Form No. 10-300 (Rev 10-74) THEME XV, SUBTHEME: Cattleman's Empire

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Sierra Bonita Ranch

AND/DR COMMON

The Hooker Ranch

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

ITY, TOWN	Willcox	CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT		
	(27 mi. NW)	X VICINITY OF	F 3rd	
STATE	Arizona	CODE 04	COUNTY Cochise/Graham	CODE 003/009

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESI	ENTUSE
DISTRICT	PUBLIC	X OCCUPIED	AGRICULTURE	MUSEUM
XBUILDING(S)	XXPRIVATE	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
		XNO	MILITARY	х _{отнев} Ranch

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME	Mrs. Jacqueline Ho	oker Hughes and Mr	. Charles Hooker Davis
STREET & NUMBER			
	Box 188		
CITY, TOWN	Willcox		STATE Arizona 85643
5 LOCATIO	N OF LEGAL DESC	CRIPTION	
COURTHOUSE. REGISTRY OF DEED	County Courthouse s,etc		
STREET & NUMBER	_		
	Graham County		
CITY, TOWN	Safford		STATE Arizona
6 REPRESE	NTATION IN EXIS	TING SURVEYS	
TITLE	None		
DATE			
		FEDERAL	STATECOUNTYLOCAL
DEPOSITORY FOR		······································	
SURVEY RECORDS			
CITY TOWN			STATE



CONI	DITION	CHECK ONE	СНЕСК О	NE
EXCELLENT XXGOOD FAIR	DETERIORATED RUINS UNEXPDSED	UNALTERED	XX _{ORIGINAL} S	SITE DATE

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Sierra Bonita ranch house is a fully articulated country <u>hacienda</u> built around a long, rectangular patio. The three-sided structure follows the <u>hacienda</u> plan; the fourth side is enclosed by a wall, beyond which stand some of the many ranch buildings. The exterior walls of the house were built of a double row of adobe bricks 16 feet high and 20 inches thick. While the roof is almost flat, it slopes slightly toward the patio for drainage, and a low parapet surrounds the roof on all three sides for possible defense. Continuing the fortress design, there were originally no exterior windows in the house, all of the openings being onto the patio, with access to the house through a gate in the wall of the carriage courtyard, long since closed up. The <u>hacienda</u> form usually has few exterior openings, but the Hooker house was built with none because it lay across the main trail used by the Apache for raiding into Mexico. Hooker, however, had an understanding with the Apache and had few problems with them.

A <u>portal</u> with a wooden floor surrounded three sides of the patio, giving shade and providing the illusion of coolness; the wooden floor has been replaced by concrete. The patio once contained a well, windmill, and root cellar, providing an interior water supply and food storage in case of attack. The well is long since capped, and the root cellar closed off. The patio is now in grass with a brick planter where the entrance to the root cellar once was.

Inside the house along the northeast side are three bedrooms and a parlor. Adjacent to the bedrooms was a bathroom with the first Victorian scroll-foot bathtub in the valley. Colonel Hooker's bedroom is now a billiard room, although the furniture from the room is in another bedroom on the northeast side of the house. East of the parlor, which still contains Hooker's rolltop desk, is the family dining room, and adjacent to that the family kitchen and pantry open into a second kitchen and the dining room once used by the ranch hands. Next to the most westerly of the bedrooms stand the workroom and storage room. The adjacent stable provided space for 17 horses, box stalls for stallions, and a tack room, for Hooker was fond of blooded stock and often hosted races on his half-mile track.

The house was the nerve center of a complex of other ranch buildings. Southwest of the house was a large adobe corral for holding cattle, as many as 3000 head, some say. Other nearby corrals, both adobe and plank, held the horse remuda. Close by is a rare structure for the Southwest: a barn built mostly of wood, with a gabled roof, and the legend "Sierra Bonita Ranch 1872" lettered above the doors, a legend recently refurbished for the ranch's centennial. To the north was a large adobe corral for the storage of hay.

North of the workroom and outside the main house complex stands an adobe bunkhouse that housed the ranch hands. It retains its tin roof, but it is deteriorating at the southeast end. A modern brick guest room has been added to the northwest end.



PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
PREHISTORIC	ARCHEULUGY-PREHISTORIC	COMMUNITY PLANNING	LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	RELIGION	
1400-1499	-ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	CONSERVATION	LAW	SCIENCE	
1500-1599	AGRICULTURE	ECONOMICS	LITERATURE	SCULPTURE	
1600-1699	ARCHITECTURE	EDUCATION	MILITARY	SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
1700-1799	ART	ENGINEERING	MUSIC	THEATER	
<u>X</u> _1800-1899	COMMERCE	-EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	PHILOSOPHY	TRANSPORTATION	
<u>X_1900-</u>	-COMMUNICATIONS	_INDUSTRY	POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	XOTHER (SPECIFY)	
		INVENTION		Ranching	

SPECIFIC DATES 1872

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Col. Henry C. Hooker founded the Sierra Bonita Ranch in 1872. It was the first permanent American cattle ranch in Arizona, and the first one to introduce graded stock into the territory. The Sierra Bonita and later ranches in Arizona were founded to feed the army posts, mining camps, and Indian agencies in the territory. Thus was laid the basis for the Arizona cattle industry. Beginning in 1867 Colonel Hooker became the most important military beef contractor in Arizona. He drove up to 15,500 cattle to Arizona holding ranges each year, there to await orders from army camps and Indian agencies. In 1872 one of his trail herds stampeded into the Sulphur Springs Valley. Impressed by this location, Hooker founded the Sierra Bonita Ranch there, on the site of a former Spanish hacienda which had been distroyed by the Apache in the early 1800's. Hooker's ranch house was an adobe fortress, for he too was harrassed, first by Apaches, later by the gangs of cutthroats and rustlers who infested the Sulphur Springs Valley.

The Sierra Bonita was watered by five springs and numerous cienegas and wells. This water gave Hooker control of a range some 20 miles long and 30 miles wide. The Sierra Bonita, at an elevation of 4,000 feet escaped extremes of heat and cold and was an ideal breeding range. A number of Hooker's outlying ranches specialized in breeding, holding stock, and grazing lands. With the importation of Hereford graded stock in the eighties, Hooker improved his ranches, fenced portions of land, and planted alfalfa and other hay crops.

Hooker was one of the few Arizona ranchers to survive the disastrous drought of 1891. He formed the Sierra Bonita Land and Stock Company with capital of \$500,000 and bought out surrounding ranchers, extending his range to 250,000 acres carrying 20,000 head. At the time of his death in 1907 Hooker was the cattle king of Arizona. So he had been for 40 years.

The Sierra Bonita is an operating cattle ranch still in the Hooker family. The adobe ranch house has been remodelled inside but still retains the fortresslike appearance of early days. Surrounding the ranch house, which is shaded by gigantic cottonwoods, are the original adobe corrals, bunkhouses, and barns. The integrity of the site is exceptional in three ways: continuity, appearance of the buildings, and magnificent setting.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See Continuation Sheet

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

DATE ENTERED

Sierra Bonita Ranch			
CONTINUATION SHEET	ITEM NUMBER 7	PAGE	2

The main house has been altered inside over the years. Exterior windows and doors have been cut, including a picture window in the family dining room, said to have been cut by Hooker himself after the Apache threat had subsided.

The main house and outbuildings are in good condition; the adobe of the corrals and the bunkhouse is deteriorating as time and weather take their toll. The ronch includes some 39,000 acres of land owned by the Hooker descendants, but the whole ranch, including leased land, is over 50,000 acres, which is used for grazing and growing hay and alfalfa. The family still occupy the house.

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Sierra Bonita Ranch

ITEM NUMBER ⁹ PAGE

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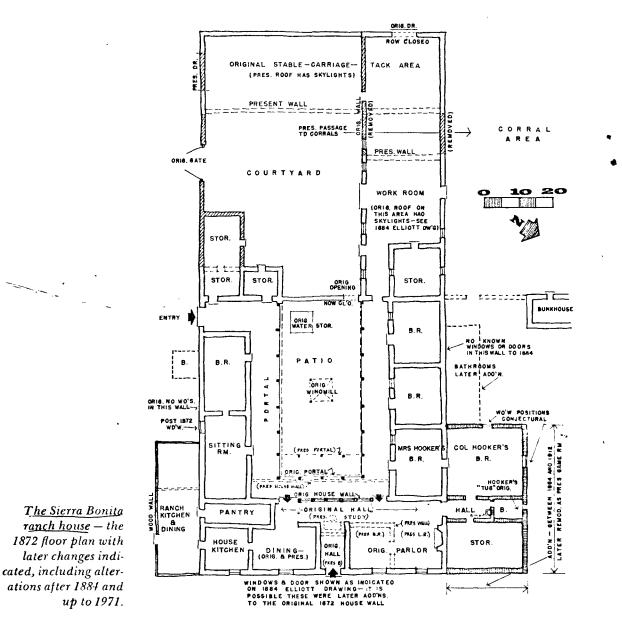
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