OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

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. Use letter quality printers in 12 pitch. Use only 25% or greater cotton content bond paper.

1. Name of Propert	У		
historic name: Elmer a	nd Etta Ball Ranch		
other names/site number	: Lazy S Over S Ranch;	5WL1599	
2. Location			
street & number: Weld	County Road 69	(NA) not f	or publication
city, town: Briggsdale		(X) vicin	ity
state: CO	code: 008 county: Weld	code: 123	zip code: 80611
3. Classification			
5. Classification		<u> </u>	
Ownership of Property	Category of Property	No. of Resource	es within Property
(X) private	() building(s)	contributing	noncontributing
() public-local	(X) district	11	2_ buildings
() public-State	() site		sites
() public-Federal	() structure	2	3 structures
() public-redefai	• •		
	() object		objects
		13	5 Total
Name of related multipl	e property listing:		uting resources
		previously lis	
<u> Historic Farms and Ranc</u>	<u>hes of Weld County.</u>	National Regis	ter <u>0</u>
Colorado			

4.	State/Federal Agency Certificati	on	
19 de pri an pri (s the designated authority under the National Reference in the National Register of History (x) meets () does not meet the Nat	nis (x) nomination () reques cumentation standards for reg storic Places and meets the p n 36 CFR Part 60. In my opin National Register criteria.	t for istering rocedural
S	ighature of certifying official	Date	
S	tate Historic Preservation Officer, Color	ado Historical Society	
	tate or Federal agency and bureau		
L			
	n my opinion, the property () meets () riteria. () See continuation sheet.	does not meet the National Ro	egister
S	ignature of Commenting or Other Official	Date	
Si	tate or Federal Agency and Bureau		
L			
5.	National Park Service Certificat:	ion	
I, l	nereby, certify that this property is:	entered in National Re	gistu
\%	entered in the National Register. () See continuation sheet	Helous Byen	10/16/91
()	determined eligible for the National Register. () See continuation sheet		
()	determined not eligible for the National Register.		
()	removed from the National Register.		
()	other, (explain:)/		
		Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action

6. Functions or Use	
Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)	Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)
Agriculture/Animal Facility	Agriculture/Animal Facility
Domestic/Single Dwelling	Domestic/Single Dwelling
Agriculture/Agricultural Outbuilding	Agriculture/Agricultural Outbuilding
Architectural Classification (enter categories from instructions)	Materials (enter categories from instructions)
	foundations concrete
Other: Vernacular Wood Frame	walls wood
Bungalow	
	roof metal
	other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Elmer and Etta Ball Ranch is a cohesive group of agricultural buildings representative of early twentieth century dryland farming and ranching in rural Weld County, Colorado, which meets the registration requirements specified in the Multiple Property Documentation Form "Historic Farms and Ranches in Weld County, Colorado." The ranch is notable for the diversity of its historic ranch buildings, which include a main farm house dating to the homestead period of the ranch, a main barn, smaller barns, a bunk house, chicken houses, storage buildings, a garage, a well, a corral area, and an outhouse. The ranch is also significant for the high degree of historic integrity of setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association that the well-preserved buildings convey. The major alteration to the buildings has been the addition of metal roofing to control water damage and preserve the buildings.

Of the eighteen resources included in the nominated district, thirteen, or seventy-two percent contribute to the district. Of the thirteen contributing resources, eleven are buildings and two are structures. Five resources within the district, or twenty-eight percent, are noncontributing. Of the noncontributing resources, two are buildings, and three are structures. The criteria utilized to determine the contributing or noncontributing status of each resource were based upon those listed in the related Multiple Property Documentation Form and included: date of construction, historic associations, and integrity of materials, design, and setting. The sketch map accompanying this form indicates the location of each resource and identifies its contributing or noncontributing status.

The Ball Ranch is located on the High Plains of northeastern Weld County, approximately four miles west of the small community of Briggsdale. The ranch buildings are located on a slight rise in the nearly level landscape, and are located west of unpaved Weld County Road 69, which ends at the ranch buildings, a

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mile south of Colorado Highway 14. The surrounding countryside consists principally of uncultivated grazing lands, and the nearest house is approximately one mile distant. The ranch is situated within the boundaries of the Pawnee National Grasslands. Private and federal landholdings form a checkerboard within the external boundaries of the grasslands. The average annual precipitation for the area is under ten inches and the nearest permanent source of water is an intermittent stream of Little Sand Creek, which meanders through the land west of the buildings.

A short, unpaved road leads from the county road to the main ranch house and the central ranch yard. Flanking the main house on the north are the well and windmill, a bunk house, and garages, with the outhouse and chicken houses to the south. Behind the main house to the southwest is the large barn. North of this barn across an open area are the corrals and pens associated with cattle raising, and smaller barns and storage buildings also utilized for livestock activities.

Contributing Resources

Contributing resources include the main ranch house (A), the barn (N), the Model T garage (C), the well (E), the bunkhouse (G), the brooder house (D), the chicken house (O), the outhouse (P), the pens and corrals (H), the sick cattle shed (I), the beef barn (J), the dairy barn (K), and the storage shed (L).

The main ranch house (A)¹ is a one-and-a-half story, Bungalow Style, frame dwelling. The house (1)², which was constructed in 1914 and enlarged in 1929, is side gable roofed, with overhanging eaves, exposed rafters, and triangular knee braces.³ The dwelling has a slightly off-center door facing a small concrete stoop, which is sheltered by a small gabled hood supported by triangular braces. Windows are one-over-one light with architrave surrounds. The center front shedroofed dormer features a band of four, one-over-one light windows, and has exposed rafters, triangular braces, and wood shingle siding. Gable ends feature wood

 $^{^{1}}$ Letters in parentheses refer to corresponding letters of buildings on the site sketch map.

²Numbers in parentheses refer to corresponding photograph numbers.

³Wilbur Ball, Buggy Trails, (Columbus, Ohio: N.p., 1968), p. 49.

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shingles and paired windows. The building has a concrete foundation and a center brick chimney, which has been painted. The rear of the building has an enclosed, squared, projecting bay. The interior of the house retains an original wooden kitchen cupboard; well-preserved decorative wooden molding around doors, floors, and ceiling; and an unpainted wooden staircase.

The current configuration of the dwelling incorporates the original 1914 two room homestead house. The homestead house is the northeast portion of the first story of the current house. In 1929, the remaining portion of the house was built around the original house, creating the present seven room dwelling. The house is now sided with vinyl siding which duplicates the width of the original weatherboard siding, which is underneath. In 1990, a shed-roofed enclosed entrance room was added to the southern elevation.

Behind the main house is the barn (N), a gambrel roofed, two story building constructed in 1921.⁴ On the southern elevation of the barn is a one-story, open-sided lean-to. Gambrel ends of the barn have wood shingles and small, square windows with plain surrounds (2). The barn roof has a peaked hood at the gambrel end. The raised concrete foundation of the barn is banked somewhat into the earth, and its walls extend approximately eight feet upward from the building's dirt floor. The foundation walls have evenly spaced ventilating windows. The walls of the barn atop the foundation have drop siding. A single, off-center, vertical board door with plain wood surround is on the eastern elevation of the building. The lean-to has a concrete foundation and walls topped by drop siding and is open on the southern elevation. The shed roof of the lean-to is supported by wood posts. The barn has metal roofing.

The interior of the barn is divided into twelve stalls for horses and mules and has a dirt floor. An open hay loft is above the horse stalls. The lean-to holds mangers for the horses and has an opening to the hay loft for feeding the animals.

A garage (C) originally designed for the family's Model T is located north of the main ranch house. The 1920s building (3), is one-story, with a gabled roof with overhanging eaves and exposed rafters. The walls of the garage have drop siding and corner boards and the foundation is concrete. The southern elevation has a hinged door. On the rear of the building is a shed addition composed of similar materials, which was necessitated by the purchase of cars larger than the Model T.

⁴Ibid, p. 52.

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A 1914 well (E) north of the main ranch house has concrete walls (4). Adjacent to the well is a metal windmill (F) manufactured by the Aermotor Company of Chicago. Windmills have always been in this location, but the current one is less than fifty years old. Immediately west of the well is the bunkhouse (G), originally used as sleeping quarters for hired help. The bunkhouse (5) is a small, drop-sided building with a wood shingled, gabled roof with overhanging eaves and exposed rafters. The building has an off-center, vertical board door and a four-light window, both with plain wood surrounds on the southern elevation. Beneath the bunkhouse is a basement-level concrete-walled water storage structure connected to the well. The water storage structure feeds into a partially collapsed concrete cattle trough to the west.

Also north of the main house is a building used by the Balls as a brooder house for chickens (D). The brooder house (6) was originally the homestead house of two brothers (circa 1910s), and was moved to the ranch by Elmer Ball when the homestead was abandoned and purchased by the government during the creation of the Pawnee National Grasslands in the 1930s. The brooder house is a one-story, shed-roofed building with horizontal board siding and corner boards. The southern elevation of the building has an off-center paneled and glazed door and four-light windows. The building has metal roofing.

South of the main ranch house is a circa 1915 chicken house (0) composed of a central coop and two shed roofed additions (8). The central portion of the chicken house is a one-story building with drop siding, corner boards, and a raised concrete foundation. The chicken house, which faces south, has a center door flanked by paired, four-light windows, with paired windows above the slope of the roof for extra light and ventilation. A shed-roofed addition on the west is of horizontal board siding and has exposed rafters. A shed-roofed addition on the east has horizontal board and wood shingle siding, a vertical board door, and a two-light window. The chicken house has metal roofing.

The outhouse (P) is a circa 1914 building which has been moved from its original location near the house. The outhouse (9) has a shed roof, board and batten siding, and a vertical board door. The interior has a wooden floor and seating area. The outhouse has metal roofing.

North of the barn are the pens and corrals and buildings utilized for the care of cattle raised on the ranch. The pens and corrals (H) are composed of wooden poles, boards, and railroad ties and have some metal gates (10, 11). The pens and corrals have traditionally been in the same area where they are today. Buildings in the corral area include the sick cattle shed (I), used to treat animals with injuries or

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illnesses. The circa 1920 building (7) is gable roofed, with slightly overhanging eaves and exposed rafters. The building has vertical board siding and two, hinged, vertical board doors on the southern elevation. The foundation of the building is concrete. The shed has metal roofing.

West of the sick cattle shed are three buildings (10) associated with the care and feeding of cattle. The beef barn (J), is a circa 1920s building with a saltbox roofline, drop siding, a concrete foundation, corner boards, and entrances on each end of the southern elevation. The interior of the building has a dirt floor. The 1920s dairy barn (K) also has a saltbox roofline, drop siding, and corner boards. The building has a wood shingle roof and concrete foundation. The interior of the dairy barn has a dirt floor, stalls for milking cows, and a small loft for hay storage. A storage shed (L) in the corral area was originally a homestead house (circa 1910s). The one-story building has horizontal board siding, a shed roof, center entrance, and small, square window openings flanking the door. The interior of the building has a center hall flanked on each side by one room. This building was obtained after the homestead on which it was located was abandoned and purchased by the government during the 1930s.⁵

Noncontributing Resources

Five resources within the building area of the ranch are considered noncontributing: a 1949 concrete block garage (B); a circa 1950s metal windmill (F, 4); a small shed covered with metal siding (M, 12); and two nonhistoric metal silos (Q and R).

⁵Roland Ball, Briggsdale, Colo., Interview, 24 May 1991.

8. Statement of Significance		
Certifying official has considered the relation to other properties: () Applicable National Register Criteria Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)	nationally () statewi (X) A () B (X) C () D	de (x) locally
Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)	Period of Significance	Significant Dates
Agriculture	1914-1941	1914
Architecture	1914	1914, 1929
	Cultural Affiliation N/A	
Significant Person	Architect/Builder N/A	

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

The Elmer and Etta Ball Ranch is significant under criterion A in the area of agriculture for its association with the movement of homesteaders onto the Colorado plains during the early twentieth century and the establishment of dryland farms and cattle ranches in northeastern Weld County during that period. The ranch is also significant under criterion C, for its architecture, which reflects the styles and construction techniques for agricultural buildings prevalent on the plains during the first half of the century. The ranch is significant for the number and variety of well-preserved historic agricultural buildings it exhibits which reflect the technology and lifestyles of farmers and ranchers in the area.

This nomination is an addition to the multiple property nomination "Historic Farms and Ranches in Weld County, Colorado." The property is associated with the historic context "Ranching in Weld County: 1859-1940," and also the context "Dryland Farming in Weld County: 1870-1940." The property type represented is "Ranches and Ranching Facilities," and includes a number of building types categorized under that property type, including a ranch house, garages, outhouse, barns, animal sheds, storage sheds, corrals, and a well. The ranch meets the registration requirements outlined in the multiple property form. Its buildings were constructed and operated during the period 1914-1941, which constitutes the property's period of significance, and reflect the development of farming and ranching.

The ranch is significant under criterion A in the area of agriculture, for its association with the farmers who poured into the dryland areas of the eastern plains of Colorado during the early twentieth century. The Ball family came to the area after hearing of its farming potential and established a homestead in 1914. Although the promised irrigation facilities never carried water to the ranch, the

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family, like hundreds of others, attempted to farm the land, growing beans, corn, and wheat. Like most of the homesteaders who were able to survive the difficult years of the 1930s, the Balls diversified their production and turned increasingly to expansion of their holdings and the raising of cattle and forage crops. The ranch, which is today owned by the homesteaders' children, continues to operate as a successful cattle raising operation.

The ranch is also significant under criterion C in the area of architecture, for its representation of the built environment of an early twentieth century agricultural operation. The ranch buildings reflect the growth and evolution of activities on the ranch and the pragmatism of reusing agricultural structures for varied purposes. The buildings' design, materials, and workmanship are typical of those favored by settlers of the area.

The barn, constructed in 1921, is a well-preserved example of a building utilized both for housing animals and storing hay. The 1929 ranch house, which incorporates portions of the original homestead house into its composition, is of the Bungalow Style, a design very popular for farm and ranch houses during the 1920s in the vicinity of Briggsdale. The Model T garage reflects the evolution of automobile design and automobile storage facilities. The bunkhouse was a commonly found building on ranches built to house hired help. Two outbuildings which originally functioned as homestead houses are representative of the common local practice of buying abandoned buildings from the government during the creation of the Pawnee National Grasslands, as well as representative of homestead architecture. Together, the ranch buildings reflect the variety of resource types and functions found on a successful ranch during the first half of the twentieth century.

Historic Context

The Elmer and Etta Ball Ranch, also known as the Lazy S Over S Ranch, was established by the Balls in 1914. Ball was born in 1889, near Groveland, Kansas. After acquiring a teaching certificate, Ball taught and farmed in Kansas for three years. After hearing reports of the agricultural potential in the vicinity of Briggsdale, Colorado, from his uncle Perry Ball, one of the first settlers in the vicinity, he decided to move to the area.⁶

⁶Information for the historic context is derived from two sources: Wilbur P. Ball, Buggy Trails, (Columbus, Ohio: N.p., 1968); and Wilbur P. Ball, "Elmer Ball," in Bud Wells, editor, Homesteading the Dryland: A History of Northeast Weld County,

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In October 1913, Ball visited Colorado, where he inspected lands and chose a homestead site which he felt had good farming potential. The site had been filed on twice previously. In 1905, an unsuccessful Desert Land Claim was entered. In 1908, a second Desert Land Entry was established. The claim was relinquished in 1913, and the relinquishment was purchased by Ball, who planned to return the following year. Ball, like other newcomers to the area, was assured that the Greeley-Poudre Irrigation District would build the necessary irrigation systems for farming. Unfortunately, the irrigation schemes of the development company were unrealistic and although a ditch was dug, it never carried water. The homesteaders were forced to cope with the naturally limited precipitation of the area.

In March 1914, Ball married Etta H. Wendt, also of Groveland, Kansas. Shortly thereafter, the Balls traveled to Briggsdale. Like hundreds of other new settlers, Ball traveled with his household and farming goods aboard an emigrant railroad car. Among the possessions the Balls brought to their new farm were horses, a buggy, a hand plow, a harrow, a wagon, fence posts, furniture, a milk cow, and four dozen chickens. The Balls lived in the two room house built by Perry Ball and Roy Adams, and began the construction of other buildings necessary for their farming operations. Elmer and Etta Ball raised eight children on their farm, receiving a homestead patent in 1919 for 160 acres.

During the first year on the homestead, Elmer Ball taught school in addition to his farming activities to supplement the family income. Etta Ball traded butter and eggs in exchange for groceries in Briggsdale, and sold butter in the town to earn extra money. The main crop during the early years was pinto beans, which was supplemented with the raising of corn and wheat. In 1921, profits from the pinto bean harvests allowed the family to build a new barn. A successful wheat crop in 1928 enabled the family to enlarge its home to the present building the following year. Lumber for the construction was purchased in Briggsdale.

Elmer Ball realized that diversification of his farm was a necessity, and soon began building up a breeding herd of cattle. Although cattle raising continued to grow in the area, the drought, dust storms, and depressed economy of the 1930s were a test

Colorado, (Dallas: Curtis Media Corp., 1986), pp. 10-11.

⁷U.S., Bureau of Land Management, Colorado State Office, Land Patent Records for Section 34, Township 8 North, Range 63 West, Sixth Principal Meridian.

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for the residents of the plains. Farmers such as Ball gradually began to abandon the raising of cash crops such as corn, beans, and wheat in favor of forage and grass crops to support their expanding cattle operations. Unfortunately, conditions for raising forage crops were so poor during the 1930s, that the rancher was forced to feed his cattle cacti to insure their survival. In 1937, Elmer Ball joined the Crow Valley Livestock Cooperative Association, a group formed to improve the farming techniques and condition of the lands in the vicinity.

As a result of the poor economy and harsh conditions, the community of Briggsdale and the surrounding vicinity began to lose population after reaching a peak in 1931. The federal government came to the aid of desperate farmers and purchased failed homesteads during the period 1933-1943. These lands were to be the basis of the Pawnee National Grassland, a program designed to preserve and rehabilitate the natural plains vegetation. During the same period, Elmer Ball was able to expand his land holdings by purchasing the acreage of unsuccessful homesteaders.

Having survived the challenges of the 1930s, the ranch recovered with the increased prosperity of the following decade. When Elmer Ball died in 1959, his ranch consisted of over 6,000 acres of deeded and leased land, and his holdings included 325 cows, twelve bulls, and 120 yearlings. The land which he had homesteaded had evolved from a small farm to a successful ranching operation. The family continues to operate the cattle ranch and maintain the buildings, and great grandchildren of the Balls now live in the ranch house.

9. Major Bibliographical References
Ball, Roland. Interview. 24 May 1991. Briggsdale, Colorado.
(X) See continuation sheet
Previous documentation on file (NPS): () preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested () Other State agency () previously listed in the National Register () Local government () previously determined eligible by the National Register () University () designated a National Historic Landmark () recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
10. Geographical Data
Acreage of property: 10.3 acres
UTM References A 1 3 5 4 9 5 9 0 4 4 9 7 0 6 0 B 1 3 5 4 9 8 0 0 4 4 9 7 0 6 0 Northing C 1 3 5 4 9 8 0 0 4 4 9 6 8 7 0 D 1 3 Zone Easting Northing C 1 3 5 4 9 8 0 0 Northing C 1 3 5 4 9 8 0 0 Northing () See continuation sheet
Verbal Boundary Description Beginning at the northeast corner of Section 34, Township 8 North, Range 63 West, thence south 600 feet, thence west 750 feet, thence north 600 feet, thence east 750 feet to the point of beginning, as drawn on the attached USGS map.
() See continuation sheet
Boundary Justification Includes that portion of the property containing buildings and structures historically associated with ranching functions. (See Sketch Map) () See continuation sheet
11. Form Prepared By
Name/Title: R. Laurie Simmons and Thomas H. Simmons Organization: Front Range Research Associates, Inc Street & Number: 3635 West 46th Avenue City or Town: Denver Date: May 1991 Telephone: (303) 477-7597 State: CO Zip Code: 80211

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Ball, Wilbur P. Buggy Trails. Columbus, Ohio: N. p., 1968

"Elmer Ball." In Bud Wells, ed. Homesteading the Dryland: A History of Northeast Weld County, Colorado. Dallas, Texas: Curtis Media Corp., 1986.

U. S. Bureau of Land Management. Master Title Plats and Land Patent Records. Colorado State Office, Wheat Ridge, Colorado.

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Index to Photographs

Information that is the same for all photographs:

- 1) Resource: Elmer and Etta Ball Ranch
- 2) Location: Weld County Road 69, one mile south of Colorado Highway 14, Weld County, vicinity of Briggsdale, Colorado
- 3) Photographer: Thomas H. Simmons
- 4) Date: 24 May 1991
- 5) Location of Original Negatives: Colorado State Historical Society, Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation

Photo Number	Descriptive Information							
1	1) 6)	Main House Camera Direction:	SW					
2	1) 6)	Barn Camera Direction:	SW					
3	1) 6)	Model T Garage Camera Direction:	NW					
4	1) 6)	Windmill Camera Direction:	W					
5	1) 6)	Bunkhouse Camera Direction:	NW					
6	1) 6)	Brooder House Camera Direction:	NW					
7	1) 6)	Sick Cattle Shed Camera Direction:	NW					
8	1)	Chicken House						

Camera Direction: NW

6)

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Photo Descriptive Number Information 1) Outhouse 6) Camera Direction: NE 10 1) Pens, corrals, and outbuildings: storage shed, dairy barn, and beef barn (left to right) 6) Camera Direction: NW 11 1) General view of ranch buildings from north Camera Direction: S 6) Shed 12 1) Camera Direction: NW 6)

ELMER BALL RANCH BUILDINGS

Sketch Map Map #2 Northeast corner of WELD COUNTY ROAD 69 Section 34 Recattered trees and old ranch implements Н 100 Feet Approximate scale Map Key Non-contributing Contributing G Bunkhouse M Shed A Main House N Barn H Pens and Corrals B Garage O Chicken House C Model T Garage I Sick Cattle Shed J Beef Barn P Outhouse D Brooder House Q Metal Silo K Dairy Barn E Well R Metal Silo L Storage Shed F Windmill

Numbers indicate photographs referenced in the nomination.