

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

**SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD**

NRIS Reference Number: 02001409

Date of Listing: November 25, 2002

Property Name: Bee Farm

County: Larimer

State: Colorado

none  
Multiple Name

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This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

*for Daniel J. Vivian*  
Signature of the Keeper

November 25, 2002  
Date of Action

=====  
Amended Items in Nomination:

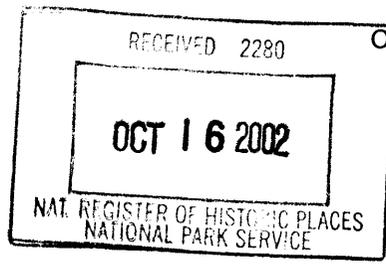
Section 5: Classification

The status of the migrant worker house (identified in the property description as resource H) is hereby changed to non-contributing because alterations made since the end of the period of significance have destroyed its integrity. In accordance with this change, the number of buildings in the resource count is hereby revised to 12 contributing and 7 non-contributing; the total count is 22 contributing and 8 non-contributing resources.

The Colorado State Historic Preservation Office was notified of this amendment.

**DISTRIBUTION:**

- National Register property file**
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)**



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

1409

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 Bee Farm

other names/site number Morse Farm; 5LR1917

2. Location

street & number 4320 East County Road 58 [N/A] not for publication

city or town Fort Collins [X] vicinity

state Colorado code CO county Larimer code 069 zip code 80524

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.)
Signature of certifying official/Title: Georgiana Coutyuglin, State Historic Preservation Officer
Date: October, 2002
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:

- [X] 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.

Signature of the Keeper: Daniel J. Vivia
Date of Action: 11/25/02

Bee Farm  
Name of Property

Larimer County, Colorado  
County/State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

**Category of Property**

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not count previously listed resources.)

Contributing                      Noncontributing

13	6	buildings
1	0	sites
9	1	structures
0	0	objects
23	7	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: secondary structure
- Agricultural field
- Agriculture: agriculture outbuildings
- Agriculture: animal facility
- Agriculture: irrigation facility

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

- Domestic: single dwelling
- Domestic: secondary structure
- Agricultural field
- Agriculture: agriculture outbuildings
- Agriculture: animal facility
- Agriculture: irrigation facility

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

- Modern Movement
- Other: Minimal Traditional
- Other: Ranch Style

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

- foundation see continuation sheet
- walls
- roof
- other

**Narrative Description**

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**
**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

Bee Farm Larimer County, Colorado

Section number 7 Page 1**MATERIALS**

Foundation: WOOD

BRICK

CONCRETE

Walls: WOOD

WOOD/Weatherboard

BRICK

METAL/Tin

METAL/Aluminum

METAL/Steel

CONCRETE

Roof: WOOD/Shingle

METAL/Tin

METAL/Steel

ASPHALT

**DESCRIPTION**

The Bee Farm is an historic agricultural complex located northeast of Fort Collins, Colorado. The farm sits at an elevation of 5,100 feet above sea level, in a shallow valley drained by Boxelder Creek. Nestled in the northeast corner of the intersection of Interstate 25 with County Road 58, the property was once a typical quarter-section (160-acre) homestead. However, the construction of the Interstate in 1965 resulted in the condemnation of five acres to accommodate a frontage road and the viaduct that carries County Road 58 over the Interstate.

The farm complex consists of thirty extant resources, twenty-three contributing and seven noncontributing (see figures 1 and 2, and resource summary below). Those contributing resources are the original homestead house (resource A); the old granary (resource B); wagon shed and granary (resource C); loafing shed (resource D); horse barn (structure E); buggy shed (resource G); migrant worker house (resource H); chicken coop (resource I); milk barn (structure J); garage (resource K); granary east of homestead house (resource M); small machine shed and shop (resource N); farm house (resource P); cistern northwest of the farm house (resource Q); cistern north of the farm house (resource R); first well (resource T); little house (resource U); little house garage (resource V); cistern south of little house (resource W); north well and pump house (resource X); south well and pump house (resource Y); irrigation ditches (resource Z); and agricultural fields including the remaining Timber Act cottonwood (resource AA). Noncontributing resources are the square shanty (resource F); tank granary (resource L); large machine shed and shop (resource O); and the corral complex (resource S), which includes four cowsheds. The main farm house is located approximately 1,285 feet east of the eastern Interstate 25 frontage road and seventy feet north of Larimer County 58. A large cottonwood and cedar surround the house, which features mature landscaping. A driveway runs along the western edge of the farm house into the main complex of buildings behind it. The majority of resources are located in this small area. A dirt access road emerges from the northern edge of this complex, following the centerline of the property until it reaches a field access road following the east-west centerline. This east-west road connects to the Interstate frontage road just south of the little house complex, which includes resources U, V, and W. Access roads also follow the northern and eastern edges of the farm. A lone cottonwood stands near the northeast corner of the property.

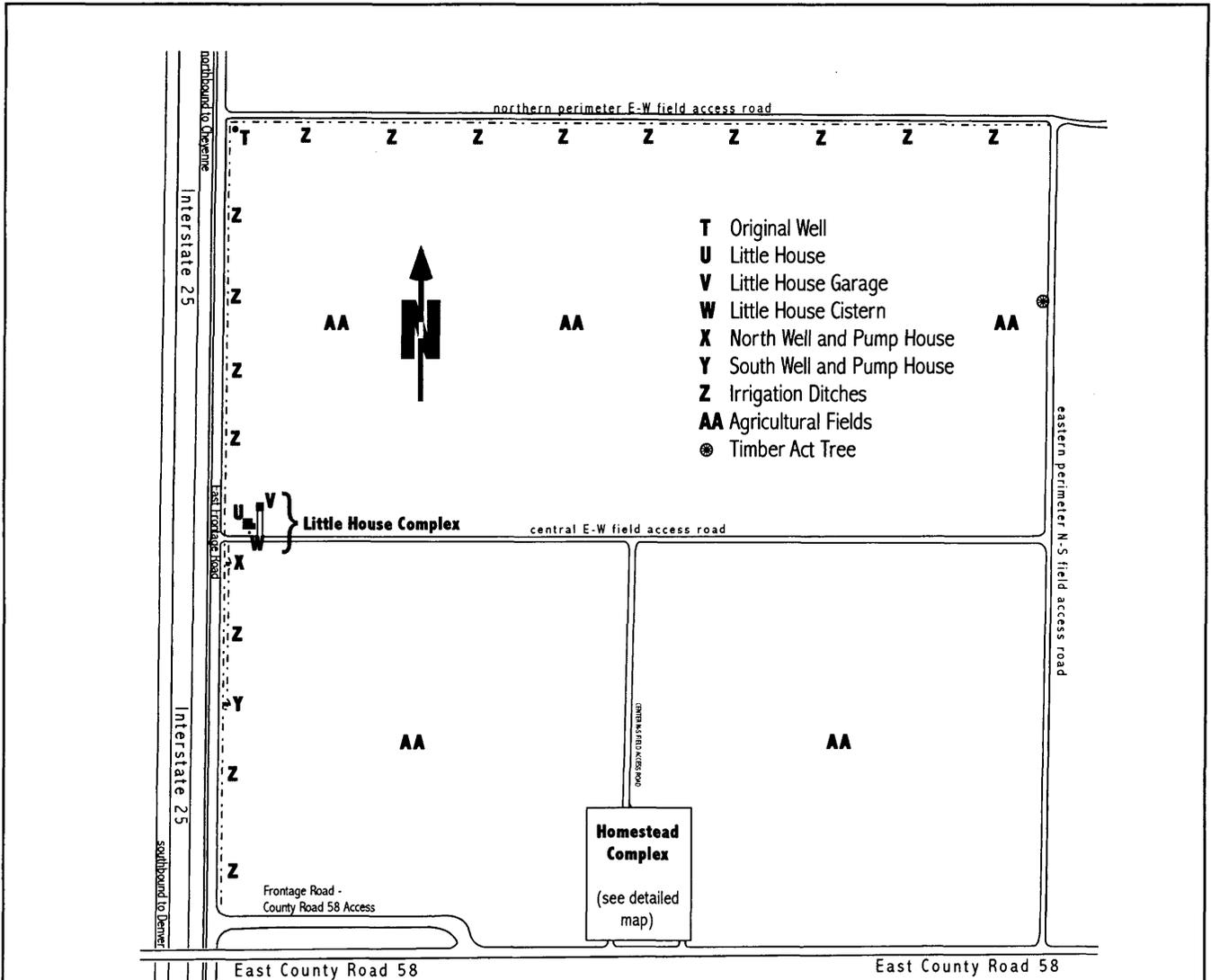
# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

## United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

Bee Farm Larimer County, Colorado

Section number 7 Page 2

Figure 1.



# Bee Farm

Scale: 1 Inch ≈ 500 feet

Southwestern Quarter of Section 10  
Township 8N, Range 68W  
Larimer County, Colorado

4320 East County Road 58  
Fort Collins, Colorado 80524

January 2002

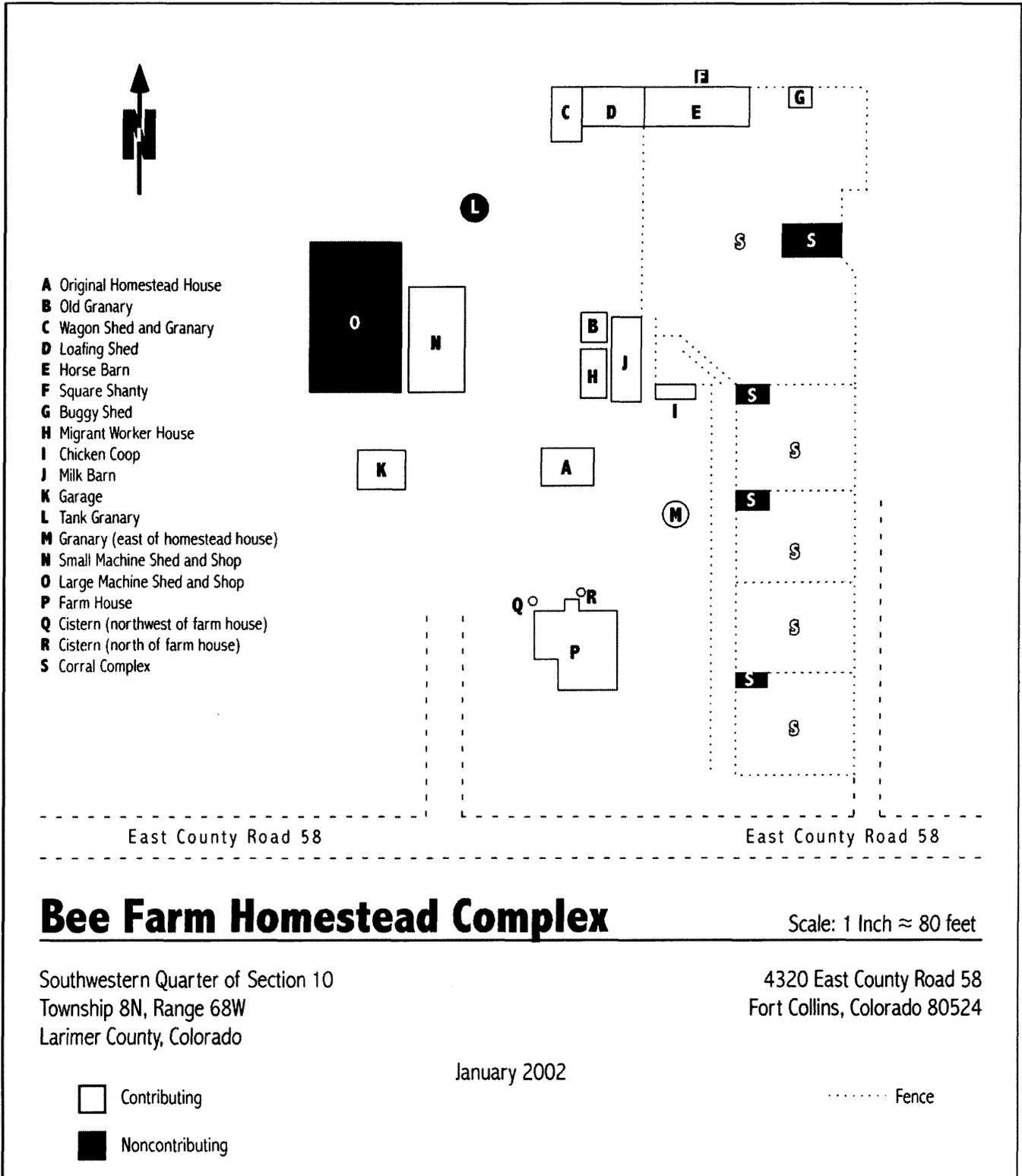
# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

Bee Farm Larimer County, Colorado

Section number 7 Page 3

Figure 2.



# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

Bee Farm

Larimer County, Colorado

Section number 7 Page 4

## CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES

Contributing resources include buildings, structures, and sites erected or modified within the district's period of significance (1894-1957), having an historic association with the farm and retaining their historic integrity. The following buildings and structures represent the evolution of the Bee Farm from early homesteading and grazing, through irrigated farming (including sugar beet cultivation and sheep feeding), until the late 1950s.

### Homestead Complex

*Original Homestead House (1894, Resource A, Photos 1 and 2).* The oldest structure on the Bee Farm, this small, hall-and-parlor dwelling was constructed by Alvarado and Lizzie Morse in 1894. The Morses were uncle and aunt to Arleigh Bee. Oriented to the south, this one-story, rectangular-plan structure has a concrete foundation and measures fourteen feet north-south by twenty-five feet east-west. Broad, white-painted horizontal siding and one-by-four-inch cornerboards clad the exterior walls, and corrugated metal covers the side-gabled roof. A small, red-brick chimney, offset to the east, emerges from the roof ridge. The eaves are boxed, with the soffit and fascia painted white. A white-painted, three-panel, glass-in-wood-frame door opens west of center on the asymmetrical façade. Windows are four-over-four, double-hung sash with white-painted wooden frames and surrounds. Windows appear as a pair south of the door on the principal elevation. A small concrete stoop approaches this door.

Photographs in the Bee Family Archives reveal that Al and Lizzie Morse originally covered the exterior walls of their homestead house in unpainted, vertical board-and-batten siding. When his uncle Al died in



1899, Arleigh Bee moved into the house with his Aunt Lizzie, and the Bees and Lizzie Morse combined residences – literally. The Bees transported their house two and half miles and tacked it onto the west of Aunt Lizzie's three-room dwelling. A photograph from 1924 reveals that the Morse homestead had been sided again, this time in narrow, unpainted, horizontal wooden siding. By 1957, the Francis Bee family had outgrown its two-bedroom bungalow on the west side of the farm and decided to build a new residence on the site of the original homestead house. They dismantled the two-story Bee homestead and, instead of demolishing the Morse

homestead house, moved it behind (north of) their new home. Francis Bee carefully removed deteriorated lumber beneath the house and installed new stringers. At the same time, the homestead house received its present siding. The Bees continue to use the homestead house as a family museum.

*Horse Barn (1907, Resource E, Photos 7 and 8).* Arleigh Bee's financial ledger indicates that he purchased the cement for this wooden post-and-beam structure in the spring of 1907. Oriented to the south, the horse barn is located and connected to the east of the loafing shed (resource D). It measures

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

# United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

Bee Farm

Larimer County, Colorado

Section number 7 Page 5

sixteen feet north-south by fifty-four feet east-west. Corrugated metal clads the east and north elevations of this one-story, rectangular-plan structure. Wooden shingles cover the side-gabled roof. The front (south) elevation is largely open, enclosed only with simple horizontal wood-plank half-doors. The doors delineate four separate bays and a larger area on the east end of the structure.

Hand axe marks and notching on the barn's massive vertical members indicate that this structure was built from used lumber. This barn historically served two functions: to house the farm's workhorses and to provide an area for milking cows. The last workhorse was put out to pasture in 1948;

the family milked cows in the large area in the eastern portion of the structure until they built a new milk barn (resource J) in 1947.



*Old Granary (1909, Resource B, Photo 3).* This granary is located north of the migrant worker house (resource H) and west of the milk shed (resource J). Oriented to the west, this one-story, rectangular-plan structure measures sixteen feet north-south by twelve feet east-west. It lacks a formal foundation and, instead, rests on logs. Corrugated metal clads the exterior walls, and wooden shingles cover the side-gabled roof. Rafters are exposed beneath the eaves. A small door sheathed in corrugated metal pierces the center of the principal (west) elevation. A portion of the metal covering on the bottom of the north elevation has been removed, exposing the "studs-out" construction typical of granaries.

According to a September 1909 journal entry, Arleigh Bee constructed this granary with a connected buggy shed (now resource G). The combined structures stood west of the granary's present location. The Bee family separated and moved the structures to their current locations when they constructed the small machine shed and shop in 1956. They covered the granary with corrugated metal sheets at that time. The Bees currently use the structure for storage.

*Buggy Shed (1909, resource G, Photos 10 and 11).* This buggy shed is located east of the horse barn (resource E), at the north edge of the corral complex (resource S). Oriented to the south, this one-story, rectangular structure lacks a formal foundation and is of wooden post-and-beam construction. It measures eleven feet north-south by thirteen feet east-west. Unpainted, broad, vertical boards clad the exterior walls and corrugated metal covers the front-gabled roof as well as the gable ends. The front (south) elevation is entirely open.

According to a September 1909 journal entry, Arleigh Bee constructed this buggy shed connected to the granary (now resource B). The combined structures stood west of the granary's present location. Arleigh Bee used this shed as his shop, housing the farm's forge. The Bee family separated and moved the structures to their current locations when they constructed the small machine shed and shop in 1956. An opening on the west elevation has been covered, and the current opening has been reinforced with railroad ties. The Bee's currently use the structure as a cow shed.

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

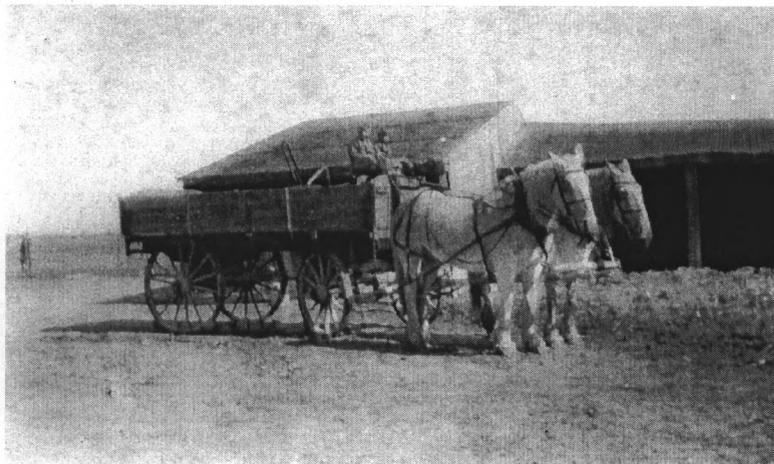
Bee Farm

Larimer County, Colorado

Section number 7 Page 6

*Cistern Northwest of Farm House (1910, Resource Q, Photo 28).* Located off the northwest corner of the farm house (resource P), this 1,000-gallon cistern is constructed of small bricks within a concrete shell. The opening above the ground is capped with a circular, galvanized steel lid with a handle and a connection to collect rainwater from a downspout.

Dated February 1, 1910, an entry in Arleigh Bee's general ledger shows an expenditure of \$6.40 for eight hundred bricks for this cistern and the one east of it (resource R). This particular cistern was originally attached to the downspout of the old homestead house (resource A) when it stood at this location. This rainwater was used for washing, but not drinking.

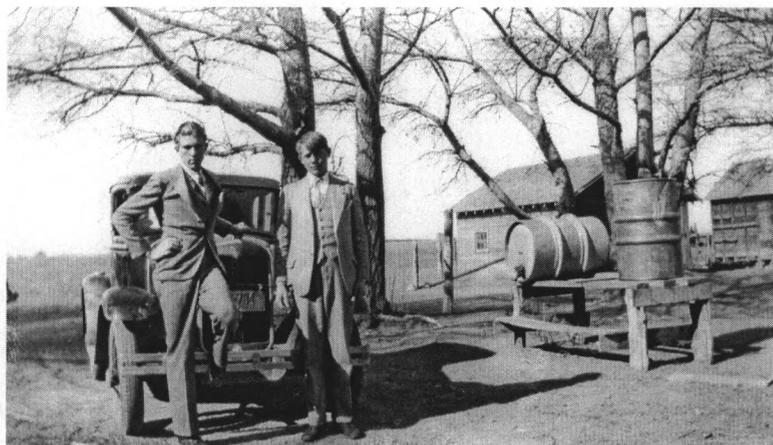


*Cistern North of Farm House (1910, Resource R, Photo 29).* This 1,000-gallon cistern is located directly north of the farm house (resource P). It is constructed of bricks encased in concrete. A circular, galvanized steel lid caps the opening above the ground. The lid features a downspout connection to collect rainwater.

Constructed at the same time as the cistern northwest of the farm house (resource Q), the history and construction

of the this cistern are identical to its neighbor except that this cistern originally lacked a downspout connection. Instead, once a week the family went to Fort Collins or Wellington to collect water in a large, horse-drawn tank. They then emptied the water into this cistern and used it for drinking. From the cistern the water could be brought via hand pump into the kitchen. Thus, the Bees continued to use this cistern even after the completion of their larger farm house in 1957.

*Loafing Shed (1911, Resource D, Photos 6 and 7).* Oriented to the south, this structure is located between and connected to the horse barn (resource E) to the east and the wagon shed and granary (resource C) to the west. This is a one-story, rectangular-plan structure measuring sixteen feet north-south by thirty-six feet east west and consists of wooden post-and-beam construction. Corrugated metal covers the north elevation and the side-gabled roof. A large opening dominates the entire front (south) elevation.



Bee family records indicate that this structure was built in 1911. The original broad, vertical board siding on the north elevation still exists beneath the corrugated metal. The Bee family currently uses this structure for equipment storage.

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet****United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

Bee Farm Larimer County, Colorado

Section number 7 Page 7

*Wagon Shed and Granary (1914, Resource C, Photos 4, 5, and 7).* Built of simple wooden post-and-beam construction, this structure is located north of the old granary (resource B) and west of and connected to the loafing shed (resource D). Measuring twenty-seven feet north-south by sixteen feet east-west, this wagon shed and granary is oriented to the south. The one-story, rectangular structure lacks a formal foundation. Broad vertical wooden planks cover the wagon shed (southern) portion of the structure. The granary (northern) portion is clad in unpainted, horizontal, wooden weatherboard. Corrugated metal covers the north and west elevations and the side-gabled roof. The rafters are exposed. The entire south elevation is open while a small door on the north end of the west elevation provides access to the granary.

Arleigh Bee built this structure in 1914. Originally, two large sliding doors covered the front of the wagon shed, but have been since removed. The steel track for the doors remains. The original wood-shingle roof remains beneath the corrugated metal. The Bee family currently uses this structure for equipment storage.

*Garage (1918, Resource K, Photos 16 and 17).* Located west of the original homestead house (resource A) and south of the small and large machine sheds (resources N and O), the garage is a wood-frame, rectangular, one-story structure measuring twenty-two feet north-south by thirty-six feet east-west. Oriented to the east, it rests on a concrete sill foundation, and white-painted, horizontal wooden weatherboard with one-by-four-inch cornerboards clads the exterior walls. Corrugated metal sheets cover the front-gabled roof and the rafters are exposed. These exposed rafters, along with a three-light awning window in the gable end above the garage door, express this structure's very muted Craftsman style. A large, retractable garage door dominates the front (east) elevation. Two window-like openings on the south elevation have been boarded shut. A sign above the eastern window reads, "SCHOOL DIS'T NO. 35." A post-and-beam, corrugated metal shed has been added to the rear (west) of the structure. The opening of this addition faces south.

The Bees added the corrugated metal shed to the garage in the 1960s. They crafted the rafters from the arms of telegraph and telephone poles. The Bees store two antique cars in the structure.

*Chicken Coop (c. 1945, Resource I, Photos 13 and 14).* This rectangular, wood-frame structure is located west of the corral complex (resource S) and east of the milk barn (resource J). It measures eight feet north-south by twenty-two feet east-west and is oriented to the south. While a single shed roof unifies the structure, it is actually the combination of two distinct halves. The eastern portion lacks a formal foundation while the western portion rests on a concrete slab. A wire fence surrounds the south side of the structure's eastern portion. White-painted, horizontal wooden weatherboard with one-by-four-inch cornerboards clads the exterior walls of the western half of the south elevation. This half of the chicken coop also features a large, tripartite, window-like opening. A board-and-batten hatch to cover this opening rests on the ground below the window. Another square opening pierces the structure's west elevation. The rafters are exposed beneath the shed roof, which is covered in corrugated metal.

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet****United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

Bee Farm Larimer County, Colorado

Section number 7 Page 8

The Bee Family estimates this structure's date of construction at sometime in the 1940s. The open, eastern portion is apparently an addition, but family members cannot determine its building date. The Bees no longer use the structure for any purpose.

*Milk Barn (1949, Resource J, Photo 15).* Oriented to the south, this structure is sandwiched between the chicken coop (resource I) to the east and the old granary (resource B) and the migrant worker house (structure H) to the west. This rectangular-plan, one-story structure has a concrete foundation and measures forty-six feet north-south by sixteen feet east-west. Large, structural clay tiles, ranging in color from orange to pink, and smaller red bricks as quoins compose the walls. Rafters emerge beneath the front-gabled roof. Small, square, louvered vents pierce the white-painted, horizontal wooden weatherboard cladding the gable ends. A white-painted, four-paneled wooden door opens on the west side of the asymmetrical front (south) elevation. The east side of the façade features a small window. Five windows line the east elevation and a large, sliding wooden door opens on its northern corner. The west elevation has four windows and a wooden hatch near the roofline. This hatch is used to access the granary inside the structure.

The milk barn closely resembles the small machine shed and shop (resource N) in building materials and techniques. John P. Bee, brother to Francis Bee, owned a brick factory in Laramie, Wyoming. When he closed the factory in the late 1940s, the Bees brought the remaining blocks to the farm. They were stored on-site and later used to build this structure and the small machine shop.

*Granary (c. 1950, Resource M, Photo 19).* Situated approximately forty-two feet southeast of the southeast corner of the original homestead house (resource A), this one-story, cylindrical structure is fourteen feet in diameter. Lacking a formal foundation, the granary rests on clay blocks resembling those used for the milk barn (resource J) and small machine shed and shop (resource N). The structure is composed of separate sheets of thin, corrugated galvanized steel bolted together on exterior-facing seams. A small vent crowns the center of the roof. A single steel door of three impressed panels opens to the south.

This structure is a standard mail-order granary manufactured by Columbia Steel Tank Company of Kansas City, Missouri. Members of the Bee family report that the granary was delivered in pieces to the farm in the early 1950s. Family members then bolted it together. They currently use the structure for storage.

*Migrant Worker House (c. 1930, Resource H, Photo 12).* This former dwelling is located north of the original homestead house (resource A) and west of the milk barn (resource J). Measuring twenty-five feet north-south by thirteen feet east-west, it is oriented to the west. This one room structure lacks a permanent foundation. Corrugated metal clads the exterior walls and the side-gabled roof. On the front (west) elevation, two small casement windows flank a four-panel wooden door. A similar window appears in the north elevation. A large opening for an automobile dominates the south elevation. It is entered through paired doors of vertical plank construction, sheathed in corrugated metal, and opening on large strap hinges.

Members of the Bee family are unsure whether this structure was built on site or moved here from elsewhere. Either way, it appeared in the 1930s, originally located near the current Interstate 25 frontage road on the western edge of the farm. A 1952 photograph from the Bee family archives indicates that this

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

# United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

Bee Farm

Larimer County, Colorado

Section number 7 Page 9

structure had a shed-roof addition on its west side, a feature which is no longer present. The Bees moved the structure in 1966, placing it just north of the small machine shed and shop. They moved the building again, this time to its present location, when they built the large machine shed and shop in 1981. In its original location the house had a shed-roofed addition which contained the kitchen. This portion of the building was lost during its relocation in 1966.

Despite having been moved and converted into a garage, the building retains sufficient integrity of design, materials, workmanship and association to be considered a contributing resource.

*Small Machine Shed and Shop (1956, resource N, Photos 20-22).* This machine shed and shop complex is located directly east of the newer and larger machine shed (resource O). Oriented to the east, this is a single-story, rectangular-plan structure measuring sixty feet north-south by thirty feet east-west. It has a concrete foundation. Large, multi-color, structural clay tile compose the walls. Small, red bricks appear as door and window surrounds as well as quoins. Rafter ends are visible beneath the side-gabled roof, which is covered in sheets of corrugated metal. White-painted, horizontal wooden weatherboard fills the gable ends. Three large sliding wooden doors and a retractable metal door dominate the front (east) elevation. Near the eastern corner of the south elevation opens a white-painted, four-panel wooden door. Beside it is a twelve-light, fixed-pane window with a metal frame.

According to Arleigh Bee's 1956 general ledger, the family hired Leroy, Alfred, and Clarence Olson to construct this building in 1956. John Bee manufactured the bricks, which are the same as those used to construct the milk shed (resource J). The rafters in this structure came from lumber originally used in the two-story Bee family homestead added to the original Morse homestead house (resource A). Arleigh Bee lived in the shop portion of this building while the old homestead house was moved and the new residence completed. The Bees continue to use this machine shed and shop for agricultural equipment storage.

*Farm House - Current Residence (1957, Resource P, Photos 24-27).* This ranch-style residence is located at 4320 East County Road 58, set back approximately seventy feet from the north side of the



road. A planted grass yard with mature landscaping surrounds the building. Oriented to the south, this single-story, L-shaped-plan structure rests on a concrete foundation with pairs of one-light hopper basement windows. A vinyl, faux-stone veneer covers the southwest corner of the foundation. Tan aluminum siding with narrow cornerboards clads the exterior walls and wooden shakes cover the shallowly pitched, cross-gabled roof. The eaves are boxed with the fascia painted dark brown and soffit tan. A small brick chimney emerges at the center of the

west-facing L. Ball-shaped caps ornament the ends of the aluminum flashing covering the ridgeline. Windows are generally paired, one-over-one, double-hung sash with aluminum frames. Large, aluminum-framed picture windows dominate the front (south) and southwest corners of the house. A six-

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

Bee Farm

Larimer County, Colorado

Section number 7 Page 10

step, concrete stoop with wrought-iron railings leads to the front door. A small, front-gabled roof with aluminum flashing on the ridgeline and a decorative ball covers the stoop's landing. The front door opens west of center on the asymmetrical façade. Another small porch lines the south-side of the west-facing L. It is approached via six concrete steps to the concrete porch. Wrought iron surrounds it. A door from the porch leads to house's kitchen. A small, covered porch on the rear (north) elevation protects a door providing access to a mud room and the basement steps.

The only notable alteration to this dwelling since its construction has been the replacement of the original white-painted asbestos siding with tan aluminum siding. It remains the residence of Arthur Robert Bee and the headquarters of Bees, Inc.

## Little House Complex

*Little House (1942, Resource U, Photos 33-35).* This small, minimal traditional house is located on the east side of the Interstate 25 frontage road, near the center of the farm's northern and southern property lines. It is surrounded by a planted grass yard with mature landscaping. An L-shaped plan, it measures twenty-eight feet north-south by thirty-two feet east-west. Set back approximately sixty feet from the frontage road and oriented to the west, this house rests on a white-painted concrete foundation with one-light hopper basement windows. Broad, white aluminum siding clads the exterior walls. Wood shingles, strained red, cover the side-gabled roof. The eaves are boxed with white-painted fascia and soffit. A small, brick chimney emerges near the center of the roof, just east of the ridge. Aluminum flashing with decorative, ball-shaped end caps cover the roof ridge. Windows are one-over-one, double-hung sash with white-painted wooden frames and aluminum storm

windows. They appear in pairs except for on the principal elevation. Black decorative shutters flank the windows. The symmetrical façade features a front door flanked by two windows as described above. A front-gabled hood supported by square columns protects the landing of the five-step concrete stoop approaching the front door. Wooden railings flank the landing's north and south sides. A porch enclosed with a band of one-over-one, double-hung sash windows extends across the southern half of the rear (east) elevation.



According to a 1954 letter from Arleigh Bee to Lloyd Crane, as well as a 1942 entry in the farm's general ledger, the Bee's contracted Lindenmeire Brothers, builders, to construct this small house and a garage (resource V) in 1942. It was constructed for Francis and Sylvia Saue Bee, who had recently married. They quickly filled the house with their children and, in 1957, moved to the much larger ranch-style farmhouse (resource P).

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

Bee Farm

Larimer County, Colorado

Section number 7 Page 11

Narrow, horizontal, white-painted wooden siding originally covered the exterior of this house. As well, the rafter ends were exposed. In the 1980s, the family re-sided the house and boxed the eaves with aluminum soffit and fascia. The house continues to serve as residence for members of the Bee family.



*Little House Garage (1942, resource V, Photos 36 and 37).* Located northeast of the little house (resource U) and oriented to the south, the little house garage rests on a concrete slab foundation. This one-story structure measures eighteen feet north-south by twenty-two feet east-west. Narrow, white-painted wooden siding with one-by-four-inch cornerboards clads the exterior walls of this one-story structure. Red-stained wooden shingles cover the front-gabled roof, which features the same decorative flashing with ball end caps as the little house. The rafters are exposed. Opening on the east elevation are a pair of three-over-three casement windows with white-painted wooden frames and surrounds. Dominating the south (front) elevation are two sets of paired vertical plank doors, side hinged with metal strap hinges.

Lindenmeire Brothers constructed this two-car garage at the same time as the Little House (resource V). Thus, architectural details correspond to those on the house. See above for more information. This structure has undergone little alteration since its construction in 1942.

*Little House Cistern (1942, resource W, Photo 38).* This 1,000-gallon cistern is located directly south of the little house (resource U). It is constructed entirely of concrete. Capping the concrete dome emerging above the ground is a circular, galvanized steel lid with a handle.

The building of this cistern correlates to the construction of the small house in 1942. At that time the family still had to haul in water from Fort Collins or Wellington (see resources Q and R). Piped water would not reach the farm until 1962, when Fort Collins completed a main to this part of the Boxelder valley. The additional cistern provided drinking and washing water to Francis and Sylvia Bee and their growing family.

## Agricultural Fields

*Agricultural Fields and Timber Act Tree (c. 1880, Resource AA, Photos 43-45).* The fields surrounding the north, east, and west of the Morse-Bee homestead represent almost the entire quarter section historically associated with this property and with the Bee Family. Before irrigation, only horse pastures and dry wheat farming were possible on the dry soil. But with the coming of irrigation in 1905, these fields nurtured more diverse crops and increased the economic stability of the Bee Farm.

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet****United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

Bee Farm Larimer County, Colorado

Section number 7 Page 12

A lone cottonwood resides at the northeastern corner of the Bee Farm and is the only remaining tree from a ten-acre tract planted under the Timber Culture Act. In 1894, the Morses bought this timber claim.

*Irrigation Ditches (1905, Resource Z, Photos 41-42).* Flanking the western and northern edges of the Bee Farm, the irrigation ditches are comprised of almost 4,460 linear feet of concrete. They were poured mostly in seven-foot sections, with parallel ditches running between the north and south pump houses (resources X and Y). The original and north wells supply water to the ditches. Siphons then carry the water from the ditches into the furrows.

The earliest ditches at the Bee Farm correspond to the coming of irrigation in 1905 and the completion of the first well in 1910. Between 1962 and 1966, contractors poured the concrete lining that characterizes the remaining ditches. A section of ditches running through the center of the farm were torn up after the introduction of the pivot irrigator.

While the concrete lining significantly diminishes the historic integrity of this structure, the family continues to use the remaining ditches as they have since irrigation arrived at the farm in 1905, including the use of siphons. Thus, although the ditches cannot be considered significant for their extant engineering/architectural characteristics, they retain their associations with the broad historical patterns of the site, particularly the development of irrigated farming.

*First Well (1910, Resource T, Photo 32).* Located at the extreme northwest corner of the Bee Farm, this twenty-eight-foot-deep well is lined with clay bricks at its bottom. A steel plate covers the top and braces the large pump, which is exposed rather than contained in a pump house. The family dug two other wells in 1937 (resource X) and 1948 (resource Y). Even today the Bees continue to use these wells to irrigate their crops.

*North Well and Pump House (1937, Resource X, Photo 39).* Located approximately one hundred feet south of the small house and immediately adjacent to the eastern I-25 frontage road, this small, one-story structure rests on a concrete slab foundation. Oriented to the south, the pump house is clad in white-painted weatherboard with one-by-four inch cornerboards. A front-gabled roof covered in wooden shingles protects the structure, which is approximately six feet square. A simple vertical plank door on strap hinges dominates the front (south) elevation. A large pipe extends from the west elevation. The north elevation has a square opening, apparently for a window.

The Bees constructed this building to protect the pump machinery for a well dug in 1937. This well and pump house continue the method of irrigation that Arleigh Bee began when he dug the farm's first well in 1910 (see resource T). The Bees continue to use this well for irrigation.

*South Well and Pump House (1948, Resource Y, Photo 40).* Located approximately 650 feet north of Larimer County 58 and immediately adjacent to the eastern I-25 frontage road, this small, one-story structure is nearly identical in size and architectural style to the north well and pump house (resource X). It rests on a concrete slab foundation. Oriented to the south, the pump house is clad in white-painted weatherboard with one-by-four-inch cornerboards. A front-gabled roof covered in wood shingles

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet****United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

Bee Farm Larimer County, Colorado

Section number 7 Page 13

protects the square structure. A simple vertical plank door on strap hinges dominates the front (south) elevation. A large pipe emerges from the east.

The Bees constructed this building to protect the pump machinery for a well dug in 1948. However, instead of pumping water into the irrigation ditches, a pipe now carries water from this well to the farm's central pivot irrigator.

*Square Shanty (Date Unknown, Resource F, Photo 9).* Located three feet north of the horse barn (resource F) and oriented to the west, this small, one-story structure lacks a formal foundation. Measuring six-and-a-half feet square, the shanty is clad in white-painted horizontal weatherboard with one-by-four inch cornerboards. Much of the paint has worn away to reveal green and pink paint and bare wood. Wooden shingles cover the shallowly pitched hipped roof, the ridges of which are covered in metal flashing. A small stovepipe emerges from the north face of the roof. The eaves are boxed. Widow-like openings surround the entire structure, but have been enclosed with plywood. A narrow door is offset to the north side of the west (front) elevation. The door is of vertical plank construction and opens on strap hinges.

This unusual structure provides few clues to its origin and past uses. The stovepipe and an interior finished in wainscoting indicate that this shanty had been inhabited. In many ways it resembles a railroad structure or perhaps a guardhouse.

Members of the Bee family and the archives reveal little about history of this structure. John Bee apparently moved the structure here, but it has served no function. Because this structure has been moved to the farm from another, unassociated site, it no longer retains its integrity of location; it is considered noncontributing.

*Tank Granary (Date Unknown, Resource L, Photo 18)* This granary is a cylindrical, one-story, steel structure, approximately sixteen feet in diameter. It is composed of separate plates of heavy steel riveted together at the seams. Oriented to the southwest is a single steel door, which has been cut out of one of the plates. Fittings for pipes crown the top of the structure as well as at various places on the sides. The structure lacks a formal foundation and, instead, rests on structural clay tile resembling those used for the milk barn (resource J) and small machine shed and shop (resource N).

The presence of pipe fittings as well as the fact that the door had to be cut into the structure indicates that this granary may have been used as a liquid storage tank, perhaps in an industrial application. The Bee family and the archives reveal little about this structure other than that it was moved to the site.

Because this structure has been moved to the farm from another, unassociated site, it no longer retains its integrity of location; it is considered noncontributing.

*Large Machine Shed and Shop (1981, Resource O, Photos 22 and 23).* The large machine shed and shop is the newest and largest structure at the Bee Farm. Located immediately west of the small machine shed and shop (resource N), this one-story, rectangular building measures eighty feet north-south by fifty feet east-west. Oriented to the south, the machine shed and shop rests on concrete footers, which support the steel skeleton. Green sheet metal clads the building and corrugated sheet metal covers the front-gabled roof. Dominating the front (south) elevation is an enormous retractable

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet****United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

Bee Farm Larimer County, Colorado

Section number 7 Page 14

metal door. It is flanked on the right (east) by a metal slab door and on the left (west) by a two-light, aluminum-framed sliding window. Another retractable door opens on the north end of the east elevation.

The Cuckler Company manufactured the components for this building, which were then shipped to the site. The Bee family erected the structure. No other alterations have been made.

This structure was built to house farm equipment too large for the smaller machine shed and shop (resource N). However, because the large machine shed and shop was constructed after the period of significance, it is considered noncontributing.

*Corral Complex (1975-76, Resource S, Photos 30 and 31).* This complex consists of metal and wooden fencing dividing a large area east of the homestead compound into five corrals. Within the corrals are four cowsheds. These structures feature poured-concrete foots and are of wooden post-and-beam construction. Some are sheathed in corrugated metal.

The corrals represent progressive building beginning in 1975-76. Because the corral complex was constructed after the period of significance, it is considered noncontributing.

Despite many changes, the context and integrity of this site has remained remarkably intact. Vistas of fields stretching to the snowy peaks of the Rockies or the low bluffs of Boxelder Creek still extend from the original homestead. This site is important because it contains a collection of structures representing over a century of agriculture in their original historic context.

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**
**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

Bee Farm Larimer County, Colorado

Section number 7 Page 15

	<u>Contributing</u>	<u>Noncontributing</u>
<i>Buildings</i>		
A Original Homestead House	1	
C Wagon Shed and Granary	1	
D Loafing Shed	1	
E Horse Barn	1	
F Square Shanty		1
G Buggy Shed	1	
H Migrant Worker House	1	
I Chicken Coop	1	
J Milk Barn	1	
K Garage	1	
N Small Machine Shed and Shop	1	
O Large Machine Shed and Shop		1
P Farm House	1	
S Corral Complex: Large Cowshed		1
S Corral Complex: Cowshed 1		1
S Corral Complex: Cowshed 2		1
S Corral Complex: Cowshed 3		1
U Little House	1	
V Little House Garage	1	
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>6</b>
<i>Structures</i>		
B Old Granary	1	
L Tank Granary		1
M Granary (east of homestead)	1	
Q Cistern (northwest of farm house)	1	
R Cistern (north of farm house)	1	
T Original Well	1	
W Little House Cistern	1	
X North Well and Pump House	1	
Y South Well and Pump House	1	
Z Irrigation Ditches	1	
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1</b>
<i>Sites</i>		
AA Agricultural Fields (including last Timber Act tree)	1	
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
<i>Objects</i>		
	0	0
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>7</b>

Bee Farm  
Name of Property

Larimer 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)

Agriculture  
Architecture  
Exploration/Settlement

**Periods of Significance**  
1894-1957

**Significant Dates**  
N/A

**Significant Person(s)**  
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above.)  
N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**  
N/A

**Architect/Builder**  
Morse, Alvarado  
Bee, Arleigh L.  
Bee Francis

### 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

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

Bee Farm

Larimer County, Colorado

Section number 8 Page 16

## SIGNIFICANCE

The Bee Farm is historically significant under criterion A for its long association with the development of agriculture in Larimer County and the high plains of Colorado, and pioneer settlement in the Boxelder Valley. Extant resources represent 120 years of European occupation in the Boxelder Valley, almost 110 of which are directly related to the Morse-Bee family. The contributing resources correspond to stages in the technological and economic development of agriculture in northeastern Colorado, the most important of which were irrigation, sugar beet cultivation, sheep feeding, mechanization, and diversification. Sugar beet cultivation and lamb feeding were critical to the development of Fort Collins and Larimer County. As well, the Morse-Bee homestead and its supporting resources reveal the struggles of one of the Boxelder Valley's original families to survive harsh environmental and economic realities. Because of their willingness to adapt to their new climate and their commitment to family, the Bees managed to survive on the arid, pre-irrigation prairie while many of their neighbors abandoned their homesteads.

The farm is also significant under criterion C as its architecture and construction techniques represent those employed by farmers with limited means and materials. The hodgepodge of vernacular styles and materials reveal the extent to which the area's farmers could make do with second-hand building materials and do-it-yourself techniques that met restricted budgets while adapting to changing economic and technological circumstances. As well, the few examples of the academic architectural styles – the Craftsman garage, Minimal Traditional little house, and the Ranch-style farm house – correspond to the growing affluence of the family and prosperity of the farm. Extant buildings and structures represent eighty-seven years of construction, beginning with the original homestead house in 1894 and ending with the large machine shed and shop, constructed in 1981. As well, these structures reveal nearly a century of changes in high-plains agricultural practices, economy, and technology. Moreover, the spatial arrangement of the agricultural outbuildings on the Bee Farm is typical of Larimer County and northeastern Colorado farming and ranching operations. The Morse and Bee families built new outbuildings according to need and financial ability. These buildings and structures are largely concentrated within two domicile-centered compounds. In turn, these compounds remain with an extant and historically associated complex of agricultural fields and irrigation structures, all retaining relatively undisturbed vistas of the Rocky Mountains and the bluffs of Boxelder Creek. Thus, the Bee Farm is not only an intact homestead complex, but a site retaining almost all of its 160-acre agricultural context.



The period of significance begins in 1894 with the construction of the homestead house and extends to 1957, the year of the construction of the new farm house and the retirement of the homestead house. Though the period of significance extends slightly into a period of less than fifty years of age, the importance of this date in the history of Bee Farm makes it the logical ending point in keeping with the requirements of National Register criteria consideration "G."

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet****United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

Bee Farm Larimer County, Colorado

Section number 8 Page 17**History of the Bee Farm**

The story of the Bee family and their farm revolves around a pleasant, 160-acre plot nestled in the Boxelder Valley northeast of Fort Collins. Here the Bee family has worked the land since Al and Lizzie Morse started homesteading it in 1894. Inherent in the story of this family and their farm are two dominant concepts of history itself – continuity and change. In particular, as the family continued to farm from generation to generation, they adopted horse and cattle grazing, beet farming, and lamb feeding as economic conditions and technological innovations allowed them. The Bee Farm has survived because of its continuity of family ownership and its adaptability to economic and technological change.

*The First Generation: Homesteading Along the Boxelder*

A successful teacher in Iowa, John Bee suffered from chronic asthma. Like so many other Americans in the late eighteenth-century, John decided to move his family to Colorado to take advantage of the state's much-flaunted and supposedly therapeutic climate. Searching for an adequate homestead, John arrived in Denver in 1880 and later returned to Iowa to gather his family. In October 1882, John, his wife, Fannie, and their children left the railroad depot platform in Fort Collins and settled on a quarter section six miles north and one mile east of town. The location is now only two miles south of Wellington, but at the time the Bees arrived, it was nothing but endless short-grass prairie. The family quickly constructed a two-story, wood-frame farmhouse. Without irrigation, all but the hardiest small grains proved impossible to grow. John took jobs on irrigated farms and the family briefly rented and resided at yet another irrigated farm. But at their own homestead, the family adapting to their new environment: turning to grazing, they purchased a small herd of cattle. The Bees certainly were not the first to introduce cattle to the grasses surrounding Boxelder Creek. Charles Whitcomb arrived in the valley in 1867-68 and began running a small herd shortly afterward. As well, in 1869, Fort Collins cattleman John C. Ish drove a herd from southern Texas to the banks of the Boxelder.<sup>1</sup>

Yet the Bees' timing could not have been worse. Devastating blizzards struck Colorado during the winters of 1886 and 1887, and abnormally dry summers followed. In 1886, a quarter of the region's cattle population died. In one particularly bad blizzard, the Bees' herd scattered throughout the area. Some of cattle wandered as far away as Windsor. A severe drought in 1892 forced John Bee to make a bargain with an unscrupulous cattleman: he agreed to give the man half of the Bee herd if he would drive all of the family's cattle to greener pastures in Wyoming. The cattleman returned in the fall with half of the cows, but the calves born in the spring were gone. "The man told [John and Fannie Bee] that he lost all the calves," Francis Bee recounted, "but they had other ideas of what happened."<sup>2</sup> With the financial panic of 1893, the open-range cattle industry collapsed. "Then followed five years of struggle and hardship such as only the homesteader on the open prairie knows," recalled Emma Bee Crane of her family's arrival in Larimer County, "but in spite of that they were happy years."<sup>3</sup>

And it was those happy times that most likely appeared in correspondence to family in Iowa. Like so many Americans who traveled west during this period, letters lured friends and relatives to follow their departed kin. Indeed, according to historian Richard White, a disproportionate number of later migrants

<sup>1</sup> Carl and Karen McWilliams, *Agriculture in the Fort Collins Urban Growth Area, 1862-1994* (Fort Collins, Colo.: City of Fort Collins Planning Department, 1995), 20.

<sup>2</sup> Francis and Sylvia Bee, oral history, 4.

<sup>3</sup> McWilliams 20; Emma Bee Crane quoted in Francis Bee, "Bee, John."

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

# United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

Bee Farm

Larimer County, Colorado

Section number 8 Page 18

to the West were family or neighbors of earlier settlers.<sup>4</sup> So many Iowans arrived in the area by 1900 that they formed a countywide social organization. In 1906, the Wellington contingency of Iowans dominated the association's annual picnic.<sup>5</sup> Thus, two years after the Bees settled in Colorado, Fanny's sister Elizabeth ("Lizzie") and her husband Alvarado ("Al") Morse arrived in Fort Collins from Iowa. They first homestead a quarter section two miles east of the present Bee Farm. In 1894, the Morses assumed a relinquished timber-act homestead two miles south and one mile east of Wellington – the present Bee Farm. Charles DeVotie originally claimed the quarter section on May 25, 1878, under the Timber Culture Act; the claim was cancelled three months later. Lewis Sheets filed another land patent for the quarter section on September 13, 1881. He relinquished it to Al Morse on November 1, 1894.

Congress designed federal land laws such as the Homestead Act of 1862 to settle western lands quickly and efficiently. While similar to the Homestead Act, the Timber Culture Act of 1873 was a bit more unusual because it tried to address and perhaps remedy the aridity settlers faced on the high plains.<sup>6</sup> White explains:

[The Timber Culture Act] provided a single-quarter section of land to any head of a family who planted and maintained forty acres of trees for ten years. This attempt to forest the prairies recognized a practical problem – the lack of timber on the prairies and plains – but it attempted to solve that problem by accepting the dubious scientific theory that rain follows the plow.... They...believed that trees also encouraged rainfall. By planting trees under the Timber Culture Act, farmers could, in effect, alter the climate and make it more humid.<sup>7</sup>

By 1878, Congress reduced the required planting to ten acres. A lone cottonwood remains as a reminder of the ten-acre stand that once marked the northeast corner of the present Bee Farm (resource AA). At their new farm, Al and Lizzie Morse survived in a chicken coop for a winter until they moved into a two-room house. They later added a third room, a kitchen, as a lean-to attached to the rear of the structure. That homestead house (resource A) remains at the heart of the Bee farm.

Despite the best intentions of the Timber Act, when the Bee and Morse families arrived in northern Colorado, they found a climate much more arid than in Iowa. "Aridity is, after all, the quality that most distinguishes the West from the rest of the country," writes historian Patricia Nelson Limerick.<sup>8</sup> But the Bees and the Morses arrived on the cusp of a change that dramatically altered both agriculture and politics in the West – irrigation. By the 1870s, construction of dams, canals, and ditches proved too expensive for individual farmers. Private corporations diverted rivers, dug ditches, and built reservoirs. In exchange, farmers purchased shares of water and agreed to a rental fee for the conduits that brought it to them. Even before water reached it, irrigation altered the economics of the Morse farm; Al and Lizzie raised horses, which they rented out to dig many of the area's irrigation ditches. They adapted to and profited from northern Colorado's arid climate.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>4</sup> White, 190.

<sup>5</sup> "Iowa People at Wellington," *The Wellington*, 4 August 1906, p. 1.

<sup>6</sup> Francis Bee, "Bee, John;" Terri Cotten, "A Christmas on the farm," *The (Fort Collins) Coloradoan*, 22 December 1982, p. D1.

<sup>7</sup> Richard White, *"It's Your Misfortune and None of My Own: A New History of the American West"* (Norman, Okla.: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), 151.

<sup>8</sup> Patricia Nelson Limerick, *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1987), 135.

<sup>9</sup> White, 405; Francis Bee, "Bee, John;" Francis and Sylvia Bee, oral history, 3.

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet****United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

Bee Farm

Larimer County, Colorado

Section number 8 Page 19

The Bees, Morses, and many of the earliest settlers in the Boxelder Valley purchased their homesteads with the expectation that irrigation would be quickly forthcoming. Despite rich soil, the valley remained unsettled for nearly a quarter of a century after pioneers established homesteads along the Caché la Poudre River. Except during occasional floods, Boxelder Creek was dry and too small to sustain irrigation. In 1881, the North Fork Ditch Company enlisted the cooperation of the English Ditch Company to irrigate the valley. North Fork purchased or contracted to buy all the odd-numbered sections in the district to be irrigated. As soon as construction began, settlers, including the Morses and Bees, homesteaded the government-owned even-numbered sections with the expectation that irrigation would soon reach their dusty farms. The North Fork and English ditch companies completed Boxelder Ditch to its namesake creek in 1884. Now a ribbon of life-giving water could wind its way to the Bee and Morse farms, rendering the once dusty soil productive.<sup>10</sup>

However, because of recently enacted legislation, the ditch company could only draw water from the Caché la Poudre during flood time. Under English common law, rights to water accompanied the rights to the land along a riverbank, a doctrine referred to as riparian rights. These landowners could use the water however they wished so long as they did not diminish or contaminate it. In the 1880s, however, Colorado claimed state ownership of water rights and revoked all riparian rights to waters within its boundaries. In its place, the state initiated a system of prior appropriation; water rights would be granted on a first-come, first-served basis. This concept of prior appropriation became known as the Colorado Doctrine and quickly influenced the regulation of water rights throughout the Rocky Mountain west. Thus, older ditches on the Caché la Poudre received priority while crops watered by the newer Boxelder Ditch withered.<sup>11</sup>

The years that followed the completion of the ditch proved to be just as dreary as those before it. Many early settlers abandoned their dusty homesteads. As well, the ditch to Boxelder Creek proved so costly to build and maintain that the English Ditch Company sold its interests in the project to the Traveler's Insurance Company. After that time, the North Fork could occasionally fill its reservoirs enough for a few farmers to draw water. But, as Ansel Watrous comments in his *History of Larimer County Colorado*, "As a whole, the ditch proposition was a lamentable financial failure, so far as the company and most of the farmers in the Boxelder Valley were concerned."<sup>12</sup>

Yet the Bees and Morses proved their adaptability. While John Bee and his family fattened their herd of cattle, Al Morse raised horses and hired out teams to construct reservoirs, dams, and ditches. Arleigh Bee, John's son, worked for his Uncle Al throughout his teenage years, driving a team and dirt slip. Born on February 4, 1880, Arleigh was only two when his family moved to Colorado. When he was 19, Arleigh's Uncle Al died, leaving Lizzie alone on the farm. Arleigh took over farming the homestead the following spring.<sup>13</sup>

Prospects brightened in 1901 when the much more financially solvent North Poudre Irrigation Company purchased the assets and rights-of-way of the North Fork Ditch Company. North Poudre immediately set

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<sup>10</sup> Ansel Watrous, *History of Larimer County Colorado* (Fort Collins, Colo.: Courier Printing & Publishing Co., 1911; reprint Old Army Press, 1972), 208-9.

<sup>11</sup> White, 401-2.

<sup>12</sup> Watrous, 209.

<sup>13</sup> Francis Bee, "Bee, John;" "Bee, Arleigh L.," in *The History of Larimer County, Colorado*, ed. Andrew J. Morris (Dallas: Curtis Media Corp., 1985), 168-9.

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet****United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

Bee Farm

Larimer County, Colorado

Section number 8 Page 20

about improving the system and, by 1902, provided enough water to increase the amount of tillable land in the Boxelder Valley (although not the Bee Farm). In that same year, the Bee family sold their original homestead to North Poudre for the construction of Windsor Reservoir (Divide Canyon Reservoir No. 3). Arleigh Bee also sold a homestead claim to North Poudre for the construction of North Poudre Reservoir No. 5 – known as Bee Lake in his honor. These reservoirs and others like them allowed North Poudre to trade water rights with older ditch companies and, by 1904, bring 30,000 acres of land under cultivation. A year later, these irrigation improvements arrived at the Bee Farm, allowing the family to develop its first sugar beet crop. (The field ditches used that first year are still part of the farm's present irrigation system.) The Bees adapted quickly to the new technology. Watrous writes that by this time, families had settled on nearly ever quarter section in the Boxelder Valley.<sup>14</sup>

Now with a single homestead between them, the Bees and Lizzie Morse combined residences – literally. The Bees transported their house two and half miles and tacked it onto “Aunt” Lizzie’s two-room residence, again exhibiting the family’s strong bonds and willing adaptation to change. In October 1906, Lizzie hosted Al Morse’s niece, Selecta Shaw, from Galesburg, Illinois. Her presence impressed at least one member of Bee family: on November 26, 1908, Thanksgiving day, Arleigh married Selecta in the Bee-Morse homestead house. By this time, Arleigh was the patriarch of the family. A few years earlier lightning killed Fannie as she tried to protect her beloved garden from a sudden summer storm. John Bee died a year later.<sup>15</sup>

### *The Second Generation: The Sweet Success of Sugar Beets*

The year 1905 marked an important turning point for the Bees as it did for many farmers throughout northeastern Larimer County. Irrigation finally arrived at the Bee farm, rendering the once dusty earth suitable for cultivation. Yet perhaps more important was the family’s first crop that year – sugar beets. “The crop [of sugar beets] is turning out well this fall and the farmers are pleased,” *The Wellington* proclaimed in October 1905. “Beets are fast becoming the staple crop in the Box Elder Valley.”<sup>16</sup> Farmers in northern Colorado fortunate enough to have water for their fields began to grow sugar beets in the 1890s. After the turn of the century, three interrelated events led to a dramatic increase in sugar beet production: the expansion of irrigated land, the improvement of beet varieties as well as cultivation techniques, and the construction of sugar beet processing factories. The Bees adapted to each of these innovations as they continued to farm and prosper.

An unnamed writer for the New-Deal-era Work Progress Administration’s Writer’s Program called the sugar beet industry “the single largest enterprise based upon irrigation.”<sup>17</sup> Historian LeRoy R. Hafen, however, suggests the growth of the sugar beet industry promoted the development of advanced irrigation engineering projects in Colorado. Sugar beets required irrigation in late summer when the state’s rivers run at a trickle. In response, irrigation companies built reservoirs to store the high water of early spring and released it when farmers needed it for their beets. Thus, Fossil Creek Reservoir and those constructed on the old Bee homesteads allowed the family to grow a crop that otherwise would have been impossible to cultivate.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Francis Bee, “Bee, John;” Watrous 209-10.

<sup>15</sup> Francis Bee, “Bee, John;” “Bee, Arleigh L.”

<sup>16</sup> “Beet Harvesting,” *The Wellington*, 7 October 1905, p. 1.

<sup>17</sup> Colorado State Planning Commission, *Colorado: A Guide to the Highest State* (New York: Hastings House, 1941), 65.

<sup>18</sup> LeRoy R. Hafen, *Colorado: The Story of a Western Commonwealth* (Denver, 1933; reprint, New York: AMS Press, 1970), 270.

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet****United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

Bee Farm

Larimer County, Colorado

Section number 8 Page 21

Yet, even with the best irrigation methods and soils, traditional varieties of beets produced very little sugar. But a new, national interest in the science and technology of agriculture soon changed that. Along with the Homestead Act, Republicans pushed through Congress in 1862 the Morrill Act, which created the land-grant college system. Under the act, the federal government offered states generous subsidies to establish colleges offering instruction in agriculture, engineering, and military science. Under this plan, Colorado established its State Agricultural College in Fort Collins. To accommodate its burgeoning research work, the institution established the Colorado Agriculture Experiment Station in 1888, which concentrated much of its early work on improving the purity and percentage of usable sugar in beets. By 1892, the United States Department of Agriculture rated the beets grown in Larimer County as the best in world.<sup>19</sup>

But even the best beets were practically worthless without a plant nearby to process them into granulated sugar. While farmers clamored for processing plants, town leaders realized the potential economic boon of the industry. In November 1901, the Great Western Sugar Company completed in Loveland the first sugar factory in northern Colorado. Fort Collins gained its own factory in 1903. It first processed sugar in 1904, a year before the Bees planted their first crop of beets.<sup>20</sup>

Beets arrived at the sugar factory via dumps soon located in nearly every settlement in Larimer County. Farmers hauled their harvest by wagon to the dump, where workers loaded them into railroad hoppers. *The Wellington* reported that during the 1905 sugar beet harvest, workers at the Wellington dump loaded twelve railroad cars a day, each handling thirty tons of beets. Farmers brought wagons loaded with anywhere from two to four tons.<sup>21</sup>

The economic impact of sugar beet cultivation and processing profoundly affected both Fort Collins and the Bee Farm. In 1904, 136 "mercantile establishments" lined the streets of the community. Two years later it boasted 218.<sup>22</sup> In the decade following the Bees' first sugar beet planting, the family engaged in a flurry of construction. Beet farming was labor intensive and required strong horses. In response, the Bees built a large horse barn in 1907 (resource E).<sup>23</sup> Two years later they completed a granary with attached buggy shed (now separated into resources B and G).<sup>24</sup> Other outbuildings followed: a loafing shed in 1911 (resource D); and another combined wagon shed and granary in 1914 (resource C).<sup>25</sup> By the outbreak of World War I, the Bee farmstead had grown into a prosperous, busy compound.

Yet to keep prospering with sugar beets, Arleigh needed a more dependable and economic source of water than the North Poudre Irrigation Company. In 1910, once again exhibiting both his adeptness and adaptability, Arleigh dug by hand one of the first irrigation wells in the Wellington area (resource T). With a hoist and team, he bucketed gravel out of the well. He constructed his own wooden curb and concrete blocks to line the well. A photograph in the Bee family archives shows muscle-laden horses drawing the bucket from the well as curious passersby stop to admire. Another photograph depicts water gushing from a pipe emerging from the recently constructed pump house. Arleigh dedicated a separate

<sup>19</sup> Stephen Thernstrom, *A History of the American People*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (San Diego, Calif.: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Publishers, 1989.), 546; Alvin T. Steinel, *History of Agriculture in Colorado* (Fort Collins, Colo.: Colorado State Agricultural College, 1926), 294-7.

<sup>20</sup> Watrous, 252-3.

<sup>21</sup> "Beet Harvesting," *The Wellington*, 7 October 1905.

<sup>22</sup> *The (Fort Collins) Coloradoan*, 5 September 1906.

<sup>23</sup> Arleigh L. Bee, General ledger, 1907, Bee Family Archives, Bees, Inc., Fort Collins, Colo., p.116.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, September 1909, p. 131.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, January 1911, p. 141; February 1914 p. 154.

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

# United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

Bee Farm

Larimer County, Colorado

Section number 8 Page 22

section of his general ledger to the well's construction, detailing expenses and labor from July 15 to September 1. He calculated the final cost at \$896.21. The pump engine accounted for almost \$675 of that figure. Francis Bee described the pumping plant as a six-inch centripetal pump powered by a twelve-horsepower, one-cylinder Olds engine. The flywheel on the engine was six feet in diameter. The family dug two other wells in 1937 (resource X) and 1948 (resource Y). Even today the Bees continue to use these wells to irrigate their crops.<sup>26</sup>

Midway through the 1910s the sugar beet boom began to stall. The first potential threat to this prosperity was the Underwood-Simmons Act of 1914. It reduced the duty on imported sugar twenty-five percent, and, by 1916, sugar was duty free. However, beginning in 1914, warfare in Europe increased world sugar prices. In the turmoil, Congress eventually repealed the Underwood-Simmons Act's free sugar clause. Throughout World War I, the Bee family continued to raise sugar beets as well as more traditional grains such as alfalfa, oats, wheat, and barley. But a second threat to prosperity came with armistice in 1919: a short but severe depression gripped the American economy, especially the agricultural sector. Arleigh responded by diversifying the farm, as did many in Larimer County, by introducing lamb feeding. The sheep feeding industry in the county actually began by accident in 1889 when a shipment of lambs bound for Nebraska wound up in Fort Collins. Delayed by a winter storm, the then starving lambs flourished on a diet of alfalfa and corn. Sensing an opportunity, area farmers fed 3,500 lambs the following year. Throughout the early twentieth century, Fort Collins became the center of a huge lamb-feeding empire. Even as late as 1940, the area around Fort Collins was one of the most important spring lamb feeding grounds in the nation. Moreover, the sugar beet industry indirectly supported lamb feeding; lambs thrived on a diet of alfalfa, silage, beet tops, and pulp from the sugar refineries.<sup>27</sup> In the 1930s, Colorado Agricultural College's Animal Husbandry Department claimed that sugar beet byproducts produced "cheaper beef and mutton or lamb than any other ration available in the United States."<sup>28</sup> Typically, farmers in Larimer County purchased their lambs in the fall, fattened through the winter, and sold them the following spring. Arleigh fed between 1,200 and 1,500 lambs annually until his son, Francis, took over the farm in 1944.<sup>29</sup>

The end of the depression in the late 1890s through World War I was a rare golden age for the American farmer. Farm prices rose faster than other prices for two reasons. First, the international agricultural market was much stronger during this period than it had been in the 1880's and 1890's. Second, settlers established few new farms after 1900: most of the suitable farmland in the country had already been settled. The demand for farm commodities balanced, at least briefly, with the supply.<sup>30</sup>

With increased prosperity also came increased mobility. In 1910, 458,377 motor vehicles were registered in the United States. A decade later, the number of registered automobiles jumped to 8,131,522. In Colorado, 13,135 vehicles were registered in 1913, while 276,847 automobiles were registered in 1930. In addition, the 1916 Federal Aid Roads Act provided states a fifty-percent federal

<sup>26</sup> Francis Bee, "Bee, Arleigh L.;" Redabaugh, "Family Portrait," in *Through the Leaves* (I could not find an exact date for this article. It can be found at the local history room, Fort Collins Public Library, in the file "Bee, Francis, John Wellington."); Arleigh Bee, "Pumping Plant 1910," General ledger, July-September 1910, p. 18-19; Francis and Sylvia Bee, oral history, 2-3.

<sup>27</sup> Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order, 1877-1920* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1967), 219-20; Henry Austin, *History and Development of the Sugar Beet Industry* (Washington, D.C.: The Association, 1928), 22-3; Francis Bee, "Bee, Arleigh L.;" Redabaugh, "How shipment delay played part in growth of lamb feeding industry," *Denver Daily Record Stockman*, 27 June 1925, p. 2.

<sup>28</sup> Colorado State Planning Commission, 65.

<sup>29</sup> McWilliams, 68; Colorado State Planning Commission, 63; Redabaugh.

<sup>30</sup> Thernstrom, 654-5.

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet****United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

Bee Farm

Larimer County, Colorado

Section number 8 Page 23

subsidy for building roads. By 1929, over 600,000 miles of surfaced highways crossed the country. The Bees purchased their first automobile, a Studebaker, in 1916 – a year *before* Colorado's first paved highway, four miles between Denver and Littleton. To house his new car, Arleigh Bee hired a carpenter to construct an ample garage (resource K). With exposed rafter ends and multi-paned, horizontal windows, the garage exhibits the characteristics of Craftsman style architecture popular during the early age of the automobile.<sup>31</sup>

Arleigh Bee suffered from impacted tonsils, which caused rheumatoid arthritis. And like his father, Arleigh searched for a more therapeutic climate to the west. This period of agricultural prosperity provided him with a chance to leave the backbreaking work of the farm, at least temporarily. In 1919, Arleigh decided to rent out the farm, load up the family, and travel to California. The Bees spent the summer of that year on a leisurely road trip to Pasadena, where they spent the winter. They returned to Colorado in 1920, and doctors removed Arleigh's tonsils. Yet the family did not immediately return to the farm. Instead, they moved to a modest yet handsome bungalow on the southeast corner of Fifth and Cleveland avenues in Wellington. While the family adapted to its new home, Arleigh continued to drive back and forth to the farm, assisting the tenant and tending his own flock of lambs.<sup>32</sup>

The Bees played a leading role in the development of Wellington as the settlement rose from the dusty banks of the Boxelder. John Bee was a founding member of the Methodist congregation in the town and helped construct the church building. Because the Baptist, Methodist and Congregational churches could not keep a full time pastor, the churches joined together and formed the Federated Church of Wellington in 1917. Arleigh served on the new church's board for many years, as did his son Francis and grandson Philip. Selecta Bee, Arleigh's wife, worked with Mrs. E. I. Raymond to found the library in Wellington. As the American agricultural economy began to falter, the family returned to the farm in January 1924. The Bee children, however, continued to attend school in Wellington, driving there each day in a 1924 Model T sport roadster. As well, Arleigh purchased a Jersey cow when he returned to the farm. Selecta churned the cream into butter and the Bee children sold the one-pound cubes to Wellington residents.<sup>33</sup>

By the time the Bees returned to the family farm, agriculture in the United States had taken a turn for the worse. While other sectors of the economy boomed during the "roaring twenties," agriculture first revealed the catastrophic cracks in the American economy. European recovery after World War I reduced the demand for American grains while domestic farm production remained high. Crop prices lagged behind those farmers paid for manufactured goods. In turn, those goods included new farm equipment, which increased the amount of acres available for commercial production during a time when demand was falling. "Devoting [machinery] to the production of cash crops did not benefit farmers *as a group*," writes historian Stephan Thernstrom. "The resulting increase in supply relative to demand simply drove prices down."<sup>34</sup> This slump in agricultural prices only worsened during the Great Depression.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 644-6; *Year Book of the State of Colorado, 1935-6* (Denver: Colorado State Planning Commission, 1937); Clayton Fraser, *Bridges of Colorado, National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form*, unpub. doc. (Denver: OAHP, Colorado Historical Society, March 30, 2000.); Arleigh Bee, General ledger, September 1918, p. 38.

<sup>32</sup> Francis Bee, "The Bees in Wellington," in *History of Wellington, Colorado, and the Boxelder Valley, 1864-1996*, ed. Arlene Anbradt (Fort Collins, Colo.: Vestige Press, 1996), 180-1.

<sup>33</sup> "The Late John Bee," Francis and Sylvia Bee, oral history, 14; Francis Bee, "The Bees in Wellington."

<sup>34</sup> Thernstrom, 655.

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet****United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

Bee Farm

Larimer County, Colorado

Section number 8 Page 24

Yet while other farms on the Great Plains succumbed to the dark clouds of the Dust Bowl, the Bee farm not only survived but prospered. In 1930, the family purchased its first tractor, a John Deere G.P., with which they pulled a one-bottom, sixteen-inch plow. As well, Arleigh and Selecta's children all graduated from universities during this period: Marion in 1933 from the University of Colorado; and Francis in 1939 and John the following year from Colorado A&M. The Bees also dug an additional well in 1937 (resource X).<sup>35</sup>

More telling, however, was an addition the Bees made to their farm early in the Great Depression: a 1930 Chevrolet truck, purchased used in 1933. It featured an eight-foot beet box to replace the wagon used to haul sugar beets to the nearest Great Western dump. It seemed as if the relative prosperity of the sugar industry allowed the farm to survive the economic downturn. The average value of the sugar beet crop in Colorado during the Great Depression was \$25,820,000 a year. While Colorado farmers grew beets on only ten percent of all irrigated land in the sixteen leading beet-growing counties from 1929-1939, the average value of the crop totaled 40 percent of the value of all principal crops grown on irrigated land in the state. Moreover, the federal Sugar Act of 1937 reduced tariffs and substituted a more comprehensive, albeit indirect, means of regulating sugar prices, beet prices, grower-processor relationships, and wages of contract. This redistributed beet profits in favor of farmers and field workers at the expense of processing companies.<sup>36</sup>

The Bee family first employed Hispanic migrant workers in the early 1930s, corresponding to a huge demographic shift in the ethnicity of sugar beet field laborers. Between 1910 and 1930, a series of events combined to push Hispanic families out of Mexico and the Southwest and pull them into northern Colorado, where some remained while others returned seasonally. The Mexican Revolution (1911-1920), combined with mounting population pressures and economic ruin, drove many Mexicans to seek a more peaceful existence north of the border. In the first three decades of the twentieth century, ten percent of Mexico's total population emigrated to the American Southwest.

Pulling Hispanics to northern Colorado was the Great Western Sugar Company, which found its traditional sources of labor quickly vanishing – Germans from Russia. These immigrants lived meagerly, saving what they could. Many families rose quickly from contract laborers, to tenant farmers, to farm owners. At the same time, immigration policies tightened and, in the wake of World War I, European immigration all but ceased. Consequently, as Germans from Russia left contract labor positions, Great Western struggled to find replacements. The “push” factors in Mexico and the southwest made the overtures of labor recruiters all the more appealing. Rumors spread of quick prosperity to be found in the beet fields of Colorado. Moreover, government policies limiting European immigration actually made crossing the Mexican-U.S. border easier. Western farm lobbyists convinced Congress to exempt Mexicans from its immigration policies for two reasons. First, without European immigration growers needed a dependable source of cheap labor. Second, they argued that Mexicans had no desire to reside in the United States and would, at the end of the season, return south of the border. Soon, thousands of Hispanic families migrated to and settled in northern Colorado.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>35</sup> Francis Bee, “The Bees in Wellington.”

<sup>36</sup> Francis Bee, “Arleigh Bee;” McWilliams 74; Colorado State Planning Commission, 65. While I have not encountered any studies on the matter, I suspect that the advanced cultivation methods necessary to grow sugar beets were at least partially responsible for northeastern Colorado's reprieve from Dust Bowl erosion.

<sup>37</sup> Adam Thomas, *Hang Your Wagon to a Star: Hispanics in Fort Collins, 1900-200* (Westminster: SWCA Environmental Consultants, 2002), 3-4.

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet****United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

Bee Farm

Larimer County, Colorado

Section number 8 Page 25

A 1951 report compiled by the National Child Labor Committee found that half of the migrant worker families surveyed in Colorado (many in the Fort Collins area) lived in one-room houses. These shanties were often prefabricated or shipped as kits through the sugar company and dated to the earliest arrival of German-Russian beet field laborers around 1905. Generally they had a barrel roof and, less often, as is the case of the migrant house at the Bee Farm, a gabled roof. Most had from four to six small, square casement windows. These shanties were easily transported and often moved from farm to farm and even in and out of the German-Russian and, later, Hispanic neighborhoods in Fort Collins. Moreover, 92 percent of migrant sugar beet workers had no means of refrigeration, and only a third could be sure their drinking water was safe. Most workers used “‘pit toilets,’ of which less than 1 in 4 would have passed elementary health inspection.”<sup>38</sup> Hispanic migrant workers at the Bee Farm appeared to have been better off than most. When they arrived at the Farm in June and July to thin and hoe beets, they found a tidy house with a shed roof addition containing the kitchen, offering considerably more room than the standard beet shanty.

Usually four to six single men arrived at the farm from Mexico, brought by the Great Western Sugar Company. Other years, an entire family from Texas would arrive without the aid of the sugar company. The Bee family provided beds and blankets, a table and chair, and cooking utensils. The house already contained a wood-burning stove. While the building lacked a cistern, members of the Bee family believe that the migrant worker house received its water from a metal tank beside the structure. To communicate with the workers, Great Western provided farmers, including the Bee family, with placards of common phrases. However, the Bees remember that usually at least one in a group of migrant workers could speak English.<sup>39</sup>

In the field, Hispanic migrant beet workers endured backbreaking labor relatively untouched by modern agricultural innovations. Even as late as 1950, only a little over 40 percent of beets were harvested mechanically.<sup>40</sup> Beet campaigns began in late March or April with sowing and thinning and continued to November with harvesting. Because “single germ” beet seeds were not developed until the later 1950s, farmers actually planted a wad of seeds that, in a few weeks, produced a patch of twisted beet plants. Laborers crawled along the rows of seedlings, using a hoe to “block” the plants so that each was 12 to 14 inches apart. Then the blocks were thinned by hand, removing the weakest plants and retaining the healthiest. After blocking and thinning (*el desaihe*), which could take up to a month and a half depending on the acreage, the workers then turned to hoeing. This involved piling soil around the beet plants while removing weeds. Accomplished in two stages – first and second hoeings – the second stage could span from mid summer to the harvest in November.<sup>41</sup>

Despite the hard work and basic living conditions wages remained low for migrant sugar beet workers. The problem was that labor prices decreased more than sugar prices and gross income from beets. Using the Agricultural Adjustment Act (1909-1914) as a base period, W. Lewis Abbott found that wages consumed 33 percent of a sugar beet grower’s gross income. In 1933, however, only 23 percent of the gross income went to pay wages. During the base period, farmers received \$5.58 per ton of beets and paid \$19.08 per acre in wages. In 1933, they received \$5.32 per ton, but paid only

<sup>38</sup> Thomas, 21-2.

<sup>39</sup> Elizabeth Bee Harrison and Arthur Robert Bee, email to Adam Thomas, 12 September 2002.

<sup>40</sup> Thomas, 19.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

Bee Farm

Larimer County, Colorado

Section number 8 Page 26

\$13.87 per acre in wages.<sup>42</sup> Relief came with the Sugar Act of 1937, which reduced tariffs and substituted a more comprehensive, albeit indirect, means of regulating sugar prices, beet prices, grower-processor relationships, and wages. This redistributed beet profits in favor of farmers and field workers at the expense of the processing companies.<sup>43</sup> By 1947, the Bee family paid its migrant workers \$1 a day. By 1959 it was \$2. While the Bees paid their workers directly, not through the sugar company, Great Western continued to determine the wage per acre. Changes in labor laws required farmers to pay their migrant workers every day the laborers were in residence, no matter if they had worked that day or not. As a result, the Bees and their neighbors often shared migrant workers to keep them busy, whether thinning sugar beet plants, shacking grain, or harvesting pickling cucumbers.<sup>44</sup>

Occasionally, an entire family, including children, came to work a season at the Bee farm. For the children, school was not an issue because they were only in residence through the summer. A legacy of child labor in the sugar beet industry extends to the very first German-Russian families who came to Colorado. To make a living wage working the sugar beet fields, an individual laborer had to agree to tend far more acres than he could possibly do himself. This often led to his entire family tending the beets while keeping costs such as rent and food as low as possible. The result was a system that paid the lowest wages to those who worked the hardest. Moreover, Colorado's child labor laws exempted agricultural work from its minimum-age requirements. Labor protection laws and minimum wage guarantees through the 1930s and '40s created less of a need for child labor.<sup>45</sup>

### *The Third Generation: Post-War Prosperity*

The Bees did not survive the Great Depression and Dust Bowl droughts unscathed. The summer of 1940 was so dry that only two feet of water remained in the Bees' well. Little water trickled through the irrigation ditches and, by the end of the summer, half the crop had burned while the other half produced particularly low yields.<sup>46</sup> But the Bees quickly recovered when the United States entered World War II at the same time "the rains came back in abundance," Francis Bee recalled.<sup>47</sup> By December 1941, spending for military preparedness reached \$75 million a day. Employment, wages, and production increased while the opportunities for domestic spending decreased, resulting in unprecedented personal savings. When the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, \$50 billion was available for spending in the United States. By the end of the war, Americans had \$140 billion ready to spend. "The war had brought...a conclusion to want and unemployment," historian William Chafe writes. "For millions more, the war brought something else – a sense of possibility and optimism for the first time in a generation."<sup>48</sup>

<sup>42</sup> W. Lewis Abbot, *Report for the Committee on Labor Conditions in the Growing of Sugar Beets* (Committee on Labor Conditions in the Growing of Sugar Beets, United State Department of Labor, March 1934), i.

<sup>43</sup> Carl and Karen McWilliams, *Agriculture in the Fort Collins Urban Growth Area, 1862-1994* (Fort Collins, Colo.: City of Fort Collins Planning Department, 1995), 74; Colorado State Planning Commission, *Colorado: A Guide to the Highest State* (New York: Hastings House, 1941), 65.

<sup>44</sup> Harrison and Bee email.

<sup>45</sup> Thomas, 20.

<sup>46</sup> Francis Bee, "Bee, Francis A.," in *The History of Larimer County, Colorado*, ed. Andrew J. Morris (Dallas: Curtis Media Corp., 1985), 169.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>48</sup> William H. Chafe, *The Unfinished Journey: America Since World War II*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 7,10-11.

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet****United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

Bee Farm

Larimer County, Colorado

Section number 8 Page 27

That optimism came early to the Bee Farm. On May 3, 1942, Francis married Sylvia Ellen Saue, the daughter of a Colorado Springs rancher and secretary for the agricultural extension agent in El Paso County. That same year the newlyweds contracted Lindenmeire Brothers Builders to construct a two-bedroom bungalow with unattached garage on the west side of the Bee farm (resources U and V). The house was evidence of the Bees' commitment to family and farm as well as wartime prosperity. Eventually, Francis and Sylvia had seven children: Arleigh H., Viola, Sylvia S., Elizabeth, Philip, David and Arthur Robert. During this period, Francis began to take over farming operations from his father. Arleigh Bee continued to live and work on the farm until his death in 1965. Selecta died in 1944.<sup>49</sup>

Yet much of the building boom on the farm that followed World War II was a direct result of adapting to new economic conditions. For instance, by the 1940's, the sheep industry in Fort Collins began to lag behind the cattle industry. Sheep ranchers and woolgrowers never became as politically and business-oriented as the cattlemen.<sup>50</sup> Moreover, after the war, domestic sugar lost its tariff protection. Sugar beet prices dropped as competition from sugarcane plantations in Hawaii and the Philippines increased. In response to the trend, Great Western closed the Fort Collins sugar factory in 1955.<sup>51</sup> Thus, in 1941, Francis purchased a registered Jersey bull and cow. In time, the herd would replace his father's lamb-feeding operation. This herd, then, was both a symbol of continuity and adaptability.<sup>52</sup>

But dairy production had become much more mechanized, and the Bees found themselves requiring a more adequate milking barn. Moreover, electricity arrived at the farm in 1949, and the family could take advantage of automated milking equipment. The milk barn (resource J) the Bees completed that year, however, is one of the more unusual structures in the farmstead compound. Francis's brother, John, owned a brick factory in Laramie, Wyoming. When John closed the plant in the late 1940's, the Bees brought the remaining bricks to the farm. The milk barn was assembled with these odds and ends, exhibiting the Bees' adaptability to the resources at hand. The large, clay blocks ranged in color from muted orange to vivid pink. Overall, the building stands in marked contrast to the weathered, unpainted wood and corrugated steel that characterized much of the rest of the compound. Like the milk barn, the Bees' dairy operation was a bit of an anomaly: it was never very large or as profitable as other sectors of the farm. However, as on many family farms at this time, the dairy did provide meat and dairy products for the family as well as work for the children. In addition, the Bees produced some income selling dairy products and steers. In 1976 Philip, David, and Robert, the fourth generation of Bees to operate the farm, replaced the dairy herd with Limousine beef cattle.<sup>53</sup>

In 1956, the Bees used the remainder of John's bricks to construct a machine shed and shop, a manifestation of increasing mechanization on the farm. The family used timbers from the two-story Bee homestead, which it demolished at this time, as rafters. Thus, the machine shed and shop embodied adaptability to new technology and continuity of building materials. In 1948, the Bees put out to pasture their last team of horses. They purchased a model "M" International Harvester tractor and one-row

<sup>49</sup> Francis Bee, "Bee, Francis A.;" General ledger, 1942, Bee Family Archives, Bees, Inc., Fort Collins, Colo., p. 284.; "Bee, Arleigh L."

<sup>50</sup> McWilliams, 69.

<sup>51</sup> McWilliams, 74.

<sup>52</sup> McWilliams, 69, 74; Francis Bee, "The Bees in Wellington."

<sup>53</sup> Francis Bee, "Bee, Francis A.;" "The Bees In Wellington;" Elizabeth Bee Harrison and Arthur Robert Bee, interviews by the author, March-May 2000 and March-April 2001, Fort Collins.

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet****United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

Bee Farm

Larimer County, Colorado

Section number 8 Page 28

mechanical beet topper and digger. The Bees last stacked hay in 1957 when they acquired a hay baler. Even more telling, the Bees moved the migrant worker house in 1966 to use it as a garage.

Yet despite all the modern conveniences, one aspect of life on the Bee Farm remained notably old fashioned – drinking water from cisterns. In 1910, Arleigh constructed two brick-lined cisterns beside the homestead house (resources Q and R). The cistern northwest of the homestead collected rainwater, which the family used for washing. They filled the other cistern, north of the house, with water transported from Fort Collins. The Bees could not drink from the well because the water was too hard.<sup>54</sup> Even when Arleigh and the family moved to Wellington they continued to haul in their drinking water from Fort Collins because Arleigh “didn’t like the town water from Stuchel Lake,” Francis recalled. Francis himself had to dig a cistern beside his two-bedroom bungalow. Indeed, town water via pipe did not arrive at the Bee Farm until 1962.<sup>55</sup>

*The Two Houses*

With a saw in hand, Francis Bee crawled beneath the original Morse-Bee homestead house. Floods on the Boxelder in 1904 and 1933 had rotted out all the stringers beneath the structure. Francis carefully removed the deteriorated lumber and installed new stringers; this was a labor of love and a testament to the Bees’ desire to preserve their heritage. By 1957 the Francis Bee family had outgrown its two-bedroom bungalow on the west side of the farm and decided to build a new residence on the site of the original homestead house. This was a special place for the family, a sanctuary surrounded by trees their ancestors had planted – a place providing a familiar perspective on a landscape the Bees helped to create. Yet, instead of demolishing the old homestead house, the Bees moved it behind their new home, lovingly preserving it as a family museum. Thus, the Francis Bee family resided in the same location their ancestors had occupied since Uncle Al and Aunt Lizzie arrived there over a century ago. But now they adapted it for a larger household. In 1975, the family incorporated their operation as Bees, Inc., “so that it will pass to our children,” Francis Bee said in a 1978 interview.<sup>56</sup> In recognition of this continuity, the Colorado Historical Society designated the Bee Farm as a Centennial Farm in 1994, an honor bestowed upon families who have cultivated the same land for one hundred years.

Today the two houses remain beside each other, a manifestation of the Bees’ continuity of family ownership and their remarkable adaptability to change. Members of the fourth generation of Bees talk about their ancestors as if they are living nearby, often visiting, often working beside them. And yet they are. In essence, Al and Lizzie Morse, John and Fannie Bee still reside in that small homestead house. Arleigh still tends his beets and flock while Selecta churns cream to butter. “Truly this is a portrait of a family who exemplifies the true traditions of the west,” D.S. Redabaugh wrote of the Bees in the late 1950’s. “[They have] proved that the combination of hard work, square dealing, and hope has its

<sup>54</sup> Arleigh Bee, General ledger, February 1910, p. 133.

<sup>55</sup> Francis Bee, “The Bees in Wellington.”

<sup>56</sup> Francis Bee, “Bee, Francis A.,” Francis and Sylvia Bee, oral history, 5-6.

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet****United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

Bee Farm

Larimer County, Colorado

Section number 8 Page 29

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rewards."<sup>57</sup> Despite the overwhelming obstacles, the Bees have survived, generation after generation, on that homestead beside Boxelder Creek.

The Bee Farm provides a rare opportunity to preserve a Colorado homestead in almost all of its original 160-acre context amidst the quickly urbanizing I-25 corridor. In addition, the single-family ownership furnishes historians with intact structures bolstered by reams of primary documentation, a century of photographic evidence, and an enormous collection of associated artifacts. But perhaps the most important and intriguing aspect of the Bee Farm is the family's immediate and intimate connection to the land and its history.

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<sup>57</sup> Redabaugh.

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet****United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

Bee Farm Larimer County, Colorado

Section number 9 Page 30

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**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet****United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

Bee Farm Larimer County, Colorado

Section number 9 Page 31

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Bee Farm  
Name of Property

Larimer County, Colorado  
County/State

## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** 155

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1.	13	500040	4502470
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2.	13	500807	4502470
	Zone	Easting	Northing
3.	13	500807	4501678
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4.	13	500040	4501678
	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 Adam Thomas  
organization Historical Consulting date February 1, 2002  
street & number PO Box 419 telephone 720-244-0844  
city or town Estes Park state CO zip code 80517-0419

## 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 Bees, Inc. (Elizabeth Bee Hamilton, primary contact)  
street & number 4320 East County Road 58 telephone 970-482-2696  
city or town Fort Collins state CO zip code 80524

**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**

Bee Farm Larimer County, Colorado

Section number 10 Page 32

**GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

The boundary of the Bee Farm historic district consists of an almost perfect square with well-defined boundaries corresponding the southwestern quarter of section 10 of township 8 north and range 68 west. The physical locations of the boundaries are follows: The northern boundary is marked by an irrigation ditch and fence extending across the entire northern portion of the quarter section. A field access road marks the eastern boundary. The southern boundary is located near the northern shoulder of East County Road 58. The western boundary, like the northern boundary, follows irrigation ditches and a fence line just east of the eastern Interstate 25 frontage road. The only variation to these boundaries exists on the western edge of the farm's southern boundary. Here, an access road connects the frontage road to East County Road 58, running north of that road's viaduct over the interstate. Here, the fence line follows the access road and demarcates the southern boundary at this location.

**BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

The nominated property encompasses all of the buildings, structures, and land historically associated with the Bee Farm, with the exception of the portion of the land converted to highway and road usage.

**PHOTOGRAPH LOG**

The following information pertains to photograph number 1-46:

Name of property: Bee Farm  
 Location: Fort Collins, Larimer County, Colorado  
 Photographer: Adam Thomas  
 Date of Photographs: May 1, 2000\*  
 Location of Negatives: Bee Family Archives, 4320 East County Road 58  
 Fort Collins, CO 80524

<b>Photograph Number</b>	<b>Camera Direction</b>	<b>Description of View ("[ ]" indicates resource designation.)</b>
1 .....	Northwest .....	Original homestead house [A], principal (south) and east elevations.
2 .....	Southeast .....	Original homestead house [A], rear (north) and west. Photograph date: January 24, 2002.
3 .....	Southeast .....	Old granary [B], principal (west) and north elevations.
4 .....	Northwest .....	Wagon shed and granary [C], principal (south) and west elevations.
5 .....	Southeast .....	Wagon shed and granary [C], rear (north) and west. Photograph date: January 24, 2002.

\* While these photographs are over two years old, a recent inspection of the property revealed that few if any changes have been made to the buildings, structures, and landscape. Additional photos were taken in January 2002 to supplement and update the original, May 2000 roll.

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

# United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

Bee Farm

Larimer County, Colorado

Section number \_\_\_ Page 33

Photograph Number	Camera Direction	Description of View (" <i>[ ]</i> " indicates resource designation.)
6	Northeast	Loafing shed [D], principal (south) elevation.
7	Northeast	Wagon shed and granary [C] (left), loafing shed [D] (middle), and horse barn [E] (right), south elevations; buggy shed [G] roofline at far right. Photograph date: January 24, 2002.
8	North	Horse barn [E], principal (south) elevation.
9	Southeast	Square shanty [F], west and north elevations.
10	Northeast	Buggy shed [G], principal (south) and west elevations.
11	Southeast	Buggy shed [G], rear (north) and west elevations. Photograph date: January 24, 2002.
12	Northeast	Migrant worker house [H], principal (west) and south elevations. Photograph date: January 24, 2002.
13	Northeast	Chicken coop [I], principal (south) and west elevations.
14	Northwest	Chicken coop [I], principal (south) and east elevations. Photograph date: January 24, 2002.
15	Northwest	Milk barn [J], principal (south) and east elevations.
16	Northwest	Garage [K], principal (east) and south elevations.
17	Southeast	Garage [K], rear (east) and north elevations. Photograph date: January 24, 2002.
18	North	Tank granary [L], south elevation.
19	Southeast	Granary east of the homestead house [M], northwest elevation.
20	Northwest	Small machine shed and shop [N], principal (east) and south elevations.
21	North	Small machine shed and shop [N], detail of the window and door on the south elevation. Photograph date: January 24, 2002.
22	Southwest	Small machine shed and shop [N], principal (east) and north elevations; large machine shed and shop [O], behind. Photograph date: January 24, 2002.
23	Northeast	Large machine shed and shop [O], principal (south) and west elevations.
24	Northeast	Farm house [P], principal (south) and west elevations.
25	Northwest	Farm house [P], principal (south) and east elevations. Photograph date: January 24, 2002.
26	Southwest	Farm house [P], rear (north) and east elevations. Photograph date: January 24, 2002.
27	Southeast	Farm house [P], rear (north) and west elevations. Photograph date: January 24, 2002.
28	Northwest	Cistern northwest of farm house [Q].
29	Southeast	Cistern north of farm house [R].
30	Northwest	Corral complex [S], southern and eastern sides. Photograph date: January 24, 2002.
31	Northeast	Cowshed within the corral complex [S].
32	Northeast	Original well [T]. Photograph date: January 24, 2002.
33	Northeast	Little house [U], principal (west) and south elevations.
34	Southwest	Little house [U], rear (east) and north elevations. Photograph date: January 24, 2002.

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

# United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

Bee Farm

Larimer County, Colorado

Section number \_\_\_\_ Page 34

Photograph Number	Camera Direction	Description of View ("[" indicates resource designation.)
35	Northwest	Little house [U], south elevation (at left); little house garage [V], principal (south) elevation (at right). Photograph date: January 24, 2002.
36	Northwest	Little house garage [V], principal (south) and east elevations.
37	Southwest	Little house garage [V], rear (north) and east elevations with the little house [U] behind and the north well and pump [X] to the far left. Photograph date: January 24, 2002.
38	North	Little house cistern [W].
39	Northeast	North well and pump house [X], principal (south) and west elevations, with irrigation ditches [Z], flanking its east and west sides.
40	Northwest	South well and pump house [Y], principal (south) and east elevations, with irrigation ditches [Z], flanking its east and west sides.
41	South	North-south irrigation ditch [Z], with the north well and pump house [X] in the foreground and the south well and pump house [Y] behind.
42	West	East-west irrigation ditch [Z]. (The ditch at left belongs to the Bee Farm while the ditch at right belongs to the farm to the north.)
43	North	Remaining Timber Act cottonwood in the midst of agricultural fields [AA], with the eastern north-south field access road at right.
44	Northeast	Remaining Timber Act cottonwood at center, with the bluffs of Boxelder Creek in the background. Photograph date: January 24, 2002.
45	Southwest	Agricultural fields and Remaining Timber Act cottonwood [AA] (at left), with the Rocky Mountains in the background. (Longs Peak appears at right.)
46	Northeast	Homestead compound with East County Road 58 in the foreground. Visible structures are (from left to right): large machine shed and shop [O]; small machine shed and shop [N]; garage [K]; original homestead house [A]; and the farm house [P].

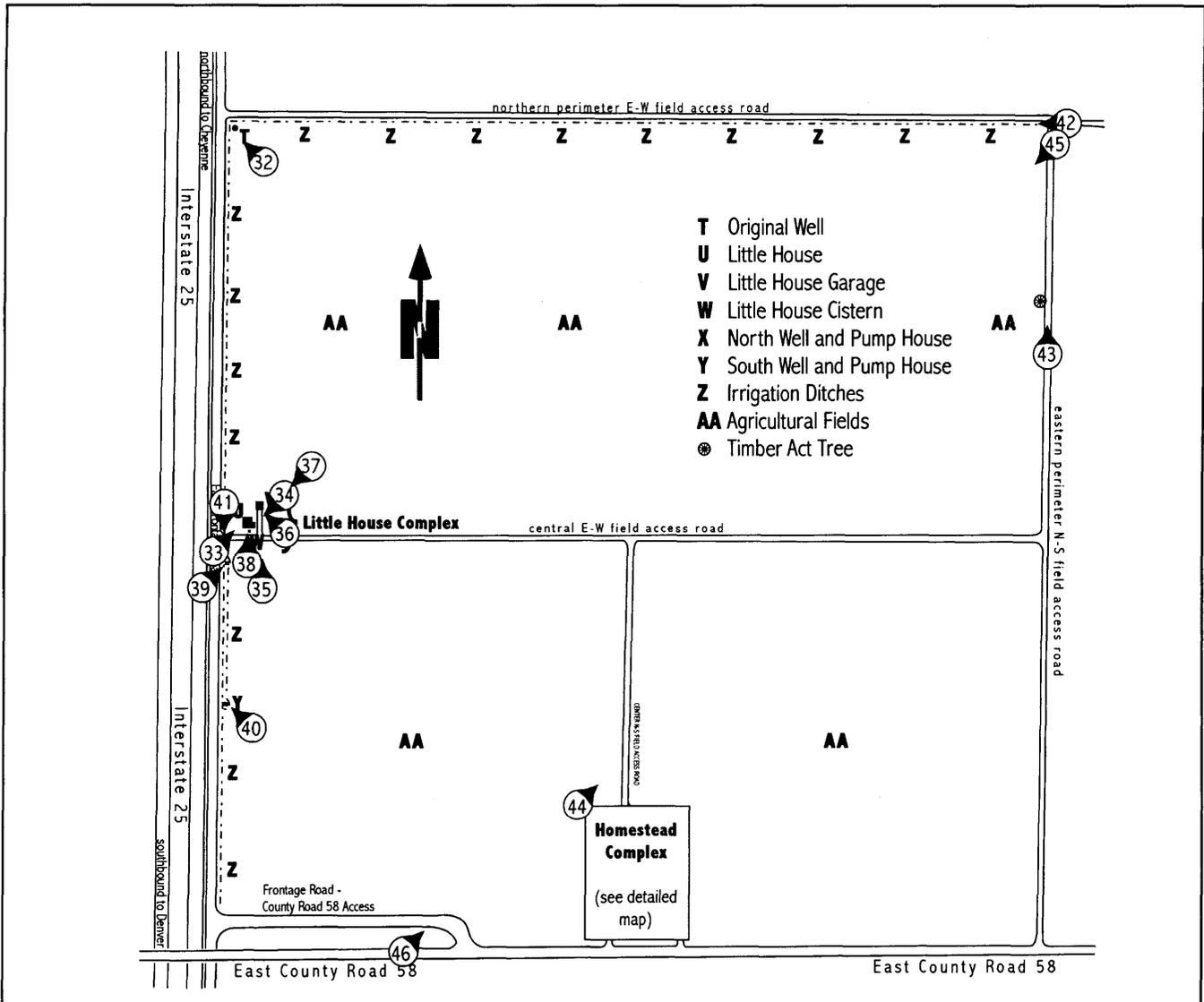
# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

Bee Farm

Larimer County, Colorado

Section number \_\_\_ Page 35



## Photo Key: Bee Farm

Scale: 1 Inch ≈ 500 feet

Southwestern Quarter of Section 10  
Township 8N, Range 68W  
Larimer County, Colorado

4320 East County Road 58  
Fort Collins, Colorado 80524

January 2002

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

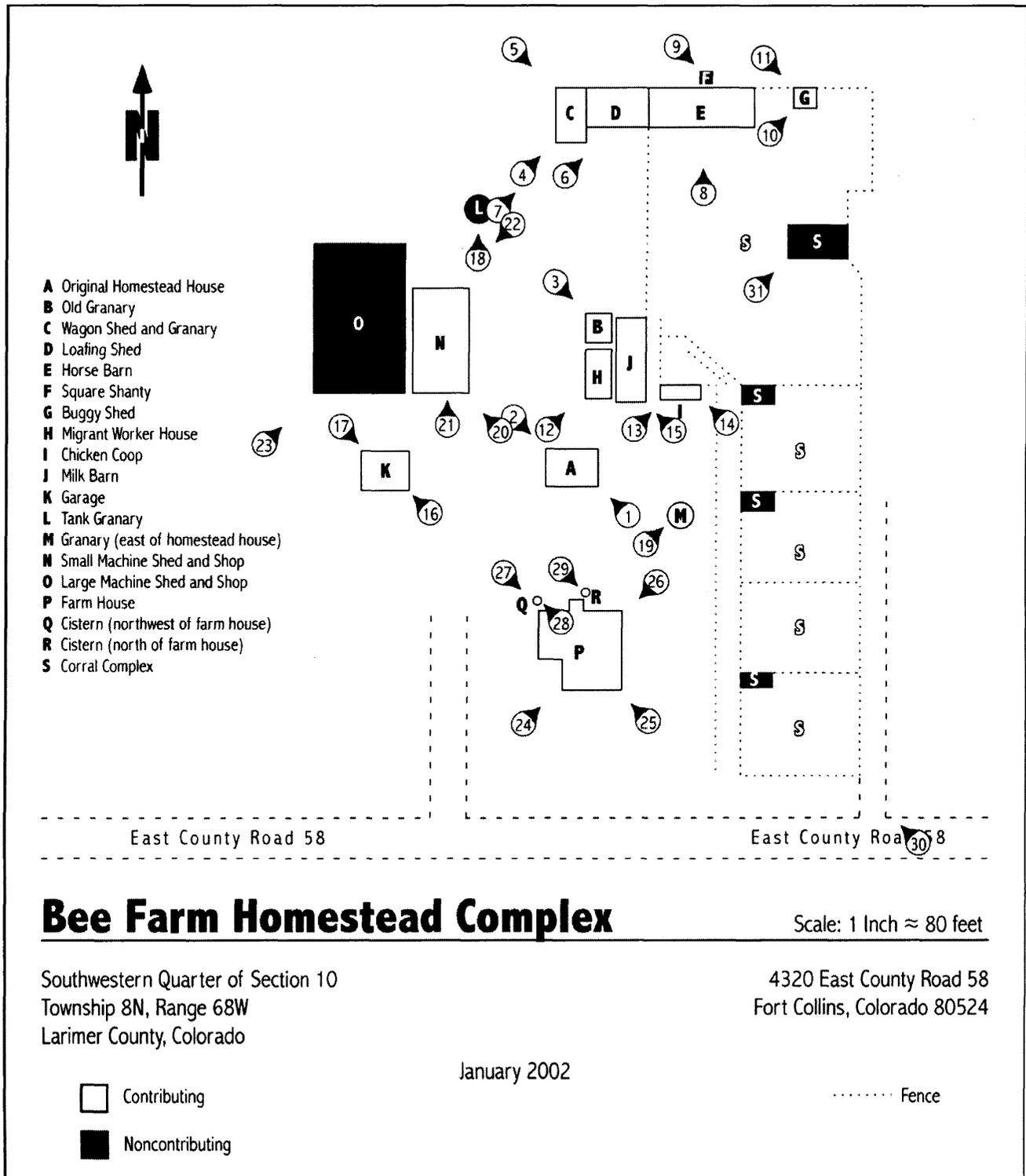
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

Bee Farm

Larimer County, Colorado

Section number \_\_\_

Page 36



# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

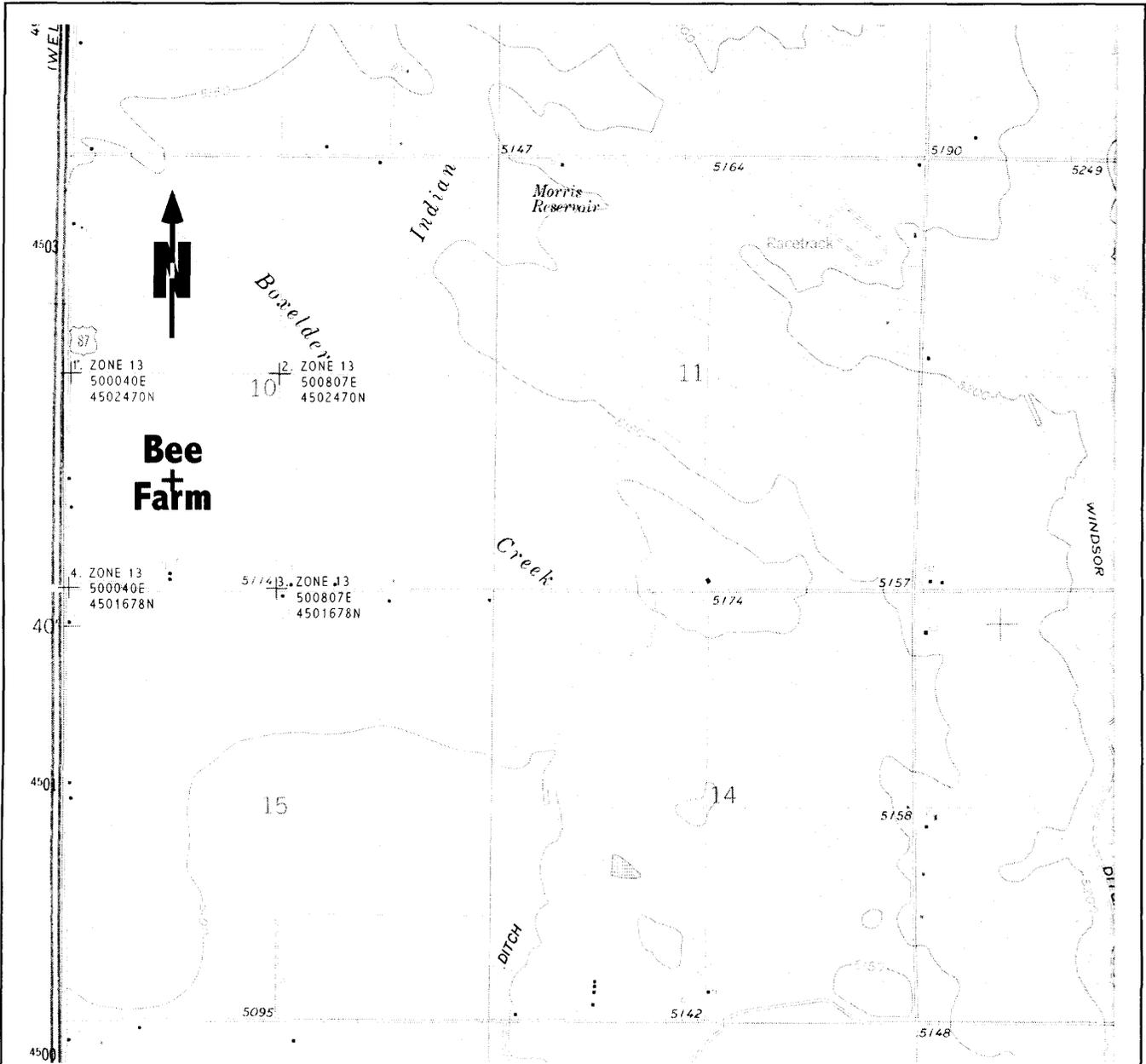
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

Bee Farm

Larimer County, Colorado

Section number \_\_\_

Page 37



## USGS Topographic Map

Scale: 1:24,000

Cobb Lake, Colorado, Quadrangle  
7.5 Minute Series  
1960 (photorevised 1978)

+ Target UTM (center of property):  
Zone 13 500400E 4502070N

C O B B

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION

PROPERTY Bee Farm  
NAME:

MULTIPLE  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: COLORADO, Larimer

DATE RECEIVED: 12/04/09 DATE OF PENDING LIST:  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: DATE OF 45TH DAY: 1/18/10  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 02001409

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT  RETURN  REJECT 1-21-10 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

*Additional Documentation Approved*

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept

REVIEWER Edson Beall

DISCIPLINE History

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

DATE 1-21-2010

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

Bee Farm  
Larimer County/ Colorado

Section number 7 Page 1A

Additional Documentation for NRIS #02001409

## REQUEST FOR RESOURCE COUNT AMENDMENT

At the time of its listing on November 25, 2002, an accurate contributing and non-contributing account of all resources within the nominated boundary was noted in the nomination form. Recent research discovered that two contributing buildings, U and V, were moved from the west edge of the property to the former corral area in 2003.

Prior approval for moving these two buildings was not obtained from the Keeper. National Register regulations stipulate: "In the event that a property is moved, deletion from the National Register will be automatic unless the above procedures [approval from the Keeper] are followed prior to the move." Since there are multiple buildings on the property and only two of these, U and V, were moved in 2003, these two buildings are recommended to be counted as non-contributing as they no longer stand in their original location, impacting integrity of location and setting, association, and feeling.

The State Historic Preservation Office is initiating the change in contributing status in the National Register based on discussion with National Register staff in Washington, D.C.

Property Owner:

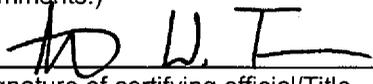
Bees Inc.  
(family contact- Elizabeth Bee Hamilton)  
4320 East County Road 58  
Fort Collins, Colorado 80524

Prepared by:

Colorado Historical Society  
Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation  
225 E. 16<sup>th</sup> Ave. Suite 950  
Denver, CO 80203-1606  
(303) 866-4683

September 1, 2009

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this additional documentation 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, these two buildings  meets  do not meet the National Register criteria. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

  
Signature of certifying official/Title

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

11/24/09  
Date

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

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

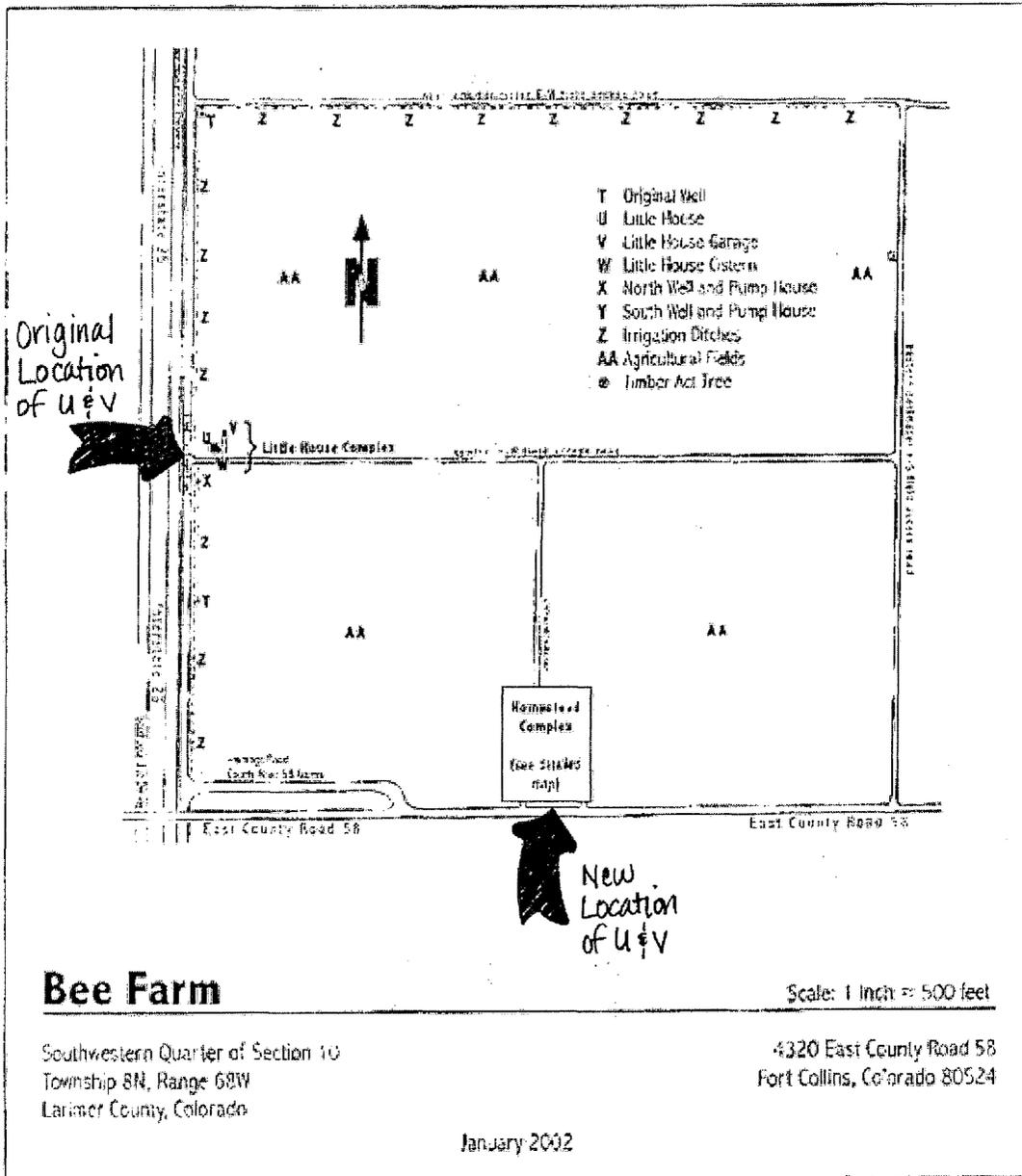
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

Bee Farm  
Larimer County/ Colorado

Section number 7 Page 2A

## Site Map from 2002 National Register Nomination Showing Original Location of Little House (U) and Little Garage (V)

Figure 1.



# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

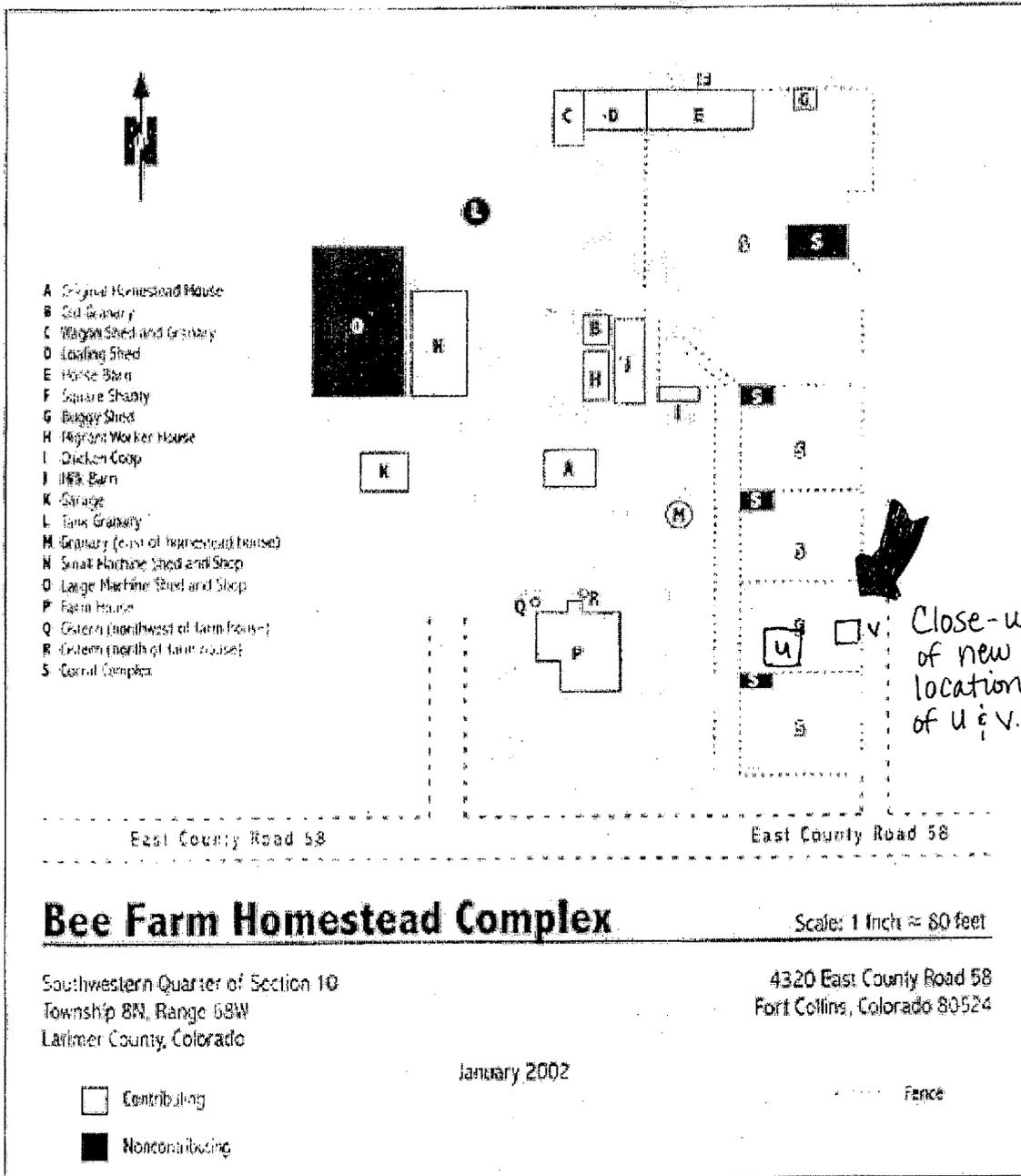
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

Bee Farm  
Larimer County/ Colorado

Section number 7 Page 3A

Site Map from 2002 National Register Nomination Showing Core of Historic Buildings and New Location of Little House (U) and Little Garage (V)

Figure 2.



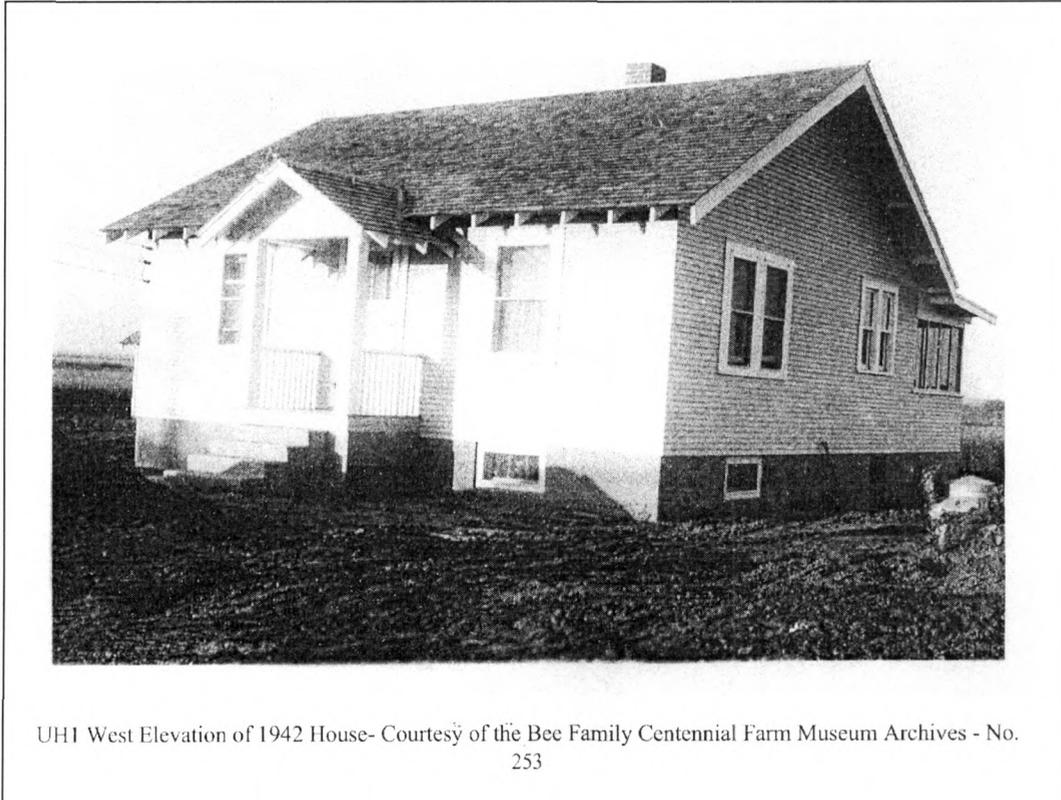
**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

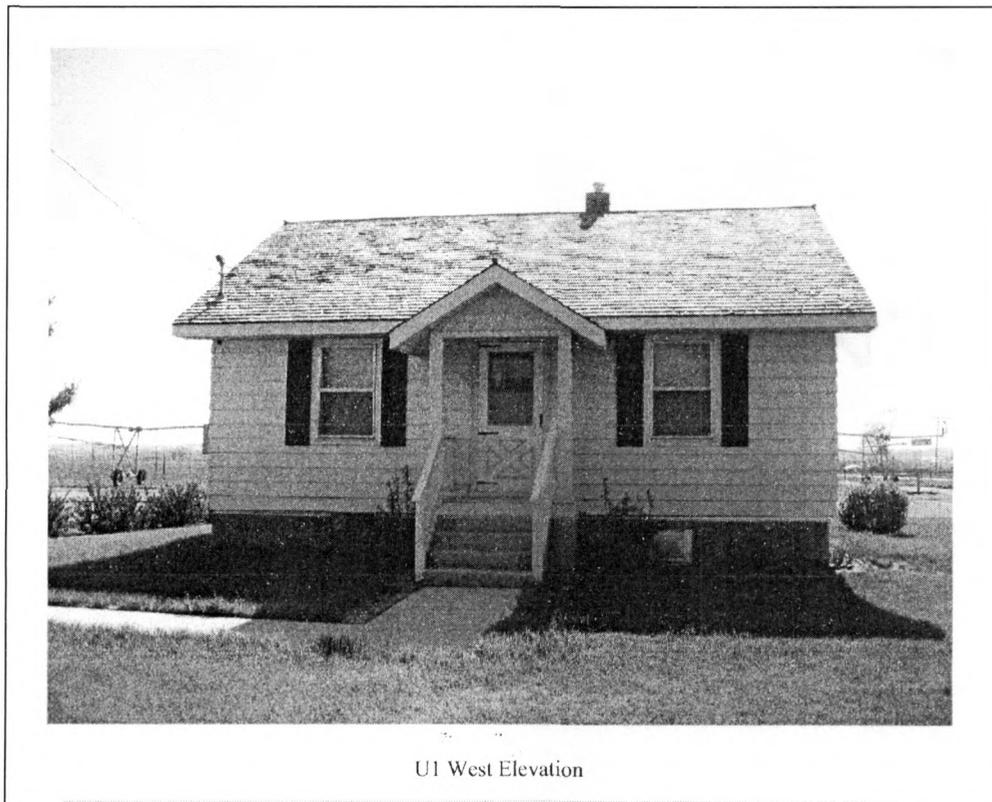
Bee Farm  
Larimer County/ Colorado

Section number 7 Page 4A

Little House Historic Image- 1942



Little House Current Image- 2009



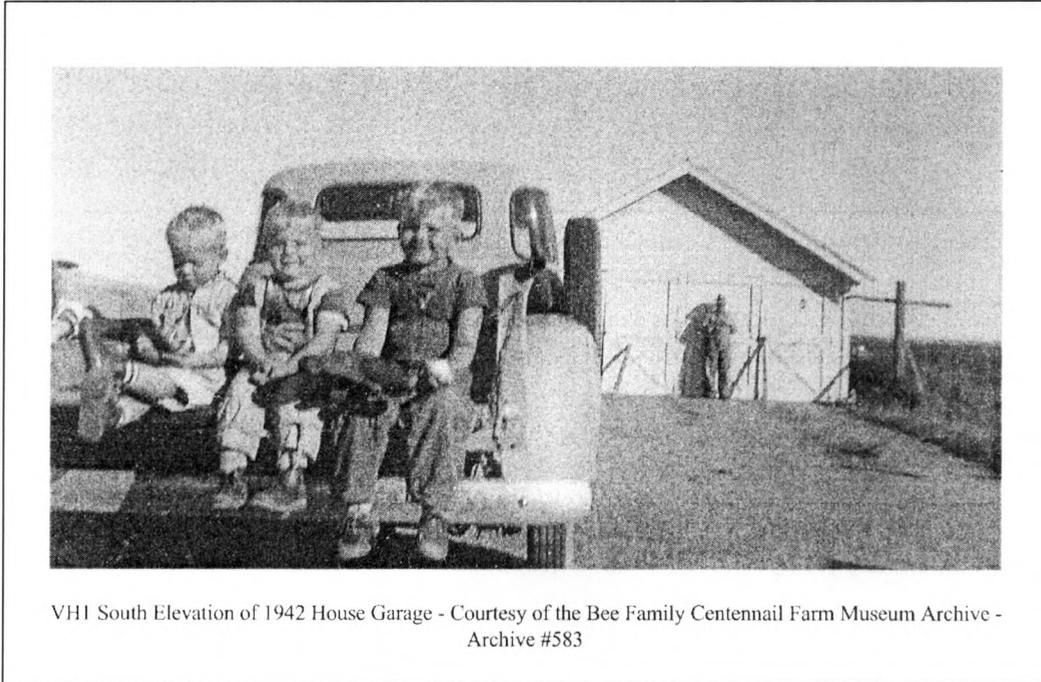
# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

Bee Farm  
Larimer County/ Colorado

Section number 7 Page 5A

Little Garage Historic Image- 1942



Little Garage Current Image- 2009

