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7' DESCRIPTION

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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Rising to altitudes exceeding 14,000 feet above sea level, the Rocky Mountain Chain is the backbone of the North American continent. Its numerous ridges, collectively, constitute the divide between the waters of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. One of the most prominent of these ridges is the Front Range that extends north from the Arkansas River in Colorado, to Wyoming. Near the forty-first parallel, or the Wyoming-Colorado state line, the Front Range divides. Its topographical, northwardtrending extension in Wyoming is the Laramie Range, a chain of mountains that stretches 150 miles, terminating just west of the city of Casper. In most places this eroded chain is scarcely more than 1,500 feet above the plains located east and west of it, its highest point being Laramie Peak (elev. 10,274). The other extension of the Front Range, which is its structural or geological extension, is a loftier chain known as the Medicine Bow Mountains. These mountains, whose rolling, upland surface averages 9,500 feet above sea level, extend north-northwest from the state line for a distance of approximately fifty miles, terminating at Elk Mountain thirty-five miles east of Rawlins. In the central portion of the range is a prominent ridge called the Snowy Range that reaches a high point at Medicine Bow Peak (elev. 12,005).

Between the Laramie Range and the Medicine Bow Range is an open, undulating grassland called the Laramie Plains, an intermontane basin whose average elevation is 7,000 feet. In the summer of 1870 Geologist Ferdinand V. Hayden conducted an investigation of the Laramie Plains, and following is his description of the area:

In our last chapter we descended the western slope of the first mountain range to a broad, open expanse of mountain prairie known as the Laramie Plains. This great area might be called a park; it is enclosed on three sides by extensive mountain ranges, but on the west its limits are not well defined, inasmuch as no mountain ranges of any importance intervene until we come to the Wasatch range, in Utah. It is usually understood to extend westward almost to the Medicine Bow River, and thus comprises an area about fifty miles from east to west, and one hundred from north to south, the Laramie range or Black Hills forming the eastern boundary. As we ride on the cars through the plains, these mountains, with their comparatively uniform and gently sloping sides, seem for many miles to bend around so as to inclose us within their walls. On the south side are the Medicine Bow Mountains, which are far more formidable and lofty than the others; indeed, the ranges this side are quite irregular and fragmentary, and are known by different names, as Sheephead Mountains, Elk Mountains, &c. Many of these lofty peaks and ranges have not yet been explored geologically or geographically, and these magnificent fields are ripe and waiting for the harvest of science. The far West is vast, but the laborers are few.

At the southwestern edge of the Laramie Plains the continuity of the Medicine Bow Range is interrupted by some outlying masses: Jelm Mountain, Ring Mountain, Red

8 SIGNIFICANCE

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

1879-present

There is both archeological and historical evidence to indicate that Indians--such as the Arapaho, Cheyenne, Shoshone and Ute tribes--utilized the resources of the Medicine Bow Range for years before white men arrived on the scene. According to written records penetration of the range by white men occurred in the first decade of the nineteenth century, an early date in the history of the region that is today southern Wyomina. Among the first white men in the area were fur trappers such as Ezekiel Williams, Jacques LaRamie, Jim Bridger, Jim Baker, and William H. Ashley. Except for the latter, few left written records of their experiences and explorations in the mountains. Following the era of the fur trade, and prior to an era of permanent settlement, government explorers such as John C. Fremont, Howard Stansbury, and Francis T. Bryan provided informative and readable documents on the topography and culture of the region. After the explorers came emigrants and settlers, and concurrent with the early settlement period came geologists such as Ferdinand Hayden and Clarence King, who conducted surveys of large regions in the Rocky Mountain-High Plains country. Detailed geological reports on specific enclaves within that area were produced in following years.

Permanent settlement in the Laramie Plains and surrounding mountains was prompted in part by the transportation industry which, in turn, is related to Wyoming's unique topography. In 1862 the stagecoaches of Ben Holladay began to roll along the Overland Trail, an ancient migration route across southern Wyoming that became a main, nineteenth century travel route in a larger, nationally significant, east-west transportation corridor between the southern and central Rocky Mountain regions. The location of the Union Pacific, the nation's first transcontinental railroad, was also dependent upon favorable topography, and upon the availability of resources such as coal for fuel, lumber for ties and construction, ballast for roadbeds, and water. Ties, in particular were readily available in both the Laramie Range and Medicine Bow Mountains. From Hayden's report we know that in 1868 the mountain sides were full of tie-hacks who cut and floated hundreds of thousands of ties down the streams of those mountains. The base of one such tie operation, described in an 1878 property abstract entry as the "Old McGreevey Tie Camp," was located at the site of what later became the mining camp called Cummins City, or Jelm.

Naturally, homesteads were taken by settlers at watering places along the southern Wyoming transportation route, and the ranching industry sprouted and rapidly grew

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See Addendum #1 BIBLIOGRAPHY

10GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

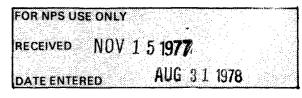
See Addendum #2 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

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NAME / TITLE				
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	Wyoming Recreation Co	ommission		19, 1977
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Form No. 10-300a (Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM



CONTINUATION SHEET Jelm Description ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

Mountain and Bull Mountain. Pine-crested Jelm Mountain is the northernmost of the four, a pyramidal-shaped, isolated peak five miles long, one to three miles wide, and rising to a height of 9,665 feet above sea level. Separating these outlying masses from the main body of the Medicine Bow Range is the Upper Big Laramie River, a major tributary of the North Platte River. The Big Laramie, whose headwaters are in the mountains surrounding North Park in Colorado, flows north into Wyoming, carving itself a path through the Medicine Bow Range. Leaving the range between Jelm and Sheep Mountains, the Big Laramie enters the Laramie Plains just west of the hamlet called Woods Landing, cuts across the Laramie Plains and Laramie Range, and eventually joins the North Platte River at Fort Laramie in eastern Wyoming. Hayden traced the stream to North Park in August of 1868, describing it in his 1870 report.

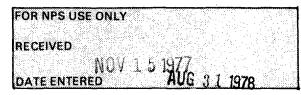
Our course from Fort Sanders was nearly southeast (sic), up the Big Laramie River, toward its source in the mountains.... The Big Laramie is a very clear stream, about fifty yards in width and averaging about two feet in depth, easily forded in most places. Like most of the western streams, the difference between high and low-water mark is very great. In spring and early summer, when the snows of the mountains melt, these streams become formidable rivers. The soil along the bottoms appears to be very good; the grass grows quite heavily, and hundreds of tons of hay are cut here by the settlers for winter use. The grazing is excellent, and numerous ranches have been started all through the valley for the purpose of raising stock.

Following the stream into the foothills of the mountains, Hayden took note of the narrow valleys or gorges carved by the river. He camped on the Big Laramie thirty-five miles southwest of Fort Sanders, at a place that possibly is within the boundaries of the historic district that is the subject of this nomination.

The scenery on either side of this valley is beautiful beyond description. On the west side are the snow-clad peaks of the Medicine Bow range in the distance, with numerous intervening lower ranges ascending like steps. The snowy mountains are mostly destitute of vegetation and are covered with eternal snow, but the lower mountain ridges are covered mostly with what may be called groves of pine. Indeed, the pine groves and grassy openings are so arranged and proportioned that the whole scene appears as if it might have been partially the work of art, and the traveler imagines himself in a sparsely-settled mountainous district instead of the unexplored Rocky Mountain region. These openings and grassy slopes will make excellent pasture grounds, for the grass is good, and they are watered with the finest of mountain streams Form No. 10-300a (Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM



CONTINUATION SHEET Jelm Description ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 3

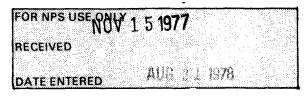
and springs. I would again remark that the pine forests of these mountains must at some period be an object of earnest pursuit. Two years ago the mountain sides were full of tie-cutters, who cut and floated hundreds of thousands of ties down the mountain streams, fifty to one hundred miles, to the Union Pacific Railroad, whence they were transported by railroad to any desired point.

In the moist ravines of the mountain sides are patches of the aspen, *Populus tremuloides*, which, from its peculiar mode of growth, forms a striking feature in the landscape. It grows very thickly, seldom attaining a height of more than forty or fifty feet, and not more than twelve to eighteen inches in diameter. The body is very smooth and nearly white, and the top forms a rounded, cone-shaped mass of foliage. These aspen groves are the favorite resort of deer, elk, grouse, and all kinds of game.

Thus, Hayden provides us with a capable description of the general area wherein is found the Jelm-Frank Smith Ranch Historic District. Three and a half miles south of Woods Landing, in the bottomland of the Big Laramie River and at a place on the west bank that is wide enough to accommodate a small town, is the site of Cummins City, later named Jelm. Today it is part of the Frank Smith Ranch, whose headquarters is located on the east bank of the stream, several hundred yards south of Jelm. The boundaries of the historic district include all structures described herein, including two bridges crossing the Big Laramie River, as well as a milelong stretch of stream bottomland--an area which is sufficient to maintain the visual integrity of the historic sites. The district is just over a half-mile wide and includes a portion of the paved, two-lane State Highway 10 located east of the river, as well as a portion of the lower slopes of both Jelm Mountain to the east and the Medicine Bow Mountains to the west. Except for forty acres of Section 35, T31N, R77W, which is owned by the federal government and administered by the Bureau of Land Management, the property within the historic district is owned by the Holland family. The boundaries of the district nearly coincide with ranch property boundaries. However, not all of the ranch property has been included, and it is not necessary to include all of it in order to provide a visually, and historically, coherent entity worthy of the National Register.

Following is a description of nineteen structures found at Jelm and the Frank Smith Ranch Headquarters, the numbers of the structures corresponding to those shown on the attached site plan. The first twelve structures listed are those found at Jelm.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM



CONTINUATION SHEET Jelm-Description ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 4

Structure #1 School-Church Prove # 2

The school building is a sturdy, one-story structure, 31'0" in length by 19'0" in width, facing east. Resting upon a stone and mortar foundation, the school is constructed of sawn logs with halved-log corner joints. The roof is hipped and covered with asphalt sheathing, and a simple wooden cupola is located along the ridge near the front of the building. The school contains six, two-over-two, double-hung windows which are covered with board shutters. The front entrance is a two-panel door. The building's interior is divided into two spaces, a vestibule and a meeting room.

Structure #2 Shroeder House Photo Fit Ale

The Shroeder House is a one-story structure facing east, 42'5" in length by 18'8" in width. Its construction is of hewn, squared logs with dovetailed corner joints. The gabled roof is covered with wooden shingles and supported by pole rafters, and the floor is dirt. Large openings have been cut out of the east and west faces in order to accommodate livestock; subsequent use of the building by livestock has accelerated its deterioration, especially on the interior.

Structure #3 Shed

This shed is a single story, crude structure of undressed logs, with halved-log joints, and with dimensions of 13'0" long by 12'0" wide. The roof is board-onboard, with pole rafters. The floor is dirt and there is a simple, low opening on the north end.

Structure #4 Cabin

This one-story cabin, 22'7" in length by 20'3" in width, is in ruinous condition, its most obvious feature being a collapsed roof. Constructed of undressed logs, with sawed corner joints, the cabin has an opening to the east.

Structure #5 Dugout paint affi

Set into a low slope just west of Structure #4 is a dugout 11'8" in length by 9'3" in width, facing east, which is also in ruinous condition. Constructed mainly of undressed logs, with halved-log corner joints, it is also covered by some board siding.

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CONTINUATION SHEET Jelm-Description ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 5

Structure #6 Mansfield House

The Mansfield House is a 1½-story structure facing east, with a one-story frame wing on the west end. The main building is 37'3" in length by 25'6" in width, and the wing is 20'0" long by 10'7" wide. Resting on a stone and mortar foundation, the entire structure is built of sawed, squared logs, with lapped corner joints. The main portion is capped by an asphalt-sheathed, hipped roof which, on its south and east sides, contains gabled dormers faced with wooden, fish-scale shingles. Windows are two-over-two, double-hung. Overall, the Mansfield House is in good condition, although it is not endowed with any particular architectural significance.

Structure #7 Bar

West of the Mansfield House is a one-story, one-room bar, a dilapidated structure facing east. It is constructed of sawed logs, with halved-log corner joints, and is 22'0" long by 19'0" wide. It has a board-on-board roof, crude window and door openings, and has a small frame, shed-roof privy attached to its east end. Attached to the west end is a long shed, 18'11" long by 6'7" wide, capped by a board-on-board roof.

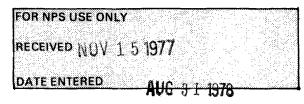
Structure #8 Johnson House

The Johnson House is a two-story structure with a partial basement, facing east. The main portion of the building, 38'10" long by 16'10" wide, is constructed of undressed, sawed logs with halved-log corner joints. The gabled roof is covered on the north side with wooden shingles, and on the south side with asphalt sheathing. First story windows are four-over-four, double-hung, and on the second story is a four-lite, casement window. The main floor interior contains three spaces and an unfinished second floor covers the entire area of the original structure. An addition to the southwest end of the building, measuring approximately 17'0" in length by 10'6" in width, is also constructed of undressed, sawed logs. It has an asphalt-sheathed, shed roof, and a massive sandstone fireplace and chimney sits in its southwest corner. On the southeast end of the Johnson House is a one-story, two-room addition whose dimensions are approximately 20'0" long by 11'0" wide. It has board-and batten siding, and a gabled roof covered with asphalt sheathing.

Structure #9 Barn Plana 9

The barn is a one-story structure, 22'7" long by 20'11" wide, with a full loft. It is constructed of sawed logs, with halved-log joints, and its most conspicuous

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CONTINUATION SHEET Jelm-Description ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 6

feature is a steeply-pitched, board-on-board, gabled roof. A single doorway opens to the east and there is but a single, unglazed window in the north wall. The interior consists of one space with a dirt floor.

Structure #10 Cabin

South of the Johnson House is a one-story, one-room cabin facing east, 23'1" long by 22'1" wide. Built upon a stone rubble foundation, the structure is constructed of sawed logs with halved-log joints, and has a gabled roof covered with asphalt shingles. There are three bays on the front side of the cabin, one of which is a four-panel door, and on the south side is another door.

Structure #11 Oculist's Shop

South of Structure #10 is a one-story structure, also facing east, whose dimensions are 37'5" long by 16'9" wide. It is constructed of sawed logs, with halved-log corner joints. The gabled roof is covered with asphalt sheathing and is penetrated by a single pipe chimney. A four-panel door and two-over-two, double-hung windows provide openings in the shop. A 14'6" long by 10'6" wide, frame addition to the rear, or west end, of the building has board-and-batten siding, and a gabled roof covered with asphalt sheathing.

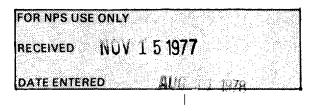
Structure #12 Stables

West of the Oculist's Shop is a badly deteriorated frame stable, one story in height and measuring 52'0" in length by 20'6" in width. There are roughly three interior spaces covered by a partially collapsed, board roof. West of the barn are log corrals which probably formed part of a livestock complex.

Structures #13-19 Frank Smith Ranch Headquarters Complex 2010 21

Several hundred yards south of the stable at Jelm, on the east bank of the Big Laramie River, is the Frank Smith Ranch Headquarters. Within the ranch headquarters complex and, indeed, within the total historic district, the ranch house (Structure #13) is the most significant structure, architecturally. This $1\frac{1}{2}$ -story, log building, constructed in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, is today in excellent condition both on the exterior and interior, and it is obvious that much work has been done to maintain it. Carefully hewn and squared logs, and neatly dovetailed joints seem to assure the visitor that the house will survive many more years in its Rocky Mountain environment.

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CONTINUATION SHEET Jelm-Description ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 7

Except for the construction of a wooden patio and a sliding-door entrance on the building's north side, the Frank Smith House appears to have experienced little alteration from the period of its construction. The overall length of the building, including a rear extension, is 49'6", and its width is 21'0". The roof is gabled and is punctuated by two, gabled wall dormers. Both roof and dormers are covered with asphalt shingles. A wooden porch runs the length of the south and east faces of the house, and is probably a later addition to the building. Windows on the main floor and on the east end of the second floor are one-over-one, double-hung, and the main entrance features an ornately detailed, Victorian door. The house uses a central hallway design, with a stair hall flanked by rooms on either side. The Frank Smith House, well-kept and well-scrubbed, both inside and outside, is used today as a part-time residence by the Holland family.

Following are descriptions of the other structures in the Frank Smith Ranch Headquarters Complex, in order of their locations west of the ranch house.

Structure #14 Ice House

A one-story structure, facing east, constructed of hewn, squared-logs, with halved-log, sawed joints; 32'0" long by 18'0" wide.

Structure #15 Shed

A one-story structure, facing east, frame constructed with board-on-board siding, and a gabled roof; 32'0" long by 18'0" wide.

Structure #16 Cabin

A one-story building facing south, constructed of hewn, squared-logs with sawed, halved-log joints; 22'6" long by 20'6" wide.

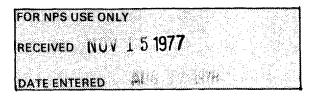
Structure #17 Cabin

A one-story structure facing south, constructed of hewn, squared-logs with sawed, halved-log joints, and capped by a gabled roof; 18'6" long by 14'0" wide.

Strucutre #18 Shed

A one-story structure, facing south, with two parts; the main part is constructed of hewn, squared-logs with halved-log joints, has a gabled roof, and measures 19'0"

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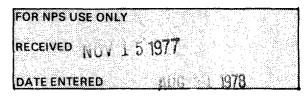
CONTINUATION SHEET Jelm-Description ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 8

long by 12'6" wide; an addition to main structure, a frame building with board-andbatten siding and shed roof, measures 15'6" long by 12'0" wide.

Structure #19 Barn

A one-story structure with full loft, facing east and constructed of hewn logs-inpanel; the main part is capped by a gabled roof and an addition to the west has a shed roof; 55'0" long by 22'0" wide.

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CONTINUATION SHEET Jelm-Significance ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

in rich grassland prairies and valleys. Hayden reported that in 1868 a few farmers in the valley of Rock Creek, along the line of the old stage road, succeeded in raising some very good vegetables, such as potatoes, turnips, and cabbages, and would have remained there contented, had not the Indians driven them away. "But it is doubtful," stated Hayden, "if these plains will ever become a favorite abode

for farmers, though for the raising of stock I believe they are unsurpassed. Horses, cattle, and sheep have already been raised here of the finest kind, and in the beautiful sheltered valleys they find the most secure retreats from the severity of the winter's cold. Thousands of tons of excellent hay can be cut every year along the bottoms of any of these streams.

Mining efforts, concurrent with the construction of the railroad, and the establishment of ranches, also provided bases for settlement. In 1868, while Laramie City was still a tent town, miners were prospecting for gold and silver in nearby hills. Placer gold is reported to have been discovered in the Medicine Bow Range as early as 1858 by a certain Captain Douglas, a member of Sir George Gore's hunting expedition to the Rockies. But serious efforts at placer mining actually commenced ten years later with the discovery, by Iram M. Moore, of gold in Moore's Gulch, a part of the Upper Douglas Creek drainage system. Eventually not only Douglas Creek and its tributaries, but also other streams issuing from the Medicine Bow Mountains, were explored and prospected for gold, silver and copper. The earliest recorded mining claim in the Medicine Bow Range was staked on the west bank of Douglas Creek in 1870. Seven years later, in the summer of 1877, the Douglas Creek Mining District was formally organized and Douglas City or Keystone, thirty miles west of Laramie, became its first mining settlement.

During the 1870's northern Colorado was also being prospected and mined for precious minerals, and it was during a rush to that region in 1879 that new prospects were discovered in gold-bearing quartz along the Upper Big Laramie River at Jelm Mountain* diverting the attention of some of the miners headed for North Park. A report of the incipient "boom" at Jelm Mountain appears in the June 28, 1879 edition of the weekly newspaper, the Laramie Sentinel.

*According to Mae Urbanek, author of <u>Wyoming Place Names</u>, Jelm is a corruption of Gillem, the name of a tie-contractor who worked in the region at an early date.

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MORE RICH DISCOVERIES

Some very rich gold-bearing quartz has been brought into the city this week from a discovery made by T. D. Pearson up on the Big Laramie River.*

Messrs. Blackburn and Bunker are, we believe, interested in this discovery and work is being pushed to develop it. The new discovery is at the foot of Gillem mountain, some thirty miles from here.

During the summer and fall of 1879 Pearson, Blackburn and Miller were reported at work developing their claim. At the same time a "white-whiskered confidence man" by the name of John Cummins was also at work, promoting his North Park, Colorado mining interests. The next spring Cummins made his debut at the mines west of Laramie.

In the April 10, 1880 issue of the Laramie Sentinel, an article appeared on page two, entitled, "GOLD! GOLD!! GOLD!!!". Apparently the boom was underway at the Pearson District and two of the principals involved were W. S. "Buck" Bramel and John Cummins. "Mr. Cummins," stated the article, "will immediately proceed to develop the claims

purchased by him. He is not a man who gets wild over small matters, but he is enthusiastic, and anxious to at once put forth the energy and experience and capital at his command for the immediate realization of the wealth now lying in the mountains near us.

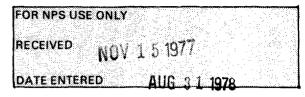
On April 17, 1880 the newspaper referred to the Pearson Mining District as the Gillem Mountain District, and W. O. Downey was on his way there to survey mining claims and draw up a plot for the new town called "Cummins City." One week later, at a meeting of the entire population of Cummins City, the Bramel Mining District supplanted the Gillem Mountains District. On May 15 <u>Sentinel</u> reporter "F. Sharp" estimated that there were 250 to 300 men in camp, nearly all of whom had their own outfits and apparently intended to stay. However, the United States census taken in June, 1880 provides us with an accurate tab of the permanent population, reporting that there

^{*}T. D. Pearson, according to a property abstract entry, at one time claimed the site of the mining discovery, but his right to the property was acquired by James J. McGreevey in 1878. McGreevey sold the property of J. J. Strode, who agreed to allow Pearson to mine and sluice, and then sold the property to a man named Olmstead. On May 1, 1880 John Cummins bought the property from Olmstead.

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were 53 persons residing in twenty-two dwellings in the Gillem Mountains. Twentyeight of the fifty-three persons were miners, and there were but nine females. Undaunted, the <u>Sentinel</u> seemed intent upon inflating the Jelm Mountain bubble, claiming that the district was destined to be one of the richest in the Rocky Mountains. "...it is no wonder" the <u>Sentinel</u> printed, "that even old miners become excited, and that others are wild, and everybody ready to drop everything else and run for the mines." It is also no wonder that the <u>Sentinel</u> was a vehicle for boomers who promoted Laramie as the logical entrepot for the Bramel District as well as for other districts in the mountains.

The Cummins City boom reached its apogee in 1880. That summer construction there apparently reached a peak, and among the buildings erected there, including individual cabins, were a boarding house, meat and vegetable market, paint store, restaurants, blacksmith shops and a livery stable. The possibility that there was at least one bar is inferred from a May 15 article in which it was stated that Mr. George W. Moore "has for some time been furnishing entertainment for the inner man." In fact, on August 7 the paper revealed that whiskey was the "indispensable adjunct to a lively mining camp." The reporter went on to write that "the recent riotous proceedings of some of the boys will doubtless result in the appointment of temporary officers of the law, who will probably be duly elected at the fall elections." About the middle of August the district's first stamp mill arrived, a ten-stamp device brought in from the Centennial district about fifteen miles north.

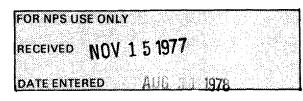
The following year, on April 6, 1881, a <u>Sentinel</u> reporter visited Cummins City and wrote an interesting report on what he found there during the second, and last, summer of the boom. Although it is a lengthy report, it is worth printing to enable the reader to taste some of the flavor of a boom camp, and to gain some insight into the personality of this particular camp.

A VISIT TO CUMMINS

The first of this week we visited the Bramel Mining District, for the first time since any progress has been made in mining there. Our townsman, Louis Miller, kindly sent in his team and buggy after us, and, Sunday morning, we rode out to Cummins, in four hours, over a smooth, level road.

The citizens of Cummins City are the most hospitable class of people we ever knew. Every cabin was thrown open to us, and we had more invitations to partake of their hospitality than we could accept in a year. We finally settled down and were perfectly at home with Dr. J. S. Watkins and his lovely family.

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At noon Sunday we attended their Sabbath School. About all the children and a good many of the adults were present. Mr. Cole is superintendent, with Miss Mary S. Watkins, sister of Dr. Watkins, as right-hand supporter, and a good force of teachers. The school is ably and effectively managed, and is a pet institution of the people of Cummins. Everybody refers to it with pride. They have a really fine Sunday-school library and plenty of suitable papers, quarterlies, etc.

In the evening they had religious services, which were atttnded, (sic) we should judge, by nearly everybody in the camp. The house was full, several people having to stand during the services. There was not only a most respectful attention but a manifest interest on the subject of religion.

We have lived in and been familiar with a great many mining camps for many years, and we can safely say we have never seen so intelligent and enterprising a class of citizens gathered in a young camp as we find in Cummins. There are some four doctors, several lawyers, old school-teachers and other professional and educated men and women.

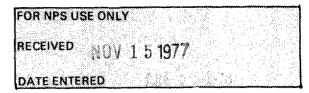
Cummins City is the capital and commercial metropolis of Bramel Mining District. It is beautifully located in a lovely and picturesque valley on the Big Laramie river, with the lofty mountains looking down upon it all around. The valley is wide enough and level enough to furnish a beautiful townsite.

The people there claim, and it is probably correct, that it is not half as cold and stormy as it is out on the plains. They are effectually sheltered from the bleak winds, and the lofty mountains around and above them seem to radiate their warmth into this little valley below and make it a sort of natural "hot bed." The trees along the river are beginning to leave and blossom, and the green grass is several inches high.

The town contains about one hundred houses, mostly cabins, of course, but generally built with much neatness and taste, so that they furnish neat, warm johnie fortable (sic) homes. There are some quite pretentious buildings, and Messrs. Beard and Thomas are actually putting up a hotel, sixty by one hundred feet in size and two stories in height. It will be the largest hotel in Wyoming Territory, and the style of architecture and workmanship is as good as one would find in Denver.

There are in Cummins, we should judge, something over one hundred men, from a dozen to twenty women and as many children. They have

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clubbed together, contributed money and labor, and built quite a comfortable and commodious school house, and furnished it with seats, tables, desks, etc. It is used for a school on week days, for Sunday school and religious services on the Sabbath day and for a reading room evenings. It is a characteristic monument to the genius of Americanism, which carries its education, intelligence and religion with it wherever it goes.

THE MINING OUTLOOK.

During our stay in Cummins the weather was very unpropitious for climbing the mountains and visiting the mines but we did what we could in that line. The Cummins folk don't want and won't expect us to over estimate or underrate their condition and prospects.

In the first place we were wonderfully surprised at the vast amount of labor and money which has been expended there in so short a time, in improvements and development. We know, from actual experience, what a job it is to go into the mountains and even build a rough-and-ready log cabin. We know what a job it is to sink a shaft or drive a tunnel for even ten feet in the solid rock, and hence we are prepared to appreciate what has been done there.

An examination of the recorder's books show that upward of five hundred claims have been preempted and recorded. Upon more than two hundred and fifty of these work has been done, ranging from a ten foot shaft which is necessary to hold the property—down to all depths—to 160 feet. There are also numerous tunnels extending from ten up to a hundred feet in length into the mountains. When it is known that the cost of sinking or tunnelling into this solid rock averages from \$12 to \$20 per foot, some idea may be formed of what has been done there.

A good deal has been said and written about the mines by our various correspondents. We visited the Betsy Jane, one of the first mines discovered It is a true fissure vein and with a well defined crevice of from three to four feet in width. A tunnel has been driven in, striking the lode, and then a shaft sunk at the end of the tunnel. We believe it is admitted that this mine has furnished the richest ore found in the camp.

We also visited The Boss. This is an immense vein, some twelve or fifteen feet in width, carrying gold, silver and copper and giving an assay of from

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\$15.00 upward. There is such a vast body of it, and it can be so easily mined, that if it will average from \$5 to \$10 per ton, it cau (sic) be worked at an immense profit, and will yield bullion enough to pay the national debt. This mine is owned and is being developed by Messrs. Beard and Thomas—the heavy men of the camp—who have ample means to prosecute the enterprise successfully.

We saw and examined some of the prospect holes, but scarcely investigated them enough to be qualified to give a reliable opinion upon the district as a whole. From what we did see we are inclined to the opinion that there are a large number of true fissure veins, carrying ores of gold and silver, ranging from \$5.00 per ton, up, generally what would be called low-grade ores, but yet such as with capital and proper machinery can be profitably worked. And here we remark that the whole mining history of the country had demonstrated that the most successful and profitable mining has been on what are called "low grade" ores.

PLACERS.

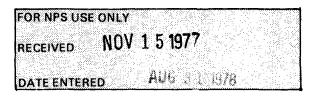
There is one feature of the camp about which little has been said or done, but which, we believe, is destined at no distant day to be one of its main features of interest and profit, and that is its placer mines.

The whole valley of the Laramie river up there, as well as its small tributaries, prospects well. In the town, every time they dig a well or cellar, or even a post hole, they can pan out a fair prospect from the gravel. Gulch gold is found from the very grass roots down. Even the dirt floors of their cabins will prospect fairly.

Some of our citizens recollect how old Father Pierson worked away there alone and what splendid nuggets he brought in. The river bottoms and gulches, even the town site, have been pre-empted for placer claims, but nothing has been done as yet toward developing or even prospecting this interest. We are confident that they will soon attract attention and be extensively and profitably mined, yielding millions of dollars.

We cannot close this article without returning our thanks to the people of Cummins for the uniform courtesy, kindness and hospitality shown to us during our brief visit, and expressing the determination to repeat the visit at an early day, and continue the acquaintance so pleasantly begun.

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The settlement along a bend in the Big Laramie River abounded with not only miners but with reputed authorities who offered their expert opinions and provided assays. On the scene at one time or another were "professors" Paige, Stanton, and Jinks, "doctors" E. P. Snow, Graham, Smith, and Watkins, and an authority known simply as Mr. Jones. The reputations of these gentlemen have not been established, and perhaps never will be, but it is known that they visited the mining district to examine its resources.* There is quite a contrast between their optimistic reports, however, and a statement made in 1952 by geology student, Daniel Michalek, concerning Jelm Mountain. Michalek chose to end his M.S. thesis with the one-sentence paragraph: "It is not likely that any large ore reserves will be discovered in Jelm Mountain."

The problems which beset the Bramel Mining District were apparently similar to those of other Rocky Mountain mining districts, notably: lack of money for development of resources, and a lack of resources for development. Even the normally enthusiastic Laramie Sentinel was occasionally pessimistic. During the height of the boom, in a May 22, 1880 article, the complaint was made that, "The whole region around Jelm mountain is being run over by superficial prospectors, each one anxious to secure as much ground and as many claims as possible, while little is as yet done towards the development of any." On June 12 the paper contained the following remarks:

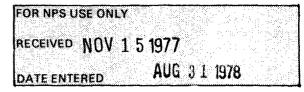
The worst feature about the mines in the Jelm Mountain and Mill creek districts is that nobody is doing anything to speak of in the way of developing them. We are aware that this is the usual fate of all new mining camps, but it is poor policy. Everybody rushes in and goes to driving stakes, and then they get together around their camps and tell stories, play cards, and smoke, it being a regular game of freeze out, each one waiting for some other one to do some digging to find out what there is in the mines.

By the end of 1881 very little can be found in the <u>Laramie Sentinel</u> regarding Cummins City and little or nothing can be found in the paper the following year. It can be assumed that by the end of the summer of 1881 Cummins City began to decline and, after less than three years of excitement it apparently was destined to lapse into history as another example of "boom and bust" in the Rockies. Wyoming Territorial

^{*}Other figures involved in one aspect or another of the Jelm development will be recognized by the student of Wyoming history, figures such as N. K. Boswell, H. V. S. Groesbeck, and W. O. Downey.

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Geologist, Samuel Aughey, in a January 1, 1886 report wrote that with two exceptions at a copper mine and at a bismuth mine, no mining had been done in the Cummins City district the previous year. State Geologist Wilbur C. Knight reported that the camp had been idle for several years previous to 1893.

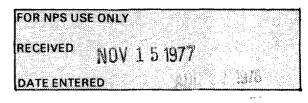
But Cummins City did not die with the failure of gold mining. Near the turn of the century interest in the Bramel District was revived by the discovery of copper in the Medicine Bow and Sierra Madre ranges, and in 1898 the Jelm Mining District was created. A new town plan was drawn up and in 1900 Cummins City was resurrected as Jelm, becoming part of the southern Wyoming copper belt that extended from Tie Siding on the east to the Grand Encampment Mining District on the west. The Laramie newspaper, <u>The Daily Boomerang</u>, was predictably optimistic, and on January 20, 1900 printed the following statement.

Picketing the hills that encircle the Laramie plains and within whose ribbed vaults is uncounted treasure is a strong contingent of the "old guard" men who for twenty years, and more, have delved in the mines and still have the faith strong within them that their search will not always be in vain. The results of 1899 strengthened their hope and in nearly every camp within a radius of fifty miles of Laramie work has been prosecuted right along up to the present time as if this was a region of perpetual summer. As a natural consequence there have been many new and some very rich discoveries, and in no instance has this been more marked than in the Jelm mining district, just west of this city, where great things are looked for during the coming season. The amount of development work that has been done out there in the last few months is astonishing.

Plans for Jelm included harnessing the Big Laramie River for power production, erecting stamp mills, and connecting of Laramie and Jelm with an electric railway. After describing activities and plans for production at the camp, the <u>Boomerang</u> concluded:

There is, in short, every reason to believe that Jelm, whose development into a first class camp would be of more direct benefit to Laramie than almost any other in the whole range of the Medicine Bow or the Black Hills, is on the threshold of an era of unprecedented achivements (sic). It requires no extraordinary penetration on the part of one experienced in mining matters and conversant with the situation at Jelm today, to see in that camp the making of a great future.

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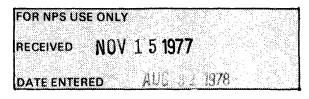
Wyoming State Geologist H. C. Beeler, in a 1906 report on mineral and allied resources of Albany County, concluded that under the direction of practical management there could be no doubt that the Jelm property could be put on a paying basis and be successful.

The ores are principally copper and gold. The camp at Jelm having become known about twenty years ago and then worked for gold, no attention was given to copper but the indications are now that it will make one of the greatest mining camps in the southwestern part of Wyoming, as the Jelm Mountain is classed in the great mining belt in which are the Ferris-Haggarty, Rambler, Douglas, Keystone, Independence and Ida May properties.

A careful investor should have realized that the law which created the position of State Geologist was designed to provide information advertising the state's wealth and, in short, it was the job of the state geologist to help bring about economic development of the state's mineral resources. The historian, too, must be aware of such promotional activities, as there are several avaliable documents that indicate lively activity at Jelm at the turn of the century. A more reliable indication of the importance of operations there, however, is provided by federal and state census figures. In Albany County in 1905 there were but 358 miners out of a total population of 9992. In 1915 the state census for Albany County listed two gold mines with one employee, and five copper mines with eighteen employees. Copper production for the year 1915 was 3,000 tons that were worth a total of \$30,000. Most of that production came from one mine, the Rambler, located in the Douglas Creek District about fifteen miles northwest of Jelm. During World War I a report showed a surge of activity in the Douglas Creek area, and in 1917 it ranked second in the state's production of copper. But the name, Jelm, does not appear in that report. An interesting, however transitory, event related to Jelm in that year was the filming of a Hollywood-produced movie.* From 1920, when Jelm was included in the Woods

^{*}In August, 1917 Jelm, for some unknown reason, became a setting for the movie, "The Man From Painted Post," starring Douglas Fairbanks, Sr., Eileen Percy, Frank Campeau and a cast of about thirty. The director of the film was Joseph Henabery and the cinematographer was Victor Fleming. Although the primary site of the production was the Riverside Ranch, located further down the Big Laramie River, some footage was shot in the Jelm area. The plot of the movie concerns a cattle detective who outwits, and captures, a notorious rustler, and in the process meets a beautiful schoolmarm. One reason why the film was shot west of Laramie is because, upon arrival by train in the town of Rock River, the company of actors, director, and others were told to leave by the mayor, who apparently disapproved of such frivolities as films and actors.

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Landing census district, until 1930, the population of Woods Landing increased only from 37 to 50. In a summary of Wyoming copper production written by Horace D. Thomas in 1943, Jelm does not even appear.

In summary, mining carried on intermittently at Jelm since its initial boom has been insignificant in comparison with that at other Rocky Mountain camps. Geologist Samuel H. Knight wrote that, although estimates of gold produced in the early days of mining operations are not reliable, up to the year 1942 about \$250,000 worth of gold was produced in Albany County. The three top mines -- the Centennial, the Keystone, and the Florence--together produced \$185,000, or about three-fourths, of the total amount. Other quartz mines produced \$4,000 worth of gold, and the rest came from various placer mines. Lost somewhere in the total of the latter two figures is the total production from Jelm. If one considers that during peak years gold production at South Pass City--Wyoming's greatest gold camp and yet one which is barely recognized in the annals of Rocky Mountain mining history--came to a grand total of perhaps two million dollars, then gold production in the Medicine Bow Range is comparatively insignificant, and production at Jelm is even less important. Total copper production at Jelm, as noted previously, is also insignificant, when compared to copper production in other areas of the state such as the Grand Encampment District and the Hartville-Sunrise District.

Despite the lack of success experienced by miners at Jelm Mountain, the role of the Jelm settlement in the history of Wyoming and the West deserves to be recognized. The significance of Jelm depends upon something more than gold and copper production figures, and upon something more significant than the fact it was a place where Douglas Fairbanks, Sr. once rode a horse. Collectively, the dozen log and frame structures at Jelm are a significant architectural representation of this settlement, and deserve to be enrolled in the National Register of Historic Places. But, apart from its architectural significance, Jelm is worth remembering as a focal point for activity that, being part of a larger mining development, provided a basis for the early settlement of Albany County and southern Wyoming Territory.

Jelm was not a large settlement, nor was it a permanent settlement. And it was not a place where mining operations paid handsome dividends to miners. Nevertheless, however small its physical size, and however small the magnitude of its economic role in history, it is still a part of the development of the Rocky Mountain West. And in order to properly gauge that development, mining failures such as Jelm, as well as mining successes, should be chronicled and their proper roles defined. However, it is also important to recognize that the physical structures remaining along the Big Laramie River are more than monuments to an economic failure. They

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should not be considered simply the forlorn objects of poets canting of winds whistling through cracks in weatherbeaten pine boards. They stand to remind visitors of a community that once had a personality, a *raison d' etre*. Jelm was a place where man expended his energy, where he schemed and worked, and where he left physical evidence of his presence, part of that evidence in the form of a collection of log and frame structures. Less concrete in substance, and thus more difficult to preserve, are human relationships, ideas, and memories of a social life. If it is true that weathered boards, today more than ever before, are appreciated and sought by collectors and photographers, then Jelm is at premium value. But if the significance of the structures at Jelm is their ability to impart some understanding of how man lived and the way things were, then one way in which they can be recognized properly is to enroll them in the National Register of Historic Places.

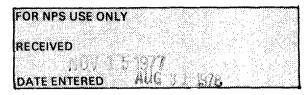
One who worked at both Cummins city and Jelm, and who remained on the scene for many years after mining stopped at Jelm Mountain was Frank Smith. Born in northern Missouri in 1856, Smith came to Laramie, Wyoming in 1875. From there he left to search for gold in northern Wyoming, but returned to the Laramie Plains because of the Indian-white conflict resulting in the Custer debacle. Upon his return he rode as a cowboy for some of the early Laramie Plains cattle outfits, but in 1879 he caught the gold fever again, and went to northern Colorado. He shortly returned to Laramie, during the Ute Uprising on Colorado's White River.* Smith was employed by John Cummins in the Jelm Mining boom. In 1886, following the decline of the gold mining district and while Cummins was involved in a promotional scheme in Denver, Smith established a homestead on the east bank of the Big Laramie River, near the Jelm townsite.

In the summer of 1941 John C. Thompson wrote an article for the <u>Wyoming State Tribune</u> that contains some interesting biographical information on the "lively Octogenarian", as he called Smith.

But just across the river from the little flat and the flanking bench on which Cummins City was born, briefly flourished, and decayed, abides a living relic, a very virile one, who was present at its accouchement,

^{*}The 1880 United States census lists twenty-six-year-old Frank Smith as a pioneer, living in the Big Laramie District, but it is not known for certain if the man listed in the census was the same who established the ranch near Jelm.

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participated in its lusty growth, saw it falter, wither, fade and disappear. He is 86-year-old Frank Smith, who probably sits a horse straighter, can ride it farther in a day and come home compatatively (sic) fresh at dusk, than any other of his age in this state; or, for that matter, all elsewhere. A remarkable man, Frank Smith; one with whom it is a delight to converse regarding things as they were when Wyoming was much younger and correspondingly less staid. Jelm mountain's cone has been the axis of his operations during 66 years. He has "lived" every hour of the period and at four-score and six still is not overlooking any bets. Memories crowd upon him as he gazes across the river at where Cummins City was; his reminiscence is engaging.

He lives alone, this lively octogenarian, in a big, two-story house of adze-hewn logs, with corners so cunningly anchored with dovetailed joints that they will be holding when the intervening sections of the sturdy timbers crumble. The Swedish lumberjack who shaped those logs with only axe and adze as tools was an artist with a dash of genius in his work; he doubtless would have regarded timber craftmanship of the standard of the present as deplorable butchery of sound wood. There is no blight upon the title to the land on which the big house rests, or the additional 10,000 acres which Frank Smith has knit together into a ranch which he validly may regard with pride. On this domain, and the adjacent forest reserve, he runs sheep. "You see," he said rather wistfully, "I can't ride now after stock as I once could."

On January 22, 1945 Frank Smith died, and that year his ranch was acquired by the Holland family. Since December 26, 1972 it has been owned by Ralph Holland, Jr. The headquarters, which was the nucleus of the large ranch that Smith developed, remains in good condition on the banks of the Big Laramie River. However, the total ranch is diminutive in size, its acreage trimmed considerably from the 10,000 acres Thompson claimed for it.

Because it is the remnant of a pioneer Wyoming ranch, one which was established at an early date in the history of Wyoming, and is nearly one hundred years old, and because it has architectural significance, the Frank Smith Ranch deserves enrollment in the National Register as a separate entity. However, because of the association of its original owner with the development of the Jelm Mining District, because of the physical proximity of the ranch headquarters to the Jelm townsite, and because of architectural similarities between the headquarters and the townsite, the two have been placed together in a historic district.

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ADDENDUM: GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

The Jelm-Frank Smith Ranch Historic District is a rectangle that is less than a square mile in size. The north boundary of the district begins at a point one quarter of a mile west of the intersection of the east boundary line of Section 27, T13N, R77W with the Big Laramie River. From this point the district boundary line runs east to a point 100 yards east of Wyoming State Highway 10, thence south one mile, thence west to a point twenty-five yards east of the Big Laramie River, thence north to the point of origin, or the north boundary. The district includes the following land area:

W¹₂ SW¹₄, W¹₂ NE¹₄ SW¹₄, W¹₂ SE¹₄ SW¹₄, Section 26, T13N, R77W; W¹₂ NW¹₄, W¹₂ NE¹₄ NW¹₄, W¹₂ SE¹₄ NW¹₄, Section 35, T13N, R77W; E¹₂ NE¹₄, Section 34, T13N, R77W; E¹₂ SE¹₄, Section 27, T13N, R77W.