

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: 88003141 Date Listed: 1/13/89

<u>Popham Ranch</u>	<u>Ravalli</u>	<u>MT</u>
Property Name	County	State

Multiple Name _____

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 Bruce Noble
Signature of the Keeper

1/13/89
Date of Action

===== Amended Items in Nomination: =====

Architecture should be added as an area of significance to correspond to the claim for criterion C. This amendment to the official documentation was discussed with Montana Deputy SHPO Pat Bick during a January 11, 1989 telephone conversation.

DISTRIBUTION:
National Register property file
Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

DEC 19 1988
DEC 19 1988

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

NATIONAL
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Popham Ranch
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 460 NE Popham Lane n/a not for publication
city, town Corvallis x vicinity
state Montana code 030 county Ravalli code 081 zip code 59828

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>9</u>	<u>3</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____ structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	_____	_____ objects
		<u>9</u>	<u>3</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
n/a

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official *Maurella Shuford* Date 12-2-88
SHPO

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official _____ Date _____
State or Federal agency and bureau _____

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:) _____

for Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

_____ Domestic _____
 _____ Agriculture _____

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

_____ Domestic _____
 _____ Agriculture _____

7. DescriptionArchitectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

_____ Queen Anne _____

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation _____ stone, concrete _____
 walls _____ wood plank _____
 _____ wood frame _____
 roof _____ shingle, asphalt _____
 other _____

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The cluster of historic buildings that compose the headquarters for the Popham Ranch are located at the base of the east side bench of the Bitter Root Valley along Popham Lane, approximately 2 1/2 miles northeast of Corvallis. The history of the use and adaptation of the buildings at the Popham Ranch exemplify the practical, innovative, and conservative values of early Valley settlers. All of the buildings are of whip sawn or milled wood construction, painted white and clustered in a coherent grouping bounded by fences. The arrangement of buildings within the farmstead changed over time as needs and building function changed.

#1 Granary, built 1882, contributing.

This rectangular, gable-roofed building of "inside-out" construction was built in three stages. Set on a hewn log sill foundation approximately 2' above ground level and measuring only 15'2" x 7'6", the east end of the granary was completed in 1882 to shelter the first year's crop of oats. A small platform supported by knee braces provided a perch from which grain could be tossed into the upper part of the granary. In about 1886, an 8-foot wide carriage house with a vertical plank hinged door was added to the west end of the granary. In ca. 1890, a second granary bay, measuring 15'7" x 15'2" and also of "inside-out" construction, was appended to the west end of the building. Whip sawn lumber was used throughout for construction. The south wall of the west end of the granary was opened up to facilitate the storage of fencing materials in 1965. The roof has recently been sheathed with galvanized metal.

#2 First House, 1883, contributing.

The original, vertical plank walled residence at the Popham Ranch was built of whip sawn lumber in 1883. In 1900, the house was moved from its original location on the site of the second house across Popham Lane, together with the farmstead's original barn, to be leased or sold. In 1915-16, with no purchasers coming forward, Popham moved the house and barn back across the street to the farmstead and converted the house into a granary. (This twice-moved horse barn was demolished in 1965.) In 1938, the house/granary was again moved approximately 100' to the east, turned around backwards from its original orientation, set on a new concrete foundation and remodeled for use as a residence for beet workers. Although altered during recent years the building retains a fair degree of historic architectural integrity. In its present location the house continues to make a positive contribution to the historic farmstead due to the fact that the original vertical plank wall framing appears to be a relatively rare survivor of an early method of construction used in the

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Bitter Root Valley and the varied functions of the building over the years reflect essential aspects of the historic ranch operation.

The original portion of the house measures approximately 22' x 14' and is sheathed in drop siding and features 1/1 double hung windows. The original windows were replaced with Thermopane units of the same configuration a few years ago. In the 1890's a small addition was built to the rear (north) elevation, and a bathroom was appended to this addition in 1950. In ca. 1960, a large frame addition, measuring 18' x 16', was built onto the west end of the building. A gable roofed porch with concrete steps is located on the south elevation.

#3 Second House, 1900, contributing.

Built by Edward Popham and Mr. Barr, a carpenter from Corvallis, this 1 1/2 story frame house had 4 bedrooms, large kitchen, pantry, dining room, parlor, music room. The ceilings on the first floor were 10'4" high and were plastered, as were the walls. The building is basically rectangular in shape with two gable-roofed dormers set on the south elevation and half-hexagonal bay windows projecting from the dining room at the center of the south elevation and the parlor at the southwest corner. All windows are 1/1 double hung sash with the exception of the cottage windows at the centers of the bays, which feature transoms with stained glass surrounds. Wide porches supported by turned posts flank the central bay of the south elevation, and the east porch wraps around the southeast corner of the building. Three exterior, four-panel doors with transoms above provide access to the interior from the porches. Much of the original interior woodworking is still in place in excellent condition.

Electricity was brought to the house in about 1923, and water pressure for a new bathroom was installed in 1927. In 1938, the heating system was updated with the installation of an oil furnace, and storm windows and doors were added as an additional conservation measure. More recent alterations include the shoring up of the rubble stone foundation with a concrete veneer in about 1970, replacement of the oil furnace with natural gas in 1972, and the lowering of the 10'4" ceilings of the first floor to 8'. The floor plan was altered by combining the music room and a small downstairs bedroom into a large master bedroom. In 1984, the entire house was insulated, an upstairs bathroom installed, and all windows were replaced with custom Thermopane units, which exactly replicate the size and sash pattern of the original windows, with the exception of the raised center muntins used for the taller units. Asphalt shingles were applied over the original cedar shingles in about 1980.

#4 Horse Barn, 1917, contributing.

This large, gambrel-roofed, frame barn was constructed in 1917 to house four teams of horses, brood mares in a pair of box stalls, a granary, harness room and hay loft, which could hold 40 tons. The barn is covered with drop siding with corner boards. Access to the hayloft is provided by a large, cross-braced door set at the top of the gambrel end. The hay bale pulley system extends out from

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the barn under the peaked roof shelter at the ridge line. The windows are 2/2 double hung sash set symmetrically in the gambrel ends, and 6-light fixed units along the side walls. The large, wooden doors set on rollers are centered at each end of the barn. The barn measures 32'8" x 42'. The addition of the 18' x 42' shed-roofed cow stalls on the west side was completed in 1932. The cow stalls are also accessed by large, rolling wooden doors, constructed in the same fashion as the original doors. When the farm converted from horse- to machine-power in the 1930's, Popham remodelled the horse stalls into a large granary with horizontal plank siding on the interior. In 1945, the hay loft was made into a basketball court where many of the Corvallis boys practiced and played.

#5 Root Cellar/Well House, 1920, contributing.

Built to replace an earlier dug-out root cellar, this earth-bermed, concrete-walled root cellar measures 14' x 16' and is located immediately to the northeast of the second residence. The thick poured walls extend 4' above grade, and a gable roofed, frame storage room is built atop. This storage room is accessed by a 4-panel door at the top of a wooden stairway on the north elevation. To ensure more even temperatures, Popham built frame walls extending 1' to surround the concrete cellar walls in 1925, which were filled with sawdust for insulation. The pump for the domestic, well-supplied water is located within the cellar.

#6 Garage, 1935, contributing.

This two bay, gable roofed garage is of frame construction, sheathed in drop siding with corner boards. Two overhead wooden panelled doors provide access to each bay. The building measures 22' x 22'.

#7 Cow Barn/Shop/Garage, 1903, 1935, contributing.

The wood frame building was built as a lean-to addition to house 7 to 8 cows, and was attached to the vertical plank wall, 1896 horse barn. Built on after the barn was moved across the road in 1900, this addition was moved back to the farmstead with the barn in 1916. After a new cow shed was built onto the 1917 gambrel-roofed barn in 1932, this lean-to was removed from the original horse barn, turned on its axis, and relocated to the west end of the farmstead. Here the shed-roofed lean-to was enlarged and made into one-half of a gable-roofed shop/garage. The overall dimensions of the building are now 22' x 45' and the roof is covered with galvanized metal.

#8 Chicken House/Storage Shed, 1892, 1940, contributing.

Originally located behind the original house at the east end of the farmstead, the small, shed-roofed chicken house was moved to the west end in 1940, where it was converted into a storage shed. The building is of horizontal plank construction and now has a pair of 12-light fixed windows on the south elevation. A concrete floor was poured in the building after its move and remodelling.

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#9 Laborer's Residence, 1933, contributing.

Located at the northeastern corner of the farmstead, this small wood frame residence with horizontal plank siding was occupied by the families of hired help during the 30-year period of sugar beet production at the Popham Ranch. The rectangular, 24' x 14' building is set on concrete corner piers, and has an interior brick chimney. The gable roof is covered with asphalt shingles. The windows are 1/1 double hung and 6-light fixed sash units. Employees stayed year-round at the Ranch; one family remained for 20 years and built a two-room addition to the house, which has since been removed. A small, wood frame privy is located to the west of the house.

#10 Woodshed/Residence/Garage, ca. 1920, 1940, noncontributing.

Located to the west of the first house, this wood frame shed was remodeled into a house in for farm laborers in 1940. The building has a gently sloped gable roof covered with asphalt shingles. During the 1950's, the east wall of the building was opened up to accommodate car storage.

#11 Machine Shed, 1945, noncontributing.

This 6-bay machine shed is of wood frame construction and measures approximately 20' x 86'. The open bays of the machine shed are oriented toward the east, and the building is covered with drop siding with corner boards.

#12 Third Residence, 1933, remodeled 1965, 1988, noncontributing.

This small, wood frame residence was constructed by Clarence Popham shortly after he began to farm the spread after his father's retirement. The house is sheathed with wooden lap siding with a 4" reveal. Numerous additions have been constructed to the rear of the house, and the original windows were replaced with new sliding sash units of a smaller size. Due to the numerous alterations to this residence, it no longer accurately reflects 1930's design and construction.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Period of Significance

Significant Dates

Settlement
Agriculture

1882-1938

1900
1917

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Significant Person

n/a

Architect/Builder

Edward Popham, Clarence Popham

C.U. Snyder

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Popham Ranch is a significant representative complex of buildings that accurately recall the late 19th century settlement and the early 20th century agricultural development of the Bitter Root Valley. The ranch has been continuously occupied by the Popham family for 106 years. This family fashioned the wild, sagebrush-covered land into a first class productive unit by building irrigation ditches, fences, granaries, barns, and houses. The Popham Ranch was one of the leading farmsteads in the Bitter Root Valley during the historic period and stands as a distinctive illustration of the evolution of agricultural practices in the Valley over two generations.

A number of buildings at the Popham Ranch are of particular architectural significance in terms of construction methods and design. The original homestead house, built in 1883, employed vertical plank wall framing, a method that appears to have been used rather extensively during the initial phase of settlement in the Bitter Root Valley, but of which few examples remain. The 1900 Queen Anne style house is a fine example of period styling, and was built to replace the first residence after two decades of prosperous farming at the Popham ranch. The earth-bermed, concrete-walled root cellar, with its exterior sawdust-filled insulation walls, is an excellent illustration of utilitarian architecture that has survived in pristine condition. The 1917 animal barn, built according to blue prints drawn by Corvallis builder C.U. Snyder, possesses all the attributes of the "scientific" farm building that was popularized during the early 20th century by the plethora of agricultural magazines and promoted by the State's experiment stations. The Western Montana Agricultural Experiment Station, opened in 1910, is located only one mile south of the Popham Ranch, and the ranch was chosen as the site for numerous horticultural test plots. Most of the outbuildings at the Popham Ranch have undergone numerous alterations during the historic period, which extends from the year of settlement in 1882 until 1938. As the emphasis on crops changed, the buildings were altered to fit new needs at the farm. Movement of buildings within the farmstead complex and reuse of older buildings for different purposes reflect the changes in farming practices and the dynamics of agricultural innovation over two generations.

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

"Centennial: Popham Ranch Since 1882," unpublished manuscript by Clarence and Mable Popham, no date, copy in possession of the authors.

Montana Genesis: A History of the Stevensville Area of the Bitterroot Valley,
Stevensville Historical Society, Mountain Press Publishing, Missoula, Montana,
1971.

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 # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property approximately 4 acres

UTM References

A

1	1	7	2	3	7	4	0	5	1	3	6	4	4	0
Zone	Easting	Northing												

B

1	1	7	2	3	8	8	0	5	1	3	6	4	4	0
Zone	Easting	Northing												

C

1	1	7	2	3	8	7	0	5	1	3	6	3	2	0
Zone	Easting	Northing												

D

1	1	7	2	3	7	4	0	5	1	3	6	3	2	0
Zone	Easting	Northing												

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The southern boundary for the Popham Ranch follows the right of way of Popham Lane. The west boundary is the west boundary of Section 22, T7N; R20W. From Popham Lane the boundary runs north along the section line for 500 feet; then, runs east 500 feet; then follows the access road for the lower lateral irrigation ditch to the south until this road intersects Popham Lane.

T7N;R20W SW 1/4 Section 22

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary for the nominated property is marked by wire fencing and has been drawn to include all historic buildings located at the headquarters of the Popham Ranch. Agricultural fields are not included within the nominated acreage.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Clarence Popham

organization n/a

street & number 46 NE Popham Lane

city or town Corvallis

date July 1988

telephone (406) 961-3486

state Montana zip code 59828

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Background History

On a mission to scope out property suitable for agricultural settlement, John W. Popham purchased preemption rights to a 160-acre homestead near Corvallis, Montana from a squatter who had built a cabin in 1881 to initiate the "proving up" process. Popham then returned to Missouri and brought his wife and four children to the Bitter Root Valley in 1882. The year after the family was settled, 17 year-old Edward Popham, John Popham's son, surveyed a 160-acre parcel adjoining his parents' property and filed a homestead claim to it. Edward Popham immediately established residency on his homestead, and began the long-term process of transforming the sagebrush-covered virgin ground of the Popham Ranch into one of the finest, most progressive agricultural units in the Valley. Looking across the fields about one-half mile to the northwest of the Edward Popham Ranch, one can see the location of the John W. Popham homestead today, which is marked only by a 100-year-old elm tree.

Only small areas on Edward Popham's homestead property were sufficiently open that they could be cropped during the first years. Clearing the virgin ground was a gradual, labor intensive process. Bitter root flowers scattered throughout the brush were collected annually by the indigenous Indians during the early years. As cultivatable fields were expanded, Popham built fences and grew a wider diversity of crops. One of the trademarks of the two Popham ranches were their Missouri-style rail fences, commonly called "snake fences." Although material cost for "snake" fencing would be minimal, the fence type was not well suited to the Montana climate, serving as a snow trap and causing high drifting on the adjacent roads. The last of the wooden rail fences was replaced with wire fencing during the 1940's.

John and Edward Popham initiated the construction of an irrigation system for their adjoining parcels of land immediately after settlement. They cut tributaries from the "Surprise Ditch," a main canal built through the cooperative efforts of earlier settlers. The canal construction by Corvallis area settlers, using horses, plows, hand-held slips and scrapers to cut channels to bring water to the arid but fertile Bitter Root Valley floor, began in 1866 with the construction of the "Independent Ditch," which was to be subsumed by the Surprise Ditch in 1871 (thereby taking over the earliest water rights in the valley). Also called the "Corvallis Canal," the Surprise Ditch appropriated 50000 inches of water from the Bitterroot River. Over the years, the ditch was enlarged and refined with a number of tributaries being diverted from it. Also, the diversion from the river was altered a number of times to accommodate industrial use of the river by the Anaconda Company at their sawmill in Hamilton, which operated from 1896 to 1917. The Surprise Ditch originated near what became the town of Hamilton and channelled in a north-easterly direction until it reached a point almost directly south from Corvallis; from that point it was directed from one low place to another flowing as directly north as possible.

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The Surprise Ditch ran about one mile directly west of the highest point on the Popham's land, and it was necessary to begin the diversion canal about two miles south of where the water was needed for irrigation. Using a carpenter's level and a plumb bob, the Pophams surveyed their ditch to have a one-fourth inch drop to the rod. The channel was cut using a team and walking a plow to make a furrow, and then the canal was hand shovelled for the two miles. At one point, the ditch went around a gravel hill where the ground was so porous that it would not hold water. To correct this, Edward Popham carried clay to the ditch, tramped it in with his feet, and kept "puddling" the clay with water until it gradually filled the porous gravel and all seepage was stopped. The Pophams' original ditch survey is still in use, now known as the Upper Ditch or Popham-Bailey Ditch of the Corvallis Canal. Edward Popham served on the Board of Directors of the Corvallis Canal Co. for many years.

During the early 20th century, with the construction of the Hedge and Big Ditches, the valley was settled so rapidly that the water from the ditches was not available for domestic cisterns. For many years, area settlers obtained their domestic water from the well on the Popham Ranch, which Edward Popham had dug to a depth of 30'.

During the first years at the Popham Ranch, a subsistence living was obtained from the cultivation of grain, hay, and garden vegetables. During the fall and winter, the Pophams hauled their wheat to the mill at Grantsdale, about ten miles away, and had 600 to 800 lbs. of flour ground, an adequate year's supply. In addition to agricultural production, the Pophams supplemented their livelihood from fishing trips to Lake Como that yielded sufficient fish to be salted and canned. The family butchered their own meat, preparing salt pork, ham, bacon, canned beef and chicken, which would be supplemented with grouse and wild rabbit.

The Pophams gained reputations as progressive farmers in the Valley. They were often the first to incorporate new mechanical innovations and to experiment with fertilizers and new crop varieties. At first, grain was cut with a scythe and cradle and the bundles were tied by hand. The threshing machines first used were powered by a horse and capstan, tended by a feeder man who cut the tie and spread the grain evenly as it went into the machine. As more land was cleared and put under irrigation, more refined machinery became affordable. Edward Popham owned the first horse-drawn riding mowers, rakes, reapers and manure spreaders in the area. The Pophams gained a greater than subsistence yield from their farm within a few years of settlement, and hauled or drove their surplus production to Missoula, a two-day trip from the ranch. Potatoes as a cash crop were introduced at the Popham Ranch in 1915. Seed peas and cannery crops were raised in addition to the more common grains. Dairying was also an important early adjunct to the farm operation.

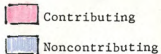
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A major change in the means of production occurred during the 1930's after Edward Popham's son Clarence took over the farm in 1932. Quickly adapting the farm from an essentially horse-powered to engine-powered operation, Clarence also embraced the newly introduced sugar beets as a major cash crop. Immigrant labor was brought in to assist in planting, cultivation and harvesting, and this necessitated the construction of new housing at the farmstead. During this decade, the acreage of the Ranch expanded as the Pophams bought out neighboring parcels in the wake of the general agricultural depression of the 1920's. Within a decade, under the management of Clarence Popham, the Ranch was transformed from a small family farm into a modern, capital intensive agricultural unit, employing wage laborers and sophisticated farming technology.

The members of the Popham family also played important roles in the civic life of the community. John and Edward Popham were instrumental in the establishment of the first Presbyterian Church and the Odd Fellows Hall in Corvallis. In response to the difficulty of obtaining insurance, Edward Popham gathered his neighbors together in 1909 to form the Farmer's Mutual Fire Insurance Co. The members of this insurance group paid a very small annual fee, and were only assessed for replacement costs after a fire. About 50% of the farmers in the area joined this cooperative, which is still in existence on a county-wide basis, one of only a dozen Farm Mutuals still in business in the State. Edward Popham was also a leader in the early effort to consolidate the area school districts in order to improve the quality of education, which was accomplished with the construction of the new, brick, combination grade school and high school building in Corvallis in 1916.

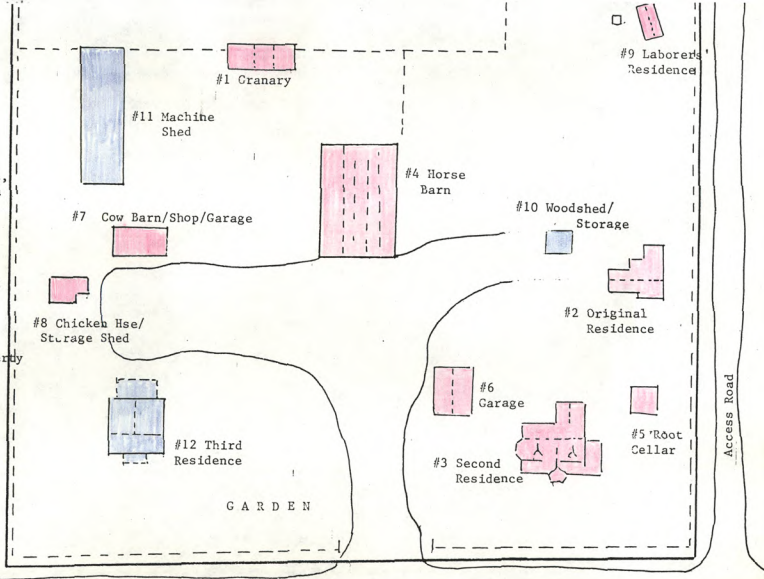
Clarence Popham continued the activist tradition of his grandfather and father, serving on the Soil Conservation Board of Supervisors from 1932 until 1970 and as an officer and active member of the National Beet Growers Federation and the Western Montana Beet Growers Association between 1932 and 1950. An ardent supporter of conservation, Popham was one of the organizers of the Bitter Root Valley Resource Conservation and Development Project in 1965, which was sponsored by the Ravalli County Commissioners and the Soil Conservation District. He served on the Board of the Bitter Root R.C. & D. from 1965 to 1975.

Popham Ranch
460 NE Popham Lane,
Corvallis, Montana
Ravalli County



----- Fencelines

———— Boundary of
nominated property



POPHAM LANE