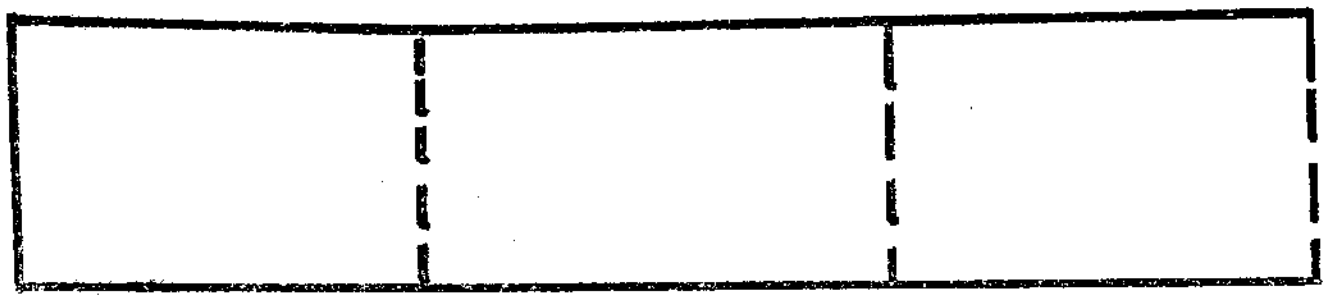
RESOURCE PROTECTION PLANNING PROCESS

Study Unit: Ranching in Panhandle Oklahoma
Region: One



Project Director: Mary Ann Anders
Text and Research: Linda Holubek
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April, 1984

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INTRODUCTION

This study unit manual has been prepared by the Oklahoma Historic Preservation Survey, History Department, Oklahoma State University. The manual has been designed for those individuals and groups responsible for management decisions for historical resources in Oklahoma. The theme and geographical location follow the statewide system for organizing information on historic resources. Specifically, this manual focuses on ranching in region one. Materials included are: (1) A narrative describing ranching activities in the panhandle of Oklahoma between 1866 and 1934; (2) Information about the most significant pre- and post-settlement ranches; (3) Maps and ranch characteristics; (4) A list of National Register Nominations; and (5) Criteria for evaluation of properties to be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places.

The information in this manual is the basis for those preparing operational plans and management units for the preservation and protection of historic resources. Funds for the research, preparation, and publication have been provided by (?).

For further information concerning the Resource Protection Planning Process contact the Preservation Office, Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

RANCHING IN THE OKLAHOMA PANHANDLE

Introduction:

The cattle industry played an important part in Oklahoma history. It provided a means of livelihood for cattle owners and their employees. Some of these cowhands were able to acquire herds and become successful ranchers. Ranchers who first migrated from Texas into the Oklahoma Panhandle, once established, served as a motivating factor for other settlers. In addition, ranching provided an impetus for economic growth in retailing. For example, barbed wire and feed comopanies capitalized on the ranchers needs. Also, the extension of rail lines, such as the Rock Island, into the Panhandle was due primarily to the need for ranchers to get their cattle to distant markets more efficiently than long cattle drives.

The life of the ranchers and cowboys has been a vital part of Western heritage. Numerous books and articles have been written about life on the range. Television shows as "Bonanza," "The Big Valley," and "High Chaparral;" movie characters as Roy Rogers, Gene Autry, Tom Mix, and John Wayne; and idealized Hollywood western movies glamorized life on the range. However, cattle drives, roundups, and branding were strenuous activities. Hardships included floods, harsh winters, stampedes, predators, and rustlers. Picnics, dances, and church socials provided some entertainment, but these were few and far between. Few ranchers or cowhands possessed the larger than life characteristics of a Gene Autry or a John Wayne, yet many became prominent citizens of their communities, and many Panhandle ranchers and cowboys are memorialized in Oklahoma's Cowboy Hall of Fame.

The objectives of this study are twofold. One objective is to present an overview of the history of ranching. The second is to focus on specific pre-

settlement and post-settlement ranches in the Panhandle. While it was impossible to discuss all of the ranches in this area, an attempt has been made to mention those that have obtained acclaim in local literature and historical studies. Although document research has been valuable, interviews with present day Panhandle ranchers have provided much useful specific information about early ranching in the Panhandle.

Area History:

The Panhandle is 5,670 square miles, or 3,682,000 acres. To the north it is bounded by Colorado and Kansas, to the west by New Mexico, and to the east by what was once the Cherokee Outlet. Texas touches its southern boundary. The Panhandle presently has three counties: Beaver, Texas, and Cimarron. The land elevation as well as the climate varies. The eastern portion of Beaver County is 2,800 feet whereas the extreme western part of Cimarron County has an elevation of 5,000 feet. Rainfall varies from ten to thirty-two inches. The principal rivers are the Beaver and the Cimarron. The Beaver runs through most of the Panhandle. The southern banks of the Beaver generally do not have much shrubbery or trees. Cottonwoods and willows line the opposite bank. On the north side along the eastern part of the Beaver Valley are sand dunes two to three miles in width. Covered by sage brush and shrubs, they become home to upland game birds, such as quail and prairie chickens. In some places the river banks are low, and during the rainy season easily flood the surrounding area. Portions of the river beds are composed of quicksand.

One of the most picturesque natural attractions of the Panhandle is the Black Mesa. The Black Mesa extends three miles into Cimarron County from New Mexico and Colorado. About sixty percent of it is covered with a top layer of basaltic lava. Where portions of the lava cap have eroded, white and tan

sandstone layers are visible. The highest point in Oklahoma, 4,978 feet, is part of the Black Mesa.

The Panhandle has had a lengthy and varied history. One of the first explorers was the Spaniard, Coronado, who visited the area in 1541. When Coronado found neither gold, silver, nor civilized Indians, Spain showed little interest in the Panhandle. In the 1830s and 1840s, two men, Wilson and Exeter, received land grants from Spain for the northern and southern halves of present day Cimarron County. Another grant, the Chambers grant, encompassed most of Texas County while the Dominguez grant included all of Beaver County. When Spain gave up her claim to Oklahoma, these grants were void. In addition, the French claimed this area briefly in the early 1800s. It reverted to Spanish control in 1819. From 1828-1836, Spain held title to the Panhandle and then Texas until 1850.

The Panhandle was often referred to as No Man's Land or the Neutral Strip because it was not part of any existing political unit. As the new states of New Mexico, Kansas, and Colorado were formed, a strip of land thirty-four miles wide and one hundred and sixty-seven miles long was isolated from any governmental body. At one point, it was thought to be part of Cherokee Outlet, and the Cherokees even collected rents from ranchers who desired to graze their cattle.

During the late 1800s, several attempts were made to establish a government in the Panhandle, commonly referred to as the Neutral Strip. In October of 1885, A. J. Sparks issued a statement that the lands in the Neutral Strip were subject to squatters' rights. Immediately, settlers began moving into the area of Beaver City. An estimated 3,000 settlers staked claims, mostly in the eastern portion of Beaver County. At first, vigilante committees were organized in various communities to maintain law and order as no laws, governments, or land offices existed.

At a public meeting held August 26, 1886, in Beaver City, an informal claims committee was set up to uphold homestead claims. By October, a formal claims board with elected officers was organized. It issued a statement that "Cimarron Territory" would hold elections on February 22, 1887, to elect representatives to meet in Beaver City on March 4, 1887. A judicial committee was formed at the March meeting to assume the duties of the claims board, and be responsible for justice throughout the entire Territory. Also, a seal of Cimarron was adopted. In 1887, attempts were made to send delegates to Washington, D.C. to secure formal recognition of Cimarron Territory. The following year, representatives met in Beaver City and adopted an "Act to Organize the Territory of Cimarron." The general election to pass this act never took place, however, due to the land run in April of 1889. Under an official proclamation by President Harrison, homesteaders were able to move into unassigned lands. Two-thirds of the area's population of 14,000 left by the summer of 1889 to take homesteads in other new lands opened by Congress.

In May of 1890, Congress passed the Organic Act to make Oklahoma a territory. The Neutral Strip, now called Beaver County, became the seventh county in Oklahoma. Seventeen years later, the Panhandle was divided into the three present counties of Beaver, Texas, and Cimarron.

Pre-settlement Ranching (1870-1890):

After the Civil War, Texas cattlemen had begun to drive their cattle through Oklahoma to Northern markets. In the Panhandle, most of the early ranches were located near the Beaver and Cimarron Rivers, or on one of their tributaries. This was because an ample water supply was a major factor in choosing a place to settle. Another incentive for bringing cattle to range in the Panhandle was the bluestem and gramma grasses. At one time over one half of the Panhandle was part of the Buffalo Plains. Journalist, Horace Greeley, estimated that at one time

five million buffalo grazed on these grasses; unlike other types, these grasses cure in the fall and are most nourishing in the winter.

By 1880, huge cattle ranches spread throughout the Panhandle. There were even large sheep ranchers such as the Lujan and Baca families. Ranges were loosely defined as from six to twelve square miles that the cattle grazed on before they returned to their source of water. Walter Prescott Webb, Texas historian, defines the ranch as "the houses and all the range of cattle, whether fenced or unfenced." He also defines ranching as "the practice of raising cattle on a large scale, . . . and the owner of a ranch is a ranchman or cattleman. The cowboy is an employee whose business it is to handle the cattle" (See The Great Plains). It must be remembered that because the Panhandle was not owned by any state at this time cattlemen did not actually own this land, however, grazing rights were generally respected.

Cattle companies formed mainly to raise capital to invest in cattle. Many of these companies were British or Scottish syndicates. Two cattle companies need to be mentioned. The Prairie Cattle Company, beginning in the 1870s with the purchase of the Hall Brothers Cross L brand, eventually carried seventeen different brands, and in 1885 listed ownership of 124,000 head of cattle. By 1903, the Prairie Cattle Company moved into the Dakotas, and by 1912 went out of business. According to Truman Tucker, its most efficient manager was Murdo McKenzie whose brother, Aleck, had a ranch near Kenton, Oklahoma. Also, during the 1870s and 1880s the Kramer Cattle Company was located southeast of Beaver and extended east to Fort Supply.

There were three cattlemen's associations that primarily served the Oklahoma Panhandle. Basically, these organizations were formed to combat cattle rustlers and to ensure that cattlemen received fair prices at the markets. Brand inspectors were hired to do the latter. In other words, these associations

were mutual support groups. The Western Central Kansas Grower's Association was organized by forty-five cattlemen in the area of Dodge City. The second was the Western Kansas Grower's Association which more effectively served the ranchers south of the Arkansas River in the Panhandle. Both were formed in 1883, but the second was twice as large as the first and claimed to represent three times as much area. Later, the Beaver Cattlemen's Association was founded and mainly included those ranchers along the Beaver River. In 1901, this organization met regularly in Hardesty and its chairman at that time was J. C. Denison, owner of the Little Bar V Ranch.

Prior to settlement, cattle grazed freely across the open range. Generally twice a year cattlemen from different outfits pooled their manpower and conducted roundups. These were done to gather the cattle from various outfits which were intermingled. Afterwards, each outfit would cut out its own cattle. The spring roundup mainly took place in order to transfer cattle to their southern ranges and to brand calves. To determine ownership, calves were always given the brand of their mothers. During the fall roundup, cattle were gathered to be shipped to market. Unbranded cattle were usually divided among the outfits. Roundups meant hard work, but they also provided social contact as cowpunchers swapped tales around the campfires.

The chuckwagon carried the crews' staples which included: sowbelly, beans, stewed fruit, sourdough biscuits, coffee, canned goods, and flour. The chuckbox, whose inventor was said to be New Mexico cattle rancher, John Chisum, was attached to the rear of the chuckwagon and served as a pantry, kitchen, and medicine chest.

Branding was the method by which cattlemen distinguished their cattle. Letters or symbols might be tilting, running, dragging, lazy, or crazy depending on their position. A short line was called a bar, a long line was called a rail, and a

diagonal line was a slash. The letter "O" was usually called a circle. If a half or quarter circle was placed on top of a letter, the letter was called swinging. If it was below a letter, it was rocking. In order to make it harder for cattle rustlers to alter brands, cattlemen preferred complex brands. Some, in addition to their brand, would mark the ears of their cattle. Also, each brand was located in a specified place. For more information on the variety of brands found in the Oklahoma Panhandle, consult Man and the Oklahoma Panhandle, edited by Bernice Jackson.

Texas ranchers were the first to use barbed wire. Later, it was used by settlers to fence out cattle from their crops. This sometimes led to bloody disputes between cattlemen and "nesters". There are perhaps six hundred varieties of barbed wire. A Frenchman first patented a type of barbed wire in 1860. By 1867, three patents were issued to Americans. The most successful barbed wire maker was Joseph Glidden who crimped the barbs and then placed them on smooth wire. "The Winner," as it was called, came out in 1874. A very good collection can be found at the Panhandle State Museum in Goodwell, Oklahoma.

Less controversial, but of more use to the pre-settlement ranchers were windmills. According to Bernice Jackson, in Man and the Oklahoma Panhandle, the first windmills in the Texhoma area were on the 3C Ranch in the 1880s. Ranchers were forced to dig wells to water their herds. One windmill was enough to furnish water for a section of land. Later, settlers took advantage of this relatively inexpensive means of obtaining water. With the advent of rural electrification, the use of the windmill declined.

Before settlers began flooding the Oklahoma Panhandle in the late 1880s, many ranchers claimed this area for their cattle. These pre-settlemnt ranches at times grazed between 30,000 to 40,000 head of cattle. During the period of the

open range, because the cattlemen did not hold titles to the land, it was very difficult to determine definite boundary lines. Also, most of these early ranchers relied on no supplementary feed, thus cattle sought their own new supplies of grass often mixing with cattle from other ranches. Therefore pre-settlement ranches were loosely defined in size. The size of grazing ranges depended on the number of cattle a rancher owned and the available grazing land.

During the 1880s ranchers faced many hardships. Storms and blizzards decimated entire herds of cattle. Two drift fences were built to check the wandering of the cattle and thus make roundups easier. One ran west from Fort Supply and partly across the Texas Panhandle. The second ran parallel to the South Canadian River. Yet, these fences became death traps during the blizzard of 1883 when cattle drifted with the snows and were stopped by the fence. Unable to move any farther their bodies were used as a ladder for those remaining cattle to climb over the fence. Most ranchers lost at least half of their stock. For example, the Kramer brothers were left with 2,500 head out of 20,000.

Another hardship ranchers faced were cattle rustlers. The Panhandle in its pre-settlement days was often an attractive place to the outlaw. Robber's Roost, near Kenton, Oklahoma, was once the hideout of the William Coe Gang that numbered around forty to fifty men. The headquarters building measured sixteen by thirty-nine feet and had thirty inch walls. There were no windows only two doors at each end and two fireplaces to provide heat in the winter. Prairie fires, wolves, and coyotes were other menaces to the cattlemen. Despite much hardship, in 1884 there were an estimated 200,000 head of cattle on the Beaver range alone.

Railroads were eager to obtain the southwestern cattlemen's business. In 1888, the Rock Island extended its line seven miles into the Oklahoma Panhandle. The town of Tyrone quickly prospered as a large stockyard was built with loading

pens to accomodate several thousand head of cattle. This also saved cattlemen from driving their cattle an extra hundred miles to Dodge City. About seven miles from the railroad's loading pens, J. U. Shade, livestock agent for the railroad, built his well. Throughout the 1890s cattlemen utilized Shade's Well as they waited to get their cattle into the loading pens. When the Rock Island extended its tracks closer to the individual ranches in 1901, Shade's Well was no longer used.

During the pre-settlement period, many prominent ranchers began as cowboys themselves. For example, Boss Sebastian Neff began his ranching career as a cowpuncher from 1883-1888. In 1888, he was able to buy eighty-three head for nine-hundred dollars. By 1898, Neff owned 1,500 head. Neff moved his family to Hooker, Oklahoma, in 1909 and subsequently went into the feed store and loan business. In community affairs, Neff was instrumental in organizing the No Man's Land Historical Society in 1934. Before his death in 1947, Neff set aside ten acres of his ranch to be a nesting area for birds. A variety of trees and vines were to be planted to serve as a shelter for the birds and provide fruit for the household. Another active rancher was Colonel A. J. Hardesty. Using the S-half circle brand the Hardesty brothers grazed between 20,000 to 25,000 head of cattle along the Chiquita Creek. Jack Hardesty was well respected by his employees, and the town of Hardesty, Oklahoma, still bears the family's name. It was Jack Hardesty who tried to prevent Texas cattlemen from bringing their tick infested cattle into Oklahoma. He employed men to keep these cattle out of the east end of the Panhandle. When Texas cattlemen complained, Washington sent word that the blockade was to be broken. The resistance ended, and organized and supervised trail routes were designated.

Two examples of pre-settlement ranches are the 101 and the OX. The British syndicate of Doss, Taylor, and Horn established the original 101 Ranch in

1874. The 101 (not affiliated with Miller Brothers of Ponca City) became one of the most important pre-settlement ranches in present Cimarron County. Fifteen thousand head of cattle were run on the ranch year round. Forty to fifty men were employed during the summer, and ten to fifteen were retained during the winter. The 101 was very progressive. According to Chrisman's Lost Trails of the Cimarron, the ranch had extensive feed operations in the Kansas Flint Hills and Eldorado where they grew grain. Also, the first telephone line ran from Trinidad, Colorado, to the 101 headquarters to the ZH Ranch. The OX was located on the Cimarron River in Texas County. Horses were also bred on this ranch which ran between 20,000 to 30,000 head of cattle. Some of the first barbed wire to be used in the area was to fence the OX horses.

The large pre-settlement ranches operated until settlement began. In the Panhandle, this happened as early as 1890. To maintain their hold on the land, some ranchers often had their relatives, or ranch hands stake claims which they later turned over to the rancher. When some of these ranching empires dissolved, their former cowboys became small-scale ranchers themselves. This was easy since some ranchers paid their cowboys with cattle, gave them loans, or sold them part of the land, equipment, or ranch buildings.

Post-settlement Ranching (1890-1940):

After settlement ranchers no longer had access to the vast open ranges. They now had to stake out claims and purchase their land. Settlers also decreased the size of free grazing pastures. They put up barbed wire to enclose their crops. In one way this helped the cattle industry because greater attention could be given to individual cows, allowing the breeding of high grade and registered cattle. However, fencing in areas often led to hostility between ranchers and "nesters." Thus, ranching operations became less nomadic and more domestic as

ranchers had limited or concentrated grazing areas. By 1907, a few large ranches remained that had from 5,000 to 7,000 head of cattle each. By the 1920s even the largest ranches ran no more than 3,000 head. Those ranches that survived into the post-settlement period did so out of careful management and diversification. Ranchers began growing crops, and later invested in commodities; oil, or natural gas. No longer did the foreign syndicates or cattle companies dominate the ranching industry. Ranching became more individualized. Ranches such as the Hitch, Barby, Labrier, and Kohler are among those surviving into the post-settlement period. Specific details on these ranches are provided later in this study. Finally, one needs to mention that the impact of mechanization and the Federal Government on today's rancher is far more extensive than during the pre-settlement days. For example, government loans and cattle purchasing programs aided ranchers through the depression. Some of this type of aid is still available. Technology has made the rancher's life less labor intensive. Barbed wire has been replaced by electric fences. Windmills are no longer the only method of bringing water to cattle. Water tanks on trucks serve ranchers just as well if not better. Farm machinery has come a long way from the hand held or horse drawn plow. Also, more is known about the cattle themselves. High-protein cottonseed cakes are fed to the cattle in the winter. Ranchers no longer face the problem of their cattle starving to death from lack of grass and over grazing is not as common as in the time of the open range.

Conclusion:

With any study, one will always find gaps in data. As previously mentioned, it was difficult to determine exact boundaries of pre-settlement ranches as cattle ranged openly. At times, it was not easy to obtain a definite number of cattle for a given ranch as most sources estimated or only gave figures for a particular year. Although county histories were helpful in learning the background of an

individual rancher, few provided detailed information about their ranching operations. Ranches frequently changed ownership. It would require much time to trace land ownership from the deed records at the county abstract office. Finding current information on individual ranches is another problem. The WPA files and the vertical files at the Oklahoma Historical Society are good beginning sources. Yet, the WPA's work was done in 1938. Some of their site locations were inaccurate. Again, it would require considerable time to go through newspaper indicies. Much use was made of oral history to fill in a few of the data gaps and sincere thanks are in order to those who generously donated their time and energy to aid in this study.

In conclusion, the cattle industry has been and continues to be important to Oklahoma. Ranchers who entered the Panhandle in the 1870s and 1880s were the first to prosper economically. They provided knowledge and information about the region that aided settlers, and those cowboys dreaming to become successful ranchers, too. Not all ranchers sought to rid the region of "nesters." During harsh winters, some of these established ranchers were a settler's only salvation. Many ranchers contributed to their communities through their support of education museums, and historical societies. Thus, the rancher was and continues to be a significant element in Oklahoma's development.

Individual Ranches:

The following is a list of the major ranches in the Oklahoma Panhandle containing basic data on each ranch. The amount of information available varies from ranch to ranch, but included herein are such essential facts as location, dates, size, founder, existing resources, and a very brief history of each. In preparing this list, the writers followed Walter Prescott Webb's definition of a ranch with the qualification that the outfit run at least one hundred head of cattle or, if the size of the herd is not known, its range be large enough to support that number (i.e. a minimum of 1,600 acres). A number of criteria were used in selecting ranches for inclusion: physical size, number of head of cattle, net income, prominence outside local area, owner (importance of him/her), number of years in operation (or still in operation), and cultural/economic/political contributions of the individual ranch to the state or nation.

PRE-SETTLEMENT RANCHES

Anchor D. Ranch

Location: Central Texas County (vicinity of Guymon)
Legal Description: Sec. 29, T3, R14E.

Dates: 1878-1920s/1930s

Size: 67,000 acres, ran 30,000 head of cattle under ownership of Dudley

Founder: E. C. Dudley

Existing Resources: Horse stable, grain elevator, school house, and old equipment
Condition of Resources: fair to poor.

History: Dudley began on a small scale, but enlarged his holdings through buying out his neighbors. George Shoemaker owned the ranch after Dudley. Then, it was sold to Stonebraker and Zea. They went broke in the twenties or thirties and sold out to the R. S. Coon Trust Estate. Coon then leased and finally sold out to Jack Freeman and Joe Meyer. Meyer owns 13,000 acres of the old Anchor D. and runs 600 mother cattle.

Barby Ranch

Location: North Central Beaver County (vicinity of Knowles)
Legal Description: Sec. 20, T4N, R26E.

Dates: 1896 to present

Size: By 1916 had 1,600 head of cattle

Founder: Otto Barby

Existing Resources: Barby Ranch Headquarters
Condition of Resources: Excellent

History: Otto Barby, born 1865 in St. Louis, Missouri, came to the Panhandle in the early 1880s. He married May Beebe in 1896 and bought his first 160 acres. Barby also bought a small herd of cattle. Later, the Barbys branched out into farm loans and oil. Otto Barby had seven children from his first wife and two from his second, Helen Hughes. Otto Barby died in 1954.

CCC RANCH

Location: Southern Texas County (vicinity of Texhoma)
Legal Description: Sec. 20, T1N, R11E.

Dates: 1890-1901

Size: 20,000 to 30,000 head of cattle

Founder: Vickers, Wells, and Gates of Tombstone, Arizona

Existing Resources: Original ranch headquarters built ca. 1880.
Condition of resources: good

History: Headquarters of the CCC is presently owned by Willie Osborn and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Cross Rails

Location: Northwestern Cimarron County (vicinity of Kenton)
Legal Description: Sec. 20, T6N, R1E

Dates: ca. 1870-(?)

Size: Unknown

Founder: Locker (?)

Existing Resources: Stone ruins

History: Locker went into partnership with George Wiggins, whose son, Jack Wiggins, presently owns the property. They shipped their cattle out of Dodge City.

Green Ranch

Location: Southeastern Texas Co. (vicinity of Hardesty)
Legal Description: Sec. 29 (NE-1/4), T2N, R19E.

Dates: 1896-1904

Size: Approximately 300 head of cattle

Founder: J. S. Green

Existing Resources: Rock ranch house built 1896
Condition: unknown

History: Green ranched, raised crops including feed for cattle, and even built one of Boss Neff's homes. Green later sold his ranch and moved to New Mexico.

Hitch Ranch

Location: Southern Texas County (vicinity of Guymon)
Legal Description: Sec. 1 (SE-1/4, SE-1/4), T2N, R15E.

Dates: 1884 to present

Size: 1880s ran 8,000 to 10,000 head of cattle, and under Henry Hitch grew to 24,000 acres.

Founder: James K. Hitch

Existing Resources: Henry C. Hitch Ranch headquarters
Condition of resources: Excellent

History: The Hitch Ranch is still one of the largest agricultural operations in Oklahoma managed by members of the Hitch family. Like many pre-settlement ranches that survived, Hitch branched out into commodities, farming, and feedlot enterprises.

Kohler Ranch

Location: Northern Cimarron County (northwest of Boise City)
Legal Description: Sec. 31 (SE-1/4), T6N, R5E.

Dates: 1903 to present

Size: 12,000 acres plus leased land in Colorado from 1928-37

Founder: Julius Kohler

Existing Resources: Ranch headquarters; Garrett Post Office; Garrett Schoolhouse; Kohler Dam.
Condition of Resources: Excellent

History: Kohler, a German immigrant, came to the Panhandle in 1886 and worked on the Anchor D. He was a blacksmith by trade, however, he went into ranching in 1903. In 1905 he married Minnie Shugart. The Kohler ranch is presently owned by his four sons.

McFarland Ranch

Location: Northwestern Beaver County (vicinity of Beaver City)
Legal Description: Sec. 11, (NW-1/4) T4N, R23E.

Dates: ca. 1884/1885-1935

Size: 5,000 acres and 500 head of cattle

Founder: Bob McFarland

Existing Resources: Ranch House
Condition of Resources: ruins

History: McFarland first lived in a sod house, then built a frame house which burned down in the 1920s.

Miles Ranch

Location: Northeastern Beaver County (vicinity of Gate)
Legal Description: Sec. 8 (SE-1/4), T4N, R24E

Dates: 1890-1939

Size: ca. 20,000 acres

Founder: Jake O. Miles

Existing Resources: Ranch house moved to location 1925
Condition of resources: good

History: Miles was a half brother to John Over and his ranch was north of Over's. In addition to ranching, Miles owned a butcher shop and supplied it with beef from his own ranch. Miles died in 1955. His son, Robert Miles is the present owner.

Neff Ranch

Location: Southeastern Texas County (1-1/2 miles north of Old Hardesty)
Legal Description:

Dates: ca. 1898-1909

Size: 1,500 head of cattle in 1898

Founder:

Existing Resources: Unknown
Condition of resources: unknown

History: Neff moved his family to Hooker in 1909. Thereafter, he primarily concerned himself with banking, his feed, store, and loan business. Neff was instrumental in founding of the No Man's Land Historical Society. He died in 1947.

101 Ranch

Location: Northwestern Cimarron County (vicinity of Kenton)
Legal Description: Sec. 13 (SE-1/4, NE-1/4), T5N, R1E.

Dates: 1874-1887

Size: Total acreage unknown. 15,000 head of cattle run year round and 40-50 men employed during summer.

Founder: British Syndicate of Doss, Taylor, and Horn

Existig Resources: 101 Ranch headquarters; corral posts
Condition of Resources: fair

History: In 1887 the syndicate abandoned the 101. Calvin Clelland bought the headquarters. In 1906 D. S. Drum purchased the ranch, but sold it to A. S. Palmer in 1910. Palmer repaired the headquarters and built himself what is now the Ross Labrier House. The first telephone line in the Panhandle came from Trinidad, Colorado, to the 101.

Over Ranch

Location: Northeastern Beaver County (vicinity of Gate)
Legal Description: Sec. 4, T4N, R28E.

Dates: 1895-1909

Size: Range extended over 200 sections. Over owned 6 sections bought mainly from those selling out.

Existing Resources: John E. Over Headquarters
Condition of Resources: good

History: In addition to ranching, he was post master of the Cline Post Office and opened a general store. Over died in 1909. His ranch headquarters is presently owned by Leland Barby.

OX Ranch

Location: Central Texas County (vicinity of Guymon)
Legal Description: Sec. 10 (NW-1/4), T3N, R15E.

Dates; 1877-1886

Size: 20,000 to 30,000 head of cattle, 16 square miles of pasture.

Founder: Syndicate of Towers, Gudgell, and Simpson.

Existing Resources: site only

History: Probably the syndicate owner left after blizzard of 1886. The OX headquarters became the home of Bob Murray, manager of the OX and ZH. He sold it to J. J. Willson who sold the ranch to Ramond Smalts. In 1957 it became part of the Cimarron Trust Estate, owned principally by Jack Renfro and Associates. Lorraine McNally owns the property presently.

Pigpen Ranch/Half Circle Ranch

Location: Southeastern Texas County (vicinity of Hardesty)
Legal Description: Sec. 23, T1N, R19E.

Dates: 1880-1897

Size: Unknown

Founder: John O'Laughlin of Wichita, Kansas

Existing Resources: Unknown

History: Established in 1880, the Ranch changed its name to the Half Circle in 1890. It disbanded in 1897. Marion W. Eldridge, foreman, purchased the 160 acres on which the ranch dugout, corral, and a few outbuildings stood. In 1901 he built a rock house. He acquired a store and post office in 1903-1909.

Taintor Ranch

Location: Northeastern Beaver County (vicinity of Knowles)
Legal Description: Sec. 6 (NW-1/4, SW-1.4), T5N, R27E.

Dates: 1881 to 1930s

Size: 1,500 head of cattle in 1881, ranch size is unknown

Founder: Fred Taintor

Existing Resources: Fred Taintor Ranch headquarters built in 1881.
Condition of Resources: fair

History: Taintor originally bought out Sam Bullard's cattle. He was one of the first to buy registered Herefords to improve his stock. He married Jesse Coons and had two sons. When his sons were old enough to attend school he sold his ranch and moved. It is presently part of the Barby property.

ZH Ranch

Location: North central Cimarron County (vicinity of Boise City)
Legal Description: Sec. 4 (NW-1/4), T5N, R5E.

Dates: 1877-ca. 1895

Size: 30-40,000 head of cattle

Founder: Commodore T. H. Burnett

Existing Resources: site only

History: T. H. Burnett sold the ranch to the Muscateen Cattle Company. The ZH local headquarters was located on the western portion of the Cy Strong Ranch. Cy Strong's father W. P. Strong took over of the ranch from Henry Bickel. Bob Clark acquired the ZH Brand and members of his family still use it.

POST-SETTLEMENT RANCHES

Calhoon Ranch

Location: Central Beaver Co. (vicinity of Beaver City)
Legal Description: Sec. 9, T4N, R2E

Dates: 1913 to Present

Size: 1,200 acres; 200-300 head of cattle

Founder: Walter Calhoon

Existing Resources: Ranch headquarters built 1914
Condition of Resources: fair

History: Presently owned by Dr. Ed. Calhoon, son of Walter Calhoon

Ross Labrier Ranch

Location: Northwestern Cimarron County (vicinity of Kenton)
Legal Description: Sec. 13 (SE-1/4, NE-1/4), T5N, R1E.

Dates: 1943 to present

Size: Data unavailable.
Founder: Ross Labrier

Existing Resources: Ross Labrier Ranch house built in 1910 by A. S. Palmer; 101 Ranch Headquarters.
Condition of Resources: Excellent

History: Ross Labrier (son of rancher Henry C. Labrier who came to Oklahoma in 1866) was born in Cimarron County on September 28, 1904. He acquired his ranch property from George Wiggins, the Easley brothers, and the School Cattle Company. Briefly, from 1950-1951 Ross was partners with his brother Shirley Labrier. Ross Labrier, aside from ranching, was active in community affairs. He served on the Kenton School Board and the Kenton Cemetery Board. Also, he was the pianist for the Methodist Church. Ross Labrier died April 28, 1983. His wife presently owns and operates his ranch. Ross Labrier's brand is the 111 on the right shoulder.

Maple Ranch

Location: Central Beaver County (vicinity of Mocane)

Dates: ca. 1906-1935

Size: In 1934 it had 18 sections or 11,520 acres and over 1,000 Herefords.

Founder: Bob Maple

Existing Resources: Unknown (possibly Maple Ranch house built in 1909).

History: Maple worked on a ranch in Kansas in the 1880s. At 16 he worked for RK Perry until 1899. In 1901, he and his brother Frank split their profits from a partnership. In 1906 he took over the Coffee Ranch. Maple was one of the first to feed his cattle cottonseed cakes. He also became a director of the Beaver Bank (1912). Grandson, Mark Mayo and his wife presently live on the Maple property.Maple died in 1935. His wife in 1941 owned 12,000 acres and leased 2,400.

Strong Ranch

Location: Central Beaver County (vicinity of Beaver City)
Legal Description: Sec. 13 (SE-1/4), T3N, R23E.

Dates: 1907 to (?)

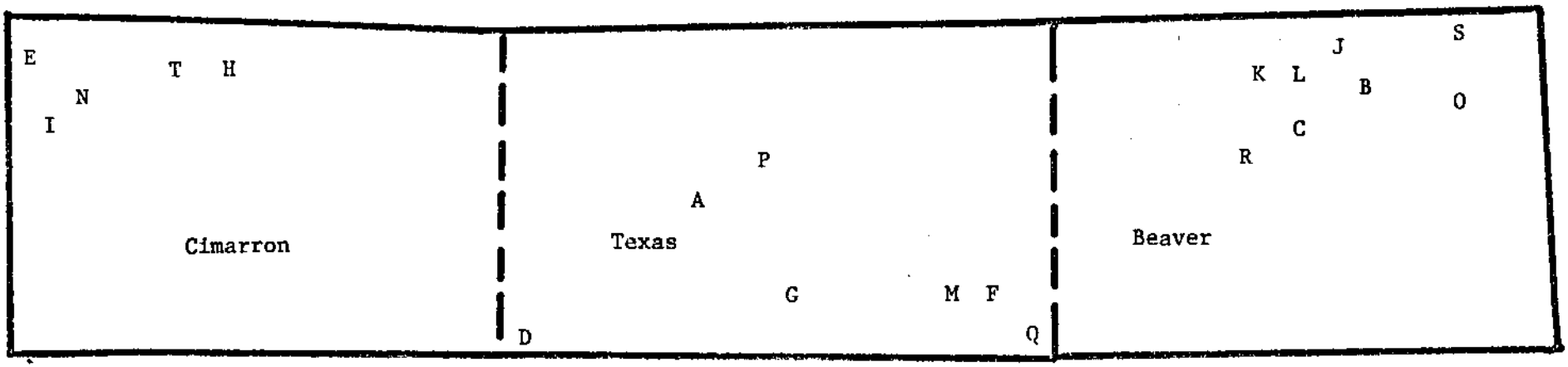
Size: 150 Registered Hereford cattle and 1,100 acres of wheat; 1,700 acres total.

Founder: S. S. Strong

Existing Resources: S. S. Strong Ranch headquarters
Condition of resources: excellent

History: Strong, before becoming a rancher, was a successful contractor

PANHANDLE RANCH HEADQUARTERS



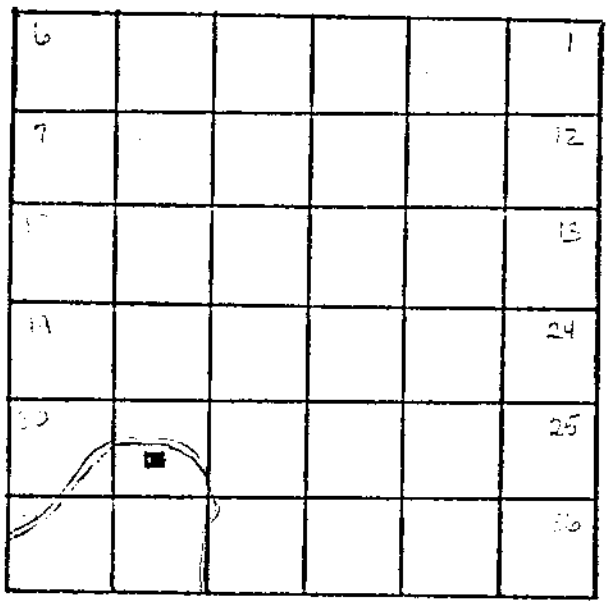
Pre-Settlement

A. Anchor D
B. Barby
D. CCC
E. Cross Rails
F. Green
G. Hitch
K. McFarland
L. Miles
M. Neff
N. 101
O. Over
P. OX
Q. Pigpen
S. Taintor
T. ZH

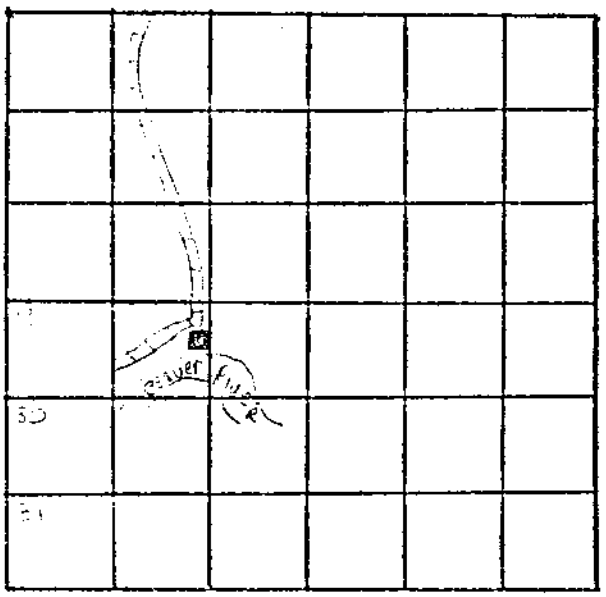
Post-Settlement

C. Calhoon
H. Kohler
I. Labrier
J. Maple
R. Strong

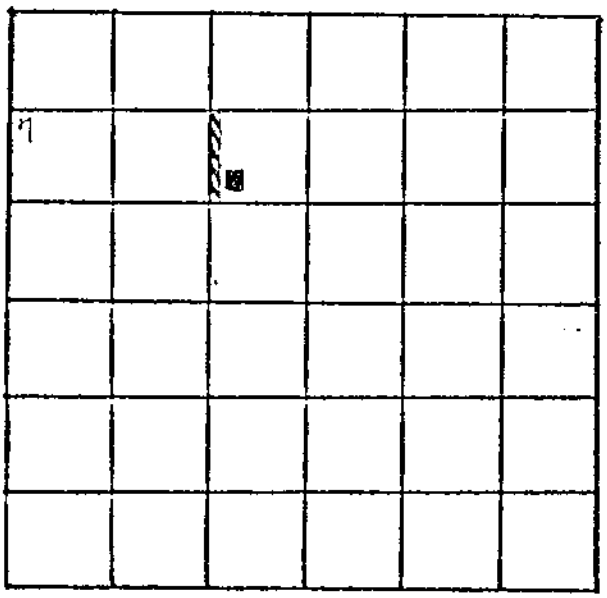
Anchor D. Ranch Properties
Texas County
Sec. 29, T3N, R14E



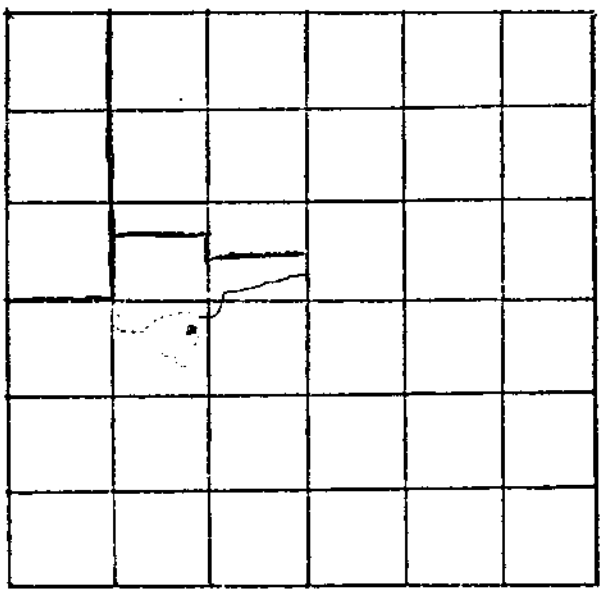
Barby Ranch Headquarters
Beaver County
Sec. 20, T4N, R26E



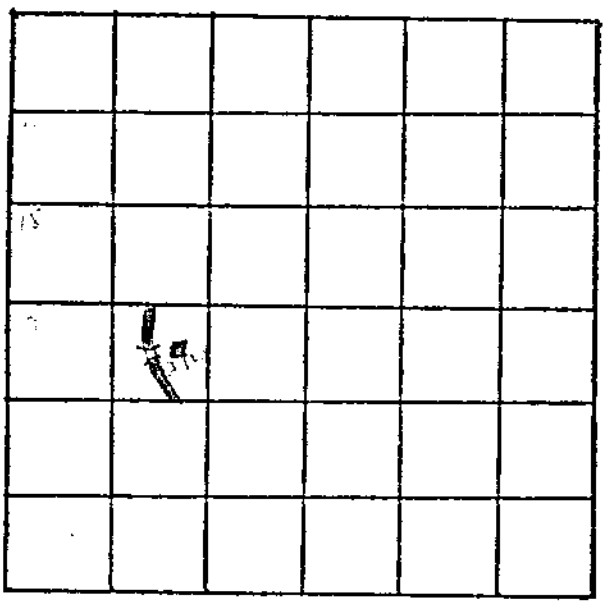
Calhoon Ranch Headquarters
Beaver County
Sec. 9, T3N, R24E



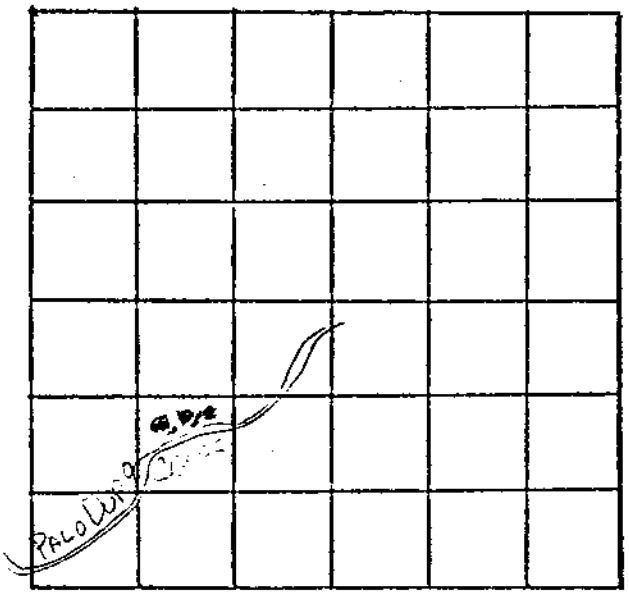
C.C.C. Ranch Headquarters
Texas County
Sec. 20, T1N, R11E (SE¼)



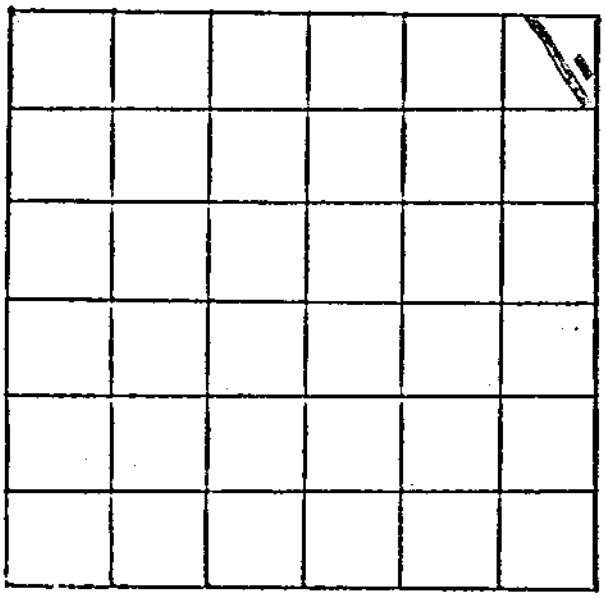
Cross Rails
Cimarron County
Sec. 20, T6N, R1E



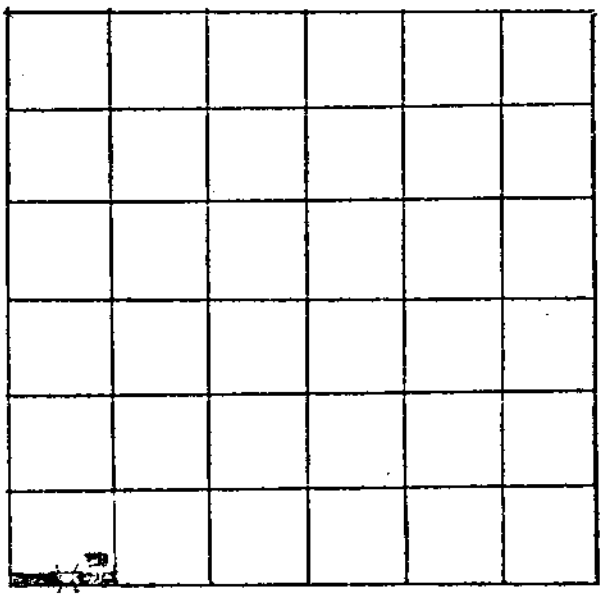
Green Ranch Ranch House
Texas County
Sec. 29, T2N, R19E



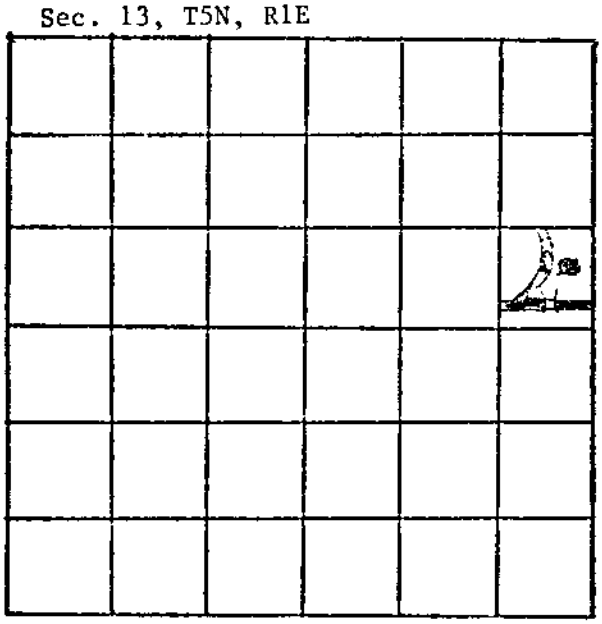
Hitch Ranch Ranch House
Texas County
Sec. 1, T2N, R15E



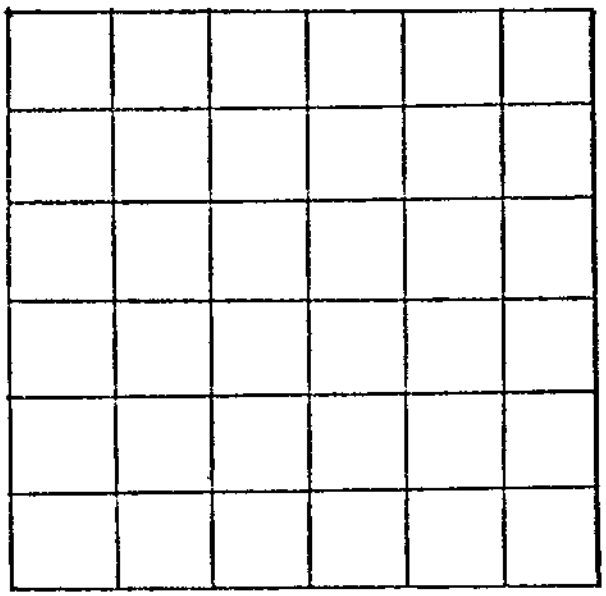
Kohler Ranch Headquarters
Cimarron County
Sec. 31, T6N, R5E



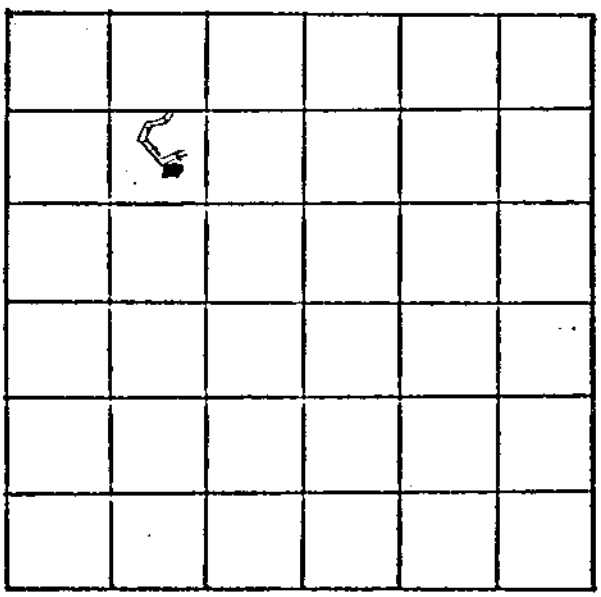
Labrier Ranch Ranch House
101 Ranch Headquarters
Cimarron County
Sec. 13, T5N, R1E



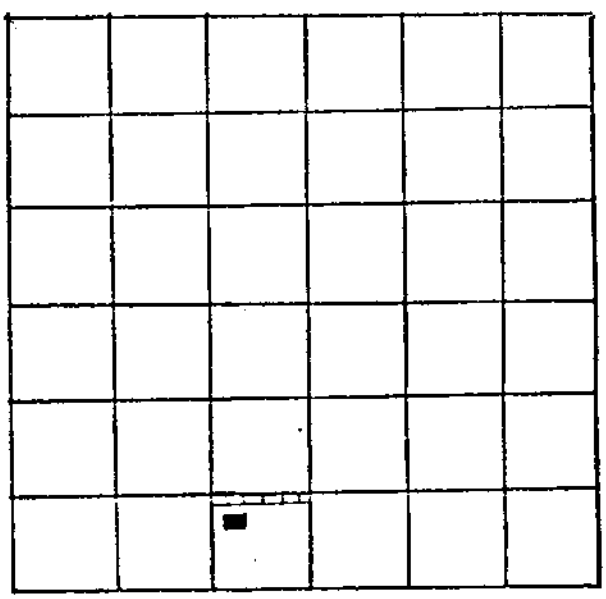
McFarland Ranch Ranch House
Beaver County
Sec. 11, T4N, R23E (NW¼)



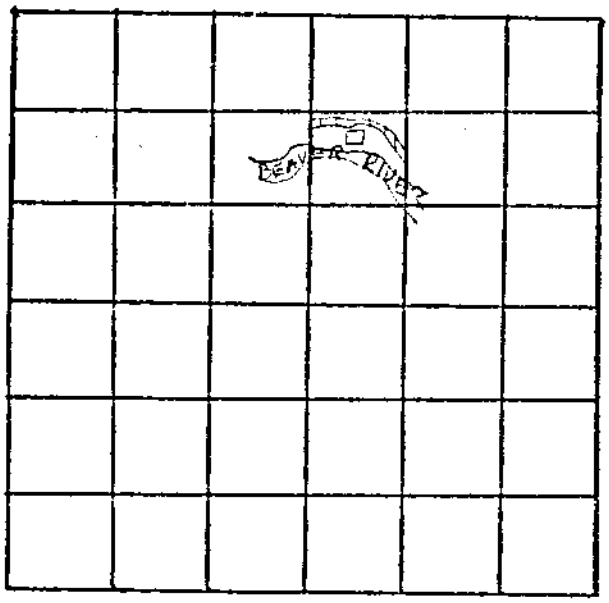
Miles Ranch Ranch House
Beaver County
Sec. 8, T4N, R24E



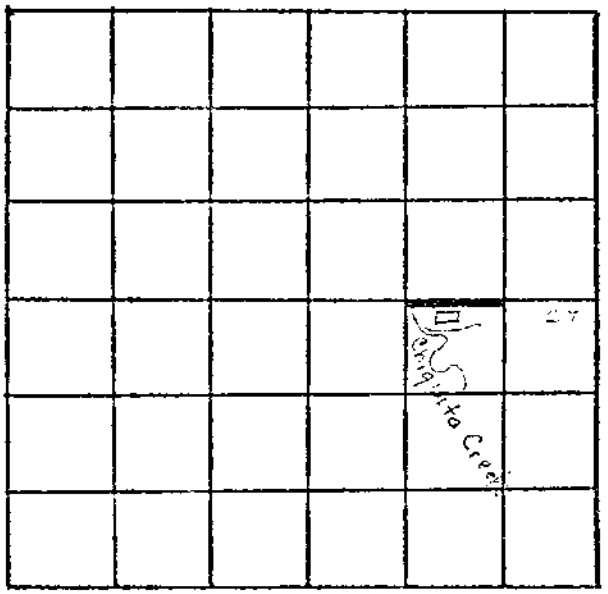
Over Ranch Headquarters
Beaver County
Sec. 33, T4N, R28E



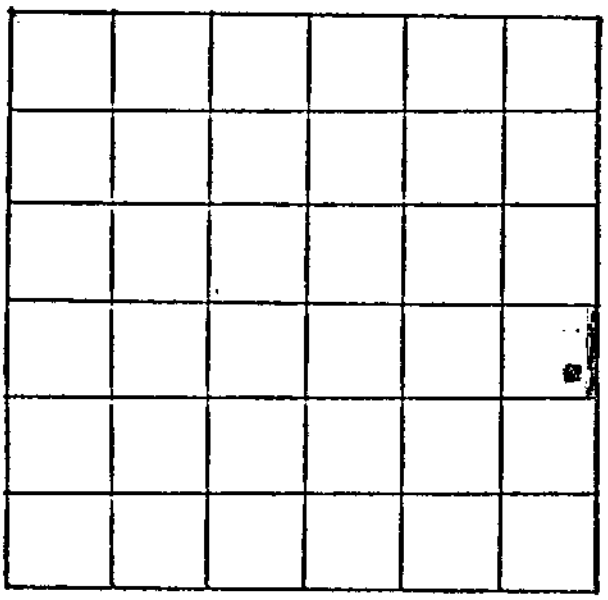
OX Ranch
Site only
Texas County
Sec. 10, T3N, R15E



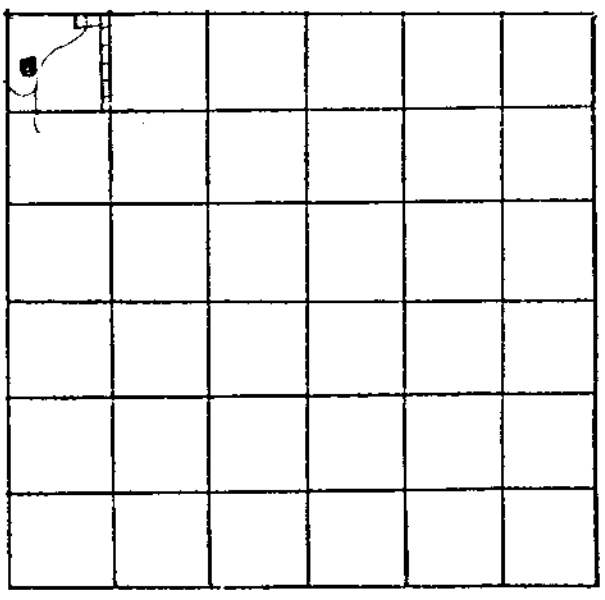
Pig Pen/Half Circle Ranch
Texas County
Sec. 23, T1N, R19E



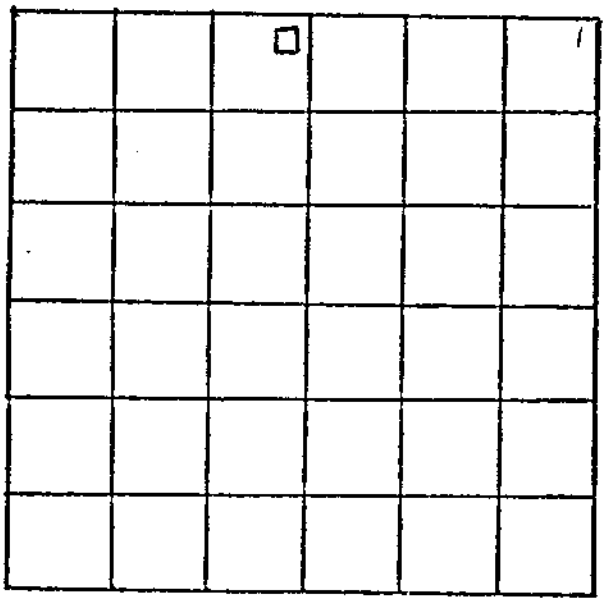
Strong Ranch Headquarters
Beaver County
Sec. 13, T3N, R23E

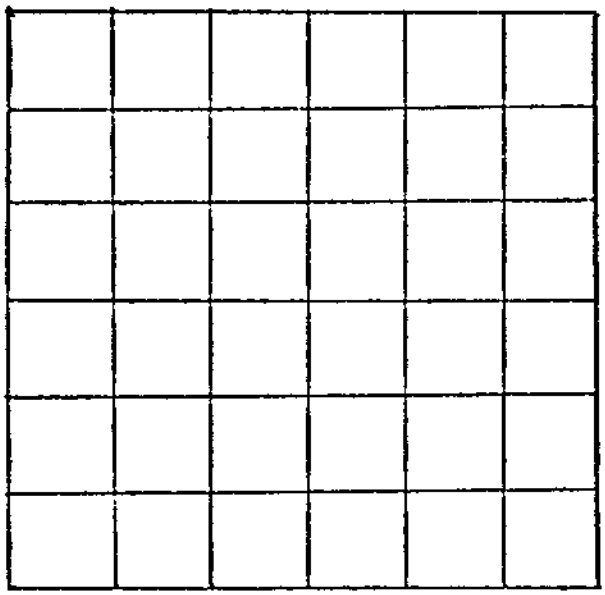


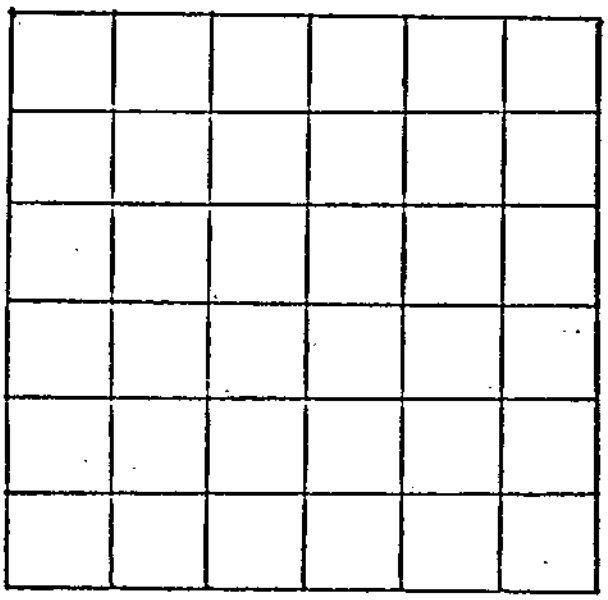
Taintor Ranch Headquarters
Beaver County
Sec. 6, T5N, R27E

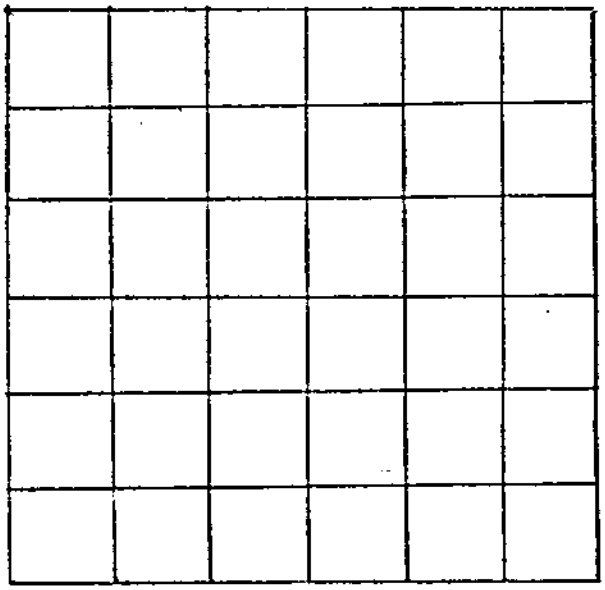


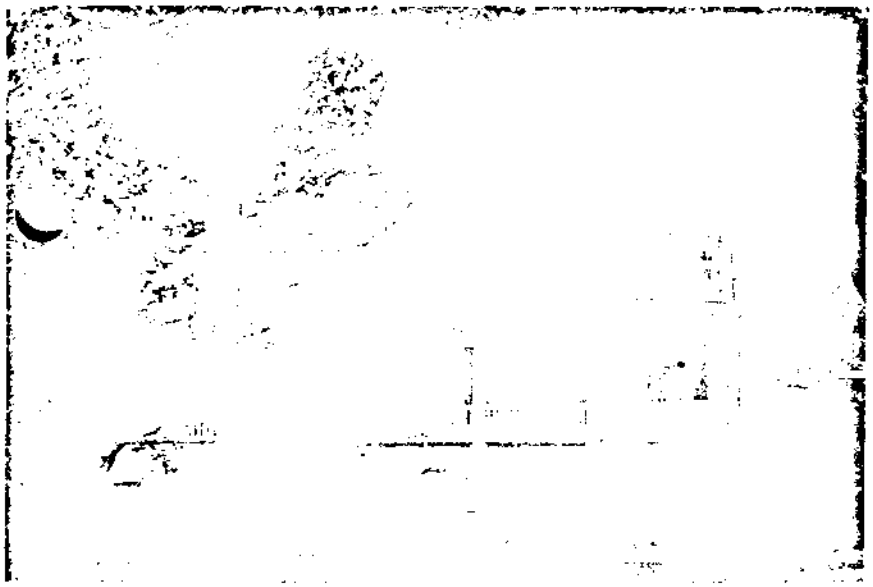
ZH Ranch
(site only)
Cimarron County
Sec. 18, T5N, R5E





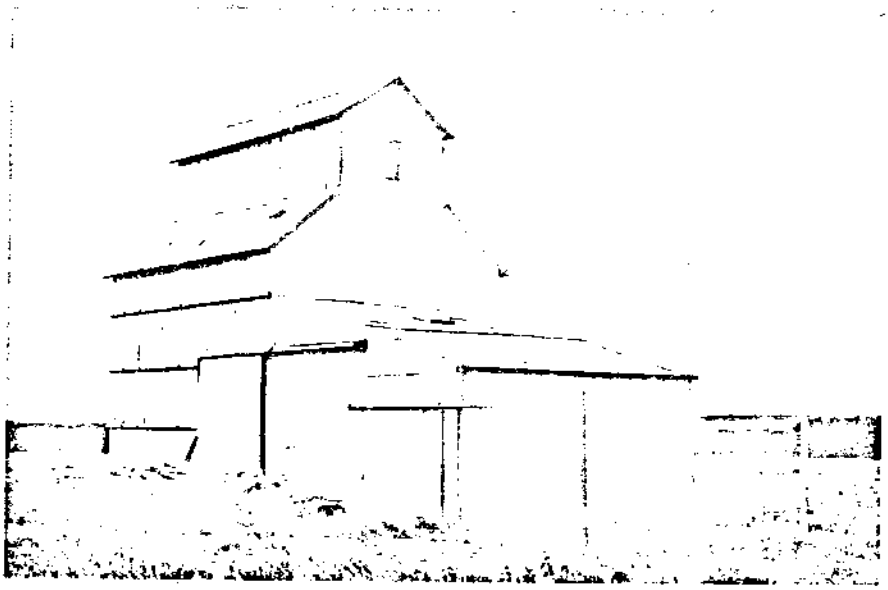


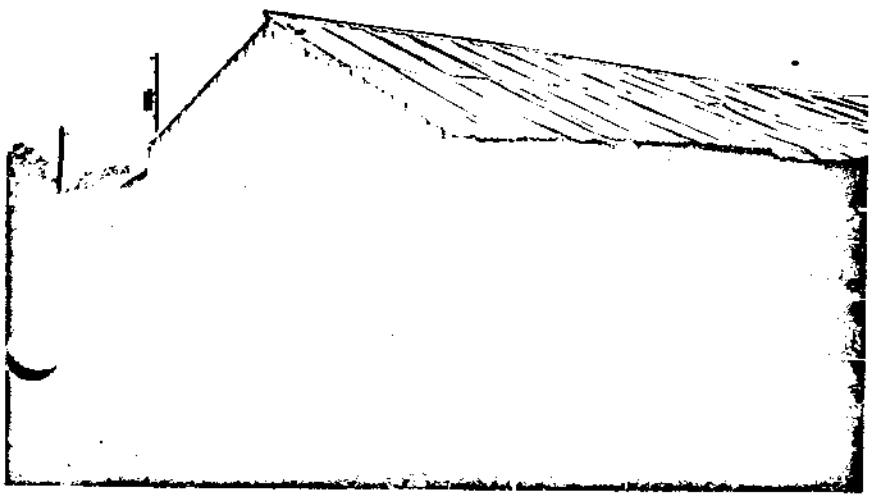




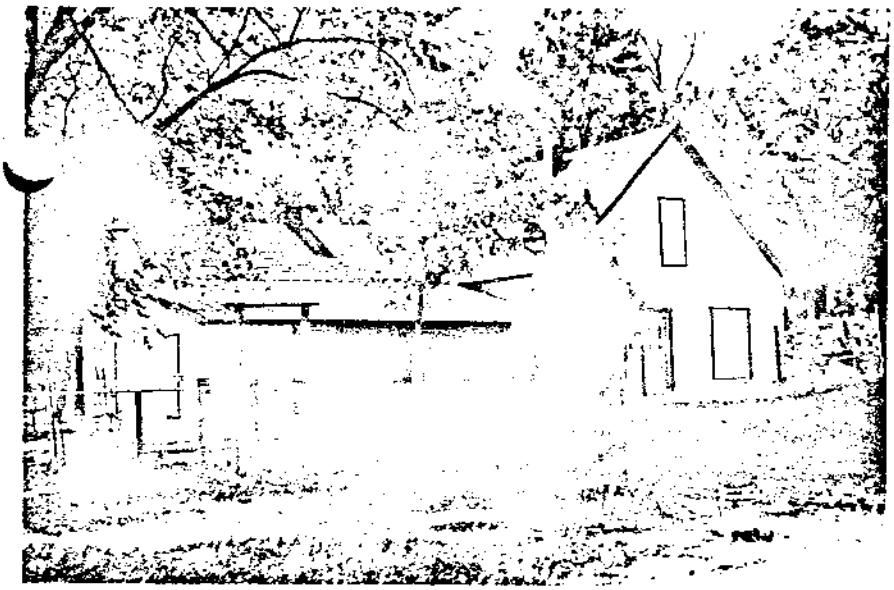
Barby Ranch Headquarters
Beaver County
date - ca. 1897

Anchor D. Ranch Properties
Grain Elevator
Texas County
date - ca. 1930



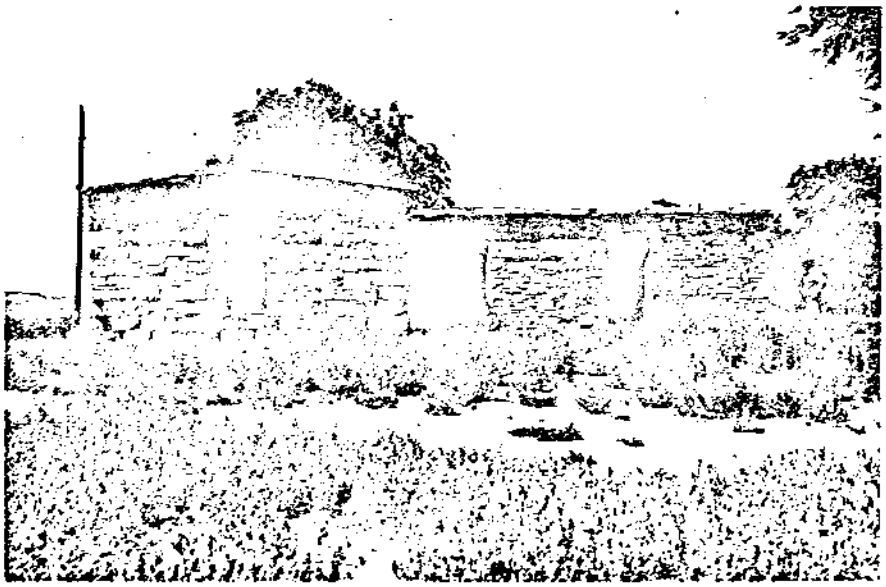


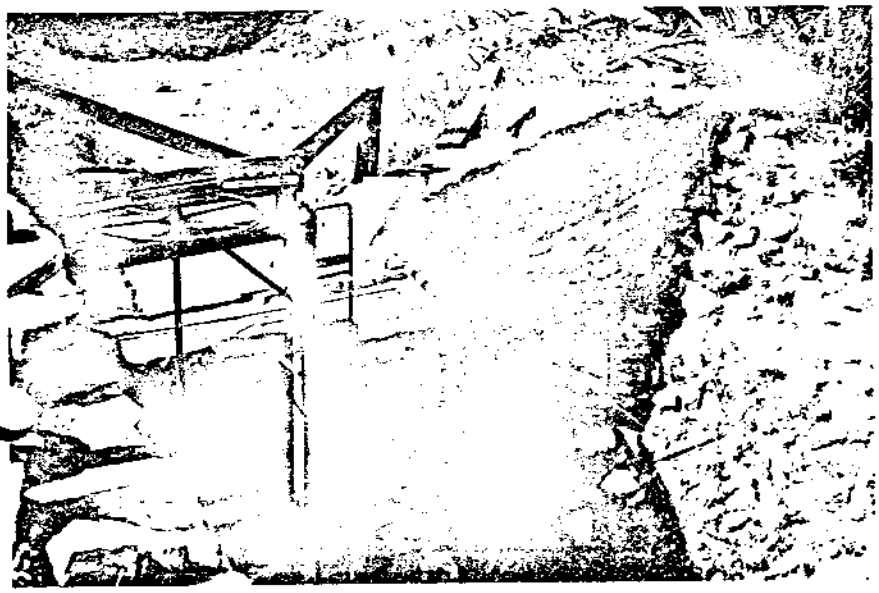
Anchor D. Properties
Horse Stable
Texas County
date - ca. 1880



Kohler Ranch Headquarters
Cimarron County
date - 1903

Garett Post Office
Cimarron County
date - ca. 1907-1908



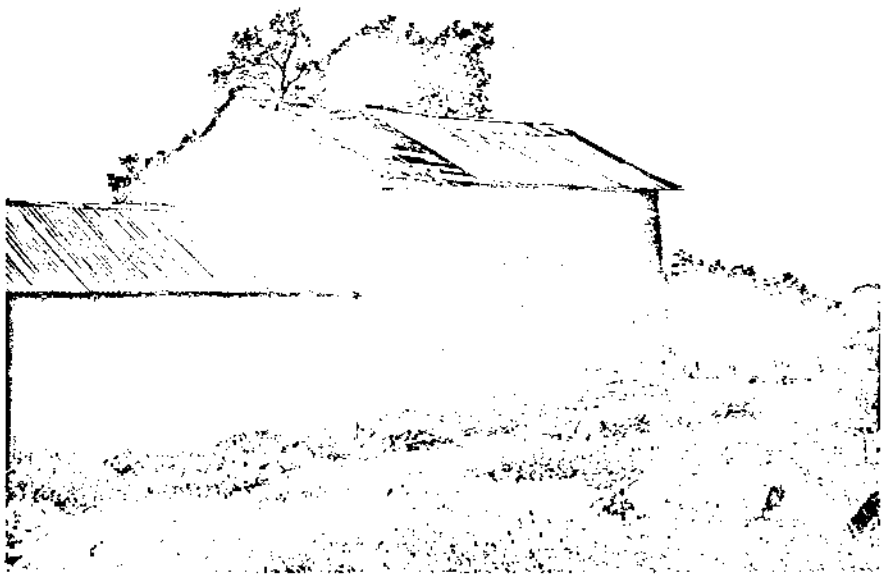


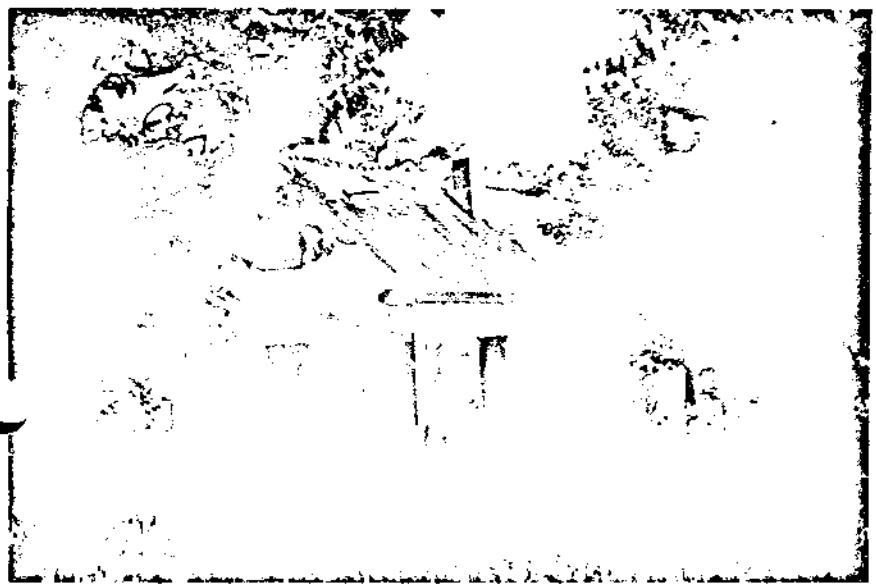
Kohler Dam
Cimarron County
date - 1933



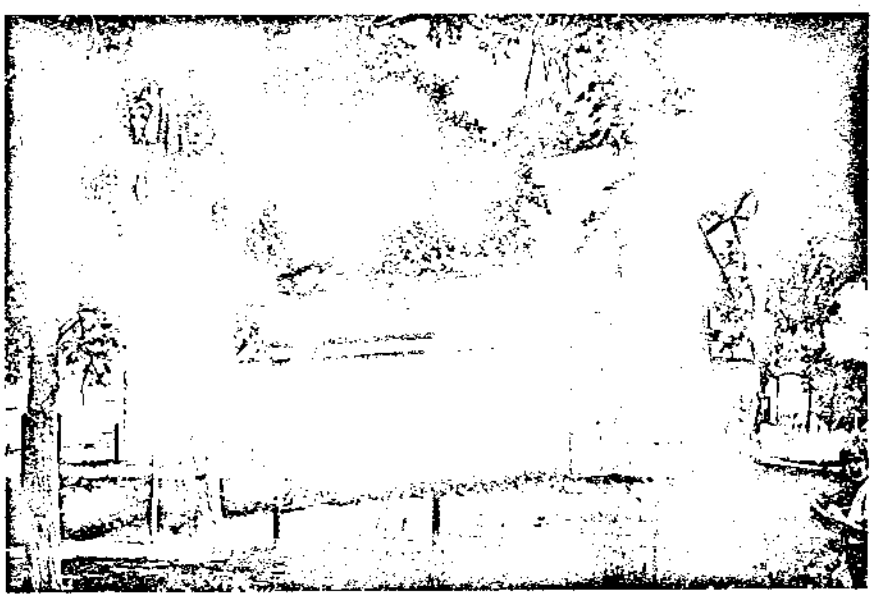
Garett School House
Cimarron County
date ca. 1898

Taintor Ranch Barn/Stable
Beaver County
date - ca. 1886





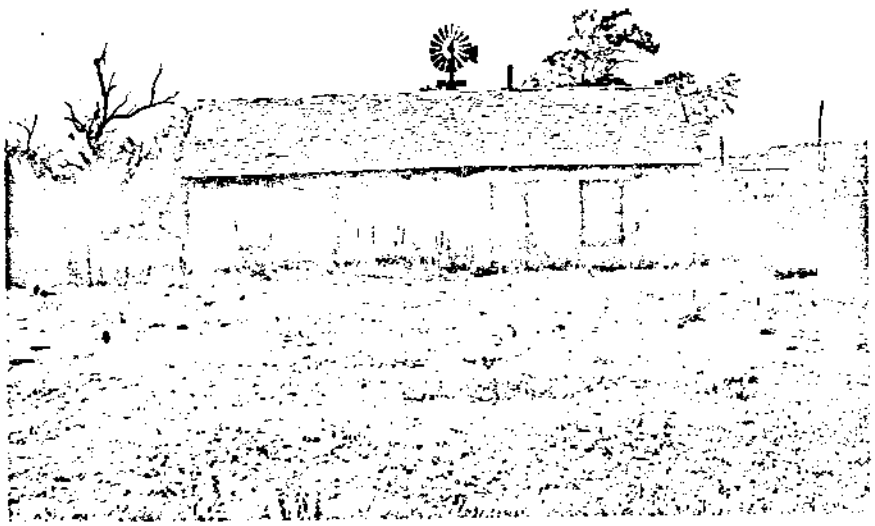
Taintor Ranch Headquarters
Beaver County
date - ca. 1886



Over Ranch Headquarters
Beaver County
date - ca. 1906

101 Ranch Corral Posts
Cimarron County
date - ca. 1824





101 Ranch Headquarters
Cimarron County
date - ca. 1874



Labrier Ranch Headquarters
Cimarron County
date - 1910

National Register Nominations and Criteria

National Register of Historic Places Nominations have been prepared in 1984 by the Oklahoma Historic Preservation Survey, History Department, Oklahoma State University for the following ranch headquarter properties:

1. Anchor D. Building (vicinity of Guymon, Oklahoma)
2. Barby Ranch House (vicinity of Knowles, Oklahoma)
3. Kolher Ranch House and Related Buildings (vicinity of Boise City, Oklahoma)
4. Labrier Ranch House/101 (vicinity of Boise City, Oklahoma)
5. Over Ranch House (vicinity of Gate, Oklahoma)
6. Taintor Ranch House (vicinity of Knowles, Oklahoma)

The following ranch property is already listed on the National Register of Historic Places:

1. CCC Ranch Headquarters Ranch House (vicinity of Texhoma)

The following criteria for determining the eligibility of properties for the National Register of Historic Places have been taken from How to Complete National Register Forms (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1977), p. 6, the "Criteria for Evaluation."

Criteria for Evaluation:

The following criteria are designed to guide the states, Federal agencies, and the Secretary of the Interior in evaluating potential entries (other than areas of the National Park System and National Historic Landmarks) for the National Register.

The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archeology, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and:

A. that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns or our history; or

B. that are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or

C. that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or that represent the work of a master or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction; or

D. that have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Ordinarily cemeteries, birthplaces, or graves of historical figures, properties owned by religious institutions or used for religious purposes, structures that have been moved from their original locations, reconstructed historic buildings, properties primarily commemorative in nature, and properties that have achieved significance within the past 50 years shall not be considered eligible for the National Register. However, such properties will qualify if they are integral parts of districts that do meet the criteria or if they fall within the following categories:

A. a religious property deriving primary significance from architectural or artistic distinction or historical importance; or

B. a building or structure removed from its original location but which is significant primarily for architectural value, or which is the surviving structure most importantly associated with a historic person or event; or

C. a birthplace or grave of a historical figure of outstanding importance if there is no other appropriate site or building directly associated with his productive life; or

D. a cemetery which derives its primary significance from graves of persons of transcendent importance, from age, from distinctive design features, or from association with historic events; or

E. a reconstructed building when accurately executed in a suitable environment and presented in a dignified manner as

part of a restoration master plan, and when no other building or structure with the same association has survived; or

F. a property primarily commemorative in intent if design, age, tradition, or symbolic value has invested it with its own historial significance; or

G. a property achieving significance within the past 50 years if it is of exceptional importance.

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Barby, Brad, Woodward, Oklahoma. Interview, 7 July, 1983

Calhoon, Ed. L., Beaver, Oklahoma. Interview, 7 August, 1983 and 13 August, 1983.

Dunn, John W. Jr., Woodward, Oklahoma. Interview, 6 July, 1983.

Focks, Burnell, Guymon, Oklahoma. Interview, 3 August, 1983.

Green, Donald E., Central State University, Edmond, Oklahoma. Interview, 12 July, 1983.

Hitch, Ladd, Guymon, Oklahoma. Interview, July and August, 1983.

Hitch, Mrs. Paul, Guymon, Oklahoma. Interview, 29 August, 1983.

Kachell, Joan, Goodwell, Oklahoma. Interview, 3 August, 1983.

Kohler, Albert, Boise City, Oklahoma. Interview, 5 August, 1983.

Labrier, Mrs. Ross, Kenton, Oklahoma. Interview, 5 August, 1983.

Mayer, Joe, Guymon, Oklahoma. Interview, 3 August, 1983.

Rogers, Jim, Central State University, Edmond, Oklahoma. Interview, 12 July, 1983.

Tucker, Truman, Kenton, Oklahoma. Interview, 2 August, 1983.

OKLAHOMA LANDMARKS INVENTORY

The following list contains those properties added to the Oklahoma Landmarks Inventory through the general county survey efforts of the State Historic Preservation Office through September 30, 1985. Dates in the right margin indicate when a property was listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

BEAVER COUNTY

BANK OF GATE	Okla. & Main St., Gate	
BEAVER CITY (Distrist)	Beaver City	
BEAVER COUNTY COURTHOUSE	Beaver	8-23-84
BENTON COUNTY BANNER	12 mi SW Knowles	
BILLY ROSE ARCH. SITE	Macone Vic.	09-01-78
CHEYENNE CAMP SITE	4 mi N of Gate	
COMANCHE CAMP SITE	5 mi N of Gate	
ELMWOOD SCHOOL	Elmwood	
GATE DEPOT	Gate	
GRAIN ELEVATORS	Beaver & Texas Co.	05/13/83
LANE, JIM, CABIN & TRADE STORE	Main & Ave C.	06-05-74
LAWERENCE FRIENDS ACADEMY SITE	Gate	
LONG ARCH SITE	Gate Vic.	
LONG L.L. HOUSE	621 Ave. E, Beaver	
LONKER ARCH SITE Bv-4	Gate Vic.	11-27-78
NEUTRAL CITY	2 mi W of Gate	
OLD CORNER CAFE	2nd & Douglass, Beaver	

OTTO BARBY RANCH HEADQUARTERS	Knowles, OK	
OVER, JOHN E. RANCH HDQ.	Vic. of Gate	
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH	3rd & Ave., Beaver	05-16-74
SCHMOKER HOUSE	Beaver	
SHARPS CREEK CROSSING	5 mi SE Turpin	04-04-75
STRONG, S.S. RANCH HOUSE	Rt. E, Box 10	
TAINTOR, FRED RANCH	North of Knowles	

CIMARRON COUNTY

AUTOGRAPH ROCK	14 mi NW Boise City	
BAT CAVE SITE, Ci-29	Kenton Vic	09-01-78
CAMP NICHOLS	3 mi NE of Wheeless	10-15-66
CEDAR BREAKS DIST.	Kenton Vic	10-10-78
CIMARRON COUNTY COURTHOUSE	Boise City	08-23-84
CLAPBOARD RESIDENCE	Cedar St., Kenton	
COLD SPRING	10 mi N of Boise City	
ICE CREAM PARLOR	Main St., Kenton	
INSCRIPTION ROCK/ CORONADO'S SIGNATURE	Kenton Vic.	
KENTON BANK BUILDING	Main _St. Kenton	
KENTON BISON KILL, Ci-81	Kenton Vic	
KOHLER RANCH PROPERTIES 101/LABRIER RANCH HDQ.	15mi NW of Boise City Vic. of Kenton	
DR. LANE'S RESIDENCE	Main St., Kenton	
LABRIER, ROSS RANCH HOUSE	Near Kenton	
LORD, D.K. MERCANTILE	Main St., Kenton	
NELL VIC, Ci-134	14 MI S of Boise City	

OLD TELEPHONE CENTRAL	Main St., Kenton	
101 MESA, Ci-78	4 mi E of Kenton	
RED GHOST CAVE DISTRICT	Kenton Vic	11-15-78
SANTA FE DEPOT	Sec 13, T4N, R7E Keyes	
SANTA FE TRAIL	NE/SW across county	
THREE ENTRANCE CAVE DIST.	Kenton Vic.	11-29-78
UNION GRADED SCHOOL & Teach	Main St., Kenton	

TEXAS COUNTY

ANCHOR D. RANCH (Meyer Ranch)	Guymon	
BROWNS CORNER SCHOOL HOUSE	Straight	
BRUBAKER SITE, TX-30	7mi SE of Griggs	
CCC RANCH HDQ	Texhoma	12-1-83
EASTERWOOD SITE, TX-37	9mi NW of Guymon	11-16-78
FRANKLIN HALL_Panhandle State	Goodwell, Texas	
GRAIN ELEVATORS	Beaver & Texas Co.	05-13-83
HAMBY, S.W., TX-51	N of Texhoma	
HITCH HOUSE	129 N. Academy Guymon	
JOHNSON-CLINE, TX_40	Griggs vic	11-16-78
NASH I, TX_2	Guymon vic	
NASH II-Clawson TX28 & 34	11mi E of Guymon	10-02-78
NEFF, BOSS, RANCH	1½mi N of Old Hardesty	
OKLAHOMA PANHANDLE (Grain Ele)	N/A	
OLD HARDESTY TOWN SITE	1½ ni NE of Hardestry	06-20-74
PENICK HOUSE	218 N. East, Texhoma	9-28-84
SHADE'S WELL/TASCOSO TRAIL SITE	Tyrone vic	
TEXAS CO. COURTHOUSE	319 N. Main, Guymon	08-23-84
SHORES, TX-39	Muncey vic	11-16-78
STAMPER ARCH SITE	2½ mi S of Optima	10-15-66
TEXAS CO. COURT HOUSE	319 N. Main, Guymon	
TEXHOMA HISTORIC RESOURCES	Texhoma	
TWO SISTERS SITE, TX-31	Guymon vic	10-02-78
WASHINGTON, BOOKER T. SCHOOL	Tulsa	