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NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

FEB 22 1988

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

NATIONAL
REGISTER

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1. Name of Property

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historic name: TA Ranch Historic District

other name/site number: Smithsonian Site Number 48J097

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2. Location

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street & number: PO Box 313 not for publication: N/A

city/town: Buffalo vicinity: X

state: WY county: Johnson code: 019 zip code: 82834

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3. Classification Private

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Ownership of Property: Private
Earl and Barbara K. Madsen
P.O. Box 313, Buffalo, WY 82834

Category of Property: District

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>11</u>	<u>6</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>13</u>	<u>6</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

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4. State/Federal Agency Certification
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As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination _____ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets _____ does not meet the National Register Criteria. _____ See continuation sheet.

John J. Keck _____ 1/25/93
Signature of certifying official Date

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

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5. National Park Service Certification
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I, hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register Antonieta de los 3/26/93
_____ 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 Keeper Date
of Action

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6. Function or Use

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Historic: DOMESTIC Sub: Single Dwelling
DOMESTIC Secondary Structure
DEFENSE Fortification
DEFENSE Battle Site
AGRICULTURE Subsistence

Current: DOMESTIC Sub: Single Dwelling
DOMESTIC Secondary Dwelling
AGRICULTURE Subsistence

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7. Description

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Architectural Classification:

OTHER: Log

Other Description: N/A

Materials: foundation Stone roof Cedar Shake
walls Log other _____

Describe present and historic physical appearance. X See continuation sheet.

8. Statement of Significance

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

Applicable National Register Criteria: A

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) : N/A

Areas of Significance:

AGRICULTURE

Period(s) of Significance: 1882-1942

Significant Dates : 1892

Significant Person(s): N/A

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: UNKNOWN

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.
X See continuation sheet.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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X See continuation sheet.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository: _____

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10. Geographical Data

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Acreege of Property: 40 Acres
USGS Quad Map: TA Ranch Quad

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

A	<u>13</u>	<u>366800</u>	<u>4890310</u>	B	<u>13</u>	<u>365290</u>	<u>4890220</u>
C	<u>13</u>	<u>366985</u>	<u>4890120</u>	D	<u>13</u>	<u>366985</u>	<u>4890320</u>

X See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description: X See continuation sheet.

Boundary Justification: X See continuation sheet.

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11. Form Prepared By

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Name/Title: SHPO Staff

Organization: State Historic Preservation Office Date: November, 1992

Street & Number: Barrett Building Telephone: 307-777-7697

City or Town: Cheyenne State: WY ZIP: 82002

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7 (TA Ranch) Page # 1 *JOHNSON County*

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The TA Ranch is located close to the North Fork of Crazy Woman Creek in an area with rolling hills and grassland. The Big Horn Mountains are located to the west; the lush vegetation indicates the area receives more rainfall than much of Wyoming because of its proximity to the mountains. The water from the creek provided sustenance for the ranch's pasturelands and hayfields. The ranch is intersected by historic laterals and ditches used for the irrigation system. Although the ranch is known for its historical association with the Johnson County War, the buildings themselves and the entire ranch complex contain interesting agricultural structures. The log ranch house has an unusual plan for a 19th century agricultural residence and circular sawn logs for both the interior and exterior walls. The cook house and garage are piece-sur-piece construction. The other buildings at the TA are log, as well as frame with wood siding. The ranch and its buildings exhibit a high degree of integrity. There are 15 buildings and two structures within the TA Ranch complex; 10 buildings are contributing and 2 structures also contribute while 5 buildings are noncontributing. The gigantic cottonwood trees and the vernacular ranch buildings strongly communicate a sense of feeling and association for ranching culture in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Wyoming.

After the 1892 conflict, certain buildings illustrated with bullet holes and portholes their association with the strife that occurred in nineteenth century west. In the three day siege that occurred at the TA Ranch, the ranch house and barn were riddled with bullet holes, and the gunmen constructed rifle holes or portholes in the buildings through which they could return fire. These historic ranch buildings with bullet and rifle holes survive today and are the subject of a restoration project.

1. BARN Contributing-1882

One of the most prominent buildings within the ranch is the log and frame nineteenth century barn that was a focal point in the 1892 Johnson County war. Visually the 1 1/2 story barn is a mixture of vertical planks, board and batten, and log construction with corrals surrounding the building on 2 sides. The barn is rectangularly shaped with additions on the north, east, and west sides. The north and west additions were built to accommodate the ranch's Percheron horses in 1904. The roof is a

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Section 7

(TA Ranch) Page #2

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medium pitched gable and shed roofs cover the additions. The roof over the original barn is metal while the additions are covered with asphalt shingles and rolled roofing. Currently the barn measures 75' x 60' but originally the barn was 60' X 40' and consisted of horizontal log construction; the log construction is visible on the south side and from the interior. The later additions were made of vertical planks, some in a board and batten fashion.

On the ground level, the barn has nine stalls on either side of an aisle with a central 10' corridor; sliding doors on north and south sides provide access to the interior. The main entrance is on the south end through sliding doors and there is a 10' x 10' tack room on the west side directly opposite the grain room. The stairs to the loft are in the tack room. The doors and door frames to both rooms have been inscribed by previous hands, some dated. Other interesting trivia has been written on both doors such as prices, harvests, etc. The original floorboards, large pine planks, are still in the barn.

Portholes were carved in each end of the original North and South upper wall for rifle sites during the battle in 1892. They are all still there except for one which was removed and placed in the Jim Gatchell Museum in Buffalo. A facsimile was put in its place.

2. RANCH HOUSE

Contributing-1882

The ranch house is a distinctive rectangular, one story, horizontal log structure placed on a stone foundation. At some point in the past, the exterior was stuccoed but the current owners have removed the stucco to expose the horizontal logs. Architecturally, the use of circular sawn logs, sawn on all four sides of each log, in any type of vernacular or folk architecture within the state is unusual. The logs measure 10" X 12" and circular saw marks are easily visible. (Usually nineteenth century log buildings in Wyoming are hewn not sawn.) The interior partitions as well as the exterior logs consist of these circular sawn logs. At each corner the horizontal logs are nailed into vertical corner logs. The ranch house is unlike any other within the complex.

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Section number 7

(TA Ranch) Page #3 *JUAN SCAI to map*

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The plan is rectangular but each major room has an exterior door on the south side; this configuration with five exterior doors is unusual. The roof is a medium pitched gable and is covered with cedar shakes. One of the three original chimneys remains today with footings for the other chimneys still visible in the attic. The windows, twelve, are double hung and are two lites over two lites and measure 3' X 6'. Although the house is not large, there are eight exterior doors with five doors on the south side, one on the east, and two on the north.

The internal arrangement of the house is unusual with no internal hallway except between the pantry and the bath. Each of the major rooms has ready access to the exterior on the south side with an exterior door found in each room. The interior has 9' ceilings and plaster walls. Narrow oak flooring is found in the west half of the building. The two east rooms have pine plank flooring. In approximately 1910, a partial basement was excavated and a large boiler installed which burned coal and provided steam heat throughout the building. There are no closets, but there is a large 15' floor to ceiling cabinet in the main living room made of tongue and groove fir. The walls of this room, and the western bedroom, have wainscoting of the same material, all painted white.

During the battle, this building was barricaded and took heavy gunfire.

3. ROOT CELLAR-Structure Contributing-1882
The root cellar measures 25' x 35' root cellar and was built in 1882. The cellar's entrance is on the east side through a timber framed door. The walls are constructed flat river stone. The roof is supported by 10" beams which rest on 10" supporting columns found at both ends of the cellar and in the middle, some of the log support columns are of hewn logs. The floor of the cellar is 5'6" below the ground. The floor is dirt.

4. COOK HOUSE Contributing-circa 1904

The one story cook house was built in 1904 and the front portion of the building is an example of piece-sur-piece log construction. The building is L shaped and the original foundation was stone but now consists of concrete block. The

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Section 7 (TA Ranch) Page #4 *Johnson Canyon*
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building was constructed during two different periods; the logs on the western part of the L are round while the logs on the eastern part are sawn. The total dimensions of the western part of the structure are 35' x 25'; the eastern portion of the L extends the building another 25' and measures 25'. A side gable roof covers the western portion of the cook house while a hipped roof, intersects the main gable. The roof is cedar shake and has just been resingled. Wood shingles fill in the gable ends above the logs on the western section. There are ten new double hung windows, two over two, that measure 3' x 6', and four exterior doors. The fourth door was added recently and resembles a patio door but in actuality is a single glass door with a stationary panel beside the movable door.

The ceilings are all 9' high. The interior walls of the western half are log and the eastern section are 2 x 4 construction. The large dining room in the western part has fir flooring and a built-in mission style cabinet with hutch. There are also two bedrooms in this half. The eastern addition contains a large kitchen that extends the full width of the house, and a bedroom and bath behind it. A partial cement block basement was dug inside under the addition. This building was recently rehabilitated.

5. MILK BARN Contributing-circa 1915

The rectangular milk barn measures 20' x 30' and consists of horizontal round logs and vertical plank hinged doors. The corners are joined by nailing the horizontal logs into round vertical corner logs at the corner. The foundation is native stone. The building is one story and has a gabled roof covered with corrugated metal. For interior light there are 2' x 2' windows in the eastern and western gables. There is also a 2' x 2' window in the north wall. There are two 3' doors in the eastern end and an 8' door in the western end. The floor is rough pine lumber and there are stalls for eight cows. There is also a grain bin and feed troughs for each stall. The floor is partially gone, but otherwise the building has retained its integrity.

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Section 7 (TA Ranch) Page #5 *JOHNSON Co WY*

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6. MEAT HOUSE Contributing-circa 1915

The 16' x 16' square meat house was built in 1915. The building was used as a meat hanging facility and place to cut the meat. The structure is one story and has a gable roof supported by log purlins. Horizontal round logs were nailed into round corner posts and side posts at regular intervals. The sill logs rest on the ground. A single door in the middle of the south wall consists of planks. Currently there is a 3' x 3' hole in the center of the roof which was presumably for a chimney.

7. HOG HOUSE Contributing-circa 1915

The hog house was built in 1915 and its dimensions are 20' x 34'. The building is constructed of horizontal round logs nailed into round vertical corner logs. The roof is gabled and is covered with corrugated metal. The east half of the building is dedicated to hog pens with four small doors leading to the outside. The entrance, a vertical frame door, to the building is in the middle of the south wall. Above the door is located a stationary window with four lites. A stone fireplace still exists in the northwest corner with an outside chimney where the hair was singed from hog carcasses. A large rough pine table is still there where the hide was cleaned and the cutting done. The floor is dirt. There are two supporting log columns are placed for support in the middle of the room.

8. CATTLE SHED Contributing-circa 1915

The open-faced cattle shed was built in 1915. The one story structure is a modified L shape with a shed roof. There are twenty-three support posts, each 15' apart, carrying the corrugated metal roof. The depth of the shed is 15'. The back of the shed is board and batten construction. The floor is dirt. At the connecting portion of the L, there is a pump house which was built in the 1950's and houses the pump controls for the four corral stockwater wells.

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9. GRANARY

Noncontributing-circa 1920

In 1920, the granary was built on a hill overlooking the ranch. The foundation is poured concrete and the building was located on a slope to take advantage of a bank, similar to a bank barn. The rectangularly-shaped building measures 20' x 40' and the exterior is covered with 4 X 8 sheets of siding of modern manufacture. The granary has been resided at least once in the past. The gabled roof is covered with cedar shakes. Windows in the gable ends provide light for the interior. The basement has two rooms and each basement room has a door and 2' x 2' window. The floor is poured concrete. The upper floor has four grain storage sections with solid pine (2" x 8") walls dividing them. two rooms and each basement room has a door and 2' x 2' window. The floor is poured concrete. The upper floor has four grain storage sections with solid pine (2" x 8") walls dividing them. The walls are 9' high and there are no ceilings. Tin chutes empty the grain from the first floor to the outside from each section; these chutes are visible on the outside. The tin chutes emptied the grain into trucks which could drive up beside the building on the lower level.

10. GARAGE

Contributing-circa 1920

A small garage was built in 1920. It's dimensions are 12' x 18'. The exterior has round logs and is piece-sur-piece. At some point, the structure was stuccoed but most of the stucco has fallen off. The building has a gabled roof covered with corrugated metal. There is a 10' opening with double wooden doors on the south side. There is also a small 2' x 2' window in the south gable. The building sits over an irrigation canal and a culvert has been covered with dirt to form the floor.

11. HEN HOUSE

Contributing-1940

The henhouse was constructed in 1940 and measures 45'x 20'. It has a poured concrete foundation. The exterior is covered with frame novelty siding. The roof is gabled and covered with rolled asphalt roofing. The walls are 7'6" high. There are two

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Terrace on west
(TA Ranch) Page # 7

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exterior doors and one connecting door between the interior rooms. There are two 3' x 4' windows on the south wall next to the doors. The interior ceiling consists of pine planks with bales of hay providing insulation. The west half of the building was used for egg laying, and some of the laying boxes are still attached to the wall 3' off the ground. The east half of the building was used for breeding and has a dirt floor.

12. BUNK HOUSE

Non-Contributing-1949

The bunk house was constructed in 1949 and replaced the icehouse/shop building which existed at the time of the battle. The building measures 35' x 25' and the exterior walls are sawn square logs resting on a poured concrete foundation. The gable roof is covered with asphalt shingles. There is a concrete stoop on the south side with the one exterior door situated in the middle of the building. There are nine windows openings measuring 2'4" x 4' 6". The interior is 2 x 4 frame construction with one living room, one kitchen, one bath and two bedrooms. The flooring is fir, and the whole building has been modernized with new wiring, plumbing, electrical and drywall.

13. PUMP HOUSE

Non-Contributing-1949

A new well was dug in 1949 and a 8' X 8' pump house was built to protect the pump and pressure tank. The building was built with plywood and is covered with red metallic tarpaper. It has a gable roof and one door.

14. MACHINE SHED

Non-Contributing-1955

A machine shed was built in 1955 of board and batten material. It measures 42' x 20' with three bays evenly spaced and divided by log poles. The shed roof is covered with corrugated metal. The floor is dirt. The building rests on a poured concrete foundation.

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15. SHOP

Non-Contributing-1962

A 36' x 20' shop was constructed in 1962. There is a poured concrete foundation and floor. The walls are 15' high to accommodate machinery. The siding is novelty wood siding. The roof is gabled and has cedar shakes. The only door is located on the south side and consists of two sliding plywood doors. There are two 2' x 3' windows on the east wall.

16. CALVING SHED

Non-Contributing-1963

In 1963, the last building on the ranch was constructed. It is used for calving. The 80' x 30' shed is constructed of board and batten material. It is open-faced with 4 bays divided by logs. The shed roof is covered with metal and the floor is dirt. A corral and chute, watering trough, and small night calving building are all part of this arrangement.

17. BUNKERS (Breastworks-3)

Contributing-1892

An important remnant of the 1892 conflict are bunkers or breastworks which served to protect during the conflict. The gunmen occupied not only the barn and ranch house but they also constructed a "fort" over trenches 4' x 3' x 15' on an elevated bench west of the barn. This fort commanded a view of access routes south, west and north of the site. The homesteaders, ranchers, and local townspeople then surrounded the gunmen and built a series of breastworks around the perimeter of the ranch buildings from which they fired at the opponents from their fortified positions. In 1892 there were at least ten breastworks and at least three of them survive today.

18. & 19. OUTHOUSES

Contributing-circa 1935

These one "holer" outhouses, located behind the barn and the calving shed, are rather typical outhouses with concrete foundations, vertical plank doors, novelty siding and shed roofs with wood shingles. Both are used in the traditional manner.

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The TA Ranch is significant under Criterion A as the site of the famous Johnson County War of 1892. The ranch is also significant for its contribution to the development of cattle ranching in Johnson County. The TA Ranch was established in 1882 and is one of the first ranches in Johnson County. The TA Ranch is the only remaining Johnson County War battle site which retains its associated buildings and structures. The marks of the battle are still evident in the barn and the ranch house; battle trenches still exist where both the defenders of Buffalo and the "invaders" entrenched themselves against the shower of bullets. Following the 1892 battle the ranch expanded; many buildings were added to support the large amount of manpower and livestock necessary to the pre-mechanization way of life. It retains its physical integrity and reflects the continuous development of ranching in Johnson County from 1882 to the present; the period of historic significance is 1882-1942.

Wyoming's cattle-raising frontier developed as thousands of cattle were driven over the Oregon-California-Utah Emigrant Trails in the 1840s and 1850s. Jim Bridger, post trader, exchanged cattle and provisions for the worn-out stock of emigrants and freighters who passed through Fort Bridger. He would then winter the cattle on the range to sell the next spring to the emigrants.

Although there were pioneering efforts in western Wyoming, the focus of the developing cattle industry was in southeastern Wyoming. Seth Ward first wintered several hundred work cattle in the Chugwater Valley in 1853 and Alexander Majors wintered 300 head in 1854 that grew to thousands over the next 10 years. In 1862 the Homestead Act enabled ranchers to obtain 160 acres of free land; additional acreage could be acquired under the Timber Culture Act of 1873 (160 acres), Preemption Act of 1841 (160 acres at \$1.25 per acre) and the Desert Land Act of 1877 (640 acres at \$1.25 per acre).

Cattle drives from Texas across Wyoming began in 1866; the southern markets for Texas cattle had dwindled during the Civil War. The arrival of the Union Pacific Railroad in Wyoming territory during 1867-68 promoted a cattle boom; Texas cattle were driven north, fattened on Wyoming grass, and shipped by railroad to the eastern markets. The nutritious prairie grasses permitted year-round grazing on the unfenced prairie and as a result ranches were organized.

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(TA Ranch) Page # 2

Johnson Co WY

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During the 1870s, many of the ranching operations located near the Union Pacific tracks. Most ranches were actually composed of large portions of public domain used for open range grazing. This "open range" system promoted the siting of pioneer cattle ranches near available water sources, where the rancher would construct his headquarters after the sale of one or two herds. To identify cattle after a winter of drifting with the storms, the cattle were gathered in a particular geographical region for spring roundup. The cattle would then be sorted and the new calves branded.

In the 1870s and 1880s foreign capital was invested in the Wyoming cattle industry and syndicate ranches began. British and Scottish interests invested \$45,000,000 in the American cattle business, much of it in the Wyoming territory. The Oregon Trail was used to drive cattle from Oregon through Wyoming to the east. The Wyoming Stock Growers' Association (WSGA) was formed in 1879, growing out of the Laramie County Stock Growers Association. It was able to exercise a strong influence in the Territorial government during the 1880s. The first cattle roundup conducted under the regulations of the Stock Growers' Association was in 1884.

Ranching in Johnson County was also developing at this time. Located in the northeast quadrant of Wyoming with the Big Horn mountains providing the northwest boundary and the Powder River running along the eastern boundary, Johnson County's semi-arid high plains grassland features an abundance of creeks, streams, and small lakes unmatched by most other areas of this arid state. Johnson County includes only a few towns and a handful of smaller communities; generally containing a post office, general store, bar, and gas station. Many of these are related to the arrival of the railroad and to coal mining activities which became important at the turn of the century. However, the county's main industry in the late 19th and early twentieth century was ranching. While Johnson County featured sizeable corporate ranch holdings, it also attracted small owner-operator ranchmen because of the abundance of water.

It was during this time period that Tom Alsop, Laramie cattleman, sold his cattle and brand to Dr. William Harris, Laramie. Harris moved Alsop's herd and brand to Johnson County in 1882 and established the TA Ranch. Four buildings were immediately built: a barn, ranch house, icehouse, and chicken coop. Harris filed for water rights, which were adjudicated in 1889, giving him fourth priority on the North Fork of Crazy Woman Creek. He continued to practice medicine in Laramie and employed Charles Ford as his ranch manager. As an absentee landowner, Harris did side on political issues with the other large land barons, many of whom were also absentee owners. It was because of his political stance that the TA Ranch became a logical destination for the "invaders" when they needed sanctuary during the Johnson County War.

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There were a long series of events which led up to the Johnson County War. Competition and an increase in cattle diseases led to the erection of barbed wire fences in Wyoming. The continually growing cattle herds rapidly overstocked the range in terms of grasses and available water, cattle prices began to drop in 1885, and the "Big Die-Up" winter of 1886-87 caused terrible losses for many cattlemen. The open range system was gradually giving way, and the large cattle companies that had been formed in the 1880s were financially hard-pressed, opening the way for smaller ranches and a challenge to the power of the cattle barons. The small ranchers acquired political power in northern Wyoming, while the cattle barons based in Cheyenne reigned supreme over the central and southern part of Wyoming. The Johnson County War of 1892 was a result of the conflict between the large ranchers and the small operators.

In Wyoming, the Stock Growers Association was a power unto themselves, using wealth and politics to control the range and the cattle herds. The Maverick Law enacted in 1884 was a protection for them, claiming ownership of all strays for the WSGA and the territory. The cattle barons believed that small ranchers were collecting the strays and branding them with their own brand. The WSGA members had strong feelings against the thievery of cattle. In 1888 the Territorial legislature repealed the Maverick Law and placed supervision of the roundups under a Board of Livestock Commissioners. Yet, because the big cattlemen controlled the Board, and since the legislature had failed to appropriate money for roundup expenses, the WSGA continued to dominate the operations of the state-wide roundup. Continuing criticism from small ranchers resulted in the Wyoming state legislature passing an act creating a Board of Livestock Commissioners in January, 1891.

However, this power did not stop the cattle rustling. Therefore in 1892 the Wyoming Stock Growers Association decided to spy on the "nesters" to find evidence of stock thievery. The cattlemen subsequently compiled a list of cattle thieves, their names, and places of abode. With this information the WSGA decided to put an end, once and for all, to rustling in the Powder River Region and Johnson County. The cattlemen began soliciting funds for a war chest. Each member was assessed \$1,000 until a total of \$100,000 was raised. With the first money collected,, the cattlemen hired a former Texas Peace Officer, Tom Smith, to ride down to Texas and round up an army of adventurers, sometimes referred to as "killers", who would be willing for a price to wage battle with the cattle thieves of the Powder River Basin and Johnson County. Smith was able to obtain approximately 20-30 men; and at the same time the cattlemen in Wyoming were recruiting men from among themselves to go with the Texans on the invasion. Twenty-two cattlemen were selected and W.C. Irvine, a large rancher in Converse County, a member of the Legislature, and a powerful figure in the Democratic party, headed the group.

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Section number 8

Johnson County
(TA Ranch) Page # 4

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 All parties agreed that the expedition should start from Cheyenne on Tuesday, April 5, 1892. All cattlemen met at 5:00 PM at the stock yards west of Cheyenne; the Union Pacific knew of the plans and arranged to bring the Texans from Denver to Cheyenne on a special car, together with their equipment. Additional cars were waiting at the stockyards in Cheyenne, already loaded in preparation for the journey to Casper. The train arrived in Casper about 4:00 in the morning where they unloaded the horses and proceeded north to Buffalo, about one hundred miles across the brown Wyoming hills. Before reaching Powder River, some fifty miles south of Buffalo, word was brought to the cattlemen that there were rustlers at the K.C. Ranch. This ranch was on the Powder River, at the foothills of the Big Horn mountains, an area notorious for the number of rustlers it sheltered. The cattlemen, historically called the "invaders", surrounded the cabin on the ranch where there were two well known rustlers, Nate Champion and Nick Ray, and two trappers spending the night. As the trappers stepped out of the cabin, they were quietly captured. When Nick Ray stepped out the door, he was fired upon and mortally wounded. Nate Champion then rushed from the house, and carried Nick into the cabin amid a hail of bullets. The "invaders" kept up a constant fire on the cabin all day long. The "invaders" then rolled a wagon loaded with blazing pitch, pine wood and hay, to the side of the cabin. The building was soon in flames, and as Champion ran out the door to escape, he was killed. This remarkable siege lasted all day and ended with the deaths of both Champion and Ray.

The "invaders" continued their march toward Buffalo during the night. However, two men, who had come past Champion's cabin during the siege, spread the news about the invasion throughout the county. The Johnson County sheriff gathered a large party of cowboys and settlers to head off the "invaders". Therefore the "invaders" changed their minds and headed towards the TA ranch, twelve miles south of Buffalo. They arrived about noon. Here the "invaders" turned in and fortified the place. The house, stable and ice house all being built of stout logs, formed natural forts. Breastworks of logs were built on either side of the house, loopholes were cut in all the buildings, and earthworks were thrown up. The place was practically impregnable against a rifle attack.

They were soon surrounded by angry residents of Johnson County who had heard of the killing of Champion and Ray. Cowboys, settlers, and citizens of Buffalo flocked to the scene; dust-covered men kept arriving, some of them having ridden two hundred miles, all eager to fight the cattlemen and their hired killers from Texas. Nearly four hundred men surrounded the ranch, some of them known rustlers, but most were settlers who considered it their duty to repel an

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Johnson Co. 2006
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unlawful and unwarranted invasion. The ranch buildings lay in a hollow, the top of the surrounding hills being four hundred yards away. The settlers dug rifle pits on the ridge and killed all of the "invaders"' horses in the corral. For two days the siege kept up; word of the "invaders"' plight was sent to Cheyenne from Buffalo. Acting Governor Amos W. Barber telegraphed President Benjamin Harrison urging that soldiers be sent from Fort McKinney to rescue the cattlemen.

The settlers had recognized from the beginning that the defensive position of the "invaders" was impregnable, and had come up with the idea of a moveable breastwork. Using the captured supply wagon, the "go-devil" was built. Sturdy, moving protection for 40 men, the portable fort was beginning to move toward the "invaders" when three troops of cavalry arrived the third day. The "invaders" were taken as prisoners to Fort McKinney, and then transferred to Fort D.A. Russell in Cheyenne. Their cases were eventually dropped for Johnson County was unable to pay the court costs.

The era after the Johnson County War, from 1892 until 1920, became a new age for ranching as smaller herds were kept in fenced pastures, and ranchers grew alfalfa and hay for winter food. It was at this time that sheep raising became a major factor, and the cattlemen battled with the sheepmen over grazing areas. In 1905 the United States Forest Service was created and the resultant control of summer grazing land in national forests contributed to the lessening of the conflict. As the wool growers continued to marshall their power, the cattlemen backed down. The harsh 1912 winter wiped out a lot of cattlemen and sheepmen, and the great emigration of homesteaders and their inevitable fencing of land from 1917-24 ended any concept of open range.

Although the outbreak of World War I brought exceptional prosperity to Wyoming cattlemen, economic depression struck in 1919-23 and urban dwellers reduced meat consumption. Larger cattle ranches broke up and family ranches began to replace the larger outfits. Maintenance feeding became an economic necessity. The Great Depression hit in 1929, and by 1932 ranchers were experiencing the worst depression of their history. The Federal Surplus Relief Corporation purchased cattle and sheep from failing ranches, and slaughtered many on the range. As cattle prices dropped, the weather worsened with water sources drying up, dust covering everything, and feed crops almost non-existent. In 1934 the Taylor Grazing Act withdrew from entry practically all unappropriated and unreserved public domain, and turned it into grazing land to be leased.

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The rains of 1938 helped restore the range; but true prosperity came at the outbreak of World War II when cattlemen intensified their production and relied more and more on ranch and pasture farming. After the war, cattlemen paid off their debts and land and cattle prices rose rapidly. The ranchers bought out dry farming homesteaders and the land that counties had obtained from unpaid taxes. Thus the family size ranch came to dominate agriculture.

The 1950s saw cattle prices jump as a result of the Korean War. Mixed farming and ranching dominated the industry, and irrigation played a more prominent role in the cattle industry after the drought of 1953-55. From the 1960s to the 1980s prosperity continued, with Wyoming ranking ninth in U.S. cattle production.

Johnson County and the TA Ranch followed these "boom and bust" trends of Wyoming's ranching industry. The TA Ranch continued to play its pioneering role in the development of Johnson County's ranching industry into the twentieth century. Dr. Harris owned the ranch until 1904, when he traded with J.P. Gammon for a property east of Johnson County. Gammon trailed several hundred head of Percheron horses from his ranch north of Gillette to the TA. Percherons were used to pull the machinery, and this continued until after World War II when motorized machinery became more widely used.

In the 1920s a herd of herefords was started. By the end of World War II, the herd had grown to approximately 350 head. During Gammon's period of ownership, he built facilities for milking, butchering hogs, cutting and curing meat, and cooking and feeding the sizeable crew required to run a large ranch in this era. The TA Ranch has continued to fulfill its historic function as a cattle ranch through the ownership of three different parties since the Gammons: the Long brothers (1979 - 1986); Henry Bauer, Jr. (1988 - 1990); and the present owners, the Madsens. The district's high degree of physical integrity provides an accurate portrayal of the development of Johnson County's ranching complexes, and typifies the survival of the original pioneer ranches through all of the "boom and bust" periods of the ranching industry from the 1880s until the present.

The TA Ranch, which played such a key role as the location of the epochal battle--the Johnson County War, also deserves special recognition as a historic place. This battle site has entered the public domain as the source and inspiration for the novel Shane by Jack Schaefer, and the movie starring Alan Ladd and Van Heflin (filmed, however, in Jackson Hole, Wyoming).

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UTM References: Zone Easting Northing
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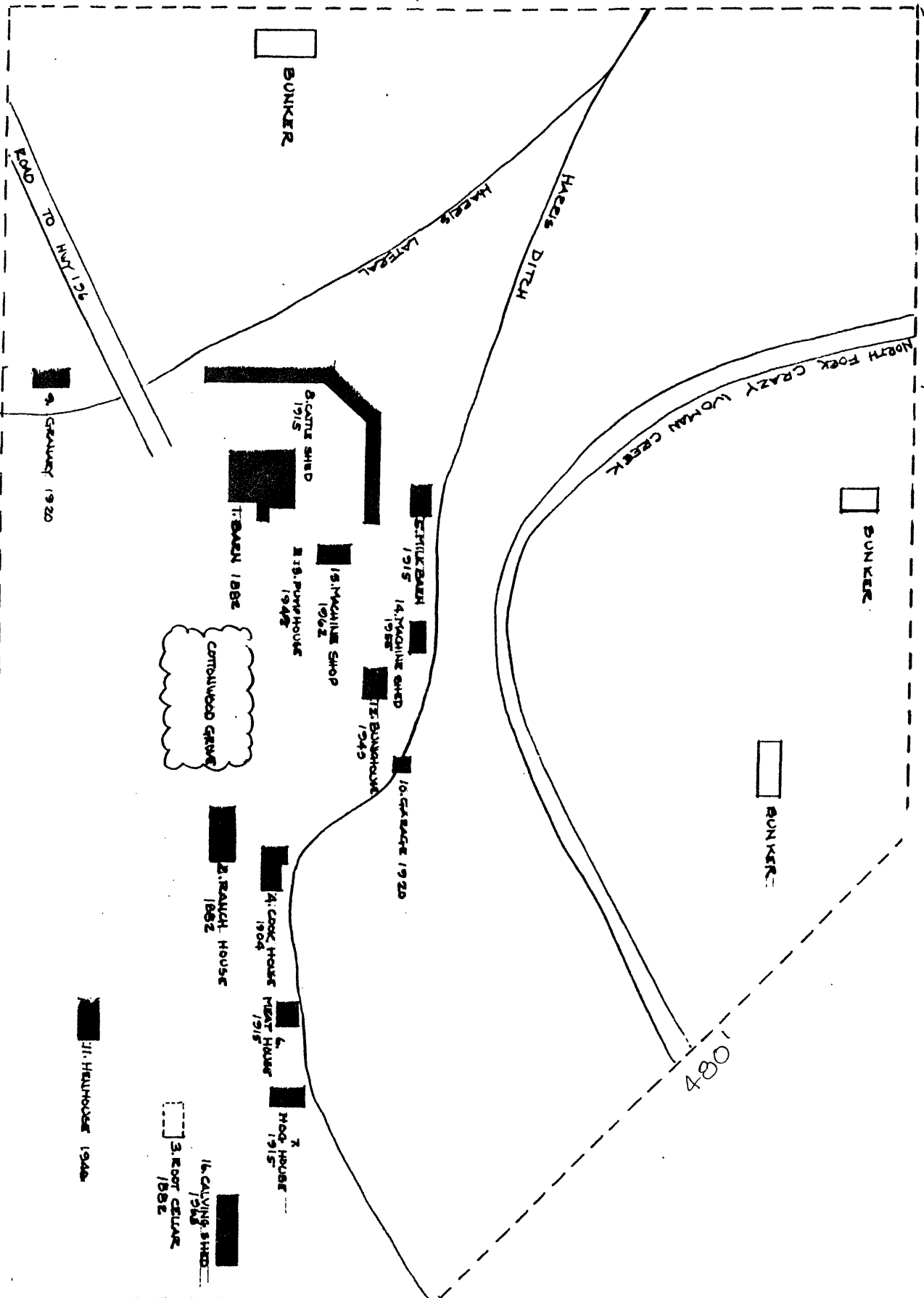
Verbal Boundary Description:

(See Attachment A) Beginning at Point A, the boundary proceeds approximately 290 yards diagonally southeast to Point B on the Harris Ditch. It then proceeds 109 yards south to Point C and thence west 550 yards to Point D. From point D, (an arbitrary point located approximately 30 feet due south and approximately 150 yards due west of the south west corner of the granery), the boundary proceeds 400 yards due north to Point E; then proceeds approximately 350 yards due east to Point A.

Boundary Justification:

This is an arbitrary boundary drawn to encompass all of the contributing and non-contributing buildings and structures of the TA Ranch complex and the battle site, including the bunkers.

650



TA RANGH

Scale 1" = 60' 0"



JAN 1900