

PH0356158

**DATA SHEET**

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**FOR NPS USE ONLY**  
RECEIVED DEC 6 1976  
DATE ENTERED NOV 23 1977

**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 Child, W.C., Ranch (White Face Farm)

AND/OR COMMON

Kleffner Ranch

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

S of East Helena on SR 518  
County Route 518

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

East Helena

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

#1

STATE

Montana

VICINITY OF

CODE  
30

COUNTY

Jefferson

CODE

043

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
			<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Paul Kleffner

STREET & NUMBER

Box 427

CITY, TOWN

East Helena

STATE

Montana

VICINITY OF

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Jefferson County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Boulder

STATE

Montana

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE Montana Historic Sites Inventory, John N. DeHaas, Jr.

DATE

June 17, 1975

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Montana Department of Fish and Game

CITY, TOWN

Helena

STATE

Montana

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" 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 buildings on the W. C. Child Ranch once served a ranch of about 5000 acres. The major ranch buildings, the huge barn and long shed, were built as a precaution against fierce Montana winters, such as the infamous winter of 1886-7. The barn is capable of storing over a quarter of a million cubic feet of hay and the shed, by its orientation, can protect cattle from winds out of the west and northwest. The ranch house, built after the barn and shed, was intended for recreational purposes, rather than as a permanent residence, because Mr. Child lived in Helena. The entire second floor of the house is an open ballroom

The two story house sits on the southwest corner of the group of buildings. It is octagonal, measuring exactly twenty feet along each side, and built of field stone with brick quoins. A veranda completely surrounds the house and it, like the eight-sided mansard over the house, is roofed with zinc. The stone walls of the house are more than a foot thick and, since most of the stones are glacial till the mortar joints are so thick at the outer surface that more mortar is often exposed than stone face. The joints were accentuated by a raised bead of red mortar, some of which remains on the upper portions of the wall under the veranda. The bricks for the quoins were custom made to accomodate the 45 degree angles at the corners.

Five outside doors enter the first floor at various points along the walls. Windows are arranged in symmetrical compositions with the doors. On the second floor, each wall has one centrally located window and each is situated such that the upper half of the window extends above the top of the wall to a dormer. Sash on both floors are double-hung and set into brick enframent, with brick arch openings on the first floor. An eight side brick chimney extends above the center of the roof and was once topped by a brick bulbous form. Four first floor fireplaces, the basement furnace, and a ballroom stove were originally served by the chimney, but now only one fireplace remains (the others having been closed) and the original furnace has been replaced.

The interior of the house has been modified over the years. The present owners have partitioned three bedrooms and a bathroom out of the ballroom space, although the majority of the space is still open. The first floor has had several doors between rooms closed off and a large family kitchen has been installed. However, all of the major partitions are intact. These radiate from the fireplace mass and it is interesting to note that they were built with bends in them so they would not interfere with the exterior window and door composition. The basement has been altered somewhat, due to earthquake damage in 1935. Some of the stone foundation walls were irreparably damaged and were replaced with brick. The huge stone fireplace foundation is intact and dominates the basement space. An interior stairway into the basement has been covered over, so the only access to the basement now is down cellar steps on the veranda.

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East of the house is a one story stone building (20' x 55') which once served as the cook house and dining hall for the large crews which worked on the ranch in its early days. This building has a hip roof, and while all the buildings except the house originally had tin plate, standing seam roofing, this is the only one with that original roofing left. Like all the other stone structures, the stone walls rest on one and one half foot deep footings, of the same stone, which spread about a foot on either side of the wall. The building has been modified by the present owners to serve as garage and storage.

East of the cook house/dining hall is a one story gable roof structure (28' x 40') which is the granary, although it once held living quarters in the south end. It is not certain what its original purpose was. It is poorly designed for grain storage and it is over structured and under fenestrated for living quarters. The exterior walls are of the Manitoba style of log construction and rest on a dry stone foundation wall which rises about one foot above grade. The structure of the partition walls utilized 2" x 6" studs, and studs, beams, columns, and crossbracing are all joined with mortice and tenon. All interior rooms were finished in high grade vertical tongue-and-groove siding and most of this remains. Only the south and north walls have windows and the north window openings are not original to the design.

Running north of the cook house/dining hall is a unique "L" shaped shed. A native field stone wall, eight feet tall, runs north for 230 feet and from there runs east for 70 feet. A lean-to roof extends east and south of these walls respectively, and thus provides the protection for cattle from prevailing winter winds. Originally, the long wall extended another 70 feet south to connect with the cook house/dining hall, but this segment of the shed was removed by the present owners to allow a driveway to pass between the two buildings. The 70 foot wall was originally 30 feet longer, so the original dimensions of the shed were 100' x 300'

Northwest of the corner of the shed stands the barn. This huge structure is built of the same stone as the other buildings, stone gathered up McClellan Creek, two miles southeast of the ranch. The walls are two feet thick. The barn at ground level measures 100 feet square and contains the pens and stanchions for animals. Resting on this base is essentially a standard wood barn, 55' x 100', with gables at the north and south ends. However, on the west and east sides, the stone walls extend upward from the first level base to form lean-two roofed wings. As a consequence, the first level of the loft is, again, 100 feet square. The height of this loft space is about 15 feet and above it, within the

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walls of the wood structure, is a upper loft level, rising about 25 feet to the ridge line of the roof. The total height of the barn is 55 feet. Originally, the barn had a large four-gabled central cupola, but the current owners had to remove it to avoid roof failure. Like the house, the barn has brick quoins and brick arches and enframement around the windows. The original wooden barn bridges, which provided access to the north and south ends of the loft, have been removed and a earth ramp now rises to the south end of the loft.

North of the barn is a final stone structure (40' x 70'). This one and one half story building once held the milk house, ice house, and root cellar at ground level with living quarters above. The lower level is used for minimum storage today while the upper level still serves as an apartment. There are two dormers on the west and two dormers on the east side of the gable roof. The north gable on the east side has been greatly enlarged by the current owners to serve as an entrance to the apartment, and a porch has been removed from the south end.

The owners have built several other buildings among the above described structures. All buildings are in use today and are in excellent condition, due to the careful maintenance of the present owners, the Paul Kleffner family.

# 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 type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES 1887-9

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

unknown

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The W. C. Child Ranch was one of the first to introduce purebred Herefords and to initiate the drilling of artesian wells into Montana. The octagonal ranch house is an unusual style of construction in the Rocky Mountain Region.

William C. Child, an Iowan, came to Montana about 1870, apparently as an agent for the Wells Fargo Express Company. In April, 1872, he was appointed Registrar of the Land Office for Montana Territory by President U. S. Grant. Child also had a number of mining interests and accumulated a modest fortune from them.

About 1885, Child purchased the original land from one Biddle Reeves and rapidly added adjoining acreage to it. He stocked it with Hereford cattle and named it the "White Face Farm." Two years later, the first artesian well (which, incidentally, is still running) in the area was drilled on the ranch.

The disastrous winter of 1886-7 which resulted in massive livestock losses on the northern plains prompted the construction the following year of the massive barn and other outbuildings on the Child ranch.

It is uncertain why Child selected the octagonal shape for his house. Although this design had enjoyed a certain popularity in the East during the 1850's and 1860's, it is not common in the West. Apparently, the house was never used as a permanent residence by Child, as he maintained a home in Helena. It was used for meetings and parties; the big octagonal dance floor on the second floor was designed expressly for this purpose. Guests were transported to the ranch in Child's private railroad car.

The Silver Panic of 1893 brought financial ruin to Child and he died that same year. The ranch passed from owner to owner, and the buildings slowly deteriorated. Purchased in 1943 by the Kleffner family, the original structures have been gradually restored.

From its beginning as the dream of a wealthy mining man through the various financial depressions and panics which afflicted Montana to its present solid agricultural basis, the history of this ranch mirrors the development of the state.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Helena Board of Trade Reports, Helena, Montana, 1887  
 Helena City Director, Helena, Montana, 1888  
 Helena Herald (newspaper) June 16, 1887; Sept. 3, 1891; October 14, 1893  
 Martin, George, "Much Area History Revealed in East Helena Ranch,"  
 The Independent Record (newspaper), Helena, Montana, July 8, 1962

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 6.36

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 2	4 3 0 1 2 5	5 1 5 7 3 5 0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary of the Child Ranch Historic Place is a rectangle of about 840 feet by 330 feet which includes all the buildings (see sketch map). This boundary is entirely imaginary, being neither legal nor physical.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE John N. DeHaas, Jr., Architect; Susan W. Curtis, Historian  
 Fredric L. Quie, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION Recreation and Parks Division  
 Department of Fish and Game

DATE  
 March 14, 1976

STREET & NUMBER  
 1420 E. 6th Avenue

TELEPHONE  
 (406) 449-3750

CITY OR TOWN  
 Helena

STATE  
 Montana

# 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

*Ron Heerday*

TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE July 23, 1976

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

*Robert B. Rettig*

DATE 11/23/77

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:

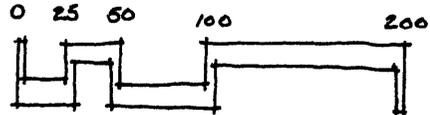
*Charles A. Bennett*

DATE 11.17.77

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

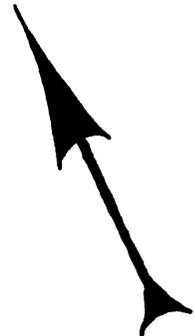
1976

W.C. CHILD RANCH  
EAST HELENA, MONTANA  
UTM REFERENCE:  
12 / 430125 / 6157350

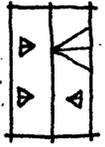


LEWIS & CLARK COUNTY  
JEFFERSON COUNTY

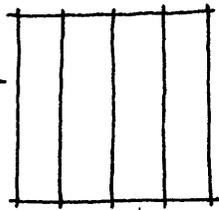
COUNTY 518



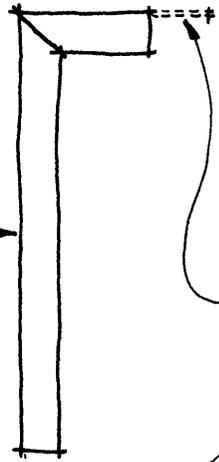
MILK HOUSE / ICE  
HOUSE / ROOT  
CELLAR / APARTMENT



BARN



"L" SHAPED SHED



FORMER EXTENSIONS OF  
WALLS OF "L" SHAPED SHED

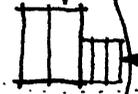
NEW SHOP (CA. 1950)



COOK HOUSE / DINING  
HALL

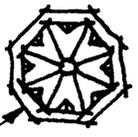


GRANARY



ADDITIONS TO GRANARY

OCTAGONAL HOUSE



CHICKEN HOUSE



ORIGINAL SITE OF CHICKEN HOUSE

