

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED JUL 1 1980

DATE ENTERED

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC  
Evans-Elbert Ranch

AND/OR COMMON  
Elbert-Austin Ranch

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

Upper Bear Creek Road

\_\_NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN *Idaho Springs vic.*

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

R.R. #5, Box 462

\_\_ VICINITY OF *Evergreen*

4

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Colorado

08

Clear Creek

019

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

**CATEGORY**

**OWNERSHIP**

**STATUS**

**PRESENT USE**

\_\_DISTRICT

\_\_PUBLIC

OCCUPIED

\_\_AGRICULTURE

\_\_MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

PRIVATE

\_\_UNOCCUPIED

\_\_COMMERCIAL

\_\_PARK

\_\_STRUCTURE

\_\_BOTH

\_\_WORK IN PROGRESS

\_\_EDUCATIONAL

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

SITE

**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**

**ACCESSIBLE**

\_\_ENTERTAINMENT

\_\_RELIGIOUS

\_\_OBJECT

\_\_IN PROCESS

YES: RESTRICTED

\_\_GOVERNMENT

\_\_SCIENTIFIC

\_\_BEING CONSIDERED

\_\_YES: UNRESTRICTED

\_\_INDUSTRIAL

\_\_TRANSPORTATION

\_\_NO

\_\_MILITARY

\_\_OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Prof. Samuel H. Elbert

Prof. and Mrs. Holcombe Austin

STREET & NUMBER

3293 Huelani Drive

20 Elm Street

CITY, TOWN

Honolulu, HI 96825

\_\_ VICINITY OF

Norton, MA 02766

STATE

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Register of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER

Clear Creek County Courthouse

CITY, TOWN

Georgetown

STATE

Colorado

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Colorado Inventory of Historic Sites

(10/03/0143)

DATE

Ongoing

\_\_FEDERAL  STATE \_\_COUNTY \_\_LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Colorado Historical Society, 1300 Broadway

CITY, TOWN

Denver

STATE

Colorado

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

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## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Evans-Elbert Ranch is located at the foot of Mount Evans in the Upper Bear Creek country west of Evergreen. The primary structure is the main house designed in the Rustic Style of architecture. The secondary structures consist of three related out-buildings: a caretaker's residence, a two-story stable, and a well house. The natural environment consists of streams, meadows, fields, and woods.

### The Ranch House:

The Ranch House is a single detached structure two stories in height and designed in a U-shape plan. It has multiple, deeply overhanging hipped roofs which are wood-shingled. The building is wood-framed and sheathed with slabs of ponderosa pine with the bark left on. The windows are double hung, one over one. The foundations and the two chimneys are of local stone.

Facing the meadow and the view of Mount Evans is the west porch, impressively large as it extends across the entire western side of the structure. Site on a small crest, the house is nevertheless closely bound to meadow by three large, wide steps which are centrally located to bring a visitor to the middle of the porch deck. There the deeply gable roof gives a strong sense of a protective enclosure, a feeling complemented by the strong, stone balustrade at the outer side. This balustrade is high and wide so as to afford a comfortable and inviting place to sit. Sets of French doors open off the west porch into dining room and living room. These rooms plus the butler's pantry, entry hall, and stairwell, constitute the base of the U-shape. Then there is a north wing holding the master bedroom suite and the south wing with kitchen, utility rooms, and backstairs. The window frames are flat, Ponderosa slabs set flush with the siding. Lugsills provide an accent.

The living room and the dining room which adjoin the west porch are sizable formal rooms. Each has a large native-stone fireplace; in each case the massiveness of the fireplace is lightened by the presence of window seats and by the lowering of the ceiling above these window seats. In the living room the wall opposite the French doors has built-in bookshelves with a niche for a desk and a special niche for an early Seth Thomas mantel clock. The decor employs, rather sparingly, objects made by native American artists, e.g. old Navajo blankets and works by the Martinez family of Idelfonso. There are also a few paintings, all on horse and rider or cattleman themes, notably an oil painting by Leon Gaspard. The dining room has as its main feature a built-in sideboard in dark burnished pine. A spectacular porcelain turkey platter in red and blue and a Navajo "Chief's" blanket in red, blue and white provide color accent.

Both of these formal rooms are given a special character by the nature of the burnished finish on the Ponderosa pine panels. These were crafted from 25 inch wide boards placed vertically floor to ceiling, their joints covered by board battens rising to meet 5" wide beams supporting the pine ceiling, also wide boards. Beams, ceiling, vertical panels, battens were all finished uniformly by a wood-scorching process done with hot irons; the result is a warm, dark, velvety luster, particularly lustrous in candle or fire light. This permanent sheen is superior to any polish obtainable with stain and wax. In contrast to the dark walls of the formal rooms the interiors in the rest of the house are light. For color and decoration rugs and blankets from Mrs. Everett's collection of Navajo textiles are used.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

## PERIOD

## AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW

<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES Spring 1909

BUILDER/ARCHITECT J. Christopher Jensen  
Jock Spence

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Evans-Elbert Ranch is significant for its association with the Evans and Elbert families which have played an important role in Colorado's development, and for its architectural features. The main ranch house is an exceptional and very early example of the rustic style.

The story of the Evans-Elbert Ranch begins in 1862 when President Abraham Lincoln appointed John Evans the second territorial governor of Colorado. Evans was a prominent Illinois Republican who had been active in the early development of Chicago, a founder of the city of Evanston, and a founder of Northwestern University. Also appointed to a territorial office at this time was Samuel H. Elbert, a Nebraska lawyer and Lincoln supporter. Elbert eventually married Evans' daughter, followed him in the governorship, and rose to become Chief Justice of the State Supreme Court. In 1868 Evans and Elbert established a mountain cattle ranch that gradually expanded to take in the greater part of the Vance, Metz, and Corral Creek valleys and uplands. Over the years parts of the ranch gradually changed hands, but some of it remained in the family, and in 1908 Elbert's niece, Louise Elbert Everett acquired this most attractive segment, began to fence it in, and set to building a house she and her family would spend the summers in.

Mrs. Everett chose an exceptionally fine stretch of woodland, meadow, and pastureland, and it was her declared intent to place the house in the meadow and have it look "as if it had grown there," thus keeping the character of the landscape as undisturbed as possible. She ordered the exterior of the house to be done in pine slabs with the handsome Ponderosa pine bark intact. This would provide a visual tie-in with the pines growing near the house. These aesthetic concerns were not at the expense of practicality. Ponderosa pine was plentiful on the spot, distant barns and corrals would reduce the fly menace to a minimum, and a water reservoir up the mountain a way would provide the pressure for the house. The site also had two springs never known to run dry, and this abundance of water permitted the contrived but nevertheless natural touch of developing a small waterfall as a feature of the north patio of the house.

Mrs. Everett was also fortunate in her architect and builder. To design the house, she chose J. Christopher Jensen of Council Bluffs, Iowa. He had a sensitivity about order, balance and proportion, which is evident in the handling of the gabled roof and the interlinked eaves. To build the structure, Mrs. Everett chose Jock Spence of Evergreen, a prominent local contractor, some of whose structures are now listed in the National Register, notably those within the Evergreen Conference District. When completed, Mrs. Everett spent fifty summers in her new home.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

H. H. Bancroft Works, Vol XXV, History of Nevada, Colorado, and Wyoming.  
 Department of Interior, Bureau of Landmanagement;  
 Homestead Filings  
Historical Highlights of Public Land Management  
Rocky Mountain News, January 14, 1872; July 30, 1958  
Tales of the Bar P D by Kay Klepetko. Lakewood, Colorado 1978

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

**UTM NOT VERIFIED**  
**ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 100

QUADRANGLE NAME Squaw Pass

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A 1,3 | 4,5,9 | 1,2,5 | 4,5 | 9,4 | 6,5,0

B 1,3 | 4,5,9 | 1,2,0 | 4,3 | 8,8 | 8,2,0

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C 1,3 | 4,5,8 | 4,8,5 | 4,3 | 8,8 | 8,0,0

D 1,3 | 4,5,8 | 4,9,0 | 4,3 | 8,9 | 4,6,5

E    |    |    |    |    |   

F    |    |    |    |    |   

G    |    |    |    |    |   

H    |    |    |    |    |   

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

See continuation sheet

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Mr. and Mrs. Holcombe M. Austin

ORGANIZATION

DATE

20 Elm St.

September 27, 1979

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

Norton

617-285-4849

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Massachusetts 02766

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL   

STATE   

LOCAL

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

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*William C. Townsend* June 23, 1980

TITLE

State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

*John W. Ray Luce*  
 KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

9/11/80

ATTEST: *Frank Storer Reed*  
 CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE

9/5/80

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From an architectural perspective, the main ranch house reflects a successful combination of the ideals of rusticity. The simplicity, comfort, and compatibility with the natural environment complement to a very high degree the beauty of the materials, the care in detailing, and the thoughtful attention to the architectural form.

ED. JEF 4/80

