

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

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**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received **AUG 15 1986**  
date entered **SEP 11 1986**

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

**1. Name**

historic Ten Sleep Mercantile  
and/or common Ten Sleep Hardware Smithsonian Number: 48WA817

**2. Location**

street & number Second and Pine Streets not for publication  
city, town Ten Sleep vicinity of T47N R88W 5/6  
state Wyoming code 056 county Washakie code 043

**3. Classification**

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

**4. Owner of Property**

name Michael and Diane Goedde  
street & number Ten Sleep Hardware  
city, town Ten Sleep vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ state Wyoming

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Washakie County Courthouse, County Clerk's Office  
street & number Box 260  
city, town Worland state Wyoming

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title not represented has this property been determined eligible? yes  no  
date n/a n/a federal n/a state n/a county n/a local  
depository for survey records n/a  
city, town n/a state n/a

## 7. Description

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

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

"A short row of false-front frame and brick buildings serves neighboring cattlemen and sheepmen and preserves much of the mood and vigor of the frontier. On the lone business street teams and solitary horsemen still dispute the right-of-way with sleek cars and pickup trucks" (WPA Writer's Project, 1981:364). This description of Ten Sleep has not changed significantly in the 45 years since it was written. Prominent, and best preserved of the material culture elements along Ten Sleep's main street is the Ten Sleep Hardware Store. Previously known as the Ten Sleep Mercantile, this two story commercial structure embodies the vernacular architecture of the frontier era and has acted as a community focal point since the turn of the century. The Ten Sleep Mercantile is located within the main downtown business district in Ten Sleep, Washakie County, Wyoming. The building sits on the northeastern corner of the Second and Pine Street intersection within block 9 in the Ten Sleep townsite plat map. The Ten Sleep Mercantile is representative of the detached retail store featuring tall, narrow and deep interior shop space that can be found throughout rural American towns and is a style of architecture particularly associated with frontier communities (Rifkind, 1980:195). As a significant component of community life, such structures generally served dispersed rural populations. In many instances communities derived what little identity they had from stores that served not only as the community supplier but social center. The Ten Sleep Mercantile, serving the community from its inception in 1905, is a representative example of the genre of mercantile.

The building is a vernacular free standing commercial building of two stories featuring sheathing and balloon wood frame construction. A light coating of stucco overlies the wood cladding. This two story, rectangular shaped building has a concrete foundation for the unimproved basement and a plain wooden watertable. A stepped recessed double door entrance-way with side lights provides access into the building. On both sides of the entrance there are fixed display windows and an ornamented kick-plate of recessed rectangles. A clerestory transom lies above the fixed display windows. Covering all the lower story facade elements is a corrugated metal, shed roof overhang. The upper story of the facade features a band of three double hung sash windows. A bracketed cornice with frieze tops the facade. The side elevations are distinctive in having a stepped gable reaching from the building's rear that intersect with the height of the facade cornice. The east elevation features a hooded stairway leading up to the second story. A band of three

(SEE ADDENDUM)



# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See Addendum

# 10. Geographical Data

Acree of nominated property Less than one acre

Quadrangle name Ten Sleep, Wyoming

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A 

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

B 

Zone			Easting						Northing											

C 

Zone			Easting						Northing											

D 

Zone			Easting						Northing											

E 

Zone			Easting						Northing											

F 

Zone			Easting						Northing											

G 

Zone			Easting						Northing											

H 

Zone			Easting						Northing											

Verbal boundary description and justification

See Addendum

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

state n/a code n/a county n/a code n/a

state n/a code n/a county n/a code n/a

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Hugh Roe Davidson

organization n/a

date September 10, 1985

street & number 2240 Nelson #95

telephone (307) 755-5009

city or town Laramie

state Wyoming

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

*Robert W. Bush*

title

SHPO

date

8/11/86

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

Keeper of the National Register

date

9-11-86

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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double hung sash windows are found on the second story west side elevation with a band of two double hung sash windows featured on the east elevation. A single ground level door appears on the rear portion of the east elevation. The rear (north) elevation features two double hung sash windows, one incorporating an evaporative cooler and a single doorway. A chimney is found on the middle west side of the flat, asphalted, roof.

The interior of the building is in good condition. Overlying the unfinished basement (used for storage) is the wooden floor for the main store interior. The plastered walls are underlain with lathe that binds the plaster finish to the wall. Across the east, west and rear walls of the store simple wood shelving is found in front of the walls. Underneath the shelves of the east wall are floor level storage bins. The wall elevations are topped by an egg and dart ornamented pressed tin cornice. Above the cornice lies the vine ornamented stamped metal ceiling. Three cornice topped square columns support the roof through the interior midsection. A two flight, single landing stairway leads from the building interior up to the second story. The upper story has been remodeled in modern times to accommodate the live-in owners of the property. Originally divided into two large rooms, the upper story now contains bath and laundry rooms (the newest additions), kitchen, living and dining areas (partitioned by a wall), and a master bedroom. A lowered ceiling of modern construction has been placed below the original stamped metal ceiling. The alterations of the interior of the building's second story have not harmed the structure's fabric and are a compatible adaptive use of the rooms. The lower story continues to function as a general mercantile as it always has. The present inhabitant-owners still fulfill an important function in the community as both merchandizers and purveyors of local information. The mercantile is still a community focal point as was evidenced by the gatherings observed immediately adjacent the store while this evaluation took place.

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Ten Sleep can be viewed as a portion of the general Nowood River drainage basin. As local resident and avocational historian Ted Frison has been quoted as saying, "it is..unfair to call this [ie., the immediate Ten Sleep vicinity] the Ten Sleep Country because it comprises a number of valleys over a distance of more than sixty miles from north to south.. [with] the north and south oriented roads connecting the Ten Sleep area to other locales." Within the Ten Sleep region ranchsteads dating to the early to middle 1880s were the first stable settlements. These ranches were formed on roads established along the Nowood drainage. In 1882 a single rancher's cabin stood in Ten Sleep, but as stockgrowers increased their range of settlement throughout the Basin through the 1890s Ten Sleep became an important regional service center (WPA Writers program, 1981:364-365).

Before 1879 the mountains surrounding the Bighorn Basin provided a strong barrier to the expanding stockraising industry that was so prominent throughout Wyoming. As good grasslands became more scarce and the market demand for beef became high, the Bighorn Basin stockraising industry exploded between 1879-1894 (Lindsey, 1930:38). Western Bighorn Basin stockraising developed first, but by 1880 Henry T. Lovell, a Kansas native, was grazing cattle on the east side of the Basin near the confluence of the Nowood and Bighorn Rivers (ibid., p.101; Wadsen, 1973:108). W. P. Noble became the first to run cattle in the Ten Sleep area when he drove a sizable herd into the region--an action that eventually led to the formation of the Bay State Cattle Company in 1886 when Noble sold out (ibid., p. 103; Wadsen, 1973: 111). Between 1880-3 numerous eastern and foreign investors began companies within the region, an example of which was the Bighorn Cattle Company, funded by English capital, within the Ten Sleep area. These beginnings marked the start of the open range stockraising pattern in the Bighorn Basin which was dominant until the disasterous blizzards of 1886-7 brought unprecedented losses (Kahin and Rufe, 1983:6). "This awful calamity, coupled with the arrival of the homesteader, was the beginning of the end of the cattle monarch.." (a Basin resident as quoted in Lindsey, 1930:133).

The combination of harsh weather, predators, rustlers, depressed market conditions and influx of "granger" farmers and sheepmen changed the completion of Bighorn Basin land use through the 1890s. In the Nowood River region little in the way of substantial agriculture was evidenced except the growing of hay to supplement range feed. Rancher Frank Ainsworth of Big Trails typified the new pattern of stockraising in the region when he put up native hay during the fall of 1886 before the disasterous storms of winter, and thereby saved a substantial portion of his stock. Between 1886-1893 the influx of settlers along the major Bighorn Basin water courses restricted open range by fencing. Commonly these

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settlers mixed cattle raising with agriculture and began a trend towards the establishment of small owner-operator homesteads integrating ranching and farming, like the homestead of Frank Ainsworth. Contemporaneous with this development was the expansion of sheepraising. When W.P. Noble established his spread along the Nowood in the early 1880s he had 9000 sheep as opposed to 8000 cattle (Wadsen, 1973:133). The boom in sheep raising was in part precipitated by the splendid range conditions in the Basin. The sage of the region provided ample feed for the sheep throughout the winter and the market demand was sufficiently profitable to keep sheep raising a viable economic alternative to cattle. By the turn of the century many cattlemen, faced with declining profits from cattle raising, switched to sheep. Former cattleman Joe Emge and some associates placed 5000 head of sheep on Spring Creek in April 1909. Although there had been conflict arising out of the cattlemen's concern that sheep ruined the range for cattle, there had not been such a marked intrusion into the cattle range in the Ten Sleep area until this precipitous action by Emge. Angered by what was considered to be an outright challenge to a mutually understood agreement and perhaps fueled by long standing animosity between Emge and a local cattlemen, the sheep camp protecting the herd was attacked on the night of April 2. Emge, a partner named Joe Allemand, and a young French herder were killed. This attack highlighted the longstanding conflict between the cattlemen and sheepmen in the Ten Sleep region. The conviction of five participants in the raid quelled the emerging conflict by bringing public opinion on the side of law and order rather than one of the two distinct camps (Lindsey, 1930:233-4; Wadsen, 1973: 142-146).

Community development within the Ten Sleep area awaited the stable development of the regional economy. As cattle ranches and sheep holdings in the area increased, the demand of the local populus for goods and services increased. By 1902 the village of Ten Sleep had begun to appear. A local school originally located on the nearby Bar X Ranch was moved to the townsite. A local community church and small general store were founded soon afterwards. In 1905 a local businessman, H.T. Church, added solidity to the emerging community by the construction of the Ten Sleep Mercantile on the corner of Second and Pine Streets. For fourteen years the Mercantile continued to form a significant segment of the town's core. During this first period the store was operated by Church's son-in-law and later by a partnership leasing from Church. Upon Church's death the property was bought by Buffalo businessman Alex Healy in an agreement that brought the store under the control of Paul Frison in 1918. Frison, whose family were ranchers in the Ten Sleep area, ran the store until 1942.

To a great extent the Mercantile derives wider significance from its association with local merchant and historian Paul Frison. Frison operated

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the Ten Sleep Mercantile between 1919-1942 and was a prominent figure in county politics serving as a Washakie County justice of the peace (1911), Ten Sleep mayor (1931-1947) and state legislator (three terms beginning in 1931). An avid avocational historian, Frison detailed the area's history and folklore in five published books and assorted manuscripts and texts. Frison's writings, all published by local presses, detail the development of the eastern Bighorn Basin. They include his autobiography, an account of the life of Mrs. Martha Waln (the first female resident of the Bighorn Basin) and an account of Charlie Wells, a legendary local stockman. Frison's own story outlined in his autobiography provides a unique glimpse into how early twentieth century merchandising depended so heavily on the success of the local stockraising economy. The trials with which these early stockraising settlers had to contend produce echoes that reverberate into the present. Frison recorded the initial soundings that acted as a precursor to things to come as the plight of the embattled stockraiser against forces beyond his control continues. The effects of this plight are well documented in Frison's work.

Within Frison's tenure as manager of the Ten Sleep Mercantile came the advent of the Bighorn Basin in tourism industry. Frison was a quick beneficiary of this new economic revolution as the Black and Yellow Trail Association established their Chicago-Yellowstone route through Ten Sleep. Formulated in 1912, the Black and Yellow Trail, conspicuously marked with black and yellow road signs, traveled over the Bighorn Mountains on a route selected by Frison and three Cody businessmen. From this time onward, Ten Sleep has derived a substantial portion of their revenues from tourist traffic through Ten Sleep Canyon. Local scenic wonders, including the Canyon, Signal Cliff and Castle Rocks, got their first prominent mention in the WPS Wyoming Guide of 1941 (WPS Writers Program, 1881:159). As communities like Worland and Basin rose in prominence, small communities like Ten Sleep stagnated and their influence in political and social affairs diminished. This state of affairs has remained the same in many respects to the present, although increased tourist traffic has revitalized some businesses. The Mercantile, for so long a vital focal point in community affairs, continues to serve the town and surrounding area in its present manifestation as a hardware store. It also serves as a reminder of the community's frontier beginnings and embodies the town's former prominence in Bighorn Basin affairs.

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Personal Communication

Marcella Chamberlain  
Mike and Diane Goedde

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The Ten Sleep Mercantile boundary description encompasses only those areas immediately adjacent the physical structure itself and under individual ownership.

The Ten Sleep Hardware (as it is presently known) lies on a parcel of land within Block 9 of the original Ten Sleep plat map on file at the Washakie County Clerk's Office, Worland, Wyoming. Encompassing an area of 0.11 acres, the building lies within a plot described as follows; beginning at the southwestern corner of block 9 (point A) the boundary runs eastward along the block's southern border 38.2' to point B. The boundary then runs northward for 50' to point C. Here the boundary runs eastward for 33' (point D) and then northward for an additional 43.1 (point E). Here, following a small alleyway, the boundary runs 71.2' westward to the outside curb of Pine Street (point F). The boundary follows the curb 93.1' to the south and intersects with point A.

These boundaries correspond to the outside boundaries of the historic Ten Sleep Mercantile lot space and fully incorporate the modern Ten Sleep Hardware building. No other elements are included in the nomination but the building and a small 33 x 42 lot space on the buildings northeast corner. The property herein described is all retained by the present owners.

