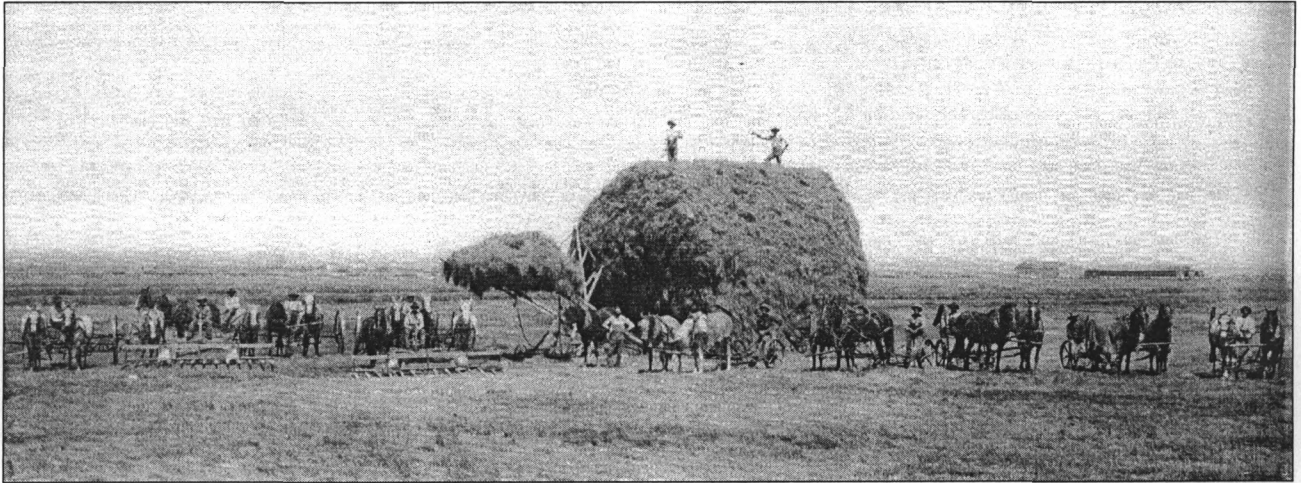


Figure 10. Here the haying crew is working in the one of the fields of the Powell and Blair Stone Ranch. Frank Blair always stacked the hay and is standing on top of the impressive haystack, on the right side. (Photo from *Forgotten People – A History of the South Platte Trial* by Nell Brown Propst)

connected to saws, lathes, drills, and tool-sharpening grinders. The bunkhouse for the hired help, with coalhouse and icehouse on the first floor, still stands to the north of the ranch house. Stone Ranch also had a blacksmith shop, a combination chicken and turkey house, a granary, a pond for ducks and geese, and an elevated water tank that provided piped running water for the house. Powell and Blair planted thousands of trees and shrubs during the late 1890s. They also planted two orchards, one immediately to the west of the ranch house and another above an irrigation ditch near the potato cellar, located far to the north of the house. The west orchard contained cherry, plum, and a variety of apple trees, while the north orchard consisted of approximately forty cherry and plum trees. A mulberry hedge was planted along the west edge of both orchards; at full maturity, the hedge exceeded twenty feet in height and acted as a windbreak for the orchards.



Figure 11. The Powell and Blair Stone Ranch barn no longer stands, but it was once considered to be the largest and most modern barn between North Platte, Nebraska, and Denver. The ranch was also considered to be the first "Self-contained" ranch in northeastern Colorado. (Photo courtesy of the Overland Trail Museum; Sterling, Colorado)

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By 1907, the ranch encompassed over 4,000 acres of land and was sold to the Logan County Development Company of Cedar Rapids, Iowa for \$400,000 and 168 shares of stock in the Iliff and Platte Valley Ditch Company. It was renamed "Blue Ranch" for J. D. Blue, the company's principal holder. The developer's plan was to divide the ranch into smaller parcels for sale to Iowa farmers. During the seventeen years that James Newton Hamil was ranch manager, only one 160-acre parcel was sold. Forty acres were dedicated for the town of Proctor. Street names included Blue Street and Hamil Street. J. D. Blue persuaded the Union Pacific Railroad to build a station in Proctor. A modest structure was later replaced with a more modern station that included living quarters for the agent's family and matched the size and design of stations found in larger towns located between North Platte and Denver. The station no longer exists. Between 1909 and 1913, several residences and a schoolhouse were constructed. Businesses included the Proctor Lumber Company, Fedder Store, Proctor State Bank, a garage for the repair of automobiles, a pool hall, a blacksmith shop, a hotel, and a barber shop. The 1913 Logan County Prosperity Edition of The Republican-Advocate Newspaper boasted of Proctor's growth: "With a hotel, lumber yard, general store and bank the town has the brightest prospects, as its geographical location in the center of the North Sterling district will unquestionably draw the farmers of this district to Proctor as a shipping point for their products." Today, the blacksmith shop is the only commercial structure remaining from the early development of Proctor.

David Alexander Hamil and James Harold Hamil

Brothers David Alexander Hamil and James Harold Hamil grew up on Blue Ranch, living there from 1907 until 1924. David Alexander Hamil was born on the ranch in 1908, while his brother, James Harold Hamil, was born in 1906 just prior to his family's move onto the ranch.

James Harold Hamil wrote *Colorado Without Mountains*, a book that provides important information about the development of the region as well as the Powell and Blair Stone Ranch. It contains descriptions of the ranch that are not available from any other source. From 1951 until 1971, Hamil was responsible for public relations, communications and other administrative areas for Farmland Industries in Kansas City, Missouri. Established in 1929, the purpose of Farmland Industries was to make independent family farmers more competitive and profitable. Cooperatives were formed that established a farmer-owned system that both manufactured and marketed their products. During the late 1950s, Hamil began writing about his boyhood experiences for Farmland publications. Due to the favorable responses that he received, Hamil decided to write a book about northeastern Colorado titled *Colorado Without Mountains*. His book and articles provide insight into the lives of those who settled in northeastern Colorado and lived there in the early 1900s.

David Alexander Hamil served as the national administrator of the Rural Electrification Administration in the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Hamil recognized the importance of rural electrification after living on Blue Ranch as well as his own personal ranch, where electric power was not available in the area. Three years after the passage of the Rural Electrification Act of 1936, Hamil assisted in forming the Highline Electric Association in northeastern Colorado and served on its board of directors for three years. As the leader of the REA under President Eisenhower beginning in 1956, Hamil was concerned with providing low cost power to areas where farms were separated by large distances and construction costs were consequently high. During David Hamil's early tenure, almost 500,000 rural consumers were added to REA-financed electrical systems, while the number of telephone subscribers tripled. David's brother said "the REA was tailor-made for Dave; he could be a farmer and a politician at the same time." In 1968, Hamil returned to Washington to serve as REA administrator under

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President Nixon. Following Nixon's resignation, Hamil served Gerald Ford and then worked with the Carter administration beginning in 1977.

Architectural Evolution of the Buildings

Historical accounts indicate that the ranch house is the oldest in Proctor, constructed between 1897 and 1898. According to William Powell Blair, son of Frank Howard Blair, he and his parents moved into a sod house on their property in 1897 and lived there for several months until construction was completed on the "big stone house". The stone, consisting of both sandstone and quartzite, was removed from an outcropping near the ranch. Stone masons from Cheyenne, Wyoming, built the house and other stone structures on the ranch, including the first floor of the bunkhouse and the stone outbuilding located nearby. At the ranch house, attention was given to the stones located at the segmental arched heads of the windows, where the individual stones (or voussoirs) were chiseled into a wedge-like shape, and at the corners of the house, where larger stones were utilized to create the illusion of quoins. Quoins can also be seen on the Bunkhouse and the other remaining stone outbuilding, which is believed to be a blacksmith shop. The stone was also hewn and chiseled for stone lintels and window sills at the two outbuildings.

The design of the two hipped roof one-story appendages on the north side of the ranch house suggests that they may have been later additions, with the eave of the northernmost appendage lower than the eave of the appendage closest to the two-story main house. However, the floor framing for the first floor is partially exposed to view in the north room of the cellar. Some of the kitchen's floor joists, located in the one-story wing closest to the main house, continue over the north bearing wall of the kitchen into the northernmost one-story wing; this suggests that both wings were constructed at the same time. Harold Hamil described the main two-story house with eight rooms and the function of the auxiliary one-story wing in his book, *Colorado Without Mountains*: "The ninth room, a mammoth kitchen with a walk-in pantry and washroom was a one-story attachment on the north, its stone walls blending into those of the two story section." Pattern books and magazines were readily available to the general public and were the sources for examples of the Foursquare type. These publications may have influenced Powell and Blair's design of the two-story house. Due to the size of the ranch, a large kitchen and pantry were needed to accommodate cooking, food storage, and a large dining table for the hired help. The partners may have added the one-story wing to the pattern book design to meet the unique needs of Stone Ranch.

There were a number of other structures on the Powell and Blair Stone Ranch that no longer exist. The surviving structures are some of the best and most intact examples of a stone agricultural complex in northeastern Colorado. Although the bunkhouse and stone outbuilding appear to have been vandalized or damaged, with stones missing from their exterior walls, the masonry has held up well and represents a durable local building material. The material's use for quoins and segmental arched door and window heads reflects the artistic talent of the stone masons and the importance placed on the outbuildings.

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Geographical Data**Verbal Boundary Description:**

A parcel of land being located in the North One-Half of Section 28, Township 10 North, Range 50 West of the Sixth Principal Meridian, County of Logan, State of Colorado, being more particularly described as follows:

Commencing at the North One-Quarter corner of said Section 28, whence the Northwest corner of said Section 28 bears South 89° 18' 41 " West a distance of 2657.95 feet, said line forming the basis of bearings for this description; Thence South 19°06'32" East a distance of 265.12 feet to the Point Of Beginning;

Thence South 02° 18' 11 " East a distance of 1021.04 feet;
Thence South 86°25'47" West a distance of 528.53 feet;
Thence North 79°00'25" West a distance of 98.72 feet;
Thence North 24°20'29" West a distance of 19.18 feet;
Thence North 18°33'46" West a distance of 174.09 feet;
Thence North 06°27' 10" West a distance of 27.54 feet;
Thence North 16°55'47" West a distance of 261.59 feet;
Thence North 19°18'54" East a distance of 62.67 feet;
Thence North 34°21 '04" East a distance of 159.35 feet;
Thence North 25°24 '22" East a distance of 59.63 feet;
Thence North 27°44'41" East a distance of 35.08 feet;
Thence North 33°43'39" East a distance of 64.47 feet;
Thence North 46°46'15" East a distance of 347.29 feet;
Thence South 20°35'15" East a distance of 30.68 feet;
Thence North 82°33'04" East a distance of 276.13 feet to the Point of Beginning.

Said parcel of land contains 14.466 acres.

Boundary Justification:

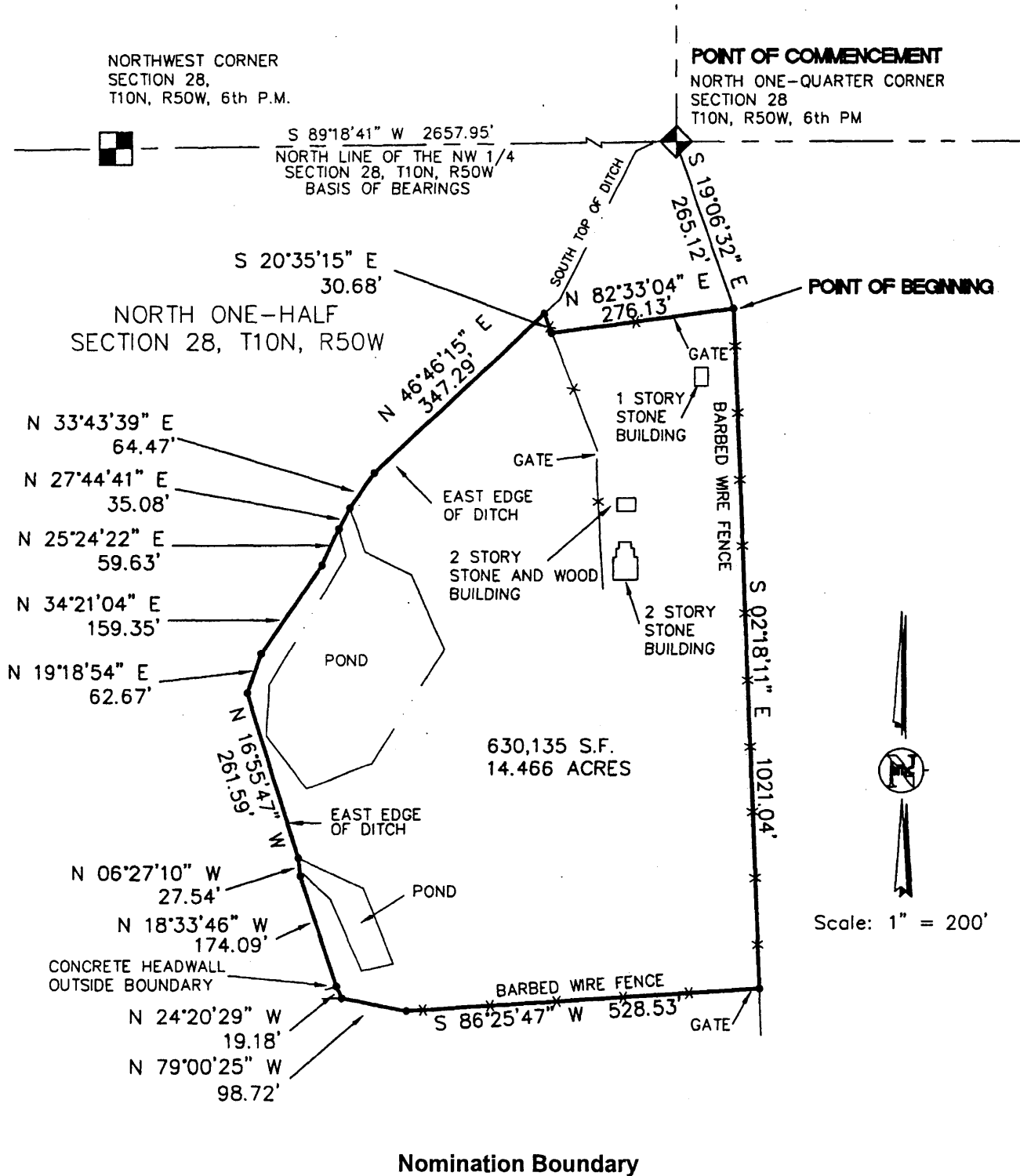
The boundary includes the house, bunkhouse, and stone outbuilding that constitute the only surviving buildings historically part of the Powell and Blair Stone Ranch. The nominated area roughly contains all the land that once formed the ranch headquarters complex and is defined by features discernible in the field.

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Figure 12



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Photograph Log

The following information pertains to photograph numbers 1 – 14:

Name of Property: Powell and Blair Stone Ranch
 Location: Logan County, Colorado
 Photographer: Tim Hoehn
 Date of Photographs: August 22, 2003
 Negatives: Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation
 Colorado Historical Society

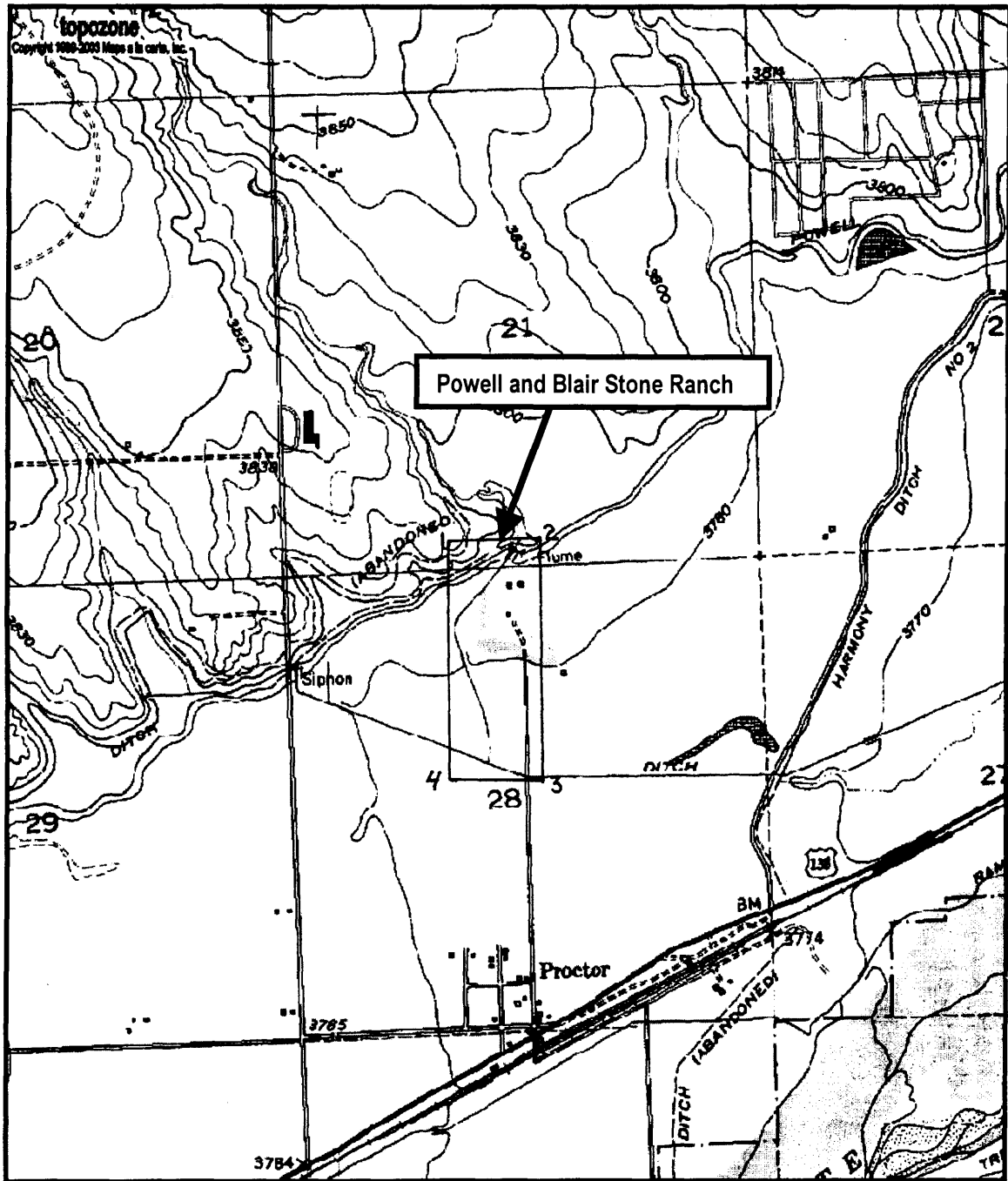
Photo No.	Photographic Information	
1	Ranch house	South and west elevations; view to the northeast.
2	Ranch house	South elevation and a portion of the east elevation; view to the northwest.
3	Ranch house	South and east elevations; view to the northwest with the Bunkhouse in the background.
4	Ranch house	East elevation; view to the west.
5	Ranch house	West and north elevations; view to the southeast with the well house in the foreground.
6	Bunkhouse/ Stone Outbuilding	View to the northeast, with the Bunkhouse in the foreground and the Stone Outbuilding in the background.
7	Bunkhouse	South and east elevations; view to the northwest.
8	Bunkhouse	South elevation; view to the north.
9	Bunkhouse	East elevation and a portion of the north elevation; view slightly south of west.
10	Bunkhouse	North elevation and a portion of the west elevation; view to the southeast, with the ranch house in the background.
11	Stone Outbuilding	West and south elevations; view to the northeast.
12	Stone Outbuilding	South elevation; view to the north.
13	Stone Outbuilding	South and east elevations; view to the northwest.
14	Stone Outbuilding	East and north elevations; view to the southwest with the ranch house in the background.

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USGS TOPOGRAPHIC MAP
Proctor Quadrangle, Colorado
7.5 Minute Series



0 0.3 0.6 0.9 1.2 1.5 km
 0 0.2 0.4 0.6 0.8 1 mi
 Map center is UTM 13 672810E 4520417N (NAD27)
Proctor quadrangle
 Projection is UTM Zone 13 NAD83 Datum

MN
 GN
 MN=7.722
 GN=-1.34