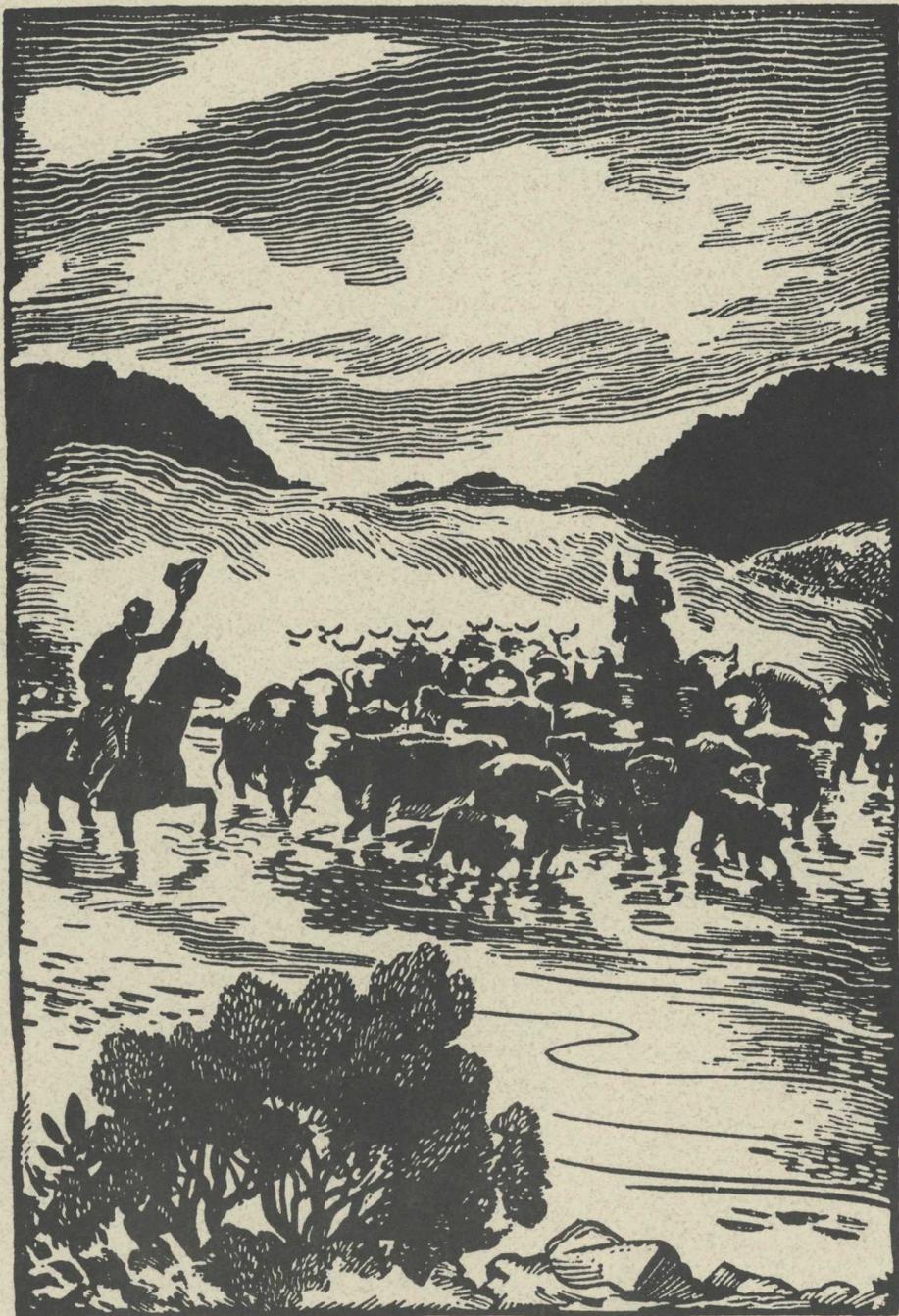
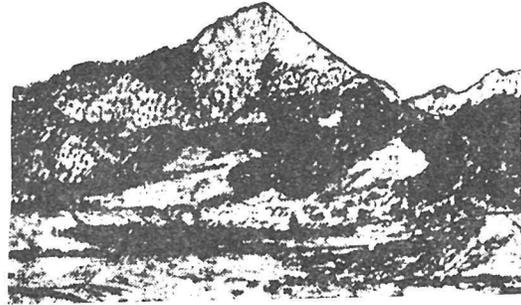


GRANT-KOHR'S RANCH

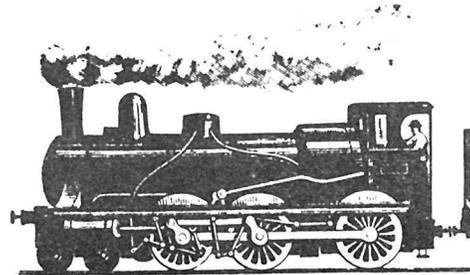
Self-guided map supplement



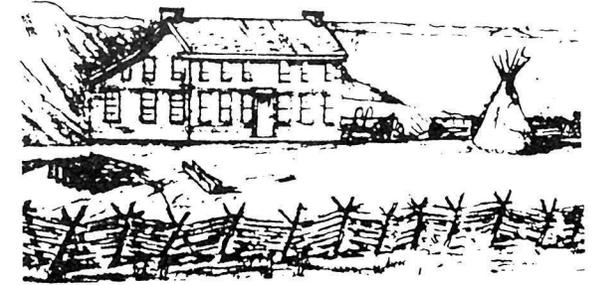
The mountain to the west of the ranch is called Mount Powell, part of the Flint Creek range. The highest peak, which is hidden from view at this angle, is 10,200' above sea level. Storms coming from the west frequently dump their snow on Powell and surrounding peaks, leaving the Deer Lodge Valley relatively free of snow. That is one reason John F. Grant settled here in the 1850's. If there was little snow on the ground, the cattle could graze all winter without being fed hay. Though the valleys surrounding Helena and Missoula, Montana, have milder climates, they have the disadvantage of having much more snow. So, even in the earliest years of the cattle business, the needs of cattle superseded the needs of humans.



The railroad tracks which pass by the ranch came through in 1883 (Utah Northern) and 1907 (Milwaukee Road). Only the track nearest the Visitor Center is still in use today. Before the coming of the railroad, Kohrs and other cattlemen had to trail their cattle as far east as Ogalalla, Nebraska (900 miles) and Cheyenne, Wyoming (700 miles). By the time the railroad reached Deer Lodge, Kohrs was shipping most of his cattle from Eastern Montana. That's where the open, unfenced range was. Here at the home ranch, he raised registered Shorthorn and Hereford cattle. In Eastern Montana he raised any breed which would bring him profit.



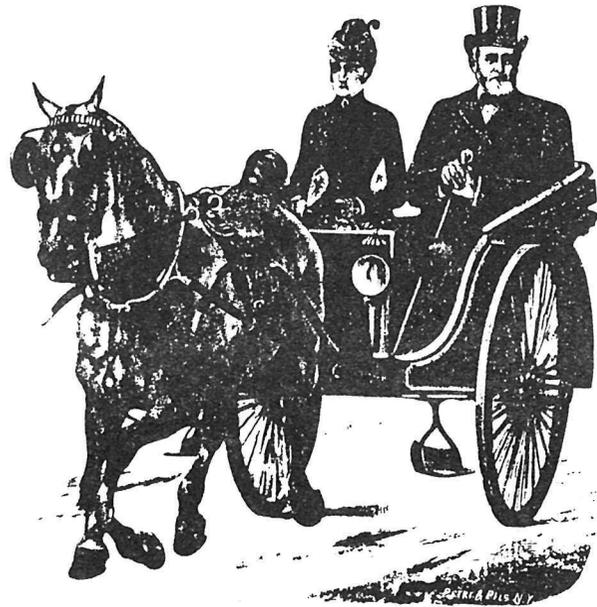
The white portion of the ranch house was built by Canadian John F. Grant in 1862. It was a trading post downstairs and a residence upstairs. Grant didn't think of himself as a rancher at first. He was a trader, and one of the things he was able to trade for was worn-out cattle along the Oregon Trail at Fort Hall, near present-day Pocatello, Idaho. After he sold his ranch to German immigrant Conrad Kohrs, he returned to Canada, first settling in the Carmen, Manitoba area, and finally returning to his native Edmonton, Alberta. He died there in 1907, at the age of 76.



Kohrs bought the ranch to have a place to keep the cattle that supplied beef for his butcher shops, which were located in every major gold camp in Southwest Montana. In time, he became Montana's largest shipper of beef to the Chicago Stockyards. By 1890, he had become so successful he was able to double the size of the ranch house with the brick addition which extends behind the 1862 Grant portion.

Today, the ranch house is filled with original furniture, rugs, pictures, books, dishes - all the domestic articles which make a house a home. These date mostly from 1880 through 1900. By 1880, Kohrs was sufficiently prosperous that his wife, Augusta, could indulge her taste for Victorian finery. In 1900, the family moved to Helena, the state capitol. They left their outdated 1880's furnishings behind in what became their summer home. Augusta Kohrs died in 1945, by which time her grandson, Conrad Kohrs Warren, had decided to preserve the home in its original state.

Bunkhouse row is actually a collection of buildings. The shed nearest the railroad tracks was constructed to house carriages. Half of the original building was cut off and moved behind the ranch house when the railroad came through. Next to the buggy shed is a barn which often held harness for carriage horses. In addition to four stalls, it originally had two "loose boxes" in which horses could move about. In the 1940's, one of these loose boxes was made into a room for chore boy Gus Strand. It was later used by ranch hand Jack Peters, who donated his old cowboy gear to furnish it as you see it today.



You will notice that the next section of the bunkhouse is built of hand-hewn logs. This room dates back to John F. Grant's day, and was originally used to store hides. When Kohrs' grandson ran the ranch, he used the room as an office.

The next door down bunkhouse row will take you into the cowboys' social room. Here they could warm themselves at the woodstove, play a friendly game of cards or swap yarns. The dining and bunk rooms can be seen from the social room. Only a handful of employees lived at the ranch. Many of the hands were just day laborers, hired from the nearby town of Deer Lodge. The "real" cowboys in Kohrs' employ worked in Eastern Montana on the unfenced, open range, and their lives were much more rugged than those of the hands at the home ranch.

The bunkhouse kitchen was a busy place. If a ranch didn't have good food, it didn't have any cowboys. Over the years, Chinese cooks like Ham Sam and Tom Wing, German Heine Neudt and many others produced the hearty fare the cowboys needed for a hard day's work. Tom Wing was famous for his doughnuts. Heine Neudt would often feign a heart attack so he could take a little "medicinal" whisky to enable him to carry on.



The cowboys' washroom was rather spartan, and the cowboys had only an outhouse long after the ranch house got indoor plumbing. Still, this bunkhouse was considered to be pretty high class. Many cowboys who rode the open range were lucky simply to have a roof over their heads in rough weather.

The woodshed saw plenty of use, since there were cookstoves and heating stoves in the bunkhouse and ranch house, as well as stoves in some barns and shop areas. One year the Kohrs bought 90 cords of wood.

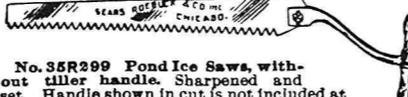
Standing between the house and bunkhouse at the west end of bunkhouse row is a tack room. After 1935, this was where saddles and other horse gear were kept, cleaned, and mended. Before refrigeration came to the ranch in 1935, this was an ice house. It has a tin floor, tightly seamed to prevent the underfloor from rotting. In the winter, huge blocks of ice were cut from ponds and stored in the ice house, with sawdust insulation packed between the blocks.

Ice Saws.



No. 35R298 Hand Ice Saw, with iron handle.

Length, inches.....	24	26	28	30
Price, each.....	78c	85c	94c	\$1.00



No. 35R299 Pond Ice Saws, without tiller handle. Sharpened and set. Handle shown in cut is not included at these prices. See No. 35R300 for handle.

Length.....	4 feet	4 1/2 feet	5 feet
Price, each.....	\$1.78	\$1.98	\$2.20

No. 35R300 Extra Tiller Handles, for Pond Ice Saws. Price, each..... 60c

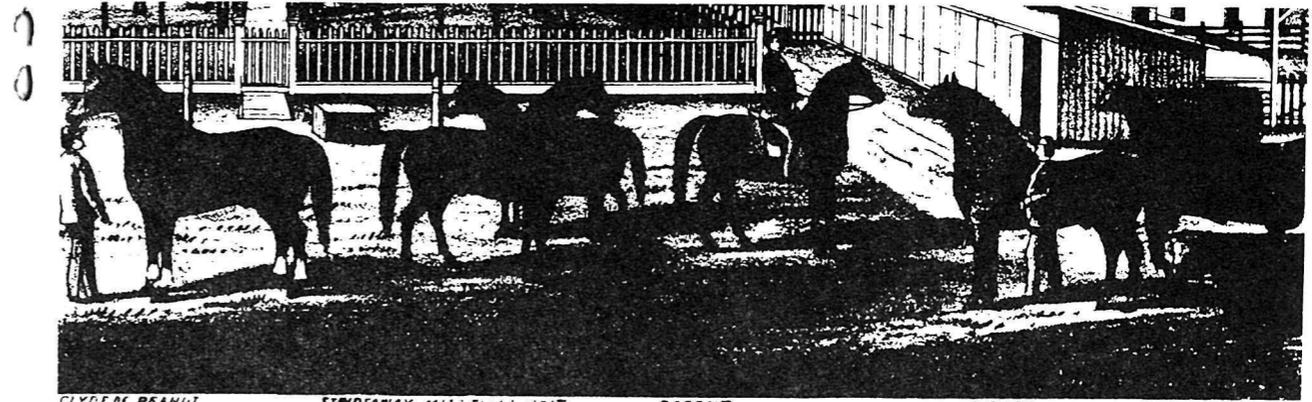
Directly behind the ranch house is a coal shed. Coal was used to heat the ranch house from 1915 until 1984.



The blacksmith shop is a fairly modern building, having been added in 1935 by Conrad Kohrs Warren, Kohrs' grandson, after he took over management of the ranch. The shop was used to house and repair farm machinery and equipment. Horses were shod here, and the forge, with its electric blower, was a welcome change from the old handcrank blowers which horseshoers were accustomed to. The registered Belgian draft horses shod here were Con Warren's pride and joy. When World War II finally forced farmers to switch from real horsepower to tractors (the team drivers were all off to war), he reluctantly quit raising draft horses. His registered Hereford cattle continued to make his reputation. He finally retired from ranching in 1983.



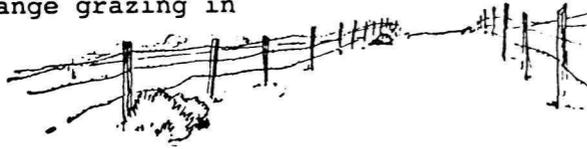
Like many of the buildings on the ranch, the barn now holding our wagon collection has had many uses. It was originally built to house the Thoroughbred studs Kohrs bred to native mares to produce a superior cow pony. Later it held Con Warren's show cattle, and the laboratory which enabled Warren to keep abreast of the latest technology in the field of animal husbandry. But though it has been used for dairy and beef cattle, race horses and storage, it has kept the name it was given originally, and is known as the Thoroughbred Barn.



CLYDE OF BRANDT STRIDERWAY, MISS ELLA & COLT. REGENT. FIGARO
 RESIDENCE OF CONRAD KOHRS, DEER LODGE, MONT. KOHRS & BIELENBERG BREEDERS OF SHORT-HORN & HEREFORD CATTLE THOROUGHBRED
 CLYDESDALE PERCHERON-NORMAN AND COACH HORSES

Next to this barn is a small log barn which was built to hold a draft horse stallion. There are numerous small barns and sheds on the ranch. Some held livestock, some held feed or equipment. The animals themselves were rarely kept inside for any length of time. At most, a beef cow might wander into what is called a "loafing shed" to get out of hot sun or cold wind. On the open range, cattle and horses are outdoors year-round. Even dogs and barn cats may spend the winter in unheated buildings. Nature has equipped them to handle severe weather.

In almost any direction you look you can see fences. They enclose corrals, pastures, feed lots, yards and gardens. It would be possible to have a farm without fences. Crops don't move around much. But a ranch is essentially a livestock operation, and animals wander. Without fences, it would be impossible to keep livestock out of crops, there would be no control of selective breeding, animals would be endangered by passing cars and trucks, some areas would be overgrazed and others underutilized. In short, though fences doomed the old, open range system of raising cattle, they are necessary today, and have been since the decline of open range grazing in the late 1880's.



The hen house and brooder coop (where young chicks are kept) date from the 1930's, but there were earlier structures to shelter poultry. On special occasions such as Christmas or a family birthday, the Kohrs often celebrated with a roast turkey with cranberry and lingonberry sauces. The high fence around the coops may keep out marauding dogs and coyotes, but foxes can climb right over it, so the poultry must be "cooped up" each evening.



As you walk back towards the ranch house, you will pass an outhouse. You might have passed the very same building in several other locations during the history of the ranch, because when one location became... undesirable (to phrase it politely), the pit would be filled in and the outhouse moved to a new location.

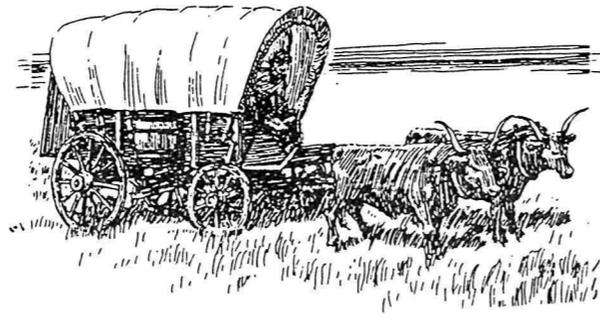
The log building east of the outhouse has been a barn, a blacksmith shop, and a garage. In more than 130 years, things have changed and adapted on the ranch. Though all the buildings and most of the artifacts here are original, it is very hard to show the ranch "exactly" the way it was, because the question becomes, "The way it was *when?*" If we decided to show it as it appeared in the earliest years, all but two or three buildings would have to be removed. Other buildings, long since torn down or burned, would have to be reconstructed.

East of the log building is half of the buggy shed which was once part of bunkhouse row, but which had to be cut off when the railroad came through, since it extended too close to the tracks.

Continue towards the house and then turn left on the road which heads towards the cluster of buildings on the north side of the bunkhouse. Straight ahead is a granary, built by Conrad Warren in the 1930's. Different grains could be augered into the building and mixed to provide the best possible feed for his valuable livestock.

Across the corral to the west of this granary is another granary built during Conrad Kohrs' day. It was built in the "studs out" style of construction. Building styles have changed over the years, but the basic needs of livestock - grass, grain and water - have remained constant. Follow the road up between the granary and bunkhouse. This brings you to the old log draft horse barn. Percherons, Clydesdales, Shires, and Belgians did the heavy pulling at the ranch. They were not ordinarily stabled in this barn, but were brought in to be fed grain, groomed, harnessed, or shod.

Just behind the draft horse barn is a small log building traditionally called the ox barn. There is some question whether it ever really housed oxen, but it is known that John F. Grant used oxen at times for his freight wagons that ran between Deer Lodge and Fort Benton, Montana.



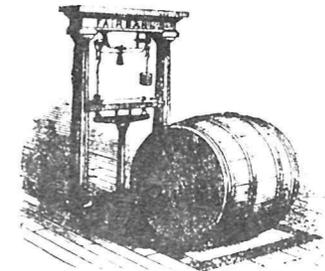
Past the ox barn is a broad platform which covers a manure pit. Beyond the pit is a beef hoist. This is where a butchered beef would be hung to be "dressed out" - made into the roasts, steaks and other cuts used in the ranch house and bunkhouse. Kohrs also provided his cowboys with pemmican, a kind of jerky, for times when they would be unable to get back to the chuckwagon on a roundup.

Across the road from the beef hoist is a long barn which has been used for both cattle and horses. Heifers (cows having their first calves) were often kept here as the barn provided some shelter for both the cows and the ranch hands who cared for them.

If you turn back now and begin to retrace your steps, you will pass the dairy, built in the 1930's by Con Warren. In addition to providing milk for human consumption, Warren sometimes gave the rich milk from his dairy cows to his beef calves. It provided superior nourishment for greater growth.



In the enclosure formed by the bunkhouse, granary, dairy and draft horse barn is a red wooden chute which once housed a livestock scale. The scale mechanism was moved to the other side of the railroad tracks when Con Warren moved most of his livestock operation there.



PLATFORM AND COUNTER
SCALES.

At this point you have choices to make. If you have the time, you could walk the half mile road which loops around the main ranch buildings. If you choose to do so, please be sure to close any gates you have to open. That's Rule Number One in ranch country. At various times of the year, livestock are kept in different pastures. You may wish to check with a ranger to see if you will have to walk through livestock to complete the ranch road circuit. None of our animals are vicious, but if you happen to scare or annoy them, they will act to protect themselves.

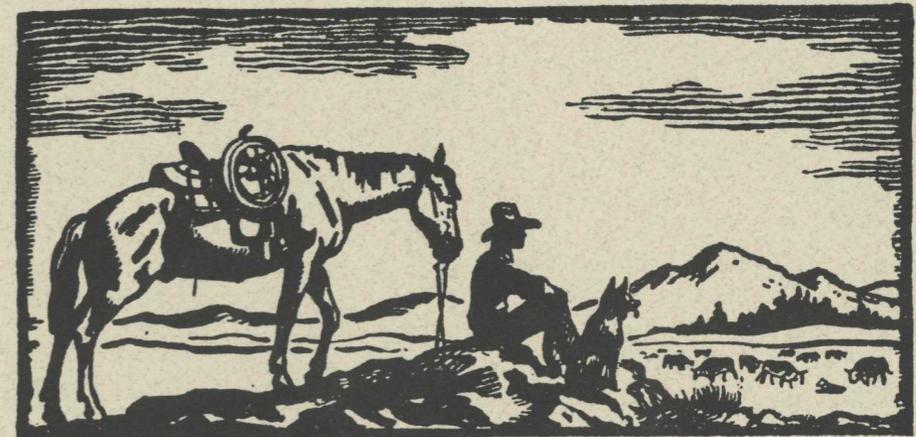
If you have even more time, or if you are a birdwatcher, you will enjoy the road down to the Clark Fork River. Again, it's a good idea to ask a ranger if there are any potential hazards on the way, and the best route to get there.

If you like to fish, you may do so on the Clark Fork if you have a Montana fishing license. We do not recommend eating the fish from the river, because of heavy metal contaminants, but the catch-and-release fishing is often good.

At different times of the year, there are special events and demonstrations. These include draft horse use, blacksmithing, chuckwagon cooking, branding, and other ranch chores. Ask a ranger for details.

Though this completes the walking tour of the ranch, it doesn't even come close to giving you the whole picture. Unless you've seen the ranch in every season and every type of weather, until you've fed cattle on a sub-zero morning or dragged yourself out at midnight to check on a heifer that's due to calve, lifted heavy harness onto huge horses, fought with (or been friends with) a saddle horse, and come to know the exact spot the ranch cats will snooze on a sunny winter's day, it's hard to imagine the challenges, joys, tragedies, and wonders of ranch life.

Come back again. Come back often. This is already your ranch, but the better you know it, the more "yours" it will become.



NOTES:



This booklet has been published in cooperation with the Glacier Natural History Association, a non-profit organization.