

1938

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**

1. Name of Property

historic name: Meadowbrook Stock Farm

other name/site number: Thomas R. Murray Ranch

2. Location

street & number: U.S. Highway 87

not for publication: n/a
vicinity: X

city/town: Hobson

state: Montana

code: MT

county: Judith Basin code: 045

zip code: 59452

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: Private

Category of Property: Buildings

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>10</u>	<u> </u> building(s)
<u>5</u>	<u> </u> sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u> objects
<u>15</u>	<u> </u> Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

Name of related multiple property listing: n/a

4. Certification

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.

Marcella Steffy 12-3-91
Signature of certifying official Date

MONTANA STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

 See Continuation Sheet

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register Neilous Byers 1/13/92
 See Continuation Sheet

determined eligible for the National Register _____
 See Continuation Sheet

determined not eligible for the National Register _____
 See Continuation Sheet

removed from the National Register _____
 See Continuation Sheet

other (explain): _____

Signature of Keeper fu Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic: Domestic/single dwelling
Agriculture/animal facility, agricultural outbuilding

Current: Domestic/single dwelling
Agriculture/animal facility, agricultural outbuilding
Vacant/Not in use

7. Description

Architectural Classification: Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals: Neo-Classical Revival
Other: Vernacular

Materials: foundation: concrete
roof: shingle
walls: concrete, weatherboard

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Meadowbrook Stock Farm is located approximately one mile north of the small community of Hobson, Montana. Hobson sits approximately one half mile south of the Judith River in a region of central Montana known as the Judith Basin. The Judith Basin is nestled between two mountain ranges, the Little Belts and the Big Snowies, both of which are outliers of the Rocky Mountains. Thirty miles to the east are the Judith Mountains.

The Judith Basin is a fertile high plains valley, and since the turn of the 20th century, it has been a mixed farming and ranching region. Wheat, barley and other grains are the predominant crops raised in the basin. Settlement in the area is characterized by small centers of community, surrounded by farm and ranch lands.

The farm includes a house and a full complement of agricultural outbuildings, which comprised the center of a horse, cattle, hog, sheep, and wheat operation in the early 20th century. Presently, there are 10 buildings and 5 structures on the Meadowbrook Stock Farm, all of which contribute to the property's significance. The northwest portion of the historic farmstead is residential, with the house, coal shed and ice house surrounded by a large mown grass lawn. The agricultural outbuildings stand to the south and east, and include a complex of barns and corrals for stock raising. All associated historic buildings and structures are located within the historic property boundaries, which encompass twenty acres at the heart of the original stock farm.

The main house and three outbuildings were built with cast stone, a form of concrete block cast to replicate quarried rock, which Thomas R. Murray, the founder of the ranch, made near the premises. Other buildings are of wood frame and post-and-beam construction with weatherboard or plank sheathing. Outbuildings for which dates of construction are not known appear to be contemporaneous with the house and barn built in 1908 and about 1910.

Contributing Buildings

1) **Residence:** The main residence is a two-story farmhouse built in 1908 of cast stone, with Neo-Classical Revival influences. Cast stone was employed in construction of the foundation and walls; the walls are trimmed with smooth, concrete block quoining at the corners. The building is a modified cruciform plan, basically a rectangular, gabled mass with shortened cross gables. The gables have rounded returns, each framing single or paired fixed square windows in the gable ends. The roof is covered with wood shakes. Fenestration is characterized by double-hung windows, arranged 1-over-1. Door and window openings have concrete lintels and sills. Two red brick chimneys interrupt the flat line of the building's roof; only one of these is original. The design of the building was taken by Mildred Murray, Thomas Murray's wife, from a home in Michigan. An unknown Eastern architect finalized the plans.

On the west elevation, an open porch spans the first story of the house. Wooden columns on rounded bases, having tall blocks above the capitals with open bracket work support the porch roof. The original narrow rail baluster is being restored to its former location enclosing the porch and upper balcony on the second story. These elements lend a distinct

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Neo-Classical influence to the home. A panelled wooden door with upper glazing, and a single window with a leaded transom open onto the porch. Two windows, placed above these openings, illuminate the second story. A pair of square, fixed windows are placed in the gable end.

On the south elevation, the cross gable features a first floor bay window with a hipped roof. Window openings are loosely grouped in singles and pairs. Two doorways open on this side, near the rear, originally onto a covered, single-story porch. That porch has been removed and a new, uncovered wooden deck replaced it. This deck is lower in height than the original back porch, which matched the front. A line of unpainted cast stone above the rear deck marks the roof line of the original rear porch. On both the front and back porches, the roof originally served as a second-floor, balustraded porch. These original second floor porches also had doors opening into the cross gable.

On the east elevation, there is a rear doorway offset to the south, with an open wooden porch and steps. Single windows also open on the first and second stories. On the south elevation, small, fixed windows illuminate the stairwell toward the front of the house. Otherwise, the windows include 1-over-1 and 2-over-2 double hung windows. A doorway located toward the rear is now boarded over. A basement entrance is attached near center.

2) Big Horse Barn: Built soon after the completion of the farmhouse, probably in 1910, this three-story, gambrel-roofed, wooden barn is an imposing structure. The complexity and sophistication of this building imply that it was probably a commercial barn plan. The building rests on a concrete foundation with a partial floor. The first story, post and beam construction supports a large, open hay loft on the second and third stories. The roof is formed in a continuous arch with bracing at each angle. It has narrow, weatherboard siding and a wood shingle roof. Large, sliding, cross-reinforced doors are located at the main, rear, and side entrances on the first floor as well as the third floor on the main facade.

The gambrel ends of the building contain symmetrically placed, multi-light, fixed, 9-pane windows on the first and third floors. The side facades contain fixed windows of the same configuration, arranged in ordered rows of twelve on the west facade and thirteen on the east facade. Two large ventilators with sheet metal caps top the gambrel roof. They contain inset panels with the words "Meadowbrook Stock Farm" barely visible.

The interior of the barn retains much of its original historic integrity. On the first floor, a series of four double stables faces an identical series of stables across a large central passage. Between the outer walls and stable series are two other passages, much narrower than the central passage. Feed troughs separate these passages from the stables. The first floor also contains a tack room, feed room, stairway, and larger stall, probably used for shoeing horses. Representing both rough-hewn post and beam construction and continuous arch framing methods, this building is an excellent representative of early 20th century agricultural building techniques.

3) Sheep Barn: The sheep barn is a single-story, gable-roofed building topped with asphalt (originally wood) shingle. The building is sheathed in weatherboard siding that is partially covered with plywood. Three symmetrically-spaced, sliding, wood doors open from the building's west facade into a large corral. The center door is missing. The south facade has two symmetrically-spaced, cross-reinforced, sliding doors which also open into the large corral.

A shed-roofed addition protrudes from the building's east facade. Of frame construction, it has board and batten cladding, and corrugated metal roofing. The roof of the addition starts at the peak of the gable roof and projects out at a shallower pitch. The building

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sits on a poured concrete foundation with a dirt floor. This addition has fixed-pane windows with one pane over three horizontal panes.

4 and 5) Granaries: Two granaries are located just east of the sheep barn. They are identical, gable-roofed outbuildings with wood shingle roofs. The gable ends of the buildings are finished with horizontal, milled boards. The buildings' four facades are covered with horizontally laid boards, reinforced by vertical boards.

6) Outhouse: The outhouse sets south of the main residence. It is a gable-roofed, wood frame building with weatherboard siding and conerboards. The roof is shingled with wood. A plain wooden door is framed with wood, and includes a small upper window. On the interior, there is one seat, off-center.

7) Ice house: This 1½-story, wood frame building is covered with weatherboard siding. It has a gable roof, covered with wood shingles. The main entrance is located on the south side of the building. The original offset, sliding wood doors are now replaced with a standard-sized door at the main entrance. Three hinged loading doors with cross bracing are vertically spaced on the building's east facade and were useful in the loading and unloading of ice. The building sets on a poured concrete foundation with a wooden floor. It has 4-pane windows on the first and second levels.

8) Coal Shed: The coal shed is a one story, gable-roofed, cast stone building with smooth concrete block quoining at the corners. The roof is covered with wooden shingles. It has a wooden-plank, hinged door framed with wood at its entrance. A concrete slab threshold marks the entrance.

9) Garage: The garage is a one story, gable-roofed, cast stone building with smooth, concrete block quoining at the corners. The roof is covered with wood shingles. Hinged, wooden doors cover the main entrance, which is spanned by a wooden lintel. A partial storage loft is located on the east end of the garage's interior. Removable 1-over-1 wooden windows with rounded mouldings are centered on the north and south facades. They are spanned by smooth, concrete lintels and projecting sills.

The garage has a gable-roofed addition on its north side. This addition appears to have been made ca. 1920, and is wood frame, covered with wood, tongue and groove siding. The roof is covered with wood shingles. A single window infilled with wood is placed at the rear of the addition's west facade. The building and the addition both set on the ground and have a dirt floor.

10) Chicken Barn: This is a 1½-story, gambrel-roofed building with wooden weatherboard siding. Small, square windows are located in the center of the building's west facade. Charred rafters on the north facade show evidence of a fire. The building sets on the ground and has a dirt floor. The east facade of the building has been altered. Originally, it had large, paired, wooden doors. Today, the doors are removed and replaced with chicken wire.

Contributing Structures

11 and 12) Small Lean-To: Two small lean-to structures covered with horizontal, wood sheathing, stand in pastures east of the buildings. One is located at the junction of the main road and the road leading from the big horse barn. The other is located approximately one hundred yards to the east. They were apparently used to shelter hay in the field.

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13) **Lean-To:** Attached to the south entrance of the big horse barn, this structure is framed with railroad ties and covered with a corrugated metal roof on a wooden plank sub-roof. It apparently served as an animal shelter. A loading ramp directly in front of the structure leads up to the barn's large, rear entrance.

14) **Large Corral System:** The large corral system surrounds the farm's big horse barn, sheep barn, and two granaries. A number of gates and inner corrals reflect historic function. The corral is constructed with wood posts and 2"x 6", symmetrically-spaced, horizontal boards. Gates are built of 2"x 6", vertical boards with 2"x 6" frames. A loading shoot connected to the corral near the granaries is constructed with railroad ties.

15) **Small Corral:** Located approximately 100 yards east of the garage and chicken barn, this circular corral uses the same 2"x 6", wooden posts, boards, and frames as the large corral system. Its historic function is most likely a breaking corral for horses.

The many buildings located on the Meadowbrook Stock Farm are all in nearly-original condition. While many of the buildings suffer from a general lack of maintenance over many years, non-historic alterations have been limited to loss of historic fabric on the residence's porches, replacement of doors on the chicken barn and alteration of the sheep barn. The present owner (Thomas Murray's granddaughter) is currently in the process of repairing and restoring many of the buildings to their original condition. Currently, the buildings, structures, farmyard and the surrounding agricultural fields all appear much as they did in the 1910s, conveying a very accurate sense of the original design and historic associations of this significant property.

8. Statement of Significance

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

Applicable National Register Criteria: A, B, C

Areas of Significance: Agriculture, Architecture
Commerce, Exploration/Settlement

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): n/a

Period(s) of Significance: 1908-1925

Significant Person(s): Thomas R. Murray

Significant Dates: 1908

Cultural Affiliation: n/a

Architect/Builder: Thomas R. Murray, builder

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

The Meadowbrook Stock Farm is an important historic property in the Central Montana agricultural region. Associated with the transition in agriculture which took place during the late 1800s - early 1900s period in Montana, the farm's history reflects the evolution from early open-range cattle and sheep ranching on the prairies to small farm communities dependent upon railroad transportation. The property gains significance for its associations with Thomas R. Murray, the original owner and builder of the Meadowbrook Stock Farm, and an active community builder. Murray helped to establish institutions which were important to the settlement and growth of Hobson, Montana and the surrounding rural community. Finally, the architecture of the buildings themselves is important. The unusually large farm house was undoubtedly influential locally, wedding transitional Neo-Classical style with the cast concrete block construction methods popular in early 20th century Montana. Murray's use of concrete block for a range of farm buildings demonstrated his facility with, and the versatility of, the material. In addition, the big horse barn is a fine example of commercial plan-inspired barn buildings which were increasingly common during the early 20th century. For these reasons, the property is eligible for the National Register under criteria A, B and C.

In 1880, Thomas R. Murray arrived in Montana after traveling through much of the West in search of economic opportunity. A son of poor Scotch immigrants, Murray's family came to America when he was just six. Young Tom helped support his family by working in the coal mines of Bradford County, Pennsylvania and Lonaconing, Maryland, their two early homes. At age twenty, Murray was ready to seek his fortune elsewhere. He worked his way west to the mining camps of Leadville and Gunnison, Colorado where he became a freight driver. He soon moved on to Montana. Murray circled the state, laboring in such occupations as freight driver, lumberjack, and miner: from Coulson (Billings), through the Judith Basin, to Fort Benton, to Philipsburg, to Butte, to Big Timber, and finally back to the Judith Basin. By 1882, Thomas Murray had settled in the Judith Basin he would call home for the next 65 years.

Murray worked as a range hand in the Judith Basin where he came into contact with such notable Montanans as William Babcock, Jake Hoover, and Charlie Russell. In 1883, a year after his arrival in the Judith Basin, Murray had saved enough money to bring the two surviving members of his family to Montana: his father, Robert, and his sister, Jessica. The family claimed adjoining 160 acre homesteads, one in Thomas' name and the other in Robert's. Originally, a log home straddled both properties, with each man sleeping on opposite sides of the cabin to insure their claim. The Murrays operated a small cattle operation on the largely open prairies during the 1880s and early 1890s. Jessica Murray met and married Henry Lapham in 1890. The couple inherited the homestead of Robert Murray, who had died in 1888. Thomas Murray followed suit by marrying Henry Lapham's adopted sister, Mildred, in 1892. Subsequently, the Murrays' and Laphams' business fortunes became entwined for the next sixteen years.

The open prairies which made raising cattle such a profitable venture for early Judith Basin residents soon attracted many of these same people to sheep ranching. Census figures show the number of sheep in Montana doubling between the years 1887 and 1893, from 1.2 million to 2.5 million. By the turn of the century, Montana had roughly 6 million sheep. After that time, the state's sheep population dropped steadily before leveling out at roughly 2.5 million. The figures clearly show that many of the state's new farmers and ranchers saw sheep as a profitable venture, something to be added to their existing operations. Sheep afforded ranchers dual opportunities for profit. Wool was particularly lucrative in the Judith Basin since wind erosion was minimal, and consequently, the wool

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was very clean. In addition, young lambs were a popular source of meat which could be taken to market annually, unlike cattle which took several years to fatten. Lapham started raising sheep in 1893; Murray joined him in 1898. Murray and Lapham also looked to other sources for their income. Wheat farming in the 1890s and early 1900s offered a consistent means of income. Statewide farm yields show consistent yields of 20-30 bushels per acre. Prices for wheat also remained fairly consistent, ranging from 60 to 80 cents per bushel. Murray and Lapham, always looking for new ways to utilize their land, were two of the first homesteaders to employ wheat farming in the Judith Basin. They owned one of the first mechanical threshing machines, which was powered by fourteen horses. Transporting the wheat great distances over unreliable roads to the major market of Great Falls presented itself as the most formidable obstacle to Murray and Lapham's business. Nevertheless, Murray and Lapham had created a moderately successful farming operation by 1906, when Lapham sold his interests to Murray and moved his family to Delaware. That same year, railroads began their stretch into the vast expanses of the Judith Basin, dramatically influencing the settlement of the region.

In 1906, the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul, and Pacific Railroad opened a branch line connecting Lewistown and the northern Judith Basin to Great Falls. With the Milwaukee's presence, curving, narrow, and potted roads gave way to a more economical and efficient means of transporting local products to Great Falls, the largest market in the area. As a result, most area settlers grew increasingly optimistic about farming's future. When surveyors for the Great Northern Railroad explored the Judith Basin in 1907 and 1908, that optimism was spurred. In 1908, the Billings and Northern Railroad, a division of the Great Northern Railroad, followed the Milwaukee's lead by completing a line connecting Billings and Great Falls. It passed within three miles of the Murray Ranch.

In coming to the Judith Basin, the two railroads clearly defined one of their goals as bringing new farmers into the area, establishing communities, and then transporting the products of these new farmers to market. They launched their efforts immediately. The railroads began a massive public relations campaign, using colorful brochures, newspaper advertisements, and free railroad transportation to the area. The results of their promotions soon became apparent as a new wave of homesteaders from such far away and different places as the Mid-west, East Coast, and Northern Europe soon began swelling the population of the Judith Basin. Also in keeping with the goal of both the Billings and Northern and the Milwaukee Railroads, small communities centered around the railroad and agriculture began to emerge. Moccasin, Benchland, and Geysers were all established within two years of each other. Near the Murray Ranch, S.S. Hobson organized local residents and persuaded the Billings and Northern to build a station at the small town of Philbrook, where Hobson had purchased land for a new townsite. The railroad agreed and a new community was founded. On July 4, 1912, the post office moved from Philbrook to the community established on the land donated by S. S. Hobson. The town officially became "Hobson" rather than "New Philbrook" as some residents proposed.

Hobson and Judith Basin architecture of the early 20th century reflects the confidence which emerged from the arrival of the Billings and Northern and Milwaukee Railroads and the regional growth which followed. The large number of homesteaders following the railroad's promise of "an empire in itself"¹ filed land claims, built homes, farm buildings, fences, and began to tame the wide open spaces of the basin. Furthermore, many farm dwellings took on a look of permanency, as the log-walled and sod-roofed homes of a previous, less certain era were replaced by those using pre-cut lumber, shingled roofs, and concrete foundations. The Thomas R. Murray Ranch demonstrates this trend quite remarkably. The house was constructed by Murray in 1908, working from plans drawn by an unknown architect. The design was inspired by a house in Michigan which his wife Mildred noticed during a visit in 1907. Murray employed concrete block construction, taking

¹Great Northern Railway, The Great Judith Basin Montana, Chicago: 1908, p. 3.

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advantage of an increasingly popular technology of the day to form the large amounts of gravel on his property into concrete block. Cast stone concrete blocks formed on-site became the primary building material for outbuildings constructed later.

Murray's cast stone blocks were used in other Hobson buildings as well. He erected a large business block in 1910, which was described by his son as, "the largest and most pretentious building in town."² The "Murray Block" housed various businesses over the years, including: the First National Bank of Hobson, a general mercantile, a dentists' office, and a pool hall. The Murray Block later became the "Murray Block and Opera House," although no evidence is given that opera was ever performed. Hobson High School used the "Opera House" (a large open area on the second floor) for graduation exercises, basketball games, silent movies, plays, and dances from 1916 to 1937. Murray also built Hobson's second largest building. The Power Mercantile building was built between 1909 and 1910 while the plans for the Murray Block were being drawn up. The building was constructed diagonally across the street from the Murray Block. The Power Mercantile Building burned down in 1923, apparently the victim of arson. A wall of concrete block, similar to that used for the Meadowbrook Stock Farm and the Murray Block, remains today. Murray is also known to have constructed two cottages in Hobson.

The homestead and railroad booms were compounded during the years 1906-1916 by unusually temperate and moist weather. Large numbers of settlers moving to the area from more temperate regions assumed the weather they experienced to be the normal patterns for the region. During this period, wheat and other grain crops grew at a phenomenal rate. The Great Northern Railroad cites numbers which show Montana as having the largest yields per acre for wheat, rye, barley, oats, hay, potatoes, and flax of any state for 1907.³ Crop production peaked in 1915, with a statewide average yield of 35-50 bushels of wheat per acre, nearly double the 1907 yield. It is not hard to imagine the optimism of early Hobson farmers, like Murray, nor to recognize that optimism in the substantial homes and business blocks that they built during this period.

During this time, Thomas Murray diversified his business interests and emerged as an influential community figure, helping to build local banking, education, and farming opportunities. While Murray continued to ranch sheep and cattle and raise crops, he also began raising Percheron and Belgian horses and hogs to sell to the many new families moving into the area. Shortly after Murray started raising horses, the Murray Ranch assumed the name "Meadowbrook Stock Farm." In 1912, Murray formed the Hobson Farmers Mill and Elevator Company with other local farmers. The mill was intended to be a locally owned and community-minded business, unlike Hobson's two other mills which were owned by large outside interests. Murray served as president until 1927, when the Hobson Farmers Mill and Elevator Company went out of business. The company's grain elevator still remains in Hobson, offset in location and color from the town's two other elevators, highly symbolic of its independence.

In 1909, Fred Warren, an area rancher, formed a partnership with a Minneapolis banker, H.S. Woodward. The result was Warren & Company, the town's first of three banks. Murray served on the board of directors until the early 1920s when the bank folded, the last in Hobson to do so. Warren & Company became the First National Bank of Hobson shortly before it moved into the Murray Block, in 1910. It stayed there until its closing.

²Murray, Henry T., Judith Basin Pioneers, Thompson Publications, Pierre South Dakota: 1966, p. 67.

³Ibid, p.5.

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Finally, Murray's community involvement extended to his promotion of local schools. He was an early advocate of an elementary school and after the Pleasant Valley School remained open for only three months in 1908, Murray and his wife Mildred started a private school in a log building (no longer extant) on the Murray Ranch for their two oldest boys, John and Henry, and several area children. Murray built the school and hired the instructor, thus instituting the first full-time elementary school in Hobson. Later in his life, Murray claimed one of the problems with the school was that "he had an awful time ... getting the hired man to do any work," because the immigrant, Scandinavian workers would attend classes with the Murray children, in the hopes of obtaining a basic education.⁴ In 1909, Pleasant Valley School moved from its original location outside of the town and reopened in Hobson, where it was soon overcrowded due to the area's booming population. That same year, Murray began a 15-year tenure on the local school board. A year later, taxpayers approved a \$6,750 bond for a new school. Subsequently, Murray is known to have been one of the first advocates of a Hobson high school. That goal was reached in 1914, when Hobson High School started class work. In addition, Murray donated space in the Murray Block and Opera House for the high school's social activities during its early years. That role ended in 1937 when a new high school was constructed as part of the Works Progress Administration.

The peak agricultural year of 1915 gave way to much less productive years in 1916 and 1917. In 1918, unusually temperate conditions of the previous ten years yielded to the long term climate trends of little rain and extreme temperatures. The next ten years were very hard on farmers who falsely assumed the good growing climate they had experienced was normal. The wartime depletion of the world's grain supply led to high prices in 1917, 1918, and 1919. Additionally, the federal government had instituted price guarantees of \$2.00 per bushel in an effort to boost production for the patriotic cause of "The Great War." These two factors eased the pain of Montana farmers who were enduring what for them was a major drought. By 1920, European farmers had begun to once again raise crops; prices dropped. The farmer's plight was heightened by the new federal doctrine of free markets. The removal of wartime price supports drove the final nail in the coffins of many of Montana's farmers. Residents of the Judith Basin were no exception. Wheat prices dropped from \$2.40 to \$0.40 overnight, while the drought waged on. Judith Basin farmers discovered that 160 or even 320 acre tracts of land could not sustain a family. Even farmers with diversified business interests, such as Thomas Murray, found the economic situation unbearable. Ironically, the drought of the 1920s began to abate in 1928 and in 1929, the year of the stock market crash.

Thomas Murray was one victim of the depression in Judith Basin agriculture. He left his ranch in 1924, citing his wife Mildred's health problems as the reason. His business interests were either played out or soon to be dissolved by this time. Murray moved to a small home in nearby Moore and lived out the rest of his life. He died in 1947.

The Meadowbrook Stock Farm went through a succession of owners following Murray's sale of the property, none of whom made significant restorations or alterations. Some evidence exists that Murray leased the ranch for several years in the early 1920s before he finally sold the property. While the evidence is often cloudy, the historical record generally shows that the property has been used exclusively as a residence since Murray sold it. In the aftermath of the great drought and population decline in Montana, farms and ranches evolved, typically becoming much larger than the 320 acre tracts which had been granted to homesteaders. A frequent pattern in the state was the consolidation of former homesteads into very large properties by individuals who had somehow managed to endure the depressed farm economy. These consolidations meant that one or more former homestead or ranch buildings were abandoned or sold as separate, small properties. This is the most likely scenario for the Meadowbrook Stock Farm. Today, the property sits on only twenty acres,

⁴Early Judith Basin Settler Tells of Career as Gold Miner, Hunter," The Billings Gazette: October 21, 1934, Section 2: p.1.

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the smallest division of a former homestead allowed by law. While a few of the agricultural outbuildings have served some utility in recent years, the scale has been very modest, reflecting a subsistence farm or even a retirement home with a few animals. The net result is a property, although in general disrepair, which retains nearly all of its historic integrity.

9. 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:

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: 20 acres

UTM References:	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	12	587340	5208720
B	12	587550	5208720
C	12	587350	5208300
D	12	587540	5208300

Verbal Boundary Description:

The Meadowbrook Stock Farm is located in the SW $\frac{1}{4}$, SW $\frac{1}{4}$, SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 29 and in the NW $\frac{1}{4}$, NW $\frac{1}{4}$, NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 32, T15N, R15E.

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Boundary Justification:

The property's boundaries encompass a twenty-acre complex consisting of the Meadowbrook Stock Farm's main residence and the associated agricultural outbuildings--the nucleus of the Meadowbrook Stock Farm. This complex formed the operational and visual heart of the farm activities throughout the historic period.

11. Form Prepared By

Name/Title: Patrick McCleary/Intern
Organization: Montana State Historic Preservation Office
Street & Number: 225 North Roberts
City or Town: Helena State: MT
Date: July 2, 1991
Telephone: (406) 444-7715
Zip: 59620

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Sanborn Insurance Map Company, Hobson, Fergus County, Montana, 1914.

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

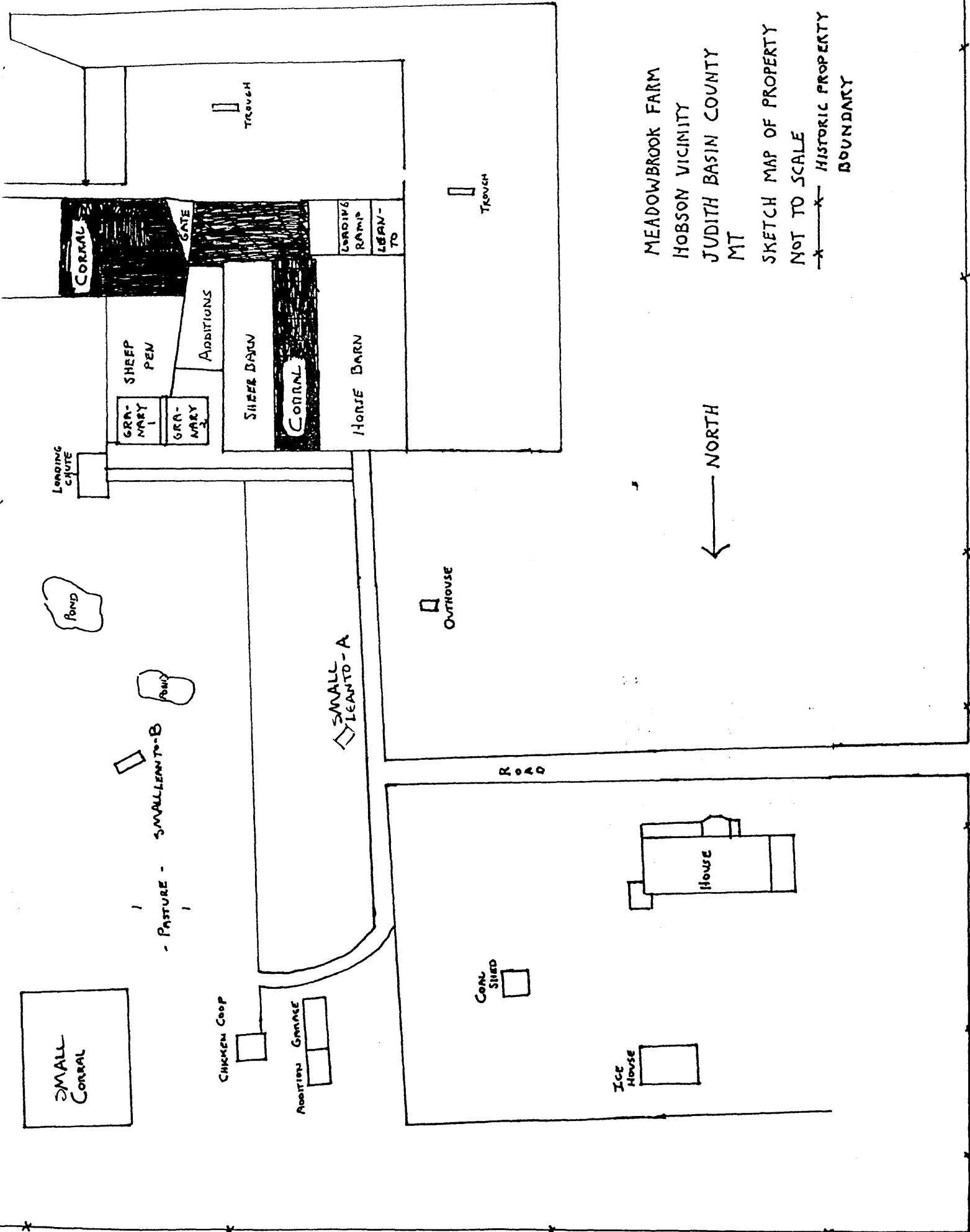
Section number 10

Meadowbrook Stock Farm

Page 1

The historic property boundaries for the Meadowbrook Stock Farm are described as follows:

From the point of beginning, at the centerpoint of the boundary between sections 29 and 32, proceed south along the quarter section line 660 feet; proceed due east from that point 660 feet; proceed due north from that point 1320 feet; proceed west from that point 660 feet; proceed due south from that point following the quarter section line 660 feet to return to the point of beginning.



MEADOWBROOK FARM
 HOBSON VICINITY
 JUDITH BASIN COUNTY
 MT

SKETCH MAP OF PROPERTY
 NOT TO SCALE
 HISTORIC PROPERTY
 BOUNDARY

← NORTH

COUNTY ROAD