

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form

This form is for use in documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

☒ New Submission ☐ Amended Submission

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

Historic Resources of Vernal/Maeser, Utah, 1879-1985

B. Associated Historic Contexts

(Name each associated historic context, identifying them, geographical area, and chronological period for each.)

Early Settlement and Community Development, 1879 - 1929

Depression and World War II, 1930-1946

Postwar Energy Development Boom and Bust, 1947-1985

C. Form Prepared by

name/title Beatrice Lufkin

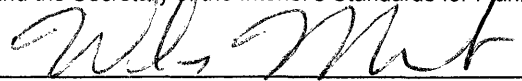
organization _____ date September 23, 2004

street & number 1460 Harrison Avenue telephone 801-583-8249

city or town Salt Lake City state UT zip code 84105

D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Planning and Evaluation.

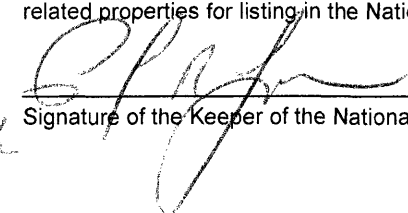


Signature of certifying official

Date 11/15/04 See continuation sheet

Utah Division of State History, Office of Historic Preservation
State or Federal agency and bureau

I, hereby, certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.



Signature of the Keeper of the National Register

12/29/04
Date

Table of Contents for Written Narrative

Provide the following information on continuation sheets. Cite the letter and the title before each section of the narrative. Assign page numbers according to the instructions for continuation sheets in How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form (National Register Bulletin 16B). Fill in page numbers for each section in the space below.

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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. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Historic Resources of Vernal/Maeser, Uintah County, Utah

E. STATEMENT OF HISTORIC CONTEXTS

The city of Vernal is located near the Colorado line in eastern Utah, one hundred seventy five miles to the east of Salt Lake City in the Ashley Valley, bordered by the Uintah Mountains that uniquely run in an east-west direction. Maeser is an unincorporated residential/agricultural area directly to the northwest of Vernal and is an extension of Vernal. The area surrounding Vernal/Maeser is rich in minerals and hydrocarbons. Nearby land is part of the Uintah and Ouray Indian Reservation created in the nineteenth century. Livestock and agriculture production have historically smoothed out the mineral-related boom and bust economy. The Vernal/Maeser area was settled in the late 1870s, later than most other Utah towns. The location is far from navigable rivers or a railhead but twentieth century highways have brought tourists as well as goods and services to the residents of the Vernal/Maeser area.

EARLY SETTLEMENT AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, 1879-1929

The first Europeans known to have visited the area near Vernal were the Spanish exploring party of Fray Francisco Atanasio Dominguez and Fray Silvestre Velez de Escalante of Santa Fe traveling down the Green River in 1776 in search of a route to Monterrey. Later trappers and mountain men crossed the area looking for game and established trading houses or "forts." The Ashley Valley, the location of Vernal and Maeser, was named after William H. Ashley, an early fur trader in 1825. Captain Pardon Dodds was appointed the first Indian agent for the newly created Uintah Indian Reservation in 1868. When he retired in 1873 he moved to Ashley Creek to settle and was the first known Anglo-European settler in the area of Ashley town¹.

After the Native Americans of the Uintah Basin were forced to move into the new Uintah Indian Reservation, LDS President John Taylor, leader of the Mormons² with headquarters in Salt Lake City, "called" for the Mormon colonization of the Ashley Valley. Mill Ward was organized in 1877 for members of the LDS church living in the area later renamed Maeser. The David Johnston family was the first to settle in the area called the Bench, now known as Vernal, in 1878 and more settlers followed the next year. After the White River Utes rebelled against their agent, Nathan Meeker, in 1879 in the so-called Meeker Massacre, and the subsequent deaths of soldiers and Utes, the residents of the Bench, following the advice of sympathetic Indian leaders, moved their cabins into a central location inside a fort in a square facing inward. The fort was U-shaped and located on what is now Main Street.³ People began to move their cabins out of the fort in 1880 and by 1882 the fort was torn down. In 1884 the area where the fort was located was named Ashley Center. The town was surveyed and laid out in the typical Utah grid pattern in 1885 and businesses were established there.

Gilsonite, a hydrocarbon, was discovered on nearby Indian lands in 1886 and was one of the first commercial mining activities in the Vernal area. After intense lobbying, two years later the "Gilsonite

¹ Four miles northwest of present-day Vernal.

² Members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints or LDS.

³ Doris Karren Burton. *A History of Uintah County: Scratching the Surface*. Utah Centennial County History Series. Uintah County Commission. (Salt Lake City, UT: Utah State Historical Society, 1996), 88.

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Historic Resources of Vernal/Maeser, Uintah County, Utah

strip" was removed from the reservation and available for mining. Efforts were made to break up the Uncompahgre Reservation just south of Vernal in the 1890s. These efforts were successful and the reservation was opened to homesteading in 1897 and to mineral claims in 1903. The Uintah Reservation was opened to homesteading in 1905. The availability of mineral leases and the opening of reservation land to homesteading led to Vernal's greatest boom time in the early twentieth century. The necessity to transport Gilsonite to markets was responsible for the only railway in the county, the narrow gauge Uintah Railway. A freight station was built in Vernal in 1905 in anticipation of the railroad coming to town. It was hoped that the railway would handle the export of minerals and the import of building supplies and goods for settlers. The railroad never approached closer than sixty-five miles to Vernal (Dragon, Utah) and the station still stands on Vernal's Main Street.

The Vernal area was prosperous in the first decades of the twentieth century. The needs of the miners and the new settlers to the area provided local markets and made local agriculture profitable. The increased wealth in Vernal and Maeser is seen in more elaborate house styles and larger houses as well as the volume of houses built during the first decades of the twentieth century. As the boom began to end, the beginning of the war in Europe served to keep agricultural and mineral prices high. The Ashley Field was the first major producer of gas in the country in 1925. Natural gas was provided to the city of Vernal in 1929.

Government

Uintah County was formed from part of Wasatch County with the county seat in Ashley in 1880. The county seat was moved to Vernal in 1893 along with the 13' x 16' log cabin that was used as a courthouse. Incorporation as a city followed in 1897. A new courthouse was built in 1900 and used until 1959 when it was demolished and a new one built in front of it. The people of Vernal began to organize themselves to provide community services and infrastructure. By 1908 they organized the first public library with Mrs. Mina Peck as the first librarian. The current public library building on Main Street was built in 1959. Infrastructure was introduced; electric lights in 1907, telephone service in 1909, a city water system in 1910, and street lights along Main Street in 1915. The streets and sidewalks were paved in the 1920s and by 1933 there were six miles of sidewalks in the city of Vernal.

Commerce

The first commercial store, Blythe and Mitchell, was begun in 1885 in Ashley Center as a general mercantile business and post office. The name Vernal was given to the town in Ashley Center by the post office in 1886 because Ashley was already the post office name of the nearby town. The Chamber of Commerce was formed in 1899 by business people in the vain hope of getting the railroad to Vernal. The two-story brick building of the Ashley Co-operative Mercantile Institution, organized in 1887, on 4 West Main Street dates from 1900. It advertised as "Eastern Utah's Big Department Store."⁴ The façade was modernized and later restored. The Bank of Vernal was organized in 1903 and a competitor, the Uintah State Bank in 1910. The Bank of Vernal was responsible for changing U.S. postal service regulations by shipping the 80,000 bricks needed for construction of its new building in 1917 by parcel post, the cheapest way to get them to Vernal.

⁴ Polk's Utah State Gazetteer 1922-3, 374.

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Historic Resources of Vernal/Maeser, Uintah County, Utah

Education

In common with other Utah communities, Vernal and Maeser's first public buildings were schools. The earliest schools were held in pioneer homes. During the sojourn in the fort, school was held in one of the log cabins in the fort. As soon as the county was established in 1880, school districts were laid out. Maeser was District 5 in the 1881 boundary change and had its own brick schoolhouse. Log buildings were used for schools in Vernal until 1888 when the two-room brick Central School was built. It was later enlarged by the construction of a third room (the school building is now demolished). The brick Washington Elementary School on 500 West in Vernal was built in 1895 but was a school for only two years as its location was determined to be too far from the center of population of the city. The LDS church owned it from 1913 to 1928 and the women of the LDS Relief Society used it as a place to hold their weekly meetings. It was used as a residence in the 1930s/40s and has been used for storage since 1944. Maeser's school was one of five new schoolhouses built in the county from 1900 to 1910.

The LDS church opened the Uintah Stake Academy as a church school in 1891 and a building was constructed for it in 1911-12. The Congregational Church established a missionary school, the Wilcox Academy, in 1903 as an alternative to the Mormon Church's influence on education at Uintah Academy. The brick building for the school and a new Congregational church were constructed on the same lot and both dedicated in 1905. The first four-year high school course in the county was offered here. The Uintah Stake Academy was taken over by the city in 1923 and the public Uintah High School was held there. A new building was constructed to the south of the academy building in 1924. After the Uintah Academy was made a free public high school in 1924 and the alternative was no longer needed, Wilcox Academy was closed and the building returned to ecclesiastical use.

Religion

In the nineteenth century the population was predominantly LDS in the Vernal area and the Uintah Stake was established in 1887 with six wards, and headquartered in Vernal. Mill Ward (now Maeser) was founded in 1883 with William Shaffer as acting bishop. The organization was formalized in 1887 and Schaffer ordained as bishop. The diversity of the population of Vernal was seen in the churches supported in the early twentieth century. St. Paul's Episcopal Church was built in 1909 at 226 West Main Street. In 1910 with a total population of 1,000 there were three churches in Vernal: Congregational, Episcopalian and Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. By 1917, with a population of 1,400,⁵ Vernal supported five churches; one each of Catholic, Congregational, and Episcopalian churches and two Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints meetinghouses. Construction of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Uintah Stake Tabernacle began in 1900 and the building was dedicated in 1907.⁶

Recreation

Cultural activities and recreation have been an important part of life in the Vernal area from the earliest days. The Vernal Literary and Debating Society was organized in 1896. The Opera House (Workman Hall) was erected on the west side of 500 West between First south and Main Street in 1895-6. It burned in 1936 and was not rebuilt. The brick Orpheus Hall, built in 1911, had a dance floor and later became a roller rink; it was razed in 1965. The Maeser Art Club was founded in 1914. Dancing was a

⁵ Both population figures are from the Sanborn Map Company *Fire Insurance Maps* for 1900 and 1917.

⁶ It was converted for use as a temple in 199x.

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popular activity and in summer took place on wooden dance floors in cooling groves of trees around town. In 1911 the community built a combined ballpark, rodeo grounds and racetrack with grandstand at 100 West and 100 North. The first public swimming pool was the Crystal Baths in 1927-8.

Agriculture

Because of the remote nature of the towns and the lack of easy transportation access to markets, residents of the Vernal area were historically self-reliant and produced most of what they needed. The agricultural economy was based on livestock, predominantly sheep with some cattle, milling, honey, small grains and alfalfa.⁷ Wool and fruit growers were the most frequently noted agricultural occupations in the Vernal area in the 1923 *Polk's Utah State Gazetteer*.

Transportation

Vernal and Maeser are located in the verdant Ashley Valley, far from a navigable river or a railroad. Although the railroad never reached Vernal, the city had early national highway access. The first automobile arrived in Vernal in 1905 as John W. Pope had it shipped by rail from Denver to Dragon, the end of the railroad, 65 miles from Vernal. He drove it the rest of the way from Dragon to Vernal, then a two-day trip. At the end of World War I the Victory Highway (now U.S. Highway 40) was planned to be the shortest route between San Francisco and Washington, D.C., passing on Main Street through Vernal on the way to Salt Lake City. By 1917 there were 192 automobiles in the Uintah basin⁸ and the Victory Highway extending to Salt Lake City was paved by the end of the 1920s.

Tourism

The areas natural beauty combined with the dinosaur discoveries made tourism a natural industry for the Vernal area. After the Dinosaur National Monument was established in 1915 tourism via the automobile began to be seen as a potential business possibility. Vernal's location on the coast-to-coast Victory Highway supported four hotels; many restaurants, including the Victory Highway Café and the Bon Ton Café; and auto-related businesses as well as several blacksmiths in 1928.

DEPRESSION AND WORLD WAR II, 1930-1946

Utah was one of the states most affected the by the economic dislocation of the Great Depression. Unemployment reached 35.8% in Utah in the depths of the Depression.⁹ Several federal New Deal program projects sponsored by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) helped the local Vernal area economy. New Deal projects included work on the streets and installation of a sewer system in Vernal, excavations at the dinosaur quarry, a new grandstand at the county fairgrounds, and the construction of forty-one reservoirs, one hundred fifty miles of roads, and twenty bridges. There were several CCC camps in Uintah County including one at

⁷ Doris Burton and William Jolley, comp. *Uintah County's Historical Sites and Homes*. Uintah County Historic Preservation Commission. (Vernal, UT: Mansfield Printing, Inc., 1989).

⁸ Burton, *A History of Uintah County*, 208.

⁹ Richard D. Poll, Gen. Ed. *Utah's History*. (Logan, UT: Utah State University Press, 1989), 482.

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the county fairgrounds in Vernal. Many of the CCC workers were young men and a number of them stayed in Vernal and married local women after the end of the program in 1941.

The end date for this era is 1946, the year before the oil boom began in the Vernal area and the search for and subsequent drilling for oil and gas deposits led the local economy back to prosperity. The face of Vernal changed significantly with the population increases due to the oil boom and the tourism engendered by the dinosaur quarry and the Field House.

Commerce

The beginnings of the Great Depression at first did not appear to affect business in the Vernal area. The sheep industry provided one million dollars in revenue in Vernal in 1930. The same year the Ashley Cooperative Mercantile Institution was remodeled and enlarged. By 1932, however, the Ashley Coop building was sold to J.C. Penneys. The Ashton Brothers store in Vernal became the largest store in town in the 1930s and served as a department and grocery store. During the hard times of the Great Depression credit was extended and people were allowed to pay when their wool was sold or their cattle were shipped to market.

Education

The school district consolidated area schools in 1934 to save funds during the Great Depression. Maeser and Glines, a nearby town, were combined and students from Ashley were sent to Vernal. In 1935 all county schools closed in April as funds to run them ran out. They later reopened in the fall. Schools were able to use some of the federal relief monies coming to the area. The old Central School in Vernal was torn down in 1942 and a new Central School was built in the PWA Moderne style with WPA funds on the site of the old school.

Recreation

The economic hardships of the depression era made facilities for recreation even more important for the people of the Vernal area. The Vernal Golf Club was organized in 1930 and the Green Acres Golf Course opened in 1937 with an open dance floor, one and a half miles north of the city. The Vernal Theater is one of the longest continuous operating businesses in Vernal. It began showing movies on Main Street in 1946 and continues at the same location today.

Agriculture

Livestock was the main industry in the Vernal area during this era. This time was the peak of the wool and sheep industry in Uintah County. In 1930 fifty sheep men ran 100,000 head of sheep in the county. The federal Taylor Grazing Act was enacted to regulate grazing on public lands. An office was opened in Vernal in 1935 to issue grazing permits and attempt to halt overgrazing on the surrounding public lands.

Transportation

The section of the Victory Highway (now Highway 40) from east of Vernal to the Colorado state line was paved in 1938. The last section in the country to be paved was through Fruitland east of Vernal and it was completed in 1940. Air transportation was becoming more common with the Vernal Aviation Club organized in the early 1940s and a Civil Air Patrol (CAP) squadron in 1944. Land for the present airport in Vernal was acquired in 1944 and the airport was completed in 1945.

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POSTWAR BOOM AND BUST, 1947-1985

1948 was the year that oil was finally found in commercial quantities in the area and the oil boom began. The population of Vernal doubled from 1947 to 1950, going from 2,500 to 5,000. It increased another 12.5% by 1960. By the 1960s agriculture and government were providing half of the jobs in the area.

The year 1985 is the close of this era as the boom in the local economy turned to bust. The Ashton Brothers store on Main Street in Vernal closed in 1985 after sixty-five years of operation. The oil-shale boom ended due to events outside of the Uintah Basin. The glut of oil on the world markets resulted in low prices for oil and subsequently the federal government discontinued its support of the big oil-shale production projects.

Education

This era of population growth also saw the construction of a number of new schools for the Vernal/Maeser area. A new Uintah High School was built in 1954 at 161 North 1000 West in Vernal for \$860,000. Ashley Elementary School was constructed at 350 North 1150 West in 1961 for pupils from Vernal and Maeser. The new Junior High for Vernal was constructed in 1967. A new Maeser school was built in 1970 at 2670 West and 1000 North. The PWA Moderne Central School in Vernal was enlarged and a multipurpose room added in 1970. In 1977 new school board offices were built at 6356 West 200 South. Discovery Elementary School was built in 1980 at 650 West 1200 South for students from Vernal and Glines.

Religion

Many people of different religions moved into the area during the oil boom and established their churches. The first Catholic Church, now the second largest religion in the county, was constructed in 1948 at 138 North 100 West. It seated 150 and was built by parishioners. A rectory was built in 1963 nearby. The Baptists constructed a church at 100 South 288 East in 1948. A round modern Congregational church was built in 1962. The Lutherans organized in 1960 and built a building for Our Savior Lutheran Church in 1966. Other Christian religions organized and met in existing buildings.

Agriculture

Agriculture took a smaller place in the economy of Vernal and Maeser in this era. In 1960 twenty-nine sheepmen ran 44,538 head of sheep.

Transportation

There was little major change in surface transportation other than widening or resurfacing existing roads in this era. Air transportation, however, grew exponentially. A move to bring a commercial airline to Vernal culminated in Challenger Airline's inaugural flight from Vernal in 1949. Frontier Airlines took over the commercial flights later that year and built an administration building in 1954. Sky West became the commercial carrier in 1982 and construction on a new municipal airport terminal began in 1985.

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Historic Resources of Vernal/Maeser, Uintah County, Utah

Tourism

The Utah Field House of Natural History opened at 235 East Main Street in 1947 and soon became a major attraction for visitors from outside of the Vernal area. It displays many natural and human artifacts from the surrounding area. Life-sized dinosaurs were added in 1962 and the Dinosaur Gardens has fourteen life-sized models in a tropical habitat. The Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area was created as part of the Ashley National Forest, headquartered in Vernal, in 1968.

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Historic Resources of Vernal/Maeser, Uintah County, Utah

SUMMARY DATA FOR VERNAL¹⁰

Contributing Buildings (eligible building only)	<u>Contributing</u> 60%	<u>Non-contributing</u> 40%				
Construction Dates (contributing primary buildings only)	<u>1870s-1929</u> 63%	<u>1930.-1948</u> 37%				
Original Use (contributing primary buildings only)	<u>Residential</u> 91%	<u>Other</u> ¹¹ 4%	<u>Commercial</u> 4%			
Architectural Styles ¹² (contributing primary buildings only)	<u>Victorian</u> 14%	<u>Bungalow/Early 20th</u> 31%	<u>Classical</u> 2%			
	<u>Period Revival</u> 7%	<u>WWII/Post-War</u> 14%	<u>Modern</u> 3%	<u>Other</u> 21%		
Exterior Materials (contributing primary buildings only)	<u>Wood</u> 40 %	<u>Veneer</u> 30 %	<u>Brick</u> 20 %	<u>Stone</u> 6 %	<u>Concrete</u> 3 %	<u>Log</u> 2%

¹⁰ Data in the table is from the Utah State Historic Preservation Office report on the data in its computer files on Vernal, based on a partial reconnaissance level surveys completed in 1986 and 1987 and individual records collected since the survey.

¹¹ Religious, public, civic or governmental, health care.

¹² Totals for Architectural Styles and Exterior Materials may total more than 100 percent as more than two types of building materials and two styles may be recorded for each primary building

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Historic Resources of Vernal/Maeser, Uintah County, Utah

SUMMARY DATA FOR MAESER¹³

Contributing Buildings (eligible building only)	<u>Contributing</u> 42%		<u>Non-contributing</u> 58%			
Construction Dates (contributing primary buildings only)	<u>1880s-1929</u> 86%		<u>1930.-1948</u> 14%			
Original Use (contributing primary buildings only)	<u>Residential</u> 97%		<u>Religious</u> 3%			
Architectural Styles ¹⁴ (contributing primary buildings only)	<u>Victorian</u> 26%		<u>Early 20th century</u> 45%		<u>Period Revival</u> 13%	
	<u>WWII/Post-War</u> 2%		<u>Other</u> 15%			
Exterior Materials (contributing primary buildings only)	<u>Wood</u> 40%	<u>Veneer</u> 30%	<u>Brick</u> 20%	<u>Stone</u> 6%	<u>Concrete</u> 3%	<u>Log</u> 2%

¹³ Data in the table is from the Utah State Historic Preservation Office report on the data in its computer files on Maeser, based on a partial reconnaissance level survey completed in 1987 and individual records collected since the survey. The survey only examined and documented buildings up to 1945.

¹⁴ Totals for Architectural Styles and Exterior Materials may total more than 100 percent as more than two types of building materials and two styles may be recorded for each primary building

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Vernal, Uintah County, Utah

F. ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES

I. Name of Property Type: Residential Buildings

II. Description:

Single-family residential buildings are the most common building type according to the reconnaissance level survey of the historic core of Vernal that was undertaken in 1986 and the Maeser survey of 1987. Information on various buildings in Vernal has been updated since then by a scattering of Intensive Level Surveys. Cory Jensen of the SHPO staff did a windshield survey to update some of the postwar buildings in Vernal in May of 2004. The inventory consists of approximately 800 buildings in the town of Vernal with 242 residential buildings, or 91% of all buildings, constructed within the historic period (1879-1954) that retain their historic integrity. Maeser has 88 buildings documented from the historic period and 97% of them are residential. There are four contributing examples of multiple dwellings in Vernal built within the historic period (up to 1954) and none in Maeser.

The majority of residential outbuildings from this period are garages. Many historic garages in Vernal are frame although there are some brick examples. No outbuildings were documented in the Maeser survey. Garages, coops and other residential outbuildings from this period are associated and evaluated with specific dwellings.

Early Settlement and Community Development, 1879-1929

The first buildings constructed by settlers were small log dwellings many of which were moved in the area that is now called Vernal to be placed in a fort for protection. Six contributing examples of log buildings are extant in Vernal and none in Maeser. They may still exist in Maeser but may have been covered by veneers of stucco, siding, or other concealing cladding. As the settlements took on a more permanent character, other building materials were used in addition to logs. Brick is found less frequently in Vernal than other Utah towns that had access to materials via the railroads. Bricks had to be freighted to Vernal from the nearest railway terminal, a costly process. Bricks were used to construct many Victorian and bungalow house types. Bungalows were popular in Utah from 1905-25 and appeared in Vernal through the 1920s. There are fewer stone buildings in the two towns, with fourteen contributing stone buildings in Vernal and none in Maeser.

Depression and World War II, 1930-1946

Less residential construction took place in Vernal in the 1930s and 1940s than in the more affluent 1920s. Several residences in Vernal have Art Moderne styling features, reflecting the influence in Vernal of national styling trends. There are also a number of noncontributing buildings from this period that have had sufficient modifications to lose their historic integrity.

Postwar Energy Development Boom and Bust, 1947-1985

Residences from this period encompass a variety of building styles and types ranging from Minimal Traditional World War II cottages to Early Ranch and Ranch style houses. Many are clad with either aluminum or vinyl siding. There are no buildings in Maeser documented from this period, although there are probably several extant examples.

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III. Significance:

The significance of residences built in the Vernal/Maeser area between 1879 and 1954 chronicle the settlement and growth of the Vernal/Maeser area. Significance for the majority of the residences will fit under Criterion A for their association with the growth and development of the city during the Early Settlement and Community Development Era, 1879-1929, the Depression and World War II Era, 1930-47, and the Postwar Energy Development Boom and Bust Era, 1947-1985. They embody the national influence of types and styles typical of dwellings in Salt Lake City and the rest of the country at the time although early examples were more vernacular.

Early Settlement and Community Development, 1879 – 1929

Early dwellings were constructed of logs or adobe in a simple single cell, double cell or hall-parlor form. The oldest known dwelling is the hall-parlor Marell Nelson Oaks Cook House built c. 1879 of logs and moved to its present location c. 1941. Early buildings were often later clad in various types of siding which obscures the original materials. Styling is primarily vernacular with simple Classical lines. Victorian house types and styles were popular for the more elaborate and/or larger houses. The central-block-with-projecting-bays type is the most frequently occurring type with 24 examples in town. Victorian styling is generally eclectic with a few distinct examples of Gothic, Queen Anne and Shingle Style. The bungalow is overwhelmingly the most frequent house type and style, comprising almost one third of the historic era houses, and corresponding with the Vernal area's prosperous growth period in the first quarter of the twentieth century. The bungalows are modest in styling with a few showing Prairie School or Arts and Crafts influences.

Depression and World War II, 1930-1946

Buildings from this period will be eligible under Criterion A and possibly under Criterion C. The styles from this period exemplify the change to modern, non-historically based, architecture. The styling is often vernacular as is the type. Modern era buildings including Art Moderne residences show the influence of the more exotic design ideas coming to Vernal with the people from around the country in the CCC/WPA as well as the people involved with exploration and mining activities. World War II-era cottages are significant for their association with the increased production of houses in the years during and following World War II. There are more examples of these houses from the latter part of the period so unless they use indigenous materials or display unusual craftsmanship, fewer of these will be significant under Criterion C as compared to earlier buildings.

Postwar Energy Development Boom and Bust, 1947-1985

Buildings from this period will also be eligible under Criterion A and possibly under Criterion C. To be eligible under Criterion C, a residential building must have the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction that helped to shape the historic identity of Vernal, and must retain its architectural integrity. The domestic architecture from this era reflects the tremendous postwar growth of the communities of Vernal and Maeser in the era of development of the surrounding energy resources.

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Vernal, Uintah County, Utah

IV. Registration Requirements:

The following criteria must be met in order for a property to be considered eligible for the National Register under the Residential Buildings property type in this MPS:

1. The building must be a domestic dwelling and be at least 50 years old.
2. The building must be associated with the history and development of Vernal and retain sufficient integrity to depict the era in which it was constructed. The degree to which the historic building is recognizable and the changes are integral to the building's form, massing and detailing will be evaluated based on the existing architectural inventory. Changes to the building over time may be locally significant to the development phases of Vernal's history and will be considered in evaluating the integrity of these buildings. Buildings from the earliest years of the settlement or Vernal and Maeser or rare examples of building types will have more leniency in the application of restrictions.
3. The maintenance of the overall form and massing of the historic structure will be considered the most important factor when evaluating the impact of non-historic additions. Additions should be sensitive to and distinguishable from the original construction. Elements that can easily be removed without damage or alteration to the original building, such as aluminum window canopies, do not necessarily render a building ineligible.
4. The original fenestration and size of door and window openings on the principal facades must be maintained. The replacement of the original windows and doors may be acceptable so long as they do not detract from the original historic qualities of the architecture. Modified window openings may be acceptable if the original openings are discernible and window-to-wall ratios retained. Bricked in or covered openings are acceptable if the original outlines are visible.
5. Porches are primary defining features but are often replaced due to deterioration. If the overall scale and placement of the out-of-period porch is congruent with the historic porch and the non-historic porch does not detract from the historic features of the house, the porch will be considered to meet the registration requirements.
6. Historic materials must be maintained but acceptable alterations may include: covering the historic materials with non-historic materials if the appearance of the original is duplicated, painting of previously unpainted surfaces, and new roofs that do not alter the roofline.
7. Easily removable features, such as metal canopies or awnings, would not render a building ineligible.

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I. Name of Property Type Commercial Buildings

II. Description

The Selective Reconnaissance Level survey conducted in 1986 identified 10 commercial buildings in Vernal within the area of study dating from the historic period that currently retain their historic integrity. There are

No commercial buildings from the 1987 survey documented in Maeser. Others may be discovered with subsequent surveys. Most of the commercial buildings in Vernal, as in the rest of Utah, have had substantial changes to the first floor facades in search of a "modern" look for the structure. There are no commercial buildings in Vernal or Maeser listed on the National Register.

Early Settlement and Community Development, 1879 - 1929

Commercial buildings in Vernal from this era are primarily one- and two-story brick structures with no setbacks, opening directly onto the sidewalk. They range from one-part commercial blocks with a single street level structure to two-part commercial blocks with two distinct zones, public space on the first floor, often retail establishments, and more private space on the second floor, frequently professional offices, apartments or meeting space. The buildings are often shaped like a shoebox with the narrow end on the street and large plate glass windows on the façade for use as retail display space.

Depression and World War II, 1930-1946

The architecture of buildings from this period exemplifies the change to modern, non-historically based, architecture. The styling is often vernacular as is the type. Modern era buildings including Art Moderne, PWA Moderne and International Style are found in Vernal.

Postwar Energy Development Boom and Bust, 1947-1985

There are many documented commercial buildings in Vernal and none in Maeser from this era. Commercial buildings begin to be set outside of the historic downtown area, along the highway on the edges of town. They are often set back from the road with a large parking lot in front. They may occur singly, like "Big Box" stores or smaller franchise restaurants in a standard plan and style, surrounded by parking areas, or in a linear fashion as part of a strip mall shopping center.

III. Significance

Significance for commercial buildings will fall primarily under Criterion A for their association with the growth and development of the city of Vernal. To be eligible under Criterion C, a commercial building must have the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction that helped to shape the historic identity of Vernal.

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Early Settlement and Community Development, 1879 – 1929

As Vernal grew along the main arteries of Main Street¹⁵ (US Highway 40, a major interstate automobile route) and Vernal Avenue in response to industrial and commercial needs, most of the historic period commercial buildings are located directly on or within a block of these two roads. They mainly date from the early to mid-twentieth century, reflecting Vernal's growth and economic boom time in the early twentieth century.

Depression and World War II, 1930-1946

Buildings from this period will be eligible under Criterion A and possibly under Criterion C. Commercial buildings in the Art Moderne, PWA Moderne and International Styles from this era show the influence of the more exotic modern design ideas coming to Vernal with the people from around the country in the CCC/WPA as well as the people involved with exploration and mining activities. The effect of these outside influences is seen in the fashionable commercial buildings from this era found in Vernal.

Postwar Energy Development Boom and Bust, 1947-1985

The state highway, U.S. 40, is still the major location of businesses in the Vernal/Maeser area. In the postwar era, more and more businesses are located on the outskirts of town behind large parking lots, rather than directly on the street in the traditional downtown area along Main Street in Vernal. The buildings from this era may be located in a strip mall or for larger stores, the "big box" store is by itself at the far side of the parking lot. The buildings and their settings exemplify both the influence of the automobile and truck to the residents of Vernal/Maeser and the fact that they are able to shop at the same stores and eat in the same franchise restaurants as residents of other small towns in the United States. Buildings from this period will be eligible under Criterion A and possibly under Criterion C.

IV. Registration Requirements

In order for a commercial property to be eligible for the National Register under this Multiple Property Submission, it must meet certain basic criteria:

1. It must be a commercial building and be at least fifty years old.
2. The building must have been built and functioned as a commercial building during the historic period and be associated with the development of Vernal.
3. The building must retain sufficient architectural integrity to depict the era with which it is associated. If the building was constructed early in the period but received later additions or alterations before the end of the historic period, it may still be eligible. Alterations after the end of the historic period such as new storefronts of aluminum, brick, stucco, or Mansard roofs, etc. could be an adverse effect and could preclude the building from eligibility. The building could still be eligible if these changes are easily reversible without destroying the character of the original building. Major stylistic elements from the architectural period must be maintained.

¹⁵ Historically, Main Street was known as Uintah Avenue.

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4. The building must retain its overall form and massing. Extant examples from early in the period may not require as strict an adherence to integrity, especially since commercial buildings commonly undergo several changes throughout their existence. Those buildings with historical significance in association with the development of the community or with important community figures may be evaluated more for their attachment to history than with their material integrity. The majority of the historic buildings in Vernal have been modified enough to compromise their historic integrity and therefore the requirements may be interpreted in a more lenient fashion, but the integrity must remain within the above guidelines.
5. In order for a building to be eligible under Criterion C, the building must be a good example of a particular type or style or architecture, or a good example of the work of local builders or craftsmen.

F. Associated Property Types

I. Name of Property Type Civic and Institutional Buildings

II. Description

In a similar pattern to other communities in Utah, the civic and institutional buildings of Vernal have been systematically demolished and replaced with more modern structures. This property type includes the religious, educational, and public buildings and structures of Vernal. They consist of schools, churches, libraries, fire stations, and other public structures. Of the many civic and institutional structures from the historic period, few contributing examples remain: The c. 1925 post office on Main Street in Vernal was heavily remodeled in 1966 and is no longer contributing. Maeser has only one documented institutional building, a c. 1930 meetinghouse.

Civic and Institutional buildings of Vernal demolished from earlier periods include the Orpheus Theater (Imperial Hall), the Vernal Opera House (Uncle Jake Workman's Hall), Uintah Academy, the Uintah High School, Central School, and the Uintah County Courthouse.

Early Settlement and Community Development, 1879 - 1929

Many civic and institutional buildings extant from the first era have had their uses changed over the years. Wilcox Academy was built as a missionary school and later used for ecclesiastical space. The Vernal Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Temple was dedicated as an LDS Tabernacle in 1907 and renovated and rededicated as an LDS Temple in 1997. The 1895 Washington Elementary School became an LDS Relief Society Hall from 1913 to 1928. The 1937 LDS Seminary Building now houses the LDS Family Genealogical History Library. The LDS Tithing Building was moved in 1951 to become the Daughters of Utah Pioneers Museum and enlarged in 1958.

The Episcopalians built St. Pauls in the Gothic Revival style in 1909. It is the oldest religious building in continuous use in Vernal. The St. Paul's Lodge was built in 1912 directly to the east of the church to

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house young women from outlying areas that sought education. During the 1920s and 1930s the building was used to house the Uintah Basin Hospital, the major hospital in the county. After World War II the building was returned to the Episcopal Church and is currently used as a parish hall.

Known extant contributing religious buildings in Vernal from this period are the Vernal Tithing Office, the Uintah Tabernacle/Temple, St. Paul's Episcopal Church and St. Paul's Lodge (the old County Hospital), the Wilcox Academy, and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Seminary Building (now the Genealogical Library). St. Paul's Episcopal Church and the Vernal Tithing House are listed on the National Register.

Depression and World War II, 1930-1946

Historically based period revival styles were popular throughout Utah from 1920-1940. Their popularity may be due to an increase in nationalistic pride following World War I or an attempt to recreate through styles the buildings seen by American soldiers in Europe during the war. The English Tudor style was especially popular in Utah for residences and religious buildings. Maeser has an English Tudor meetinghouse from c. 1930.

Modern styles from this era reject historical references and emerged from high style architecture in Europe from the 1920s. The modern styles, Art Moderne and PWA Moderne, recall the work of machine designers and their curves reflect the nautical and aerodynamic imagery. Their smooth masonry wall surfaces were often highlighted with metal trim or sash and decorative elements such as pipe rails, glass block and circular (porthole) windows. The brick PWA Moderne Central School built in 1942 in Vernal is contributing.

Postwar Energy Development Boom and Bust, 1947-1985

There are no documented civic or institutional buildings in Vernal/Maeser from this era although some may be extant.

III. Significance

These buildings will be significant under Criterion A, association with events and broad patterns of history, particularly with regard to religious, civic and educational functions. Religious buildings, churches in this case, are often the sites of ceremonies celebrating defining events in human life; birth, marriage and death, as well as being the locations of social activity for members of the congregation/ward. Religious buildings are seen as symbols of the community and community effort and care is spent on their design and construction. Civic buildings characterize the community more than commercial ones, for they are built to represent the community values and ideals. They are open to and used by members of the entire community.

They are also often significant under Criterion C for the care taken in their design and construction, using the best available architects and craftsmen in the admired styles of the day. Other institutional buildings in Vernal or Maeser may be significant but have not yet been surveyed or documented.

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Early Settlement and Community Development, 1879 - 1929

Buildings from this era represent the styles and types found in the rest of the state. This reveals that although Vernal was a geographically isolated community (it had limited transportation access), it was influenced by regional and national architectural styles and trends. The civic and institutional buildings will be significant under Criterion A as well as possibly under Criterion C.

Depression and World War II, 1930-1946

Modern era buildings including Art Moderne, PWA Moderne and International Style show the influence of the more exotic design ideas coming to Vernal with the people from around the country in the CCC/WPA as well as the people involved with exploration and mining activities. Modern styles from this era rejected historical references and emerged from high style architecture in Europe from the 1920s. Exceptional buildings from this era may qualify under Criterion C as having the distinctive characteristics of an architectural style.

Postwar Energy Development Boom and Bust, 1947-1985

Although there are no documented civic and institutional buildings from this era, new schools, churches and civic buildings were most likely constructed during the boom periods for the workers and their families coming to the Vernal/Maeser area. They would be significant under Criterion A as physical symbols of Vernal's boom and bust postwar energy development period and possibly under Criterion C.

IV. Registration Requirements

In order for an institutional property to be eligible for the National Register under this Multiple Property Submission, it must meet certain basic criteria:

1. It must be a religious, civic, institutional building and be at least fifty years old.
2. It must have been built and functioned as a religious, civic or institutional building during the historic period and be associated with the history and development of Vernal.
3. Changes and additions to the structure must not detract from the historical character, or must be reversible. Some additions are acceptable if they:
 - a. do not obscure the historic core of the building and the overall footprint and massing of the historic building remains discernible.
 - b. are subordinate in scale and architectural detailing to the original building, in order to not jeopardize its integrity.
 - c. are distinguishable from and sensitive to the original building in design.
4. Defining stylistic elements must remain intact. Any out of character elements that might give a false sense of history would render the building ineligible.
5. The fenestration pattern must be maintained. Some acceptable modifications include:
 - a. Replacement of like windows with like windows. The primary concern is that the fenestration pattern remains the same and that the historic window opening to wall

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mass ratio remains. This includes the replacement of wood with aluminum or steel frames.

- b. The covering or obscuring of transom windows may be considered acceptable if the remainder of the building detail is sufficient to illustrate the architectural character.
 - c. A door or window that has been bricked in but retains a visible outline would be acceptable.
6. In order for a building to be eligible under Criterion C, the building must be a good example of a particular type or style of architecture, or a good example of the work of local builders or craftsmen.

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G. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

The boundaries of the area covered by this Multiple Property Nomination are the city limits of Vernal and the Maeser area. The Vernal city limits run roughly from 5th East to 1150 West and 5th South to 5th North with the southwest corner cut out and an extension along Vernal Avenue to about 10th north.

H. SUMMARY OF IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION METHODS

Statistical information on Vernal's architectural resources is based on a selective reconnaissance level survey of Vernal buildings in 1986 which only accounted for the historical core of Vernal and various intensive level surveys compiled since that time. Approximately 748 structures were photographed and recorded in 1986.

Maeser was selectively surveyed in 1987 and 88 buildings were photographed and recorded. Information such as address, number of stories, estimated construction dates, eligibility, building type, style, original use, height, and construction materials were recorded. The information on both towns was entered in the Utah Historic Sites Database and reports from it are available from the Utah State Office of Preservation. A May 2004 report based on the updated information was used in the preparation of this nomination.

The historic context for this listing was developed using historic resources including books, manuscripts, newspaper articles, and maps available from local sources as well as state and local libraries. Information compiled from the surveys of the cities as well as from individual properties was used in developing the historic context.

Two nominated properties in Vernal are included as part of this multiple property submission. Other nominations will be prepared and submitted as funding permits.

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