

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received MAR 26 1986  
date entered 6-25-86

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

1. Name

historic Barn at Oxford Horse Ranch

and/or common Barn at Burman Ranch

2. Location

street & number 868 US Highway 287 \_\_\_\_\_ not for publication

city, town Laramie \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of Red Buttes: Red Buttes Biological Sciences  
Research Laboratory

state Wyoming code 056 county Albany code 001

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Mr. Keith Burman

street & number 950 US Highway 287

city, town Laramie \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of Red Buttes state Wyoming

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Albany County Courthouse

street & number 501 Grand Avenue

city, town Laramie \_\_\_\_\_ state Wyoming

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Albany County Historic Survey has this property been determined eligible? \_\_\_\_\_ yes  no

date 1981 \_\_\_\_\_ federal \_\_\_\_\_ state  county \_\_\_\_\_ local

depository for survey records State Historic Preservation Office

city, town Laramie \_\_\_\_\_ state Wyoming

## 7. Description

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

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Oxford House Barn is a massive log barn measuring 158 feet eight inches long and fifty feet wide. Apart from its size, the structure has a particularly distinctive earthen ramp on the back, used for providing wagon access to the loft, and a strict bilateral symmetry of plan and facade.

Resting on a sandstone foundation, the barn is constructed of horizontal squared logs mortised into vertical posts at exact 17 foot intervals. This technique divides the long facade visually into nine equal sections. Massive 1 3/4 ground level sliding doors with original hardware are located in the gable ends and also in the middle (5th) and end sections (1st and 9th) of the long facades. Modern garage doors function in one end and one side opening. Additionally, fixed 4 light windows with plain surrounds are centered in the even numbered sections (2,4,6 and 8) on these facades. There are 2 larger square, sliding, plank loft doors in the 3rd and 6th sections which balance all apertures in the facade. This balance is further emphasized by 2, double hung, 4/4, gabled roof dormers, located directly above the sliding loft doors and gabled ventilator cupolas which straddle the roof peak immediately above the dormers. The gable roof of cedar shingles needs repair. It is supported by 2 rows of vertical posts in the loft.

The interior is intact on one wall of the ground floor which retains the original 3/4 wall, iron-grilled, box stalls with original hardware and all doors intact on most. The other row was removed to make room for modern equipment. The loft contains a series of lateral beams and angled supports, for use in hay storage. There is also a bunkhouse tackroom partitioned off at one end of the loft.

Boundaries for this site are defined by the historic cultural landscape and follow corral lines and driveways. Within this complex of functionally dependent interrelated structures are two out buildings used in the horse ranching operation, which retain integrity and contribute to the sense of time and place. They are shed roofed with a combination of stacked log, frame and board and bat-ten construction. They have fixed 6 light windows and angled plank doors with plain surrounds and original hardware.

All buildings and corrals retain a high degree of integrity of setting, design, location, workmanship, materials, feeling and association and are excellent examples of the influence of English cattle barons on high plains ranching.

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> invention				
<b>Specific dates</b>	1887	<b>Builder/Architect</b>	Unknown	

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Oxford horse barn, constructed in 1887, is both one of the oldest and one of the largest extant barns in Albany County, Wyoming. It is also probably the County's best preserved example of vernacular architecture as influenced by late 19th-century English cattle and horse ranchers. It provides important evidence for an interesting phenomenon in the history of the American West: the transplantation of the English upper class thoroughbred horse culture (with such attendant forms as riding to hounds) to the Rocky Mountain west and more specifically, Wyoming. The rigid, tripartite, bilateral symmetry of the barn justifies considering it an agricultural manifestation of the "Georgian vernacular" tradition so pervasive in the domestic architecture of England and the eastern U.S. Beyond this broad cultural significance, the Oxford horse barn also figures prominently in local history. Most notably it is associated with the name of Axel Palmer, who worked at and later became part owner of the then Whitehouse Ranch on which the barn is located. Palmer trained horses and used the barn loft as a kind of obstacle course for breaking teams.

(SEE ADDENDUM)

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See Addendum

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property less than 1 acre

Quadrangle name Red Buttes

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A	<u>1</u> <u>3</u>	<u>4</u> <u>5</u> <u>0</u> <u>3</u> <u>2</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>5</u> <u>5</u> <u>9</u> <u>6</u> <u>4</u> <u>0</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

B	<u>1</u> <u>3</u>	<u>4</u> <u>5</u> <u>0</u> <u>3</u> <u>4</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>5</u> <u>5</u> <u>9</u> <u>6</u> <u>4</u> <u>0</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

C	<u>1</u> <u>3</u>	<u>4</u> <u>5</u> <u>0</u> <u>3</u> <u>5</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>5</u> <u>5</u> <u>9</u> <u>6</u> <u>5</u> <u>0</u>
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D	<u>1</u> <u>3</u>	<u>4</u> <u>5</u> <u>0</u> <u>3</u> <u>6</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>5</u> <u>5</u> <u>9</u> <u>5</u> <u>4</u> <u>0</u>
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E	<u>1</u> <u>3</u>	<u>4</u> <u>5</u> <u>0</u> <u>3</u> <u>2</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>5</u> <u>5</u> <u>9</u> <u>5</u> <u>4</u> <u>0</u>
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F	<u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>
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G	<u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>
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H	<u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>
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Verbal boundary description and justification

See Addendum

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

state	<u>n/a</u>	code	<u>n/a</u>	county	<u>n/a</u>	code	<u>n/a</u>
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state	<u>n/a</u>	code	<u>n/a</u>	county	<u>n/a</u>	code	<u>n/a</u>
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# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Albany County Historic Preservation Board, Dr. John Dorst nominator

organization Albany County Historic Preservation Board date March 15, 1985

street & number c/o Albany County Clerk telephone 742-2149

city or town Laramie state Wyoming

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Robert W Bush

title Director and State Historic Preservation Officer date 3-18-86

For NPS use only

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

for Melvora Byers date 6-25-86  
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

Chief of Registration

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Continuation sheet Barn at Oxford Horse Ranch Item number 8 Page 1

The Laramie Plains are often referred to as the cradle of the livestock industry for it was here that pioneers first noticed that oxen abandoned after a hard summer laboring, turned up fat and healthy in the spring. The ranch near Red Butte known as the Oxford horse ranch was one of the earliest in the area established in the 1870s by Pete Johnson and then sold to Whitehouse and Stokes in the 1880s. Scottish born and Canadian educated Whitehouse and Stokes brought the ranch to international recognition as breeders of full blooded pedigree horses, running up to 3,000 head of stock during peak years. Additionally they became locally noted for their practice of lavish entertaining and for Scottish and English style sporting events including horse racing at their personal 1/2 mile track and hunting with a pack of 54 trained hounds. Another popular event hosted by the Oxford was a pocket billiards tournament with the table pockets filled with \$20.00 gold pieces; players played for the jackpot.

The Oxford became the main attraction for English, Scottish and other European cattle barons who had established themselves at many neighboring ranches, and who transplanted their way of life nearly intact to the northwestern plains region. A colorful group whose money, culture, education and political activities greatly influenced the unusual history of the area.

The horse barn, outbuildings, and corrals were constructed in 1876 and the barn loft held grain bins in addition to 200 tons of hay. Axel Palmer, a Swedish gentleman who had begun working on the ranch as a hired hand, eventually bought into the Whitehouse operation after Stokes returned to Glasgow. Palmer became a full partner with Whitehouse. Whitehouse was a veterinarian and is thought to have been the first visiting lecturer at the University of Wyoming School of Agriculture, and also served on the Veterinary faculty of the Colorado A and M College at Fort Collins from 1912 to 1922 before he returned to Glasgow, Scotland.

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Continuation sheet Barn at Oxford Horse Ranch Item number 9 (Bibliography) Page 1

Burns, Robert, Andrew Gillespie, and Williny Richardson. Wyoming's Pioneer Ranches. Laramie: Top of the World Press, 1955.

Burns, Robert, Tour of Old Time Ranches of the Laramie Plains. Laramie: Albany County Historical Society, October 12, 1950.

Larson, T.A., History of Wyoming. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1985.

Laramie Boomerang; Special Edition Spring 1889. page 11, columns 1 and 2.

National Register Nominations. Cheyenne: State Historic Preservation Office files, 1985.

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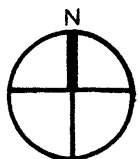
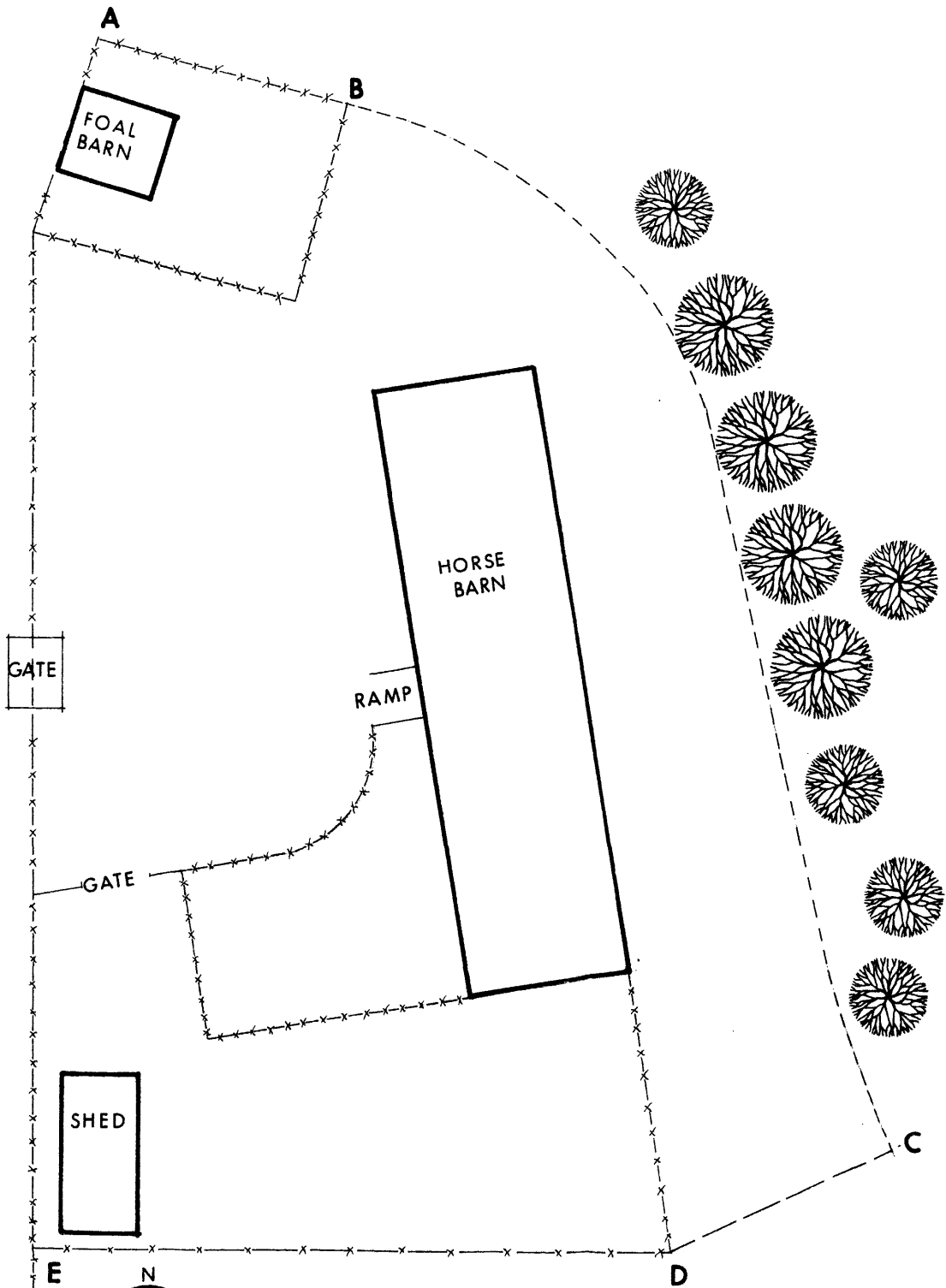
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**Continuation sheet** Barn at Oxford Horse Ranch **Item number 10 (Boundary Des.)** Page 1

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The boundary for the Oxford Horse Ranch is defined by manmade features and one short arbitrary line used for connecting the site.

The boundary on the east is defined by a corral fence which extends the full length of the complex. The point of beginning (A) is located at the meeting place of the corral fence and another fence defining the northern boundary, this point is located approximately 15 feet from the northwest corner of the foal barn. The boundary follows the fence east approximately 150 feet to point (B) where it meets the existing roadway. The eastern boundary then proceeds south approximately 350 feet along the west side of the roadway, the full length of the complex to an arbitrary point (C) which coincides with another fence extending the full length of the north side of the complex. The boundary then follows an arbitrary line approximately 25 feet to the point where it meets the corner of the fence (D). It then follows the fence west approximately 125 feet to point (E) at the next fence corner. It then follows this fence north approximately 350 feet to the point of beginning. This boundary concisely defines the barn complex and includes four contributing structures: The main barn, foaling sheds and the corral system. These are the only historic structures which remain on the site and have retained integrity. Because the complex is still operating as a working ranch and the owners are very seriously pursuing restoration and preservation of the complex, the boundaries will remain intact for the life of the site.



NOT TO SCALE

# THE OXFORD HORSE RANCH BARN