

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section _____ Page _____

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SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 10000545

Date Listed: 8/12/2010

Reed's Fort Post Office
Property Name

Fergus MT
County State

N/A
Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

[Handwritten Signature]

Signature of the Keeper

8/12/10

Date of Action

Amended Items in Nomination:

Significance:

Architecture is added as an area of significance under National Register Criterion C.

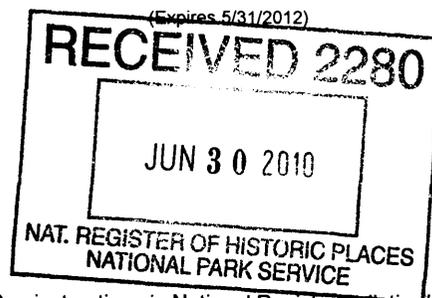
These clarifications were confirmed with the MT SHPO office.

DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

545

(Expires 5/31/2012)



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property

historic name Reed's Fort Post Office
other names/site number 24FR0414, Reedsfort Post Office

2. Location

street & number 0.1 mi. southwest from the junction of Brassey and 6th Avenue on Casino Creek Drive not for publication
city or town Lewistown vicinity
state Montana code MT county Fergus code 27 zip code 59457

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

 national statewide X local

Mark F. Faucher /State Historic Preservation Officer 6/25/2010
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Montana State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

Signature of commenting official _____ Date _____

Title _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register determined eligible for the National Register

 determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register

 other (explain:)

[Signature] 8/12/2010
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Category of Property
(Check only one box.)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		district
		site
		structure
		object
1		Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

GOVERNMENT/Post Office

RECREATION AND CULTURE/Outdoor recreation

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

OTHER/Pre-railroad/Log

foundation: None
walls: WOOD/Log
roof: WOOD/board and batten
other:

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Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

The Reed's Fort Post Office is a log cabin built of square hewn logs that is typical of Montana's early frontier era buildings in its modest size and its simplicity. The one-room, square building features a side-gabled roof supported by log purlins, and the simple fenestration pattern is limited to a single door and window across the south (front) elevation. Located in Lewistown, Montana, an agricultural community of approximately 5,950 people, the historic post office is situated in the Judith Basin which is bounded by the Judith Mountains to the northeast, the Little Snowy and Snowy Mountains to the south, the Little Belt Mountains to the west, and the Highwood Mountains to the northwest. Big Spring Creek is the major source of water in the area flowing southeast-northwest through Lewistown. Little Casino Creek is located immediately north of the post office. The Reed's Fort Post Office is sheltered by ponderosa pines, cottonwood and spruce trees in a city park setting. Neighboring middle-class homes surround the city park and two rows of trees help to emphasize the boundaries of the property and the log building that were deeded to the city of Lewistown in 1931.

Narrative Description

Reed's Fort Post Office (constructed 1880, one contributing building)

The Reed's Fort Post Office is a square, one-room log cabin measuring 16.5 feet (northwest) x 16.2 feet (northeast) with a low-pitched side-gabled roof. The walls are constructed of hand-hewn square logs and joined at the corners using both steeple or V-notching and square notching. Chinking and daubing consist of cement and wood strips secured with round-head nails. The side-gable roof is supported by five round log purlins and clad with a wooden board and batten roof. The fenestration is simple. There is a single door on the east half of the main façade (south elevation), constructed of vertical boards with top and bottom rails. The door handle is wood and consists of three one-inch sticks fastened in an I-shape. On the west half of the façade next to the entrance door there is a large four-over-four double-hung sash framed with one-inch by four-inch milled lumber. The post office rests on the ground; no foundation is currently associated with the building. However, a U.S. Site Report in 1985 did report stone slabs for a foundation at that time.¹

The interior consists of a single room with exposed log walls and rafters. The floor is dirt. There is no evidence of any interior finishes, or plumbing or electrical improvements.

Originally, the Post Office looked slightly different. Photos from the early 1900s show that the original post office had a board and batten roof, and dilapidated shed roof addition on the north. Also, the front door was constructed of vertical butt-jointed boards with a circular cut-out or large peep hole at eye level. The door was trimmed with 4-inch flat wood. Unfortunately, the original window sash type is unknown as it is missing and boarded over in all existing historic images. Early 1900s views of the façade show that the window had no trim around it.²

Since its construction in 1880, the Reed's Fort Post Office has undergone two restorations. As part of a late-1930s-era Daughters of the American Revolution project, the post office was preserved.³ The original entrance door, roof, window sash and trim, and chinking were all replaced. The roof and front door were clad with unpeeled split logs; the window replaced with a six-over-six double-hung sash; and the window and door frames were finished with four-inch-wide pine boards.

¹ GCM Services, U.S. Site Report #24FR414" (Montana State Historic Preservation Office 1985) 4.

² Analysis of photos in the Lewistown Public Library reveal the changes.

³ Lewis Barrington, *Restorations of the Daughters of the American Revolution* (1941) 197.

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These repairs extended the life of the building until the late 1960s when a local group was organized to again maintain the building, one of Lewistown's oldest best-known landmarks. By 1970, the group had raised enough funds and a volunteer group lead by Les LaTray, the grandson of original builder, Mose LaTray, supervised the 1970 restoration. During this restoration, the logs were dismantled and rotted members were replaced in kind. The window sash, door, chinking, and roof were also replaced in kind, and a stone slab foundation installed. It is reported that Les LaTray tried to maintain the integrity of the building, and he repaired and re-used as many of the original wall and roof logs as possible in the restoration process. Carol La Tray, the widow of Les LaTray, also confirmed this in a 2008 interview with Jim Dullenty of the *Lewistown News Argus*.⁴

Integrity

The Reed's Fort Post Office clearly retains excellent overall integrity sufficient to reflect its period of significance from 1880 to 1885 when it served as Lewistown's first post office. The building still stands in its original location and the setting and feeling remains rural given that the immediate area around the post office was developed into parkland in the 1930s. A large area of grass around the building is well maintained and stands of mature trees screen the view on the north, south, and east from modern development. The nearby housing development, plainly visible northwest of the building does detract from the setting and feeling, though not sufficiently to obscure the setting and feeling, which overwhelmingly indicates that this is a nineteenth century log cabin.

Although the Reed's Fort Post Office has been restored two times over the last 130 years, these efforts have maintained the building's integrity of design, materials, and workmanship of its original builder. The majority of the building's materials are intact, and the replacement logs and woodwork are in keeping with the original. The roof material, door and window sashes have been replaced in kind to resemble the original and appear much as they did when the post office was first photographed in a deteriorated condition in the 1920s. The restoration in 1970 used most of the original building logs with only the lower bottom logs being replaced due to rot. The corner notching was also altered in some cases in order to repair rotted areas. While some of the replacement logs and corner notching do not display the skillful notching original to Mose LaTray's workmanship, the work of his Grandson Les LaTray was executed carefully and the overall design and materials of the original building were fully retained.

As it stands today the integrity embodied in the Reed's Fort Post Office reflects the early days of settlement in Lewistown, the development of mail service in Central Montana, and the building traditions of the Métis people who settled around the Judith Basin.

⁴ Jim Dullenty, "Although Major Reed ran it, Reedsfort Post Office was built by Moses LaTray." *Lewistown News-Argus*, 27 Dec. 2008.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT

Period of Significance

1880-1885

Significant Dates

1880

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Mose LaTray

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance for the Reed's Fort Post Office encompasses its history from the time of construction in 1880 to the end of its operations as a post office in 1885.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

The Reed's Fort Post Office is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A at the local level of significance for its associations with the initial patterns of settlement of Lewistown. It is also eligible for listing under Criterion C as a rare and important example of a traditional log building constructed by a builder of Métis heritage.

The Reed's Fort Post Office, established in 1880, was the first post office in the area that later became Lewistown. One of the oldest buildings in Lewistown, today it is the only remaining building from Alonzo Reed's Reedsfort Homestead. Reed and his partner John Bowles ran the first trading post nearby in the Judith Basin from 1875 to 1880 and Reed was likely responsible for enticing the Métis from the Milk River area to settle in the Judith Basin in 1879. Reed's homestead, store, and post office supplanted the trading post. The Métis community that sprang up around Reedsfort, along with several early cattle and sheep men of the area was the catalyst for the growth and development of Lewistown in the early 1880s.

In addition, the post office gains significance given that it was built by Mose LaTray, a Métis carpenter, and one of nearly 300 Métis who settled on Big Spring Creek between 1879 and 1880. The Red River Métis that settled here were known for their building expertise, particularly their Red River Carts, but also as one of the few native tribes of the northern plains in the 1870s and 1880s to build and maintain permanent homes. Though their buildings were simple log cabins with little or no ornamentation, the Reed's Fort Post Office is one of a few documented Métis buildings that stand in North America and still reflects well the traditions of Métis builders and the frontier architecture of a Montana territorial post office.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

In the years before 1880 when cattlemen, mixed-blood Native Americans, and white settlers moved into Central Montana, the Judith Basin was frequented by a number of Native American tribes of the region, including the Blackfeet, Gros Ventre and Assiniboines from the north and east and the Crows to the southeast. This area was a traditional hunting ground for the Flatheads and Nez Perce as they traveled across the Trail to the Buffalo in the summer and fall, to provision themselves with meat and other food for the winter. As buffalo and other game became scarce elsewhere, the Sioux from the east and others frequented the region more intensively for hunting and trading.⁵

Interest in the native lands of the western U.S. began with the first European explorers, the de la Verendrye Expedition, who in 1743 followed the Missouri River westward. Approximately sixty years later, the American expedition Corps of Discovery, led by Captains Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, passed through north central Montana, again along the Missouri River in 1805 and during their 1806 return to the United States.⁶

For the following several decades, the Missouri River remained the primary form of travel for the fur traders who entered the area seeking beaver pelts. During this formative period, Euro-American fur trappers began to establish a foothold along the Missouri River to further economic aims. In 1822, Fort Union (then Fort Floyd) was completed near the confluence of the Missouri and Yellowstone rivers, and trappers used this post as a base to gradually penetrate the upstream corridor. In 1831, James Kipp of the American Fur Company constructed Fort Piegan at the mouth of the Marias River in order to conduct trade with the Blackfeet people who controlled the region. While this fort only lasted one season, it inspired a series of forts over the coming years. The American Fur Company's outpost at Fort Benton opened for business in 1846, and soon rose to prominence as the head of navigation on the Missouri River.⁷

⁵ Oscar Mueller, "Reed, Bowles Played Part in Judith Basin History" *Great Falls Tribune* (March 29, 1931).

⁶ Jim Jenks, "National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form, The Naylor Ranch" (August 11, 2008) 15.

⁷ *Ibid.*

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In 1858, gold was first discovered in Montana on Gold Creek, in the northern portion of Deer Lodge Valley. This and other discoveries transformed Fort Benton, hurt by the dying fur trade, into a bustling port and supply center. Steamboats first docked at the fort in 1860, and new roads connected the outpost with regional mining centers. By 1865, the American Fur Company ended its Fort Benton business interest, and the town settled into a role as a supplier to the mining industry and infant agricultural settlements.⁸

Through the 1860s and 1870s, the U.S. military waged numerous campaigns in Montana and adjacent territories against native people, in an effort to restrict them to increasingly reduced land bases and open more territory for mineral extraction, transportation routes, railroad building and settlement. During the summer of 1872, the Northern Pacific Railroad sent parties to survey potential rail routes through the Missouri and Yellowstone drainages. By 1873, miners and prospectors had entered the southeastern portion of Crow territory, undeterred by treaty boundaries, and were scouring the region for minerals. Negotiations for a possible Central Montana Crow Indian reservation in 1873 promised to change the map of central Montana Territory.⁹

Construction of Fort Sherman

The trading opportunities presented by the possibility of a new Crow Indian reserve in Central Montana Territory interested white businessmen and drew Nelson Story and Charles W. Hoffman to the treaty negotiations. Story, a pioneer Gallatin Valley rancher and Hoffman, a former Northwestern Fur company employee, had actually been engaged in trade with the Crow since 1870, trading at the Mission Creek Crow agency on the Yellowstone. Both were present in the summer of 1873 when a commission was sent to negotiate with the River and Mountain Crow to persuade them to move and accept a small reserve in the Judith Basin for both bands. The Crow recognized it was too small to support their numbers, but acquiesced in August of 1873, in discussions with the commission. Papers drawn up indicated the Crow's position through their interpreters, with Nelson Story and Charles Hoffman signators as witnesses.¹⁰

In the fall of 1873, Story and Hoffman had retained Peter Koch to travel north from Bozeman with a bull train of materials to "build, stock and manage" a trading post. He sited the new camp on the west side of Big Spring Creek, just north of Little Casino Creek and named it Fort Sherman. He built the first standing structures in the Judith Basin.

As Koch later related:

"A site was selected just below the mouth of Big Casino Creek, on the south bank of Big Spring Creek, and when the ox train with the goods and supplies had arrived I built there, during November and December, 1873, the first permanent houses within the Judith Basin. While waiting in idleness for the arrival of the train, the boys put in most of their time with an old deck of cards, playing casino, and we accordingly named the creek we were camped on "Big Casino" and a little spring creek just below " Little Casino," and I was much amused years after on seeing Colonel Ludlow's map that these names had been perpetuated.

The basin was then the finest game country I ever saw, swarming with buffalo, elk, and deer. The white-tail deer were especially plentiful in the pine coulees which ran down through the foothills from the mountains, and their tameness showed that they had been very little hunted. Small bands of Crows came in to trade all through the winter, and we had considerable trouble from war parties of Sioux who came in to steal horses. One white man was killed by them.¹¹

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Robert Dissly, *History of Lewistown* (Lewistown, News Argus Printing) 12-17.

¹⁰ John S. Gray, *Custer's Last Campaign: Mitch Boyer and the Little Bighorn Reconstructed* (University of Nebraska Press, 1991) 100.

¹¹ Walter Harvey Weed, Louis Valentine Pirsson, as quoted in *Geology and Mineral Resources of the Judith Mountains of Montana* (U.S. Gov't. Printing Office, 1898) 448-449.

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The plan for a Crow reservation in this part of Montana did not materialize, and soon after Story and Hoffman sold Fort Sherman to T.L. Dawes.¹² Koch went on to report . . .

“I left there in March, 1874, when it became evident that the removal of the Crows would not take place, and T. L. Dawes took charge of the post, which I had named Fort Sherman.

That year Carroll was established on the Missouri River, and a wagon road was opened from that point to Helena, running through the basin. Meanwhile Major Reed, an old Indian trader, had purchased the trading store from Story and Hoffman and moved it down Big Spring Creek about a mile and a half, to the crossing of the Carroll road, where it became known as Reed's Fort, and a hard place it was.”¹³

By the Spring of 1875, Alonzo S. Reed and John J. Bowles had positioned the Reed & Bowles Trading Post to take advantage of what they hoped would be brisk traffic along the much anticipated Carroll Trail. In moving the post down river, they purposely located it farther away from the newly established Camp Lewis, a summer camp for Company F of the Seventh U.S. Infantry dispatched to guard travelers on the Carroll Trail. Away from the watchful eye of the military, the partners could carry on with their lucrative, but illegal trade of liquor and firearms with the passing tribes.¹⁴

Though the Carroll Trail ceased to be a viable freight route after 1875, Reed and Bowles remained, running a brisk business trading with passing tribes, hunters, and trappers. Accounts of visitors to the Reed & Bowles Trading Post were numerous and ranged from big game hunters such as Englishman and insatiable sport hunter Charles A. Messiter, to unsavory hunter “Liver-Eating” Johnson, and nearby trader Pike Landusky.¹⁵ Also, George Bird Grinnell, American anthropologist, naturalist and early-day conservationist along with Captain William Ludlow stopped at Reed and Bowles store in 1875 on their way to explore the newly created Yellowstone National Park for the U.S. Army. Ludlow and Grinnell later became well known for their report on Yellowstone, which was instrumental in establishing enforced protection of the natural resources of the park.¹⁶

On September 21, 1877 the Nez Perce stopped near the post for provisions on their 1,100 mile flight from Wallowa as they sought to find refuge from the U. S. Army. The buffalo hunters of the tribe were quite familiar with the post, having traveled the many trails and campgrounds of the basin, well known to tribes from all over the Northwest.

“Heading due north toward Canada . . . they [Nez Perce] rode through country familiar to many of their buffalo hunters and on the night of September 21 camped near the Reed and Bowles Stockade . . . Some of the hunters had traded with Reed in the past, and they rode over to see him, spending the evening in a friendly way and telling him of some of their exploits and adventures. The next day they continued on, following the Snowy Mountain foothills and heading down Dog Creek.”¹⁷

The Nez Perce hurriedly moved out of the Judith Basin that day and on to cross the Missouri River at Cow Island on September 23rd.¹⁸

In the years after 1877, Reed and Bowles continued to trade with trappers and white and native hunters, and witnessed the coming influx of ranchers into the Judith Basin as stockmen like Frank Chamberlain, David Hilger, H. P. Brooks, T. C. Power and J.H. McKnight trailed cattle into today's Fergus County. In 1877, rancher Frank Chamberlain moved the first substantial amounts of cattle into today's Fergus County, establishing his herd along today's McDonald Creek.¹⁹ By

¹² Bozeman Avant Courier, March 6, 1874.

¹³ Ibid, Weed and Pirsson.

¹⁴ Ibid, Dissly 16.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ John F. Reiger, *The Passing of the Great West: selected papers of George Bird Grinnell* (Winchester Press 1972) 113-114.

¹⁷ Alvin M. Josephy, *The Nez Perce Indians and the Opening of the Northwest*. (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt 1997) 613.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Jenks 16.

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1883 some 33,000 cattle grazed within a twenty-mile radius of Spring Creek, and by 1885 the number of sheep and cattle within sixty miles of the creek increased to approximately 100,000 each.²⁰

Rapid change in the landscape and economics of the Judith Basin occurred between 1880 and 1885. The first mention of change came in a June 1879 news brief in the Helena Independent. "Reed & Bowles have quite a large field of corn growing on their ranch near old Camp Lewis, Judith basin" (sic). The brief note indicates the beginning of agriculture in the region, and also goes on to introduce the Red River Métis (may-tee). A few lines below the mention of Reed and Bowles, the editors note that "Seventeen families of the Red river half breeds who arrived in the Judith basin recently, from the North, have located on Big Spring Creek, on the south side of the Judith, where they say they will build homes this season."²¹

The "Red river half breeds" referred to were the Métis people, descendants of French Canadian fur traders who married Chippewa and Cree women. The Métis culture that resulted was rich and vibrant, centered around trade among many nations in a period of great upheaval. They established trading centers, pursued agriculture, hunted and trapped, and functioned as translators and intermediaries between native and non-native cultures.²²

According to Métis history, through the 1850s to the 1870s, the Métis settlers on the plains in Pembina (now northwestern North Dakota) pursued the hunting traditions of their Indian ancestors, following and hunting buffalo to provision their families. Many traveled seasonally into the northeastern and central parts of Montana, in the Milk and Missouri River drainages. In 1870, 25 of the Pembina families set out in their screeching all-wood wagons known as the Red River Carts. The families crossed North Dakota and lived in the Milk River country in northeastern Montana near Malta for almost seven years.²³

The group was living near Chinook and the Bear's Paw when the Nez Perce surrendered there to the U.S. Army in 1877. Two years later, with game under pressure and growing scarce, they faced a decision.

"Pierre Berger, leader of the group, called the members around him to discuss the situation. He recalled that previously a Cree Indian had told him of a spot across the Missouri River where small game and wild birds were abundant and where the grass grew high. The land sounded promising and so, in May, 1879, twenty-five families left the familiar Milk River area in their squeaking carts and started for this new region. As it was necessary for them to go by way of Fort Benton and then eastward until they came to the Judith Mountains, it took most of the summer for the group to make the journey.

Here at their destination, the Judith Basin looked fertile and inviting. Berger decided that this area would make an excellent home site. The twenty-five families built cabins and hurriedly made preparations for the approaching winter. True to the description given by the Cree, game was plentiful. So, during the decade of the 1880s ... the Spring Creek colony flourished. Soon Janeaux established a trading post for them; in time other establishments sprang up and a colorful Montana frontier village, destined to become the town of Lewistown, was born."²⁴

An alternative account for the Métis moving into the Judith was related regarding Ben Kline, a prominent Métis leader of the Lewistown community. According to this account, Alonzo Reed played a role in convincing the Métis of the attractions of the Judith country.

The moving of the band from the Milk River country to the Judith Basin was the result of the discovery in the winter of 1878-79 by Frank Daignon and John Laverdure of some horses belonging to Major Reed of the Reed

²⁰ Martha Harroun Foster, *We Know Who We Are: Métis Identity in a Montana Community* (University of Oklahoma Press 2006) 158.

²¹ Helena Independent, 6 June 1879, 3.

²² Verne Dusenberry, *Waiting for a Day That Never Comes* (Montana The Magazine of Western History Volume 8, No. 2) 27.

²³ Dusenberry 30.

²⁴ Dusenberry 31.

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and Bowles trading post. When notified of the find, Reed, accompanied by Matt Sitteljin, a Canadian, went to the Métis camp in January 1879 to identify the horses.

During his visit, Reed told the Métis of the beautiful country in which he lived - a basin surrounded by mountains with fine streams full of fish, game in abundance and large herds of buffalo roaming the whole of the basin. His description so stirred the imagination of the hunters that they decided to move immediately to the new hunting grounds.²⁵

Three bands of Métis became the first group of people to permanently settle along Big Spring Creek, in the headwaters of the Basin in the summer of 1879. In 1880, Francis Janeaux, leading Métis figure and licensed trader, established a trading post in what would later develop into Lewistown (the corner of Third Avenue North and Broadway).²⁶

Reed's Fort Post Office

With the establishment of Janeaux's trading post and the arrival of white ranchers in the basin, Reed and Bowles dissolved their trading post business in 1880, and Reed filed on a homestead southeast of the post. There he built a cabin, trading store and post office at the south boundary of Janeaux's homestead land, near Little Casino Creek. The post office was constructed on his property with the help of carpenter, Mose LaTray, one of the Métis that had arrived from the Milk River settlement. The post office, officially established January 6, 1881 was the first in the Judith Basin and was for three years the only means of communication with others in the territory and the U.S. Here, Reed received and distributed mail and continued trade with passing tribes, travelers, and the few ranchers in the area at the time, despite the fact that he was in direct competition with Janeaux, whose trading post was located less than one mile away.²⁷

Reports of Reed running a less than organized and honest operation led Janeaux to circulate a petition to have the post office moved to his post location. Though the petitions came to nothing, Reed (perhaps sensing the end of an era) sold the Reedsfort property in 1882 to Frank Day and Jacob Holzemer, Euro-American ranchers. Day became the second postmaster of Reed's Fort, foreshadowing the shift of power to white ranchers. Reed left the area and later moved to Billings. The same year that Reed left the Judith Basin, Janeaux proved up on his homestead claim and platted a portion of it for a village. Dr. L.A. LaPalme laid out the townsite, using Janeaux's fence line as a starting point. Several others of Janeaux's Milk River band had settled on homesteads and built homes. A school was established and Catholic missionaries regularly visited and held services in Janeaux's home.²⁸

But just as Janeaux and his people appeared to be establishing a foothold in developing a Métis community, he was forced to give up everything to his supplier, powerful Helena merchant, T.C. Power. Janeaux was in debt for over \$5,000 in merchandise, and agreed to turn over all buildings, merchandise, and land necessary to settle his debt. N.M. Erickson was dispatched to take over the operation and develop a town. Erickson and others petitioned for a "Lewistown" post office and abandonment of Reed's Fort. The effort was successful and on May 15, 1884, the management of the Reed's Fort Post Office was officially transferred to the postmaster of the Lewistown Post Office. Mail continued to be delivered to both post offices until August 24, 1885, when the Reed's Fort Post Office was officially closed.²⁹ Since then the building has remained vacant, and has not been known to serve any other function, except as a local historic landmark.

Despite its short tenure as a post office, the little log cabin that held the Reed's Fort post office was a key impetus and backbone in the development of Lewistown. The building, with its ties to early trading post operator, Alonzo Reed, and

²⁵ George D. Mueller, "Ben D. Kline: A True Leader of the Métis" *Lewistown News Argus* (December 12, 1999 Christmas Edition). Accessed Feb 20, <http://fergus.mtgenweb.org/ben-kline.htm>

²⁶ *Ibid* Foster 94.

²⁷ Robert Dissly, *History of Lewistown*. (News Argus Printing 2000) 7,12.

²⁸ *Ibid*.

²⁹ Ellen and Ken Sievert, *A Guide to Historic Lewistown* (Montana Historical Society Press 1999)6.

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to the fledging Métis community who first built and settled in the region, tells the many layered story that chronicles the end of the territorial trading posts, the beginning of white settlement and our now familiar agricultural towns.

Early Development of Lewistown and Architectural Significance

The area that is now Lewistown was originally divided into two enclaves, Janeaux's Post and Reedsfort. The settlements claimed a population of about 300 residents in 1880, according to U.S. Census records. The majority of its residents claimed French-Canadian or Canadian ancestry and their race (in most cases) was designated by the enumerator as Indian, indicating their Métis heritage. Historian Martha Harroun Foster indicates that the Métis men engaged primarily in trading immediately applied for homesteads located centrally near Janeaux's post, and the hunting families spread out and located a few miles east, not applying for homestead lands until years later.

“As they settled in the fall of 1879 and spring of 1880, certain residential patterns became evident. The trader group built homes and a trading post on Spring Creek about three miles south of the crossing of the Carroll Trail. Francis Janeaux, leader of the traders, Paul Morase, Pierre Laverdure, and Antoine Ouellette immediately took advantage of the promising location by applying for homesteads near the post on land that is now within Lewistown city limits. By doing so they became the town's founders.”³⁰

Relatively few of the hunting families applied for homesteads until after 1886 given the cash requirements and the inconvenience of travel over 100 miles to the land office in White Sulphur Springs. “Undertaking such a project required not only an appreciation of legal title, but also a need for such title. Of the hunting families, only the Bergers and Wilkies applied for homestead land by 1883.” Fifteen Métis hunting families applied for homesteads between 1886 and 1899. In total, 50 Métis applied for homesteads, and 32 “proved up” by meeting the Homestead Act requirements -- a success rate far above the national average of 30 percent. Foster's analysis of homestead records also shows that “The popular notion that U.S. Métis were excluded from participation in the Homestead Act provisions is not supportable. To the contrary, most of the Spring Creek band did file on homestead land and, in a few years, met the requirements and received their final certificates and deeds.”³¹

The first buildings constructed in the Reedsfort settlement were likely built by or with the help of Métis builders like Mose LaTray, who were known for their expertise in cutting and building with wood. LaTray was one of a group of Métis “woodhawks” so named because they made a living cutting wood in the winter and trading it or selling it at the posts and river towns the rest of the year.³² LaTray also built the first Lewistown Post Office, as well as other homes in Lewistown, Giltedge, and Maiden.³³ In addition, the Red River Métis were well known for their Red River carts, all wood wagons used to carry their household goods from camp to camp. The Métis also came to be known as one of only a few native tribes on the Northern Plains of the 1870s and 1880s that built permanent homes and community buildings.

“The housing of the Métis was copied directly from their fathers. In the settlements, they lived in one-story houses, often gaudily painted. While on the plains hunting, they used tents. Frequently, however, their hunts took them far to the west, particularly along the Milk River in Montana, and since the distance was too great for them to return to the Red River . . . the Métis built frontier cabins, generally of cottonwood, there. They plastered the interior with clay mixed with buffalo hair and, in one corner of the building, they always built a fireplace, likewise cemented with clay. Scraped skins of buffalo calves, carefully worked until they were translucent, covered the windows. Floors were left bare. Just as their Indian ancestors placed tipis in a circle, so did the Métis build cabins, but in the center of the enclosure they built a large structure with puncheon floors.”³⁴

³⁰ Foster 104.

³¹ Foster 110.

³² Babbie Deal and Loretta MacDonald, eds. Heritage Book of Central Montana (Fergus County Bi-Centennial Heritage Committee 1976) 229.

³³ Foster 139. Mose LaTray also served as undertaker at Fort Maginnis, and, since he spoke five Indian languages plus French, acted as interpreter.

³⁴ Dusenberry 28. Puncheon refers to the hard packed floors of the larger building, used by the Metis for dances.

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Another description of traditional Métis housing gives more detail about the materials. "These dwellings were one or one and a half stories, with a thatched roof, consisting of either shingles or planks topped with sod, upon a fieldstone foundation. Mud or clay filled spaces between the logs, making the houses watertight and windproof. Each home had a ground floor, an attic (common sleeping room), and two rooms, which served as kitchen and dining room while the other was for living and sleeping." Interior walls were usually whitewashed with a mixture of lime and clay.³⁵ Examples of Métis cabins in Manitoba and Saskatchewan all share striking similarities in their size, simple log walls, sod roof, and symmetrical placement of windows and doors.³⁶

Although the Reed's Fort Post Office was not meant to be a dwelling it was constructed in the same manner. Skillfully built by Mose LaTray, it is representative of the type of building traditionally built by the Red River Métis. LaTray took the time to shape the logs into square members using an ax and adze and joined the four walls at the corners with consistent and clean steeple or V-notches. Square and evenly notched log always made for a tighter log wall that required less chinking and insulation for winter warmth and comfort. Also, this extra effort along with the consistency of the log sizes and uniform corner notching indicates that LaTray was skilled at his trade. Though the post office was restored and the log walls lost some of the quality of the workmanship wrought by LaTray, this building continues to symbolize the type of traditional building constructed by the first Métis to settle along Big Spring Creek and is a tangible symbol of the architecture of the formative days before Lewistown was established.

Today, nineteenth century examples of Red River Métis cabins are rare to find in Canada as efforts to upgrade the quality of life for native populations there in the 1960s and 1970s resulted in many Métis moving into modern homes or urban apartment houses. A few Métis log cabins that survived in Manitoba were restored and are now National Historic Landmarks.³⁷ At this writing, there have been no known efforts to document the building traditions of the Métis in Central and Northern Montana. Further research into Métis building traditions in Montana may reveal more information on the development of their building style and its impact to Montana's territorial landscape.

Reed's Fort Post Office After 1885

The small, one-room log building that was the Reed's Fort Post Office remained abandoned on Day's property for many years. In 1919, the Lewistown's Woman's Club asked Mr. Day if they could purchase the log building for its historical significance and Day agreed. Finally on March 12, 1931, the deed for the Reed's Fort Post Office and 0.132 acres surrounding the building was transferred to the City of Lewistown. A dedication ceremony was held in September 1931, to acknowledge Reed's Fort Post Office as a historical landmark. A bronze tablet affixed to a large boulder was donated by the Anaconda Copper Company to the Julia Hancock Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) for this special event. This original marker remains in relatively good condition today in front of Reed's Fort Post Office.

Sometime in the late 1930s the post office was restored by the local DAR chapter. The look of the building changed slightly with the addition of a split-log roof and split-log front door. When the project was complete the post office was listed as a historical place in *Historic Restorations of the Daughters of the American Revolution*, and indicated that the building was open daily.³⁸ By the fall of 1967 the building was again in poor condition and a local group organized to save the building. In the spring of 1970 enough money was collected to repair the crumbling walls and roof of the log building. Les LaTray, grandson of Mose LaTray, the original carpenter who built the Reed's Fort Post Office, volunteered his services to supervise the restoration. LaTray dismantled the building and re-built it on concrete footers using most of the salvagable logs. The split-log roof was replaced with a board and batten roof, constructed to look like the original roof. Also, the front door was replaced with one more in keeping with the original door.

³⁵Todd Paquin and Patrick Young, "Traditional Métis Housing and Shelter," (Gabriel Dumont Institute 2003) 4. Available at <http://www.metismuseum.ca/resource.php/00720>.

³⁶ Examples of Métis log cabins found at http://firstpeoplesofcanada.com/fp_metis/fp_metis2.html

³⁷ Paquin and Young, 8.

³⁸ Barrington 197.

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In July 1970, when the repairs were almost completed, vandals tore down part of the log walls and the work stopped for a few months. Finally the building was roofed just as the first snow fell in the winter of 1970.³⁹ Since then it has been well maintained by the City of Lewistown.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

Native American Occupation

The Judith Basin was a traditional hunting ground for the Flatheads and Nez Perce as they traveled across the Trail to the Buffalo in the summer and fall, to provision themselves with meat and other food for the winter. These lands were frequented by the Blackfeet, Gros Ventre and Assiniboines from the north and east and the Crows to the southeast. As buffalo and other game became scarce elsewhere, the Sioux from the East and others frequented the region more intensively for hunting and trading.⁴⁰

The movement of various Plains tribes through the region made Central Montana and the Judith Basin an important area for trade, into which the Crow quickly established themselves. Crow trade, although centered in the Montana/Wyoming area, essentially linked them to both sides of the continent, a comment on the extensive Indian trade networks. The region, then, and the associated large-scale waterways of the Missouri and Musselshell rivers, formed a portion of the critical transportation corridors that maintained thriving Crow trade networks.⁴¹

The Blackfeet initially opposed the American fur trappers who followed Lewis and Clark after 1806, and successfully resisted attempts by Americans to open fur trade outposts in their country. Finally, in 1832, the American Fur Company opened an outpost, Fort Piegan, on the Missouri River near the mouth of the Marias River. By then, the Blackfeet tempered their dislike for these intruders, enjoying the goods that traders offered. Besides access to trade, the Blackfeet ranged widely throughout the Missouri country using the region's resources.⁴²

Relations with the traders deteriorated when the Gros Ventre came to view the Europeans as allies of their enemies. Clashes with traders, as well as continued conflict with the Cree and Assiniboine, worsened their condition, and by the early 1800s the tribe was moving south. By 1830, the Gros Ventre established a territory that stretched from southern Canada's "Cypress Hills to the Judith River and Bear Paw Mountains...down the Missouri and the Musselshell rivers on the east." After this relocation, relations with traders improved. Beginning in 1831, the tribe traded peacefully with the American Fur Company outposts on the Missouri River, where the tribe grew rich in horses and goods.⁴³

By the time of the Stevens Treaty of 1855, the central Montana region was used by all of these native people, but under the treaty it was reserved for the Blackfeet. This was a period of great upheaval for native people in the region, as Euro-American interests increased pressures on Indian territories, and natural and mineral resources. Non-Indian traders, miners, and agriculturists all increasingly looked at central and northern Montana as a last frontier where fortunes could be made.⁴⁴

The Carroll Trail and Reed and Bowles

The Carroll Trail was the short-lived brainstorm of enterprising promoters and merchants from Helena who sought to shorten the distance and lessen the costs of freight from Fort Benton, then Montana's shipping center. While the distance between Fort Benton and Helena was 140 miles and the distance between Carroll and the future Capitol was 70 miles further, the Carroll Road was advertised as much less difficult to travel, saving an estimated ten days. Steamboats could also get to Carroll more quickly, given that Benton was further upriver.⁴⁵

³⁹ Ibid Dullenty.

⁴⁰ Ibid, Mueller, "Reed, Bowles . . ."

⁴¹ Ibid, Jenks 13.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Jenks 14.

⁴⁴ Sievert, *A Guide to Historic Lewistown*, 6.

⁴⁵ Michael J. Koury, *Guarding the Carroll Trail and Camp Lewis, 1874-1875*. (Fort Collins: The Old Army Press, 1985) 9.

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In 1873, the Diamond R Freight Company established the Carroll landing as a reliable head of navigation on the Missouri River to access Helena, and promoted the Carroll Trail as the most reliable route for getting supplies to and from the new capital of Montana Territory. In 1874, the Diamond R convinced the U.S. Army to establish a series of posts along the Carroll Trail to protect it from Indian raids. Camp Lewis was located on Big Spring Creek in nearly the exact location of Fort Sherman, which Reed & Bowles had just moved down river. Low water on the Missouri in 1874 and 1875 made Carroll an attractive port that summer, but freighters soon discovered that the Carroll Road was actually *more* difficult to travel than the Fort Benton Road to Helena. Gumbo-mud roads made travel incredibly laborious.⁴⁶

Further, Lakota Sioux warriors took advantage of the feeble protection provided by the over-stretched infantry troops along the route, with bloodshed and horse-stealing a growing occurrence. High water in 1876 allowed most steamboats to continue to Fort Benton's better port facilities, and the Carroll Trail was left completely unprotected when most troops took to the field when the Great Sioux War erupted in southeastern Montana. The Carroll Trail was a failure, and except for local traffic, freighting along it never revived. Carroll was abandoned by 1880 and later was washed away by Missouri River flooding.⁴⁷

The Métis and Louis Riel in Montana

Simultaneous with the move of the Milk River Métis to Spring Creek in 1879, the revered Métis leader of the 1869 Manitoba Resistance, Louis Riel, joined the remaining Milk River Métis at their hunting camp north of the Missouri River. He was soon elected as leader to represent them and secure permission from military and reservation agents for the band to hunt on what was then, in part, Assiniboine, Gros Ventres, and Sioux reservation land. Without permission, the hunters would be in danger of expulsion to Canada. Although some military officials welcomed a strong Métis presence as a deterrent to Indian warfare, military officials also feared that Riel might unite the Indians and Métis and become a military threat in the region. Despite the suspicion, Riel was given permission, but officials demanded that the hunters return to Canada in the spring.⁴⁸

Riel did not return to Canada after the 1879 hunt given that he was denied amnesty by the Canadian government. Forced to remain in the U.S., he pursued the alliances that the military feared, attempting to organize a confederation of Indians and Métis. Although his attempts to organize various tribes failed, his vision soon morphed into the first effort to establish a Montana land base for the Métis people. He prepared a petition, signed by the adult males then hunting in the area, asking for a 'special reservation . . . for the halfbreeds.'⁴⁹

Riel's request indicated that the Métis did not wish to live on an "Indian-style" reservation and intended his people to be self supporting. He asked that the people own their own land individually as other settlers did under the various government land acts in place. He also offered that the Métis held a unique position "between the civilized and uncivilized man", able to better influence neighboring tribes than whites. Of the 101 men who signed the petition, twenty-four were members of the Spring Creek band, five more settled with the band in the 1880s, and at least ten others were parents, siblings, children, or cousins of band members. Although the petition was favored by Colonel Miles at Fort Keogh, influential Crow Indian agent, A.R. Keller opposed the plan, and the Department of the Interior rejected it.⁵⁰ It was not until 1916 that the Chippewa Cree were granted the Rocky Boys Indian Reservation to the east, and today, more than a century later, descendents of the Spring Creek and other Métis groups affiliated with the Little Shell Cree continue to press for federal recognition as a culturally-distinct sovereign Indian nation.

Riel remained in the basin at Carroll until 1883 working as a trader for the T.C. Power Company. Deplorable relations between the Métis and whites at Carroll distracted Riel's efforts to establish a reservation, and he instead pursued a futile fight to restrict the sale of liquor to his people. Joseph Kinsey Howard notes in his seminal work, *Strange Empire* that

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Foster 94.

⁴⁹ Foster 95.

⁵⁰ Foster 97,99.

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had Riel instead located himself amongst the Spring Creek Métis who were peaceful and had a tradition of education "his future might have been very different."⁵¹ Riel moved on and taught school for two years at St. Peter's Mission. In 1885 he went back to Canada to fight for Métis rights in Saskatchewan, but was jailed, tried for treason, and executed by the Canadian government.⁵²

Despite the failure of Riel to establish a Montana Métis reservation, Spring Creek settlers moved ahead with plans to establish a permanent settlement in the Judith Basin, following the laws of the U.S. government and the business practices of the controlling white merchants in Helena and Fort Benton. Their early efforts were successful and the community thrived from 1880 to 1883 when the buffalo in the Judith Basin still remained plentiful. Janeaux's supplier was powerful Helena merchant, T.C. Power, with whom Janeaux, Riel and others trusted and had good relations.

However, by 1883 the buffalo had been hunted to near extinction and the cattlemen quickly moved thousands of cattle into the Judith Basin region. Janeaux, heavily in debt, turned all of his assets over to T.C. Power, thereby turning over his townsite to white merchants and cattlemen. After 1883, other community members survived by taking up work elsewhere on ranches, as freighters or day laborers. Though many Métis were successful in owning and operating small homesteads in the area, they were far less influential in the development of Lewistown after 1885.⁵³

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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⁵¹ Joseph Kinsey Howard, *Strange Empire* (Westport, CN Greenwood Press, Publishers 1952) 344-345.

⁵² Howard 562.

⁵³ Foster 135.

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Sievert, Ellen and Ken. *A Guide to Historic Lewistown*. Helena: Montana Historical Society Press 1999.

Weed, Walter Harvey and Louis Valentine Pirsson. *Geology and Mineral Resources of the Judith Mountains of Montana*. Washington, D.C. U.S. Gov't. Printing Office 1898.

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 # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository: Montana Preservation Alliance

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): 24FR414

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than 1 acre
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>12</u>	<u>619741</u>	<u>5212616</u>	3	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	4	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The following boundary description is in the original deed of the property that was given to the city: The property runs North 43° 40' West 64.78 feet; thence North 88° 40' West 58.01 feet more or less to a point on the East Boundary line of 7th Avenue South; thence South 15° 30' East along said East line 102.4 feet to the Northwest corner of Park Addition. Thence North 56° 11' East 90.7 feet to the place of beginning. The property included the Reed's Fort Post Office building and ample property surrounding the building for a city park.

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The Reed's Fort Park, where the Reed's Fort Post Office is situated, is located just east of Casino Creek Drive and just south of Little Casino Creek within the city limits of Lewistown, Montana.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The triangular-shaped park is defined by a private driveway on the eastern boundary running north off of 7th Avenue with a row of hedges running from the private driveway to Little Casino Creek. The facade faces Casino Creek Drive which is the western boundary for the park. The southern boundary of the park is defined by a row of hedges along W. Shields Street and connects with the southwest boundary of hedges adjacent to the property of a residential home on the southwest corner of the park.

Reed's Fort Post Office
Name of Property

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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Christine Wiltberger Brown and Chere Justo
organization Montana Preservation Alliance date March 21, 2010
street & number 120 Reeder's Alley telephone 406-457-2822
city or town Helena state MT zip code 59601
e-mail Christine@preservemontana.org

With assistance from Sue Brown-Moseman, Lewistown Historic Preservation Commission, 902 W Evelyn, Lewistown, MT 59457.
Funded by the Historic Preservation Fund and Montana Land Title Association Foundation, National Register Property Fund, administered by the Montana State Historic Preservation Office.

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

See Continuation Sheets

Property Owner:

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name City of Lewistown
street & number 305 W. Watson telephone 406-535-1760
city or town Lewistown state MT zip code 59457

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

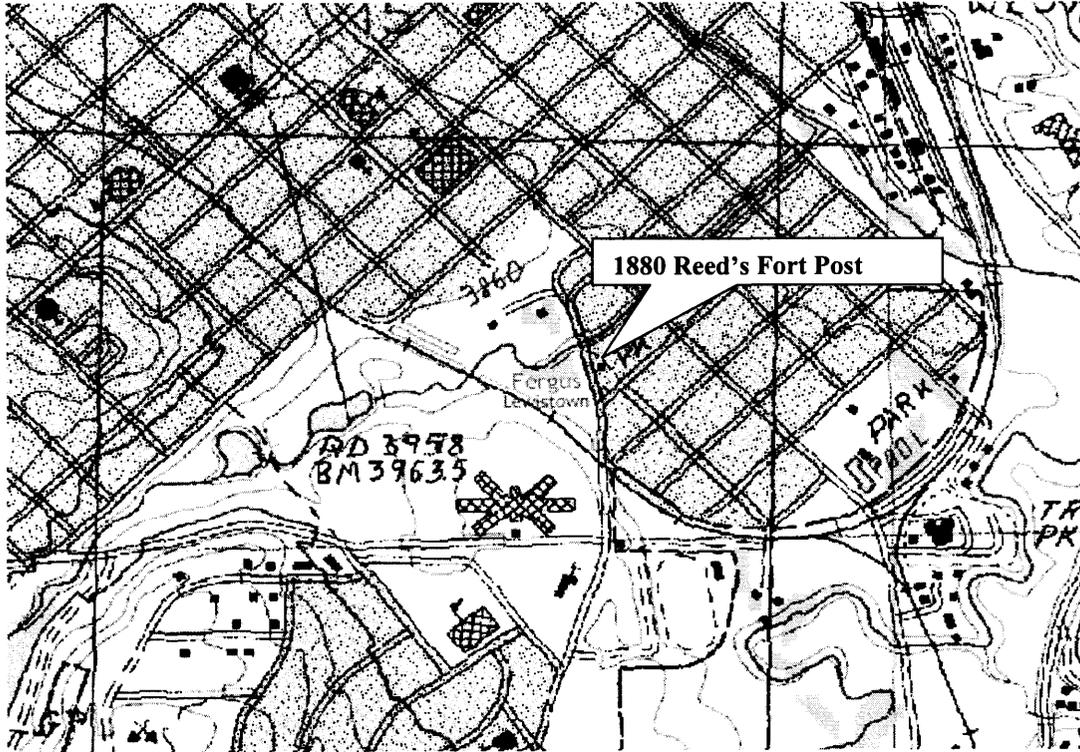
Reed's Fort Post Office
Name of Property
Fergus County, Montana
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Additional Documentation: Maps

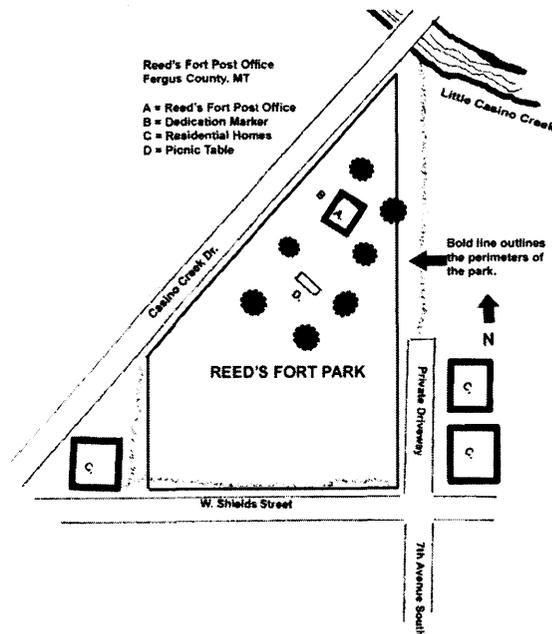
Page 1

USGS Map



7.5' Lewistown, MT Quadrangle, Provisional Edition 1985

Sketch Map



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Reed's Fort Post Office
Name of Property
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Additional Documentation: Photographs

Page 1

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

0001 of 0024

Name: Reed's Fort Post Office

County and State: Fergus County, Montana

Photographer: Unknown (Image is in the book titled "History of Montana 1739-1885".)

Date of Photograph: Unknown

Description: "Sketch of Reedsfort at Little Casino Creek". The Reed's Fort Post Office marked as #5 in the illustration. The sketch is in the book "History of Montana 1739-1885".

View of sketch: Looking West

Location of original scanned image: Lewistown Public Library

0002 of 0024

Name: Reed's Fort Post Office

County and State: Fergus County, Montana

Photographer: Unknown

Date of Photograph: ca. 1920

Description: Reed's Fort Post Office. This is a scan of an original photo that is in the historic photo collection at the Lewistown public library.

View of photo: Looking Northeast

Location of original photograph: Lewistown Public Library

0003 of 0024

Name: Reed's Fort Post Office

County and State: Fergus County, Montana

Photographer: Unknown

Date of Photograph: ca. 1920

Description: Reed's Fort Post Office, ca. 1920. This is a scan of an original photo that is in the historic photo collection at the Lewistown public library.

View of photo: Looking East

Location of original photograph: Lewistown Public Library

0004 of 0024

Name: Reed's Fort Post Office

County and State: Fergus County, Montana

Photographer: Unknown

Date of Photograph: ca. 1935, before restoration

Description: Reed's Fort Post Office, ca. 1935. This is a scan of an original photo that is in the historic photo collection at the Lewistown public library.

View of photo: Looking Southeast

Location of original photograph: Lewistown Public Library

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Reed's Fort Post Office
Name of Property Fergus County, Montana
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Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Additional Documentation: Photographs

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0005 of 0024

Name: Reed's Fort Post Office

County and State: Fergus County, Montana

Photographer: William H. Culver

Date of Photograph: September 17, 1931

Description: Daughters of the American Revolution, Julia Hancock Chapter, Dedication Ceremony, Sept. 17, 1931.

Pictured L to R (back row): W.H. Culver (photographer), unknown, David Hilger, Ben Kline, George Gilpatrick, Joe C. King I, Fred Colver, Oden Romunstad, unknown, unknown, unknown. Front row L to R: unknown, unknown, Mrs.

Beatty, Mercy Jackson, Mrs. E. A. Long.

View of photo: Looking East

Location of original photograph: Lewistown Public Library

0006 of 0024

Name: Reed's Fort Post Office

County and State: Fergus County, Montana

Photographer: William H. Culver

Date of Photograph: September 17, 1931

Description: View of crowd at Daughters of the American Revolution, Julia Hancock Chapter, Dedication

View of photo: Looking Northeast

Location of original photograph: Lewistown Public Library

0007 of 0024

Name: Reed's Fort Post Office

County and State: Fergus County, Montana

Photographer: Unknown

Date of Photograph: September 17, 1931

Description: Children with flag and bronze and stone marker at Daughters of the American Revolution, Julia Hancock Chapter, Dedication Ceremony, Sept. 17, 1931.

View of photo: Looking East

Location of original photograph: Lewistown Historic Resource Commission

0008 of 0024

Name: Reed's Fort Post Office

County and State: Fergus County, Montana

Photographer: Unknown

Date of Photograph: Unknown

Description: View of Reed's Fort Post office, ca. 1940 following first restoration. Men on left are postal workers.

View of photo: Looking East

Location of original photograph: Lewistown Public Library

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Reed's Fort Post Office
Name of Property
Fergus County, Montana
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Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Additional Documentation: Photographs

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0009 of 0024

Name: Reed's Fort Post Office

County and State: Fergus County, Montana

Photographer: Unknown

Date of Photograph: Unknown

Description: Newspaper clipping found at Lewistown Public Library. Article appears to be from the 1950s or 1960s. Alonzo Reed died in Seattle in 1909. The man referenced in the photo may have been acting as Alonzo Reed for a historical event. View of photo:

Looking Southeast

Location of original photograph: Lewistown Public Library

0010 of 0024

Name: Reed's Fort Post Office

County and State: Fergus County, Montana

Photographer: Unknown

Date of Photograph: ca. 1969

Description: View of Reed's Fort Post Office, ca. 1969.

View of photo: Façade view (looking east)

Location of original photograph: Lewistown Public Library

0011 of 0024

Name: Reed's Fort Post Office

County and State: Fergus County, Montana

Photographer: Sue Brown-Moseman

Date of Photograph: 11/22/08

Description: Reed's Fort Post Office.

View of photo: View of façade (west elevation) looking northeast

Location of original photograph: Sue Brown-Moseman

0012 of 0024

Name: Reed's Fort Post Office

County and State: Fergus County, Montana

Photographer: Sue Brown-Moseman

Date of Photograph: 11/22/08

Description: View of façade (west elevation)

View of photo: Looking Southeast

Location of original photograph: Sue Brown-Moseman

0013 of 0024

Name: Reed's Fort Post Office

County and State: Fergus County, Montana

Photographer: Sue Brown-Moseman

Date of Photograph: 11/22/08

Description: Detail photo of Reed's Fort Post Office Daughters of the American Revolution Marker.

View of photo: Detail

Location of original photograph: Sue Brown-Moseman

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

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Reed's Fort Post Office
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Additional Documentation: Photographs

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0014 of 0024

Name: Reed's Fort Post Office
County and State: Fergus County, Montana
Photographer: Zane Fulbright
Date of Photograph: 6/2009
Description: North elevation
View of photo: Looking south
Location of original photograph: Montana Preservation Alliance

0015 of 0024

Name: Reed's Fort Post Office
County and State: Fergus County, Montana
Photographer: Zane Fulbright
Date of Photograph: 6/2009
Description: Park setting
View of photo: Overview looking south
Location of original photograph: Montana Preservation Alliance

0016 of 0024

Name: Reed's Fort Post Office
County and State: Fergus County, Montana
Photographer: Zane Fulbright
Date of Photograph: 6/2009
Description: East elevation
View of photo: Looking west
Location of original photograph: Montana Preservation Alliance

0017 of 0024

Name: Reed's Fort Post Office
County and State: Fergus County, Montana
Photographer: Zane Fulbright
Date of Photograph: 6/2009
Description: South elevation
View of photo: Looking north
Location of original photograph: Montana Preservation Alliance

0018 of 0024

Name: Reed's Fort Post Office
County and State: Fergus County, Montana
Photographer: Zane Fulbright
Date of Photograph: 6/2009
Description: Front door
View of photo: Detail
Location of original Photograph: Montana Preservation Alliance

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Name: Reed's Fort Post Office
County and State: Fergus County, Montana
Photographer: Zane Fulbright
Date of Photograph: 6/2009
Description: Detail of north elevation logs and chinking
View of photo: Detail
Location of original Photograph: Montana Preservation Alliance

0020 of 0024

Name: Reed's Fort Post Office
County and State: Fergus County, Montana
Photographer: Zane Fulbright
Date of Photograph: 6/2009
Description: Detail of north/east wall junction notching
View of photo: Detail
Location of original Photograph: Montana Preservation Alliance

0021 of 0024

Name: Reed's Fort Post Office
County and State: Fergus County, Montana
Photographer: Zane Fulbright
Date of Photograph: 6/2009
Description: Detail of roofing material, east slope
View of photo: Detail
Location of original Photograph: Montana Preservation Alliance

0022 of 0024

Name: Reed's Fort Post Office
County and State: Fergus County, Montana
Photographer: Zane Fulbright
Date of Photograph: 6/2009
Description: Interior
View of photo: View of north wall/roof junction
Location of original Photograph: Montana Preservation Alliance

0023 of 0024

Name: Reed's Fort Post Office
County and State: Fergus County, Montana
Photographer: Zane Fulbright
Date of Photograph: 6/2009
Description: Interior
View of photo: View of south wall/roof junction
Location of original Photograph: Montana Preservation Alliance

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0024 of 0024

Name: Reed's Fort Post Office

County and State: Fergus County, Montana

Photographer: Zane Fulbright

Date of Photograph: 6/2009

Description: Interior

View of photo: Detail of interior door, mail slot, and drop box (part of 1970 restoration)

Location of original Photograph: Montana Preservation Alliance

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Reed's Fort Post Office

Name of Property

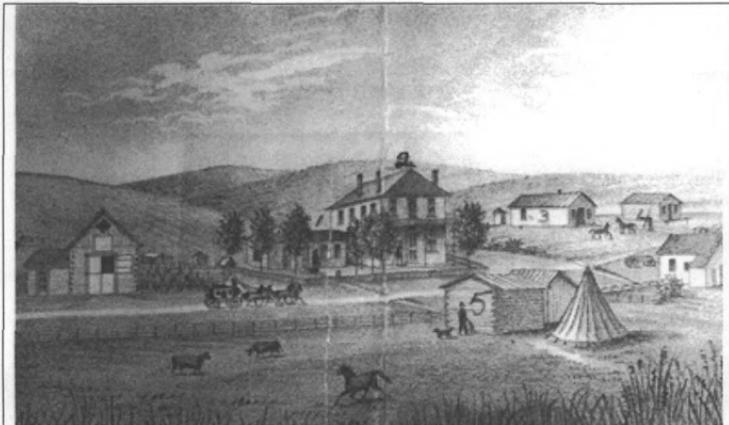
Fergus County, Montana

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0001. "Sketch of Reedsfort at Little Casino Creek". The Reed's Fort Post Office marked as #5 in the illustration. The sketch is in the book "History of Montana 1739-1885".

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0002. Reed's Fort Post Office. This is a scan of an original photo that is in the historic photo collection at the Lewistown public library.

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0003. Reed's Fort Post Office ca. 1920. This is a scan of an original photo that is in the historic photo collection at the Lewistown public library.



0004. Reed's Fort Post Office, ca. 1935. This is a scan of an original photo that is in the historic photo collection at the Lewistown public library.

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0005. Daughters of the American Revolution, Julia Hancock Chapter, Dedication Ceremony, Sept. 17, 1931. Pictured L to R (back row): W.H. Culver (photographer), unknown, David Hilger, Ben Kline, George Gilpatrick, Joe C. King I, Fred Colver, Oden Romunstad, unknown, unknown, unknown. Front row L to R: unknown, unknown, Mrs. Beatty, Mercy Jackson, Mrs. E. A. Long.



0006. View of crowd at Daughters of the American Revolution, Julia Hancock Chapter, Dedication Ceremony, Sept. 17, 1931.

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0007. Children with flag and bronze and stone marker at Daughters of the American Revolution, Julia Hancock Chapter, Dedication Ceremony, Sept. 17, 1931.



0008. View of Reed's Fort Post office, ca. 1940 following first restoration. Men on left are postal workers.

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REED'S FORT post office. Located on the Big Casino creek road just below the Home for the Aged, the post office was started in the year 1881 and is probably Lewistown's most widely-known landmark. In front of the building is the man who gave the post office its name, Alonzo Reed.

0009. Newspaper clipping found at Lewistown Public Library. Article appears to be from the 1950s or 1960s. Alonzo Reed died in Seattle in 1909. The man referenced in the photo may have been acting as Alonzo Reed for a historical event.



0010. View of Reed's Fort Post Office, ca. 1969.

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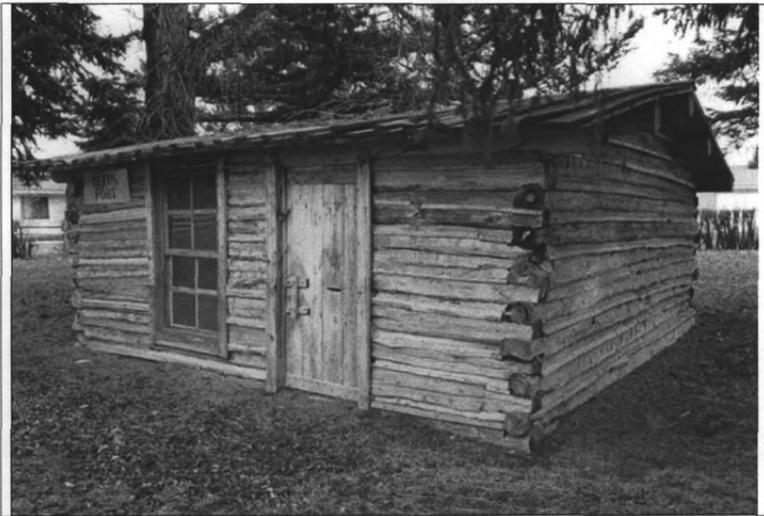
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0011. View of façade (west elevation) looking northeast



0012. View of façade (west elevation), looking southwest with DAR marker in foreground

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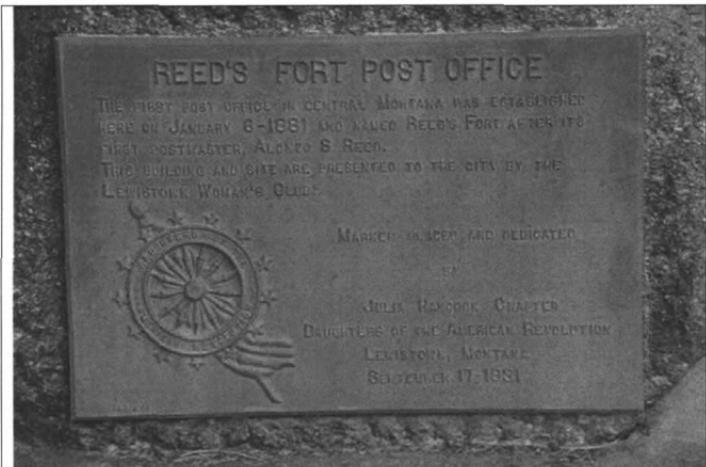
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0013. Close-up photo of Reed's Fort Post Office Daughters of the American Revolution Marker.



0014. View of north elevation

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0015. View looking south at park setting



0016. View of east (rear) elevation

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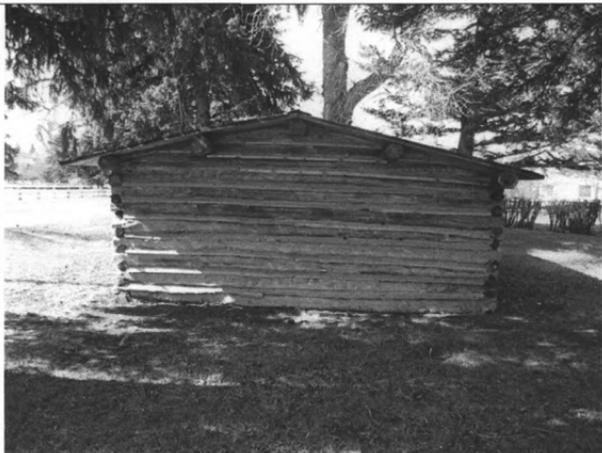
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0017. View of south elevation

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0018. View of front door

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0019. Detail of north elevation logs and chinking



0020. Detail of log notching at north/east wall junction

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0021. Detail of roofing material, east slope



0022. Interior view of north roof/wall junction

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0023. Interior view of south roof/wall junction

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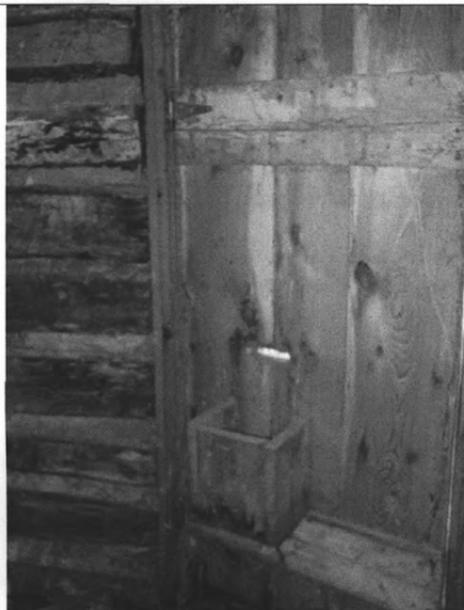
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0024. Detail of interior door, mail slot, and drop box (part of 1970 restoration)