

A HISTORY OF THE PARAMOUNT RANCH 1769-1989

By Marc Wanamaker

(HISTORICAL RESEARCH STUDY OF THE PROPERTY
FROM 1769-1989 NOW OWNED BY THE NATIONAL
PARK SERVICE)

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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE / AGOURA CALIFORNIA

TASK DIRECTIVE: By Marc Wanamaker

National Register nomination and report to document the
Historic Use and Development of the PARAMOUNT MOVIE RANCH.

BACKGROUND:

The following report consists of documenting the physical history and use of the Paramount Movie Ranch and its development as a movie ranch by Paramount Studios. This part of the report is augmented with the Ranch's previous history as the Waring Ranch before the 1920s, and in its later period during a succession of owners.

The report establishes the role and relationship of the Paramount Movie Ranch to the Paramount Studios in Hollywood, and examines the general role and relationship of movie ranches to the movie industry.

Paramount Ranch is a National Park Service area within the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area. This property, acquired in 1981, was formerly a portion of the Paramount Studios Movie Ranch. As noted in the following report, Paramount Studios acquired more than four thousand acres of ranch land in the early 1920s and developed film locations in the area. The Ranch operated until the mid-1940s, when Paramount began to sell off its interest in the property. Subsequent owners

used the land for farming, recreation and periodic filming. Subdivision continued until 1981, when the National Park Service acquired 300 acres of the original area, which it currently manages.

A Development Concept Plan was completed for Paramount Ranch in 1982. The year before (1981), a brief evaluation of its eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places, indicated that the property had no integrity historically. But in 1987, after another analysis of the property, it was suggested that the Paramount Ranch is a significant historic site, and is potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places as a cultural/historic landscape.

Since the National Park Service took over the property in 1981, several of the original buildings were demolished, including one of the original ranch houses and a bunkhouse that Paramount had built in 1926.

Since 1981, the NBC Sunday Show with Pat Sajak, aired a taped interview session with different experts on the site, and talked about the history of the ranch and its future. Other experts on movie ranches were brought to the property to evaluate what was left from its many years as a movie location. People living on the ranch or were somehow connected to the ranch were also interviewed, and independent research on the history of the

ranch was continually uncovered in the form of photographs, maps, plans, drawings and clippings.

It wasn't until 1987 that the author was told that an historical survey was needed for the Paramount Ranch application for National Landmark status. The author, Marc Wanamaker, had felt personally attached to the Paramount Ranch property due to the fact that he had been going to events there since 1964. From the Dee Cooper Rodeos to being a musician in the earliest years of the Renaissance Faires (1966-1974), and working on an encyclopedia of the Movie Studios and their ranches since 1972, he had a personal interest in and knowledge of its history and its importance to the Los Angeles area. Through his work on the history of the studios in the United States, Marc Wanamaker had collected the largest group of photographs of the Paramount Ranch in the world. From its earliest days to the present, these photographs show the ranch's use as a movie ranch (1921-1952) and also during its later periods (1953-1989).

The missing items needed in order to complete any history of the ranch were the deeds and documents that were lost over the years by the Paramount Studios as well as by almost every other owner. By chance, about 1985, the author found many of the original deeds and documents directly relating to the ownership of the ranch in the 1920s. Found literally in a garbage dump near Las Vegas, Nevada, having

been dumped by a title company, the documents reached the hands of Marc Wanamaker and were then given to a Ranger of the National Park Service, Alice Allen. These documents were the first important 'find' specifically showing who owned the ranch and to whom it was sold and when.

With the help of professional historian and researcher, David Cameron, all of the deeds and documents needed to fill in the missing history of the ownership of the ranch were found. With the help of historians and archeologists from the National Park Service, we now know some things about the pre-history of the property, such as the discovery that early Indian tribes lived and died there, leaving artifacts for future study.

The following report will try to show clearly the following:

1. Document the dates of ownership and extent of the property associated with each ownership.
2. Provide a brief biographical documentation of the early owners.
3. Document how the land was used under the early ownership.
4. Document the physical history of the development of the ranch.
5. Document the change in ownership over the years.
6. Give a history of the Paramount years of ownership.
7. Document the significance of the landscape setting used for movie purposes.

8. Discuss the role and importance of movie ranches in the in the Southern California area.
9. Summarize the importance of the Paramount Ranch as a part of the physical and cultural history of the Southern California area.

The field investigation is a critical part of the work that had to be done, and it is the basis of this report. Fortunately, the author, Marc Wanamaker had been working on this Paramount Ranch project indirectly for over 20 years. Much of the leg work had already been done during those years, compiling information which was available at that time, but could not be gotten today. Paramount Studios lost most of its collections over the years, but much material surfaced in many parts of the United States. One collection in New York contained many photographs of the Ranch since the 1920s, and some showed the first construction on the property in 1926. Other documents, as mentioned earlier, were found by chance, while still others were uncovered in downtown Los Angeles in public records.

To say the least, the project is a fascinating one. This report will be the basis for building more information for the future on the history of the Paramount Ranch, and will finally be of some use to future historians and others who love and respect the natural beauty and importance of the Ranch as a National Landmark.

HISTORICAL ERAS OF THE PARAMOUNT RANCH PROPERTY 1769-1989

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HISTORICAL ERAS OF THE PARAMOUNT RANCH PROPERTY 1769-1989

1. DEVELOPMENT OF THE ORIGINAL BOUNDARIES THE RANCHO PERIOD - AMERICAN PERIOD (1769-1917)

The Santa Monica Mountains were formed by plate tectonics, or the pushing of the Pacific Plate and the North American Plate causing folds and the rising up of the land.

It is known that humans have lived in the area for up to 10,000 years in continuous settlements. A coastal tribe known as the Chumash inhabited villages from Point Conception in northern California to Malibu (Maliwu), and at least 1,000 years ago, they began to move into the inland valley. They followed animals during hunting, thereby creating paths from the ocean shore, which facilitated trading acorns and walnuts for shellfish, etc., with the coastal Indians. The valley and its foothills was a comfortable location for village life, with varied plant and animals in abundance, a good climate, and water holes welling up from the underground.

The earliest mention of inhabitants of the area comes from the Spanish explorers in 1769. Father Juan Crespi, a member of the Portola Expedition, which came over the pass later known as Sepulveda, recorded the first contact with Indian tribes. He noted the

many live oak and walnut trees, and that the village of heathen (were) very friendly and docile. A larger group of Indians known as the Tongva, belonging to the Shoshone, shared the area peaceably with the Chumash, trading, intermarrying and using the water available, as well as a ceremonial site at the foot of what is now the Santa Susana Pass, known as the Chatsworth Cairn site. Also, a nearby sulphur spring, known to possess healing qualities, was shared by all in the region. The estimated 5,000 inhabitants, in their separate villages, shared the 225,000 acres of the valley. Under the southeast corner of Balboa and Ventura Blvds. is the site of an Indian village dating back 3-4,000 years. It is also the point at which the Portola expedition first entered the valley. This site yielded, just recently, two million archeological artifacts of the former home of the Gabrielino, Gabrielino-Fernandeno and Chumash tribes. The area of Malibu Lake, known earlier as Craggs Ranch, was also the home of Chumash and Gabrielino cultures, replete with village sites and burial grounds as well as their art carved into the surrounding rocks.

The Pueblo of Los Angeles was founded on September 4, 1781. Francisco Reyes became Alcalde (Mayor) and received the rights to raise cattle in the north valley. The Franciscan padres wanted this land for

their new San Fernando Mission, and gave the Mayor in return 4,460 acres to the south, to what is now known as Ventura Blvd.¹

When Mexico gained its independence from Spain in 1822, there was a power struggle for land. The evolution of the boundaries of the Paramount Ranch goes back to the Rancho Las Virgenes, or Paraje de las Virgenes. This was originally a provisional grant made by the Spanish acting Governor, Jose Joaquin de Arrillaga, to Miguel Ortega, sometime between 1800 and August of 1802.² This grant appears to have lapsed, since the same rancho was granted again, during the Mexican period, to Domingo Antonio Ignacio Carrillo by then Governor Jose Figueroa in 1834.³ Carrillo seems not to have perfected his claim, since it was not sustained when presented to the United States authorities later.⁴ The claim which was sustained was based on a grant of two square leagues by Governor Juan Bautista Alvarado to Jose Maria Dominguez on April 6, 1837.⁵ Among the first of the mission lands allotted to private persons were 1,100 acres in the west end, granted to three Indians; Urbano, Odon and Manuel. Urbano's (step) daughter married a non-Indian settler, Miguel de Leonis, who became in time the manager and then the owner of all their lands, including all its cattle, horses and sheep.⁶

No matter how the existing courts dealt with land grants, squatters harrassed the owners. Such a group in the Calabasas area laid claim to de Leonis' parcel known as Rancho El Escorpion. Miguel de Leonis organized an armed attack against them, killing their leader and beginning a range war in the area. In 1869 de Leonis constructed his Leonis Adobe at El Escorpion, which turned out to be public land. After being in court several times, losing a judgment of \$14,000 to Major Horace Bell, kidnapping squatters, etc., de Leonis finally won a case. He celebrated by getting drunk, falling out of his wagon and getting crushed to death. He left a half million dollar estate, most of it inherited by lawyers. By 1904, his old enemy, Major Horace Bell, became a part owner of El Escorpion.⁷

Between 1834 and 1836, when the mission lands were out of the Church's hands and subdivided, most of the Indians had to leave the mission lands on which they had worked. By 1846, Don Eulogio de Celis, a Spaniard then living in the Pueblo of Los Angeles, paid \$14,000 for 121,319 acres of the former San Fernando Mission lands. With the exception of Encino and some other smaller ranchos, title to most of the valley now lay in one man's hand.

In 1848, as a result of the Mexican-American war, California became a part of the United States. In that year, gold was discovered in northern California, and within one year, over 50,000 Americans poured into the territory. By 1850, the population exceeded 100,000, enough to qualify for statehood. In the early 1860s, after drought and debts on their ranches, many of the "Dons" such as Pico Pico and his brother Andres, went into bankruptcy. From the 1870s and into the 20th Century, the prosperity of the valley areas was in the hands of wheat growers and American developers.⁸ By the late 19th Century and into the early 20th Century, the native grasses and valley oaks disappeared, because of the cattle grazing, farming, and more recently, urban development.

The American period of the area was basically the dismantling and division of the Rancho system. The Dominguez claim was filed with the United States Land Commission (Case No. 344) by M. Antonio Machado on September 15, 1852, confirmed by the commission on November 7, 1854, and by the United States District Court for the Southern District of California (Case No. 265) on February 23, 1857. An appeal from the court's decision was dismissed on March 4, 1858.⁵

After considerable further delay, the rancho was surveyed - this being essential since the Spanish and Mexican boundary descriptions and maps (known as disenos) were extremely vague. The surveys established what would be the eastern boundary of the Waring/Paramount Ranch, and a patent was issued on September 5, 1883, covering 8,885 acres.⁴

Our (Paramount) rancho boundaries were already established. The portion of the Paramount Ranch property which was sold outright to Miguel de Leonis, was the parcel that came into Bruce Waring's hands. The boundaries were measured by the surveyors through the use of oak stumps and mentioned in the report were also the old oak trees. The original surveyor made notes as to where small details on the property were located. One says "shanty" and another part shows "orchards" and small structures. This shows what the property was like in the 1880s, as well the original establishment of the boundaries as we know them today. A map showing the original survey of the Las Virgenes Rancho is dated December 1885. Medea Creek, which in the old days was called "Canata Medeo" was the center point for the property, which it still is. Rancho Las Virgenes was the original rancho property. In 1885, there were "shanty" buildings on the property. In other words, it was an inhabited property by ranchers and farmers. The Waring

family purchased this property in 1917 and immediately subdivided it. They bought it as tracts one and two, out of the rancho, and then subdivided it into tract #2804, with its various boundaries. The report is filed with the county engineers.⁹

By 1885, various individuals had acquired interests in the rancho, and a legal action for partition of the land was brought, so that instead of each claimant owning a fractional interest in all the acreage, each would own a 100% interest in a specific parcel. Judge Anson W. Brunson entered a Decree of Partition on March 22, 1886, which, based on a survey, divided the rancho into Lots "A" through "H" and "J", as well as Tract 1 (containing 1,885.68 acres) and Tract 2 (containing 1,580 acres). Tracts 1 and 2 comprised the southern portion of the rancho.¹⁰ This survey and Decree were very important in the development of the boundaries of the Waring/Paramount Ranch, since much of its northern boundary was that of Tracts 1 and 2, and other parts of that boundary were portions of the east and west boundaries of Lot "H". It appears that Tracts 1 and 2 were acquired by one Isabella Thornton, who redeemed them in 1903 after they had been sold to the State for delinquent property taxes.¹¹ She may have been the Mrs. Isabella R. Thornton who died in Los Angeles in February 1926, and whose father, John Riggin, and brother, Eugene Riggin, were described as

"Realty men intimately associated with the early upbuilding of Los Angeles."¹²

The area of the Paramount Ranch property by 1917 was an oak studded flood plain that was vital to the lives of the wild game and to the native Indians who had lived there for generations. The broad open grassland that sweeps along what is now Cornell Road, was becoming more and more developed as farmland and ranchland. A report prepared by the WPA Writers' Project described the area in 1941:

At the foot of a sharp defile, where Medea and Triunfo Creeks form Malibu Lake, the canyon floor becomes a wide valley holding Malibu Lake, an artificial body of water created in 1923 by the Malibu Lake Mountain Club. Scores of cabins belonging to club members line the five mile lakeshore, or cling to the tree-clad slopes. Many motion picture scenes were shot on location here since 1926.¹³

The area of what is now Agoura, advertises itself as "The Picture City" because of its popularity as a film location. It was laid out in two tracts in 1928 by the L' Agoura family, Spanish Grant owners and part of their home ranch with its house and auxiliary buildings were later owned by Wm. R. Hearst. By the 1940s many Hollywood personalities had built homes there.

2. THE WARING RANCH PERIOD (1917-1927)

This period of the ranch's history starts with the acquisition of the property by Mrs. Isabella R. Thornton. As mentioned before, it was in 1903 that Tracts 1 and 2 were sold to the state for delinquent property taxes, and it was then that Mrs. Thornton acquired the property. After the death of her husband, the tracts were sold to Bruce and Madge Blunt Waring.

According to Jack Dalmeyer, a local resident of the area, in an interview in the Los Angeles Times of October 21, 1979, he said:

My grandfather originally owned the land on which the Paramount Ranch was built. Eventually, it was sold to a man named Frank T. Davis, who sold it to "Jigs" Waring, the man who sold it to Paramount. I remember having a 1929 Ford and I'd drive it down to visit the sets ...

The property was sold to Bruce and Madge Waring in February 1917. Mrs. Waring, in turn conveyed an undivided one-half interest to her husband, Bruce, that September. These deeds recited that the parcels contained a total of 3,465 acres, corresponding almost exactly with the recital in the 1886 court decree.¹⁴

Even before the deed was signed conveying the half interest in the above parcels to Bruce Waring, both husband and wife had been identified as owners of the property, when a subdivision map was filed on June 23, 1917, by which tracts 1 and 2 of the Rancho Las Virgenes were re-subdivided as Tract Number 2804, which in turn was divided into Lots 1 through 6.¹⁵

The Warings completed their assemblage of the ranch lands by acquiring Lot "H", containing 634.38 acres, from I.S. Richards and May C. Richards, his wife, in May 1920; this deed noted that \$35 in revenue stamps had been affixed and cancelled.

Their property was now at its maximum extent - some 4,100 acres. A variety of distinct landscape "types" were located here, including chaparral, oak savannah, grassland and riparian cover along the creek. The land ranged in elevation from 740 feet near Medea Creek to over 1300 feet at the top of Sugarloaf Mountain. During its years of ranch operation, seasonal laborers were utilized, who helped with the cultivation of crops and livestock. The main crops were most probably oats, barley and wheat.

In the summer of 1923, the Warings conveyed most of their ranch holdings to the Title Insurance and Trust Company, retaining substantial acreage along the south

edge of Lots 3,4,5 and 6 of Tract 2804; as well as the portion of Lot "H" of the rancho north of Ventura Boulevard. \$165.50 in revenue stamps had been affixed and cancelled. Thus were established the outer boundaries of what was later to be the Paramount Ranch.

The Waring Ranch was one of the largest in the area and there were two homes on the property that most likely housed the owner's family and the ranch foreman. One of the houses (5 rooms) on the northern section of the ranch belonged to the owner; while a house (4 rooms) on the southern section, most likely housed the ranch foreman. This later became a residence for the volunteer firemen. This house is owned by the National Park Service today and is near the original south entrance to the ranch property.

The lands adjacent to the southern portion of the ranch were used for the cultivation of crops. "Dry Farming" was most probably the effective method of working the land during the Waring period. The higher grounds, west and southwest of the southern ranch property remained largely undeveloped. There were two entrances to the ranch during this period. One was next to the ranch house on the northern part of the property, and the other was next to the ranch house at the south. Both entrances in the past as well as today, are off of Cornell Road.

The main ranch complex for the operation of the Waring property was probably near the north ranch house. This area was later to be the site for placing the "Western Town" structures that were brought from the Lasky Ranch in Burbank when Paramount took over the entire property. Thus, some buildings used in the Western Town could have been original Waring structures. In examining the remaining structures at the site of the Western Town, there are two buildings that could have pre-dated the Paramount years.

On July 12, 1923, a receipt of payment was signed by Bruce and Madge Waring as a deposit on the purchase of 2,464 acres more or less for Sixty Dollars (\$60) an acre, to be paid in installments. (20% cash and the balance in five equal annual subsequent payments, interest on deferred payment of 6% paid semi-annually. The original document went on to say:

It is understood that the above acreage contains that portion of tract 2804 known as Rancho Las Virgenes, containing approximately 2400 acres (except the Warrens Triunfo Creek Tract) and a portion of Lot "H" lying south of Ventura Blvd. of the Dolores Rancho, containing about 320 acres more or less. It is understood that all leaseholds go with the land,

particularly oil leases for 200 acres held by a certain Mr. Hoyt. Owner agrees to accept a release clause of 20% advance over and above debt; along Ventura Boulevard at \$100 per acre and along County Road at \$60 per acre. Buyer to pay for bringing down title on release of property. It is understood that parties hereto will go to escrow on July 12, 1923 at which time \$9,000 more will be placed in said escrow. It is understood that the deposit of \$1,000 is to be forfeited in the event that purchasers fail to complete said transaction in the specified time. It is also understood that the purchasers are to receive a commission of 5%. (signed)

Bruce Waring and Madge Blunt Waring¹⁸

This receipt was in response to a check from Cleveland-Blair for \$500 and a check for \$500 from Colodny and Colodny, totalling \$1,000.

On another document of July 16, 1923, on the letterhead of the Title Insurance and Trust Company of Los Angeles, California, a clarification of what was being

purchased was outlined and approved by Madge and Bruce Waring and the Title Insurance representative. It read as follows:

In connection with my instructions of this date, relative to a proposed Declaration of Trust to cover approximately 2,764 acres of land, this will be your authority to prepare schedules of release prices for the said property, after the recordation of proper maps of proposed subdivisions of the property. For all property fronting on Ventura Boulevard to a depth of not to exceed 200 feet south of said Ventura Boulevard. For all property fronting on either side of Cornell Road, to a depth of not to exceed 200 feet south of said Ventura Boulevard and for any portion of the remainder of the said property taken into the said proposed Trust. However, that for a parcel fronting on Ventura Boulevard west of Cornell Road, 100 feet wide and not to exceed 200 feet deep. Provided also, that for a parcel fronting on Ventura Boulevard east of Cornell Road, 100 feet wide. Provided also, that the amount on which a five-room house is located shall include a release

price of \$1,500 in addition to the release price of the land, and that the land on which a four-room house is located shall include a release price of \$500 in addition to the release price of the land. Also provided in the area on which is located the spring that supplies water to the aforesaid houses shall be released for less than \$3,000.

Dated July 16, 1923 by Bruce and Madge Blunt Waring.¹⁹

On July 28, 1924, Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Waring and the Title Insurance and Trust claimed that the sum of \$140,172.20 was not paid as promised. There were supposed to be several payments with interest paid by March 6, 1924. According to a document regarding the Trust No. S-6165, this was not done. The document claims a default of the original agreement between Cleveland-Blair and the Waring Family. The document went on to state that an extension will be granted to the purchaser by August 26, 1924.²⁰ By September 5, 1924, a formal agreement was signed by several different parties. Titled an "Amendment of Declaration of Trust" and prepared by the Title Insurance Company, it detailed the assignments of ownership to seven purchasers:

3/10 to John H. Blair; 2/10 to H.H. Merrick; 1/10 to W.P. Reynolds; 1/10 to H.W. Smith; 1/10 to Frederick Thompson; 1/10 to K.W. Thompson; 1/10 to Wm. F. Thompson.

The document went on to say that some of the money was paid and that the rest would be paid on schedule as outlined in the agreement. The Title Insurance and Trust Company was a trustee under the agreement. At this time, \$90,000 was owed to the beneficiaries, Bruce and Madge Waring. The document detailed all the interests of the sellers and the purchasers.²¹

On another document signed by Bruce and Madge Waring, they authorized the Title Insurance and Trust Company to set prices for the different parcels of land which were offered for sale.²²

On behalf of the new owners of the Waring Property, on April 21st, 1927, the Title Insurance and Trust Company gave an option to the Paramount Land Corporation to purchase the ranch. Dated April 20th, the document detailed the authorization of the Title Insurance and Trust Company to pay out any cash proceeds from the sale and or option approved by Harry H. Merrick, John H. Blair and Karl W. Thompson.²³

As agreed to by the Waring Family, by July 1927, the Title Insurance and Trust conveyed to the Paramount Land Corporation many of the original land parcels. The description of the southern boundary of the land differed somewhat from that in the previous deed, perhaps resulting from a better survey.²⁴ News reports at the time, indicated that the actual sellers were in a syndicate headed by John H. Blair and Harry Merrick; the latter being one of the brokers who handled the deal.²⁵ John H. Blair was a major Los Angeles subdivider and builder, best known for the 1,000-acre Goodyear Park development, who lived in Hollywood.²⁶ Harry H. Merrick, after a career as a lawyer in Minnesota and Iowa, moved to Los Angeles and engaged in the insurance and real-estate business; he was vice president of the Central Motion Picture District, Inc., which announced development of the \$800,000 Mack Sennett film studio in the Studio City district of the San Fernando Valley, at the same time that Paramount acquired its ranch.²⁷ The Studio City Development of the Central Motion Picture District Inc., in cooperation with Charles and Al Christie of the Christie Film Corporation, and Mack Sennett of the Mack Sennett Film Company, were all directed by Harry H. Merrick and Company with James R. Canterbury, Jr., as Manager.²⁸

In May of 1927 the Title Insurance and Trust Company granted a 'Corporation Grant Deed' to the Paramount Land Corporation. It detailed the boundaries of the property that was to be purchased. It specifically mentioned Parcel 1, Lots 1 and 2 of Tract No. 2804 in Rancho Las Virgenes, as per map recorded in book 33, page 95, as well as Maps in the office of the County recorder of said county.²⁹ Other documents dated between April and May of 1927, continued to detail release zones, and amendments. From an extract of minutes of the Board of Directors of the Paramount Land Corporation at a regular meeting held on the 25th day of April, 1927, several points made clear Paramount's interest in purchasing the Waring Ranch.

President Frank Garbutt reported negotiations of option with the Title Insurance and Trust Company of Los Angeles City, California, for the purchase of a certain tract of land, being a portion of the Rancho Las Virgenes, situated in the County of Los Angeles, California, and containing 2,745 acres, more or less, for the price of \$412,500. President Garbutt presented draft of the option which was read

and approved, and thereupon the President and Secretary, or any two officers of the board of directors, were authorized and instructed to execute the said option for and in the name of this corporation, and to give notice thereof and to do and perform such acts and to pay such sums of money as they may deem necessary ... and in evidence thereof to execute in the name of this corporation, promissory notes and all necessary mortgages, instruments and documents.³⁰

On April 25th, the Title Company drew up a formal "Paramount Option" agreement, which states that Paramount Land Corporation will pay specific amounts of money beginning on July 1, 1927.³¹ On April 26, 1927 a formal contract was drawn up detailing the boundary lines and statement of intent of purchase by Paramount Land Corporation, and the method of payment. The contract went on to state the exact acreage of the entire purchase: "The foregoing parcels contain 2,743 acres, more or less, inclusive of streets and roads within the exterior boundaries thereof and including Ventura Boulevard, adjoining said property, to the center line of said boulevard."³²

On May 10, 1927, Reaburn and Bowen, consulting engineers, submitted a letter to the Title Insurance Company and a blue print map of the Rancho area along with the total acreage they had computed. They came up with a total of 2,483.461 acres.³³ By July 1, 1927, an official (printed) mortgage was signed. The mortgage contract contained a great deal of information on the physical size of the property and the amounts of money to be paid in installments. Some of the more important points covered in this mortgage include such items as:

This note is one of a series of seventy-six (76) mortgage notes of like date ... aggregating \$322,500 ... signed by Paramount Land Corporation, Frank Garbutt, President and Frank James, Secretary ...

Schedule of release prices include:

Zone A - \$140,000	Zone B - \$ 67,200
Zone C - \$144,500	Zone D - \$144,500
Zone E - \$ 65,765	

All the above foregoing notes and mortgage are made, executed and delivered in pursuance of a resolution duly passed by the Board of Directors of said mortgagor, at a legal meeting duly convened and held on the 11th day of July, 1927.³⁴

On April 11, 1928, J.R. Canterbury, sales manager for the Central Motion Picture District, Inc., Studio City developers, sent a letter to the Title Insurance and Trust office, stating his involvement with the sale of the Waring property to Paramount Land Corporation.

As a matter of record for your files, I desire to state that I was the real estate broker who handled and made the sale of the tract approximately 2,750 acres held under your trust #6165, the buyer being the Paramount Land Corporation, and that I received as my commission \$67,500. in the form of notes in the Paramount Land Corporation, which notes were payable to Title Insurance and Trust Company and by it endorsed without recourse to the Security Trust and Savings Bank and by it endorsed without recourse to Harry H. Merrick, and said notes were taken up on the books of Harry H. Merrick and Company and properly accounted for to me, and said notes were part of the purchase price. Commission referred to was received by me as of July 1, 1927, the date upon which the sale was technically concluded, and

the commission was paid to me in accordance with a written contract between myself and all of the members of the syndicate as named in the declaration of trust, your number #6165.

Yours truly, J .R. Canterbury, Jr.³⁵

This letter pointed out the direct link between the Studio City Development of Motion Picture Studios and the development of Motion Picture production in the area of Agoura, where the Paramount Ranch was situated. This was the sole reason why Paramount chose to locate their ranch in the West Valley. They were convinced by real estate men connected with the Motion Picture Industry to buy land in the West Valley for many reasons. Some of them included the variety of landscape settings for different production needs. The remote area lent itself to the authenticity of settings for filming purposes. The size of the ranch was a consideration, because one could separate structures from each other so that no unnecessary buildings would ever find themselves in a "shot." And the hills and mountainous terrain provided a clear background for the camera, without any intrusions or obstructions. These were probably considerations Paramount had in mind when Blair, Merrick and Canterbury showed them the property in 1927.

Paramount actually mortgaged the property back to Title Insurance Company to secure payment of a series of 76 mortgage notes totaling \$322,500, due from time to time, beginning on July 1, 1928, and ending July 1, 1933. Appended to the mortgage was a useful general map of the property, illustrative of the zones into which it was divided in connection with provisions for partial release of the mortgage on partial repayment.³⁶

The County Assessor's Map Book showed Paramount Famous Lasky Corporation as assessed owner beginning in 1928, then Paramount Publix Corporation, beginning in 1931, and finally Paramount Land Corporation in 1933. No deeds on file substantiated these changes in ownership. Paramount Pictures Inc., was the assessed owner beginning in 1937, and a deed was recorded from Paramount Land Corporation to Paramount Pictures on January 4, 1937, which may represent transfer of this property.³⁷

Bruce Waring was born in Henderson County, Kentucky, on October 13, 1859, and came to California around 1915; his occupation was stated as "Real Estate Broker." His wife was born Madge Blunt in Wisconsin on March 27, 1868. The 1917 deed indicated that they were then residing in Los Angeles. In 1925, however, they appeared in the San Diego Directory as

living at 2832 Upas; Bruce Waring's occupation was given as "Real Estate." Living with them were Florence E. Blunt and Joseph L. Blunt, identified as Mrs. Waring's niece and nephew in her probate case file. In December of 1927, Bruce Waring sold a "Waring Ranch" in San Diego County.³⁹

In 1929 or 1930, the Warings built themselves an elegant home in the Los Feliz district of Los Angeles at 2240 Ben Lomond Drive.⁴⁰ The Warings appear at that address in the 1931 and 1932 Los Angeles City Directories, but not in 1933 through 1935.

Bruce Waring died there on December 14, 1935. No obituary has been found in the Los Angeles Times or the San Diego Union, but a funeral announcement appeared, noting that, in addition to his widow, he was survived by a brother, Webb Waring, and a sister, Addie Movius.⁴¹ Inexplicably, Bruce Waring was listed (posthumously) without reference to his wife, at 2240 Ben Lomond, in the 1936 and 1941-42 directories. At some point the Warings had acquired the El Rey Hotel, located at 1501 Fifth Avenue, corner of Beech Street, in downtown San Diego. This may be why his estate was probated in San Diego County.⁴²

III. PARAMOUNT MOVIE RANCH (1927-1948)

A. Description and Background of Property

The Paramount Ranch property lay adjacent to Cornell Road just south of Ventura Boulevard, which was once a part of the Rancho Las Virgenes in the Santa Monica Mountains.

When Paramount Pictures purchased the land under the subsidiary of Paramount Land Corporation on July 1, 1927, they received Parcel 1, Lots 1 and 2 of Tract No. 2804 in the County of Los Angeles; also portions of lots 3, 4, 5, and 6, of a tract lying northerly and northeasterly.⁷⁸

The property was owned, prior to Paramount's purchase, by a syndicate of men in the real estate business. Two of the principal owners, Harry H. Merrick and John H. Blair, were involved with Motion Picture Studio properties as a specialty. A Mr. J.R. Canterbury, Jr., handled the deal between the syndicate and Paramount Land Corporation. Mr. Canterbury was the Managing Sales Representative for Studio City Central Motion Picture District Land Organization. On April 11, 1928, he wrote a letter to the Title Insurance and Trust Company in Los Angeles:

As a matter of record for your files I desire to state that I was the real estate broker who handled and made the sale of the tract of approximately 2,750 acres held under your trust ... the buyer being the Paramount Land Corporation, and that I received a commission ... in the form of notes ... and said notes were taken up on the books of Mr. Harry H. Merrick and Company and properly accounted for to me, and said notes were part of the purchase price ... and the commission was paid to me in accordance with a written contract between myself and all of the members of the syndicate as named in the declaration of trust ...⁷⁹

In an advertisement in the Los Angeles Times of 1928, the names of Harry H. Merrick and James B. Canterbury, Jr., were printed as sponsoring investors in the new development of Studio City. The advertisement read: "Hundreds are investing at Studio City because ... it is the outstanding real estate development in Los Angeles County ... It is California's new motion and talking picture center."⁸⁰

The link between the Paramount land deal and the same men who engineered the Studio City deal which created a new motion picture center in Studio City in the same year, is the direct result of Paramount knowing about the existence of and possibility of purchasing the old Waring Ranch in the vicinity of the new town of Agoura. Minutes of a meeting of the Board of Directors of the Paramount Land Corporation, held on April 25, 1927, reported:

... President (Frank) Garbutt presented a draft of the option which was read and approved, and thereupon the president and secretary ... were authorized to execute the said option ... and to give notice ... to pay such sums ... (price of the property was \$412,500 for 2,745 acres). Frank James, secretary of the Paramount Land Corporation ... certifies that the company will accept the terms of the proposed sale.⁸¹

Frank Garbutt originally worked with the old Jesse L. Lasky Company in the late "teens" and was responsible for much of the real estate investment, development and management of the studio properties. He stayed on during the merging of the Lasky Feature Play Company and the Famous Players Film Company in 1916, and became a

trusted Paramount executive in charge of facilities and operations for several of the studios which Paramount controlled around the United States. He was also reportedly involved with the lease in 1916 of the Lasky Ranch in Burbank.

It had been rumored that Paramount had been leasing a ranch in Agoura since 1921, but there was no proof of that. It is possible, though, that since 1923, when Merrick and Blair had ownership of the Waring Ranch, that there could have been some temporary location use.

Joe Robbins, an electrical engineer with the Paramount Studio, told Marc Wanamaker in 1984 that he remembered doing several films at the Paramount Ranch (Blair-Merrick) sometime between 1923 and 1927. Gary Cooper made The Virginian there in 1929; the Goldwyn production Marco Polo was made there in 1937; and parts of several popular TV series were also shot there in the 1950s, including The Cisco Kid, Have Gun Will Travel, and Rin Tin Tin.

After the official purchase of the ranch in the Agoura area, Paramount made yet another announcement in the Los Angeles Times of July 17, 1927:

GROUND PLANS FOR THE \$800,000 MACK SENNETT
STUDIOS TO BE CONSTRUCTED AT STUDIO CITY ...
Vice President Merrick (Harry H. Merrick,
owner of the old Waring Ranch) ... stated

that he expected to announce plans for the building of another major plant at Studio City soon.

Stimulating interest in a new film center in North Hollywood and forecasting the locations of other major studios in the district, was the announcement that Paramount Land Corporation, which is the holding company for Famous Players Lasky Corporation, has purchased from John R. Blair and associates 2,700 acres of land ... and will convert it to a ranch to be used for locations of outdoor sets for the making of motion pictures ... and for the headquarters for livestock and paraphernalia to be used in pictures ...

The new Lasky purchase adjoins the Malibu Lake Club ... being on the part of the property ... which formerly was the old Waring Ranch, and is part of the original Las Virgenes Rancho. The Lasky (Paramount) purchase was made from John H. Blair and Harry H. Merrick ... and was handled through the Harry H. Merrick Company and James R. Canterbury, Jr.⁸²

By November 20, 1927, the Los Angeles Sunday Times ran a front page article announcing:

WORLD ON MOVE AT LASKY RANCH ...

Paramount shifting to new 2,700 acre property (actually 2,745 acres). Ghost towns of filmdom to rise near Calabasas ... Lease on the North Hollywood Studio Ranch allowed to expire ... With one gesture a 1,000 acre ranch is being abandoned and a new area, nearly three times as large, is being fitted out to take its place ...

B.P. Schulberg, associate producer of the studio, announced yesterday, that a new 2,700 acre property for the making of exterior scenes has been procured near Calabasas, and that the old Lasky Ranch ... on the North Slope of the North Hollywood Hills, (now Burbank) has been turned back to the Hollingsworth interests on expiration of a lease that has lasted many years. The old Lasky Ranch leaves a heritage of history and romance, great and brilliant stars of yesterday appeared there.

An improvement program that means the expenditure of one million dollars is now under

way at the newly acquired ranch. All the old exterior settings which were practicable to being moved, are being moved the thirty miles along the Ventura Highway ... It is a huge undertaking, the wholesale shifting of large settings ... One of the largest settings that soon will find itself in unfamiliar territory is composed of the French Farmhouse, barns and sheds that were used for the filming of Pola Negri's film Barbed Wire made in 1926. Paramount's famous western street is benefiting by the change and in its next edition it will be a proud array of saloons, hotels, blacksmith shops ... A small army of carpenters and movers is now making the old buildings intact ... all the live stock that made its home on the old Lasky Ranch is being moved to the new ranch. Ten permanent buildings are being built. These include a bunkhouse to house the cowboys who are under Jack Moore's foremanship ... stables, barns, and pump houses.⁸³

In November 1927, Paramount actress Mary Brian, filming Under the Tonto Rim appeared in publicity photographs publicizing the construction at the new Paramount

Ranch. The captions told the story:

LOOK OUT FOR MARY ... Mary Brian, featured film beauty lends a hand in the construction of the cowboy's bunkhouse at the new Paramount Ranch, 40 miles north of Hollywood. Mary is probably more help as an inspiration than as a carpenter.

RUGGED HILLS ... and a wild little valley make of Paramount's new 2,700 acre ranch a perfect location for the filming of western and other outdoor pictures. Buildings are now being erected, equipment is being brought in and the ranch is being prepared to be the center of intense picture making activities. It is 40 miles north of the Paramount Studio in Hollywood.

THE RANCH HOUSE ... Mary Brian, screen favorite, standing by one of the eucalyptus trees that shade the ranch house on Paramount's new 2,700 acre property in the heart of Southern California's foothill country. The ranch is to be used extensively in the making of pictures.

HISTORY MAKING ... Stagecoaches and carriages that have had their part in writing stirring pages into history are sheltered

under these huge sheds that have just been erected on Paramount's 2,700 acre ranch.

DRILLING - but for water, not oil. The well is to furnish part of the water supply for Paramount's new 2,700 acre ranch. An army of workmen are now preparing the ranch for occupation by another army of motion picture workers.

PICTURE STUFF ... Hills and lumber, they both have their part in the making of motion pictures. A glimpse of the lumber yard on the new Paramount Ranch. The ranch is the scene of great activity now as workmen transform it into a motion picture center. The rendezvous ... By the side of the stream that flows through the new Paramount Ranch in the mountains of Southern California, Mary Brian, featured film player, keeps trust; the other lucky part? We don't know.

IT WON'T TAKE LONG ... Paramount's new 2,700 acre ranch in the heart of Southern California's foothill country will soon be ready for the important part it will play in motion picture making, if Mary Brian, screen beauty, stays on the job. Mary is shown here with a

group of workmen at the ranch. (The workmen are drilling for water near the well head).

BEAUTY HATH CHARMS ... to make a gang of workers happy. Mary Brian, screen beauty, is doing her part in preparing the new 2,700 acre Paramount Ranch to play its part in the making of pictures.

All the photos were taken during the making of the first film on the Paramount Ranch - Under the Tonto Rim. The picture was shot there in November 1927 and released in February 1928. It was presented by Adolph Zukor and Jesse L. Lasky, with B.P. Schulberg, associate producer, and Raymond C. Raymaker, director. It was photographed by C. Edgar Schoenbaum and starred Richard Arlen, Mary Brian and Alfred Allen. It was billed as a "western melodrama" based on a Zane Grey story.⁸⁴

The synopsis of the film explained:

Gold miner Edd Denmeade loves Lucy Watson, the sister of the official mining claim recorder. Denmeade suspects Watson of killing his father, who, after a poker game, was shot by a gambler "who shuffles with one hand." The real murderer, Sam Spralls, has convinced Watson that he killed Denmeade,

and threatens to expose him unless Watson assigns him all the gold claims. Spralls assembles a band of killers to jump the claims, when Watson complies. Eventually, Denmeade learns the identity of the killer when he sees Spralls shuffle a deck of cards. He forms a vigilante party and rids the community of Spralls and his gang.⁸⁵

The Los Angeles Times ran yet another story on November 21, 1927:

NEW LASKY LOT OPENED FOR PICTURE ...

Start work today on first film to be made on Ventura outdoor tract ... (Under the Tonto Rim) ... The initial bow of Famous Players Lasky's new outdoor motion picture headquarters on Ventura Boulevard at Cornell Road will be made today at noon, according to executives, when the directors utilize a part of the 2,700 acre tract for a western picture.

Destruction of the Famous Players Lasky \$1,500,000 film city (Burbank) on the Hollingsworth tract on Pass Avenue has been under way for a month, while

construction work on the new Ventura Boulevard site has been progressing steadily. All future outdoor activities of Famous Players will be centered at the new location, which has been given a thorough test for shadows and atmospheric conditions for photography during the last few months. Eighteen miles of eight-foot wire fence have been built around the ranch and construction of permanent buildings has been under way since the corporation obtained the title to the property. The buildings completed and ready for use today include the ranch house, bunkhouse, stables, prop sheds, locker rooms for various departments, pump house and sawmill and several large corrals. A water supply is assured, say the executives, from two 20,000 gallon tanks on the hills, filled from wells which Paramount has developed on the property.⁸⁶

PARAMOUNT PICTURES MOVIE RANCH OPERATIONS

Since its earliest days in the film business, Paramount, like other studios, used film locations for shooting many of their productions. In Los Angeles, by 1915,

several major studios had leased or purchased ranch property for location filming. Before 1915, many companies would just use any open land, or lease private ranches for a short time. However, this proved to be more trouble than it was worth, due to the fact that there would be time limitations, less privacy, or even sudden evictions. Film companies did not want to be limited to what they could do on a property, or when they could use a ranch, or how long they could use it. The one alternative would be to own or to "long term" lease a ranch for their own needs. In 1915, the Lasky Feature Play Company followed the example of Universal Studios (which had leased and purchased ranch property since 1912 in the San Fernando Valley) to take a long term lease on the Hollingsworth Ranch in the foothills of North Hollywood, naming it the "Lasky Ranch." (Today, this land is the Burbank - Forest Lawn Cemetery).

In the same year, the Epoch Film Producing Corporation leased the ranch for D.W. Griffith's The Birth of a Nation, for the battle scenes of the Civil War. The Lasky Ranch was in operation with standing sets constructed there, for over 12 years. During the twelve year operation of this ranch, the Lasky Company merged with Famous Players in 1916, and later

became Paramount Pictures Corporation. The ranch was subleased at times to other companies which did not have any ranch land, such as the Metro Film Corporation, which used the property in 1920 for their Valentino film The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse. Elaborate sets were constructed there and were later used by Paramount in its own pictures, as a bonus.

When Paramount purchased the Agoura property in the summer of 1927, they left a ranch that had given the company much in the way of facilities close to the studio proper, as well as a great film heritage which helped make the company what it was up to then. The reasons for leaving could have been varied. They were pouring money into a lease which restricted them in the use of the ranch, and which forced them to share the place at times. On one of the contracts for leasing the Hollingsworth Ranch, the Lasky Company was obliged to shoot their films in and around a production being made by Universal (whose own ranch was adjacent to the Hollingsworth property). Another reason could have been that the timing was right for acquiring their own property. Mr. Harry H. Merrick, who, with his syndicate, was owner of the ranch, was involved in the development of studio properties, and was instrumental in getting Paramount to commit to purchasing its own ranch.

At this same time, Paramount was expanding in Hollywood, moving its entire operation from the old studio at Selma and Vine Streets to a new studio location at Van Ness and Melrose Avenue. This move began in the summer of 1926 and lasted into the summer of 1927, the same time that Paramount purchased the Agoura ranch from Mr. Merrick. It follows that Paramount was reorganizing the company and upgrading its facilities at just that time, and buying a ranch to use without restrictions was just good business.

As was mentioned above in a Los Angeles Times article, the news that Paramount was moving sets from the old ranch to the new one, was proof that the studio was giving up the old ranch permanently. In a photograph of the old Lasky Ranch in the 1940s, there were still some sets on the property, but not the more important ones. Those had been moved in 1927. In the photographs of the construction of facilities at the new ranch in Agoura, buildings and sets were being built all over the property, and special mention was made of water wells being drilled for a permanent water supply. All these factors were needed to make the ranch work efficiently for any productions planned for the future.

The sets which were moved from the old Lasky ranch were placed in strategic areas around the new Agoura ranch, taking advantage of the terrain, foliage and accessibility. New sets were built mainly facing the south, where they could get the best angles of light from the sun. Light was needed from the earliest hours of the day to the latest possible light at the end of the day. Sets were built at particular angles so that other sets or roads were not seen, and the camera would have only a view of the set needed and nothing else.

The new ranch was organized into different sections according to their use and importance. The operational core of the ranch was on the south section and included numerous support facilities.

When Paramount took over the property, two caretaker houses were constructed; one on the south section and one on the north section, adjacent to the western town sets. In addition, one or more ranch houses were for the use of the camp foreman and caretakers; and separate bunkhouses were assigned to ranch personnel and cowboys. A new commissary and mess hall supplied food for the location personnel. Two pump houses supplied water for ranch needs. Barn stalls housed both horses and mules, and harness supplies were in a tack room for saddles, etc. Seven separate corrals were used for livestock.

Perhaps most important to the operation of a motion picture studio, was the new mill and carpenter shop where sets were constructed, altered and repaired. Nearby was a lumber yard, and adjacent to it was the sash and door shed in which were stored the flats and architectural details of the sets.

Among the support facilities were a good number of storage buildings to serve not only the movie making operation, but also insured the day to day work of the ranch itself. Among them was a prop building on the north part of the lot adjacent to the Western Town sets, used for storage of hand props, etc.; three pole barns used as prop sheds for rolling stock, electrical storage and miscellaneous props; a powder magazine used for storage of ammunition for firearms and special effects; storage building for completed sets; several sand and gravel storage areas used for dressing of sets and also for road maintenance; and lastly, structures known as work buildings.

In 1927, the first sets placed on the new ranch included a French ranch house (brought from the Lasky ranch), a school house, a court house, ranch houses and sheds, and Hacienda sets. Many of the sets were semi-permanent in nature, having only two or three sides, but some were fully operational buildings.

Most of the sets were supported with telephone or pier poles and dressed with plaster or wooden fronts.

There is evidence that the original ranch road next to Medea Creek was used by the studio, but other minor roads were also installed, linking all the ranch sets to the headquarters or support camp. As mentioned in the Los Angeles Times article, extensive fencing was built all around the ranch for security as well as boundary purposes.

By 1937, several more substantial sets had been built on the ranch. The "Western Street" was improved with more buildings, while nearby two major "San Francisco street" sets were constructed. One was San Francisco of 1849 and the other of 1860. The street of 1860 included a large plaza adjacent to the set. Other sets included Taylor Ranch, Ebb Tide set, Swiss Village, Marco Polo set, Post Stockade (fort), Salem Town set, German steet (built for the 1932 film Broken Lullaby), and other cabins and assorted buildings of different descriptions.

It was in 1937 that David O. Selznick leased the ranch from Paramount for the film The Adventures of Tom Sawyer and constructed a small Mississippi town, which was re-dressed as a Swiss Village at the Medea Creek, west of San Francisco Street. In the 1940s, it was known as "midwestern street."⁸⁷

The caption of a 1931 photograph read: "Paradise - The City with One Inhabitant." Richard Arlen, featured in Paramount's Caught - is shown with Roger Bothell, the lone occupant of the town. The town, located in the foothills near Ventura, California, plays an important part in Arlen's new film for Paramount."⁸⁸

In 1931 Paramount had named its theatre chain the Publix Pictures Corporation, and in some of the corporate releases and publicity, the ranch was called the Paramount-Publix-Ranch. But only a few years later, after much of the theatre chain was taken away by anti-trust legislation, the Publix name was dropped and became history. By 1933 Paramount was being re-financed due to the fact that the corporation had gone into semi-bankruptcy and had lost its Eastern studio and other properties. A newspaper reported: "The Paramount Land Corporation, owner of the Paramount Ranch, 35 miles north of Hollywood, is now negotiating to extend for one year the maturity on an indebtedness of \$72,500."

"Location Holiday at Paramount ... Rose of the Rancho at Paramount Ranch." Robert Florey, a contract director at Paramount, had originally been a writer for film magazines in the 1920s, and continued to write books about Hollywood and the people who made the film industry world famous. In his book, Hollywood, D'Hier

et D'Aujourd'hui" (Hollywood, of Yesterday and of Today - 1948). Florey wrote in French about his first visit to the ranch where he observed the making of the film The Rose of the Rancho in August 1935.

To complete a scene, director Marion Ger-
ing was to have opera singer Gladys Swarth-
out perform a song which would be the climax
of the film The Rose of the Rancho. The
story was about the early California life
of the rancho (1852) and followed the life
of a legendary hero, like Zorro, that took
place near the Mexican border. The produc-
er, William LeBaron had cast John Boles as
Swarthout's love interest and they would
be singing the musical number together on
location at the ranch. It was at the Para-
mount Ranch in the mountains of Malibu, 75
kilometers from Hollywood, that they would
begin this grand musical number.

At 6:45 in the morning, several limousines
had left the studio to pick up the stars and
others, including myself, to begin the drive
to the ranch. The car went by way of High-
land Avenue over the Cahuenga Pass, where
we intersected with another main road forming

Ventura Boulevard, in the direction of San Francisco. This intersection, which is close to Universal Studios, went west and we passed by the Republic Studios in Studio City. Finally we reached the magnificent ranch of Paramount. It contains many standing sets on different types of terrain, with villages, European streets, and a variety of landscapes for the cameraman to play around with. It wasn't until 1931 that the majority of sets were actually constructed at the ranch. One of these first major sets was built for Ernst Lubitsch's film The Man I Killed (1931).

Upon our arrival at the ranch that morning around 8 o'clock, I saw many extras who looked like they were from Spain. Many of the caballeros were actually American cowboys dressed in Mexican costumes. I began my day on the location by speaking to the double for Charles Bickford, who was the chief villain of the film. At 8:30 A.M. the director began to shoot the first scenes. The scene I was present for was located at the "Alvarado Rancho [most likely

the Hacienda sets on the west part of the ranch], where Gladys Swarthout and John Boles would soon sing their duet together.

The following week at the ranch, when I was again there, Mae West was shooting around the exteriors for Klondike Annie, directed by Raoul Walsh. The sets at the ranch were dressed to represent the era of the Gold Rush and the Indian extras of the past week were transformed into Eskimos.⁸⁹

By 1937, the ranch was at the height of its activity. Many films were being shot there in whole or in part, and many sets were spotted over the entire span of the property. Aerial photographs showed the entire ranch property, which matched several blueprints of the ranch. The plans and the photographs showed and identified all structures on the property. An aerial photograph was dated September 14, 1937, and the blueprints were dated October 3 and October 6, 1937, revised on September 22, 1938. The photograph of the ranch shows the buildings, sets and facilities from the southerly to the northerly boundaries. These sites marked on the photograph by legend, include:

1. four room house/fire station
2. lumber yard
3. sash and door shed
4. mill office and carpenter shop
5. mess hall/kitchen
6. flat-set storage (outdoor)
7. garage/equipment shed
8. corral
9. prop shed
10. prop shed/rolling stock
11. prop shed/garage/rolling stock
12. harness/tack room/pain shop/offices
13. bunk house
14. corral
15. barn [50x120 feet]
16. corrals
17. ranch headquarters - caretaker house
18. post stockade - set
19. Medea Creek [used as a setting for films]
20. Marco Polo set
21. Hacienda set
22. Miscellaneous sets
23. German Street set
24. Ebb Tide set
25. Taylor Ranch set
26. Miscellaneous sets
27. San Francisco Street 1849
28. Swiss Village set
29. San Francisco Street 1860
30. Powder Magazine
31. Miscellaneous sets
32. Tom Sawyer Street set
33. Western Town Street
34. Caretaker's residence
35. Water tanks
36. Miscellaneous sets
37. Ranch house (5 rooms) Believed to be where
the Warings lived.
38. Fire Station (Cornell Road)
39. Grandstand set
40. (red) Camp Entrance (off Cornell Road)
41. (red) North Camp Entrance (off Cornell Road)

These structures and areas on the ranch property were necessary for proper operations as a movie ranch. A point by point evaluation of each area shows how it was used by Paramount Pictures from 1927-1948.

1. Four room house/old fire station:

According to ranch caretaker-manager Dee Cooper, who lived in the house at one time, old timers who lived in the area told him that it was built before the turn of the century. He went on to say (and confirm) that the house and grounds were once used as the old fire station before the new one was built. For years it had been used by other caretakers until he moved in some-time in the early 1960s.⁹⁰

2. Lumber yard;

This was a large area set aside to store all the lumber needs for the ranch. The lumber was used for the construction of sets needed at any time, and consisted of all that a carpenter would want to build almost any structure. The wood used was generally pine, but better grades of wood were purchased for special uses. Many of the sets were built as "temporary" structures for one picture only, although they were sometimes used again.

3. Sash and door shed:

This shed stored sashes and doors as well as tools for the construction of buildings. They called this room "the finishing room,

meaning that all necessary items for finishing a building were stored there.

4. Mill office and carpenter shop:

Just like its home office at the studio, the ranch mill office and carpenter shop was the heart of the studio organization. This is where the plans for sets were studied and executed. Almost every film shot at the ranch needed some kind of set, even if the most primitive, such as a cabin. The art director from the studio would work closely with the ranch art department housed there, on any picture using the ranch. The carpenter shop nearby would have all the power tools and equipment to cut and prepare any structure that might be needed. All orders for supplies would come directly from the mill office to the home studio in Hollywood, and the ranch would be supplied immediately.

5. Mess hall/kitchen:

The mess hall at the ranch could accommodate almost 250 people at one time. Generally, a crew plus actors would only total about 30-40 people. However, when a film needed several hundred actors, extra kitchen personnel would be brought in to help. The interior

would be equipped with picnic tables and hot meals would be provided. The kitchen at the ranch was most likely operated by the same management as the studio in Hollywood.

6. Flat set storage (outdoors):

This was a section along the road leading to the south portion of the ranch and into the lumber yard. After sets were used and could not be supported on their own, they were stored (like at the home studio in Hollywood) in areas where they could be retrieved and used again. They were stored outdoors, and were, of course, subjected to the elements, but a set could be stored this way for more than a year without much damage.

7. Garage/equipment shed:

This garage could have been used for the camp automobiles as well as other equipment for camp maintenance.

8. Corral:

This is one of the several corrals for the livestock that was used regularly in films.

9. Prop shed:

The prop shed was used to store and repair miscellaneous items used in films made on the ranch, such as anything from a spade, to gold

prospecting tools, to Indian artifacts, to saloon equipment, etc. The home studio had a major property department, but when a film was being shot at the ranch, some safe place was needed to store the props after a day's shooting so nothing would get lost. Most props were returned to the home studio after shooting.

10. Prop shed/rolling stock:

This shed was used for a combination of prop storage (larger props) and "rolling stock," which was considered anything on wheels, such as a wagon, old car, truck, stagecoach or carriage.

11. Prop shed/garage:

This was the largest of the sheds (considered a "pole barn"). Located in the pole barn was the repair shop for the rolling stock, as well as a storage area. The rolling stock included stagecoaches, wagons, old trucks, carriages, buckboards, automobiles, Conestoga wagons, water trucks and miscellaneous other vehicles.

12. Harness/tack room/paint shop/offices:

This building (now removed) was used in three parts for three different purposes. As a

harness/tack room, all the wagon harnesses and saddles stored at the ranch, were housed here. In a photograph dated 1934, actress Carole Lombard is seen showing some of the props inside the room. Beautiful horse reins, saddles and whips adorned the walls of the building. (Note that the wood used to build the structure was knotty pine.)⁹¹ Adjoining this room was the paint shop. (It seems strange that the paint shop would be so close to this room, but it was so identified on the 1937 ranch plot plan.) This paint shop, an annex to the main paint shop back at the studio in Hollywood, worked only on ranch projects. In Hollywood, as many as 100 painters were employed during the 1930s and 1940s. Adjacent to the paint shop was a "ranch office." This could have been where production planning was carried out for all the films scheduled to be shot at the ranch. Sometimes a film was shot only in part at the location. Sometimes a whole film was made there. Occasionally, there was more than one film being made at the same time. This office probably coordinated all these activities.

13. Bunk house:

The bunk house was built to house the different cowboy wranglers who might be working on a western picture at the ranch. It was not practical for these men to be bussed back into Hollywood every day after a shoot. They could stay at the ranch and work on several pictures regularly.

14. Corral:

This corral, being part of a system of corrals in this part of the ranch, was different because it also doubled as a bull ring, used in the film The Trumpet Blows (1934). The walls were made of stucco and wood, making it look like a Mexican bull-ring.

15. Barn - (50X120 feet):

The barn was the center of activity at this part of the ranch. From 1927 until 1940, most of the corrals were built around the barn. There were 34 stalls inside, for the cowboys' horses. Other farm and ranch implements were stored in this barn, as well as special hay for the horses.

16. Corrals:

The surrounding corrals penned in horses, mules,

cattle, pigs and other livestock used for film purposes. Much of the stock was owned either by Paramount, or by hired cowboys, or farmer-ranchers in the area, who leased livestock to the studio.

17. Ranch headquarters/caretaker house:

In a 1927 photograph, actress Mary Brian is shown standing by one of the eucalyptus trees [still on the site] that shade the ranch house [since removed] on Paramount's new 2,700 acre property ... As seen in the photograph, the house was painted a light color (probably white) and is sided in wood. It had a small front porch and was located to the rear of the support area on the ranch, overlooking the ranch office and prop/shed/storage barns. The headquarters which housed the caretaker and ranch foreman, probably is where the general ranch maintenance and planning was located. For such a large property it was a full time job just keeping this ranch maintained, secure and operating well.

18. Post stockade:

This set was built sometime between 1928 and 1934. In 1935, two of Paramount's new starlets were brought out to the ranch and were shown

exploring some of the sets. One of the sets photographed was the Post stockade. Fortress of the Old West is inspected by Eleanore Whitney and Frances Farmer when they visit the outdoor sets on Paramount's ranch. Eleanore is making her screen debut in Millions in the Air ...⁹²

19. Medea Creek bed:

The Medea Creek was not only a water source on the ranch, but was also used as a setting for many films. Many of the sets built on the ranch were set in specific sites chosen by art directors, cameramen and directors, because they needed as much light on the set as possible during the day. The longer the sun was shining on the set, the better for the production. The Medea Creek offered a natural addition to the setting which could be used in many ways. As far back as 1927, Mary Brian was photographed at the ranch, but this time the publicity specifically mentions the creek. "The Rendezvous ... by the side of the stream that flows through the new Paramount Ranch in the mountains of Southern California, Mary Brian, featured film player, keeps trust ..." ⁹⁴

This mention of the stream, refers to one of the settings for Paramount films that will be made at the "new" ranch. Based on photographs, examples of this use is documented. In 1930, the film Only the Brave used Medea Creek as a crossing for their Covered Wagon Train, and as a camp setting for the Western Pioneers. For the film The Man From Wyoming starring Gary Cooper, the creek was used time and time again for battle scenes depicting World War I. Workmen dammed up the creek raising the water level, for use in the film The Thunder Below (1932); then for a cattle crossing in the film The Virginian again with Gary Cooper. When the Selznick Company used the ranch for their film The Adventures of Tom Sawyer (1937), the creek was looking more like a river, to resemble the look of Louisiana. By 1942, for Holiday Inn, the creek was dammed again for special scenes starring Marjorie Reynolds. "Where Beauties are Marooned" read the caption ... "for a scene in Paramount's Holiday Inn, the Mark Sandrich production based on a story idea and songs by Irving Berlin, two lovelies, Marjorie Reynolds and Virginia Dale, are required to be left high and dry atop an automobile in a stream."

Here is where the automobile is stopped in several feet of water, which Marjorie was required to negotiate for a scene ..."

Ten years after Paramount gave up the ranch, in 1948, the creek was used again as a setting for gold prospectors, in the film California (1958) starring Ray Milland.⁹⁵

20. Marco Polo Set:

This set was constructed for the film Marco Polo in 1937. It was not a Paramount release, but resulted from an agreement with Samuel Goldwyn, which made the ranch available for his production. Gary Cooper, on loan from Paramount, starred. It was said that there were as many as 2,000 horses, fully costumed, and herds of elephants brought to the ranch to be used in large scenes. Cooper, who had starred in a number of films for Paramount at this ranch, must have felt at home on such familiar ground. Cooper had been at the ranch on numerous occasions since its opening in 1927, and had made films there, on and off, for ten years. The Marco Polo set was built on one of the hills overlooking most of the area; it was

used for other films over the years, and finally disappeared, as a set, sometime after 1948. (This site was later the entrance for the Renaissance Faire.)

21. Hacienda Set:

This set seems to appear around 1932 during the filming of The Thunder Below starring Tallulah Bankhead and Charles Bickford. A Mexican style compound, with walls and gates was built around a Hacienda structure that is a reproduction of a Mexican Rancho house. Richard Arlen, who made several films at the ranch in the early thirties, utilized a Mexican Settlement set for his film The Border Legion, a set located up a trail behind the log cabin set which still exists near the barn. Made of wood and stucco with tiled roof and arched gates, the set does not appear on the plot plan of 1937, but it appears in the aerial photograph of the same year. A remnant of the Hacienda still exists on the site, even though the large oak tree, which was in the center of the courtyard, is now missing, and a hulk of a dead tree lies nearby. In a photograph from 1936, for the production titled Woman Trap starring George Murphy, he

is seen standing near one of the tiled buildings. Part of the plot for this film was a rescue scene from Mexican kidnappers. This set was also seen in The Rose of the Rancho, known then as the Alvarado Rancho.⁹⁶ In 1943 the ranch and the Hacienda set became the property of Mr. Eser Wikholm.

22. Miscellaneous sets:

These sets were most likely cabins, shacks, small Mexican houses, ranch structures, or small mining village buildings.

23. German Street/Austrian Street:

This was believed to have been built for the film Broken Lullaby (from the stage play The Man I Killed (1932)). Director Ernst Lubitsch used one of the earliest street sets newly built on the ranch, as corroborated by Director Robert Florey, who wrote: "It wasn't until 1931 that the majority of sets were constructed on the ranch ... one of the first major sets was built for Lubitsch for his film The Man I Killed (re-named for copyright). In 1936 Florey was directing Till We Meet Again at the ranch, with Gertrude Michael and Herbert Marshall. The German Street was re-dressed into an Austrian town street."⁹⁷

24. Ebb Tide set:

This set, built for the film Ebb Tide in 1937, was a re-creation of a remote island, where stars Ray Milland, Oscar Homolka and Barry Fitzgerald try to take a treasure in pearls from a religious fanatic who lived on the island, played by Lloyd Nolan. The set was built next to the Medea Creek on a sand bar, where it appears in the 1937 aerial photograph of the ranch.⁹⁸

25. Taylor Ranch set:

This set, located approximately in the center of the entire ranch and viewed from Cornell Road, was a typical western ranch with a cluster of buildings, including a barn, two ranch houses and some shacks, with a crude corral. Many a western film was shot in and around this ranch. In 1930, Richard Arlen used the Taylor Ranch set.⁹⁹

26. Miscellaneous sets:

These sets probably included a Mexican Village set, built in 1929 for the film Wolf Song, starring Gary Cooper. The village was built of wood and stucco to replicate a Mexican village around 1860.

27. San Francisco Street 1849:

This street was most probably built in 1936 for the de Mille production of The Plainsman starring Gary Cooper and Jean Arthur. Built on a hill near the northern part of the ranch, it could have been seen from Cornell Road. The set consisted of more than twelve structures. Most of the buildings faced the south part of the ranch for longer sun exposure. The town was to represent Abilene, Kansas, and not San Francisco, as is marked on the 1937 plot plan. The buildings in 1936 were identified as: Saint Francis Hotel, Post Office, Garret House, El Dorado Saloon, American Hotel, Dr. Kisfy Office, The Bedbug House, Hardware Store and Plaza Market. The mound on which the set was built, was sprayed with water, making the road surface a muddy bog, duplicating similar conditions of Abilene of the 1860s.¹⁰⁰ In 1938, the set was used again for the film The Texans starring Randolph Scott and Joan Bennett. The town again represented Abilene after the Civil War, muddy streets and all.¹⁰¹ The signs on the buildings had been changed to: the Indianola House, Killikelly's Gallery,

Marble Hall, Golden Eagle Merchants, George Thom, Dentist, R.E. Wood, Meats-Butcher, La Fortuna Groceries Store, and the Office of Civil Administrator. In a caption on the rear of a still photograph from the film The Texans, it read: "Mired in Mud ... while the horses are supported by a prop horse, director James Hogan moves his camera in for a close-up of Joan Bennett and Randolph Scott, seated in an old fashioned wagon, which has become bogged down in the mud, in a street of historic Abilene, Kansas. The scene is for Paramount's The Texans a romantic action drama of the Chisholm trail days ..."101

28. Swiss Village:

The Swiss Village set was located just west of San Francisco Street (1849) on the western bank of Medea Creek. It shows clearly on the 1937 Plot Plan of the ranch. It was built sometime around 1936 or 1937; no film has been researched at this time.

29. San Francisco Street 1860:

This street was built for the Frank Lloyd production of Wells Fargo, 1937. The film

was released in December of that year, making the approximate date of construction around the previous August. It was a grand set with more than 35 buildings placed in a cross-grid setting with an adjoining plaza. The location is in the Northern section of the ranch just a bit north of the San Francisco set of 1849. This set was seen from Cornell Road and was mentioned by the Federal Writers' Project of Southern California, circa 1941. They reported: "Motion Picture set near Malibu Lake representing San Francisco in the '60s."¹⁰² Wells Fargo starred Joel McCrea, Frances Dee and Lloyd Nolan. It was directed and produced by Frank Lloyd, one of Paramount's most important directors of action pictures. The set, built as a "cross" had different types and styles of buildings and streets. On the West side of the set was a small town residential neighborhood of the 1860s, while the other three streets were big city buildings. The main street of the set, running East and West, was used for the large crowd scenes in the film. More than several hundred extras were used for the scenes.¹⁰³

30. Powder Magazine:

This building was a one-room structure where all the dangerous materials were kept. Located in a cleared area just west of the Swiss Village sets, this place was where ammunition, explosives, etc. were kept away from all the buildings on the ranch.

31. Miscellaneous Sets; Thatched Roof European Village:

This is possibly the site of the European Village set made up mainly of small thatched roof buildings and other small homes, resting next to Medea Creek, near the Western Town and Tom Sawyer sets.

32. Tom Sawyer Street:

This street was located north of Medea Creek and was a part of the Western Town complex of buildings. The rear section of the street backed up to Medea Creek. (See ranch plot plan of 1937). It was called "Tom Sawyer Street" only because of its use by the Selznick Company production entitled The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, starring Tommy Kelly, made in 1937 and released in 1938 by United Artists. For the most part, the street was the "residential" section of the original western

street, built and installed sometime between 1927-29. There were approximately eighteen buildings in this part of the complex. Much of the action for The Adventures of Tom Sawyer was held on this street, including the use of the School House set to the south of the Western Town complex. It was said that Medea Creek was dammed up to raise the water level to act as the Mississippi River. From several photographs of scenes from the film, one can see several uses of the street and buildings in the film:

- a. The white-washing of the fence by Tom Sawyer's friends.
- b. The town's citizens coming out of the Church on Sunday.
- c. Tom Sawyer balancing himself on the white picket fence of the school house.
- d. Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn talking near the school house.
- e. A mob of men walking down the center of the entire street, during one of the climactic scenes in the film.¹⁰⁴

33. Western Town Street:

The Western Town street was located at the North end of the Paramount Ranch and within one of the bends of Medea Creek. (See Plot plan of Paramount Ranch 1937) The town consisted of more than 40 buildings and had two distinct sections to it. One was the Western Town Main Street and the other was a Western residential street. The latter street was re-dressed in 1937 for The Adventures of Tom Sawyer.

As mentioned earlier in an article in the Los Angeles Times of November 20, 1927 ... "Paramount's famous Western Street is benefiting by the change. In its next edition, it will be a proud array of saloons, hotels, blacksmith shops, assay offices, and clap-board buildings. Here, as the nucleus around which this bigger and better Western street will grow, a small army of carpenters and movers is now making the old buildings intact; buildings which were once used in such films as The Pony Express and The Covered Wagon." ¹⁰⁵

By 1928, WEsterns had already been utilizing the WEstern town for several pictures, mostly starring Richard Arlen. The town's buildings included: the Palace Hotel, Allen's Square DEal Store, Pioneer Hotel, Dr. J. B. Park, Physician; the Jail, several saloons and other assorted businesses and buildings. In May 1929, for the filming of Stairs of Sand, the town's buildings were redressed with new signs.¹⁰⁶

The following list of changes and developments were revealed in a series of photographs taken between the years of 1928 and 1942. The dates mentioned are when the films were shot at the ranch, and not their release dates. A film was made usually two to three months previous to its release, and it took time to edit and to market it.

May 1929	<u>Stairs of Sand</u>
Dec 1929	<u>Light of the Western Stars</u>
Jan 1930	<u>Only the Brave</u>
Jan 1931	<u>Conquering Horde</u>
Sep 1931	<u>Caught</u>

On the back of one of the photographs from the film Caught, the caption read: "Paradise ... the city with one inhabitant ... Richard Arlen featured in Paramount's Caught is shown here with Roger Bothell, the lone occupant of the town..." (Roger Bothell probably lived in the caretaker's house, part of the WEstern town complex).¹⁰⁶

May 1932 Make Me a Star¹⁰⁶

Jun 1932 Ghost Valley (RKO-PATHE)

It was not unusual for one major studio to lease its facilities to another company, especially when the RKO Studio was a close neighbor to Paramount in Hollywood.

Nov 1933 Lone Cowboy

In the Lone Cowboy photographs of the Western town set, one can see clearly how well maintained the Western town was at that time. All the buildings, except for one or two made of brick, were built of knotty pine with wooden architectural details. The oak trees that were there before the town was built, were incorporated into the town plan, making the set an ideal looking location.

Jan 1934 Melody in Spring

Feb 1937 Arizona Mahoney

Jun 1937 Adventures of Tom Sawyer

Because of the long delays in getting a script ready, and finding the right children for The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, David O. Selznick had to relinquish his Technicolor commitment, and the picture, with Henry C. Potter directing and James Wong Howe photographing in black and white, began filming on the Paramount Ranch in the San Fernando Valley region. A replica of a small Mississippi town had been constructed under Lyle Wheeler's direction. He was an important art director/production designer for many years.

The town was not newly constructed; it was redressed from a Western Town set into more of a Mississippi Town set. The company had been filming there for close to two weeks, when due to a cancellation, a Technicolor unit suddenly became available. Selznick closed the production down for three days, while make-up, costume and lighting tests were undertaken, then started the picture over from the beginning.

..."The change in schedule necessitated a change in directors. Potter was replaced by Norman Taurog, an expert with children. The sudden switch to Technicolor created a problem in that the sets which had all been designed for black and white, had to be adapted overnight, with the result that color was deliberately avoided, except in the costumes. Most of the sets were repainted a carefully neutral beige, gray and white, with the occasional dab of color supplied by flowers and other accessories ..."¹⁰⁷

Filming on the production of The Adventures of Tom Sawyer began around July 1937 and was completed - after retakes, inserts and other miscellaneous bits - on December 31, 1937. It was released on February 11, 1938.

Also in 1937, the film The Maid of Salem was shot on sets constructed next to the German Street. In an article in the Los Angeles Times of October 1979, an old time resident of the area, Jack Dalmeyer recalled:

They built two and a half blocks worth of Salem, Massachusetts, complete with cobblestone streets, with all materials of the finest quality; even the doorknobs were made of solid brass ... For another picture, they built an entire seaport. Back in 1936, they built the town of Nome, Alaska for Klondike Annie and the set was so realistic, you'd get cold in the summertime just looking at it.¹⁰⁸

Toward the end of the 1930s, the Paramount Ranch was a busy location used by the studio when pick-up shots were needed. That meant the studio didn't have to return to an outlying location if a shot did not work correctly or if the film exposure wasn't right, etc. Jesse Lasky, Jr., who wrote the film Union Pacific in 1939, said: "We used the ranch for many scenes that could not easily be shot on a far away location without great cost and inconvenience."¹⁰⁹

With the beginning of 1938, the Western Street was completely transformed from a rustic western town into a re-dressed and paved American mid-western street. All the buildings were re-built and dressed to look like a Twentieth Century American town with brick facades and a modern railway station. The dirt street was paved and re-named "Main Street." Street lamps were installed and

all the remnants of the old Western Street were for the most part wiped out.¹¹⁰

Oct 4, 1938 The Arkansas Traveler

Cast: Bob Burns, Fay Bainter, John Beal, Irving S. Cobb.

Director: Alfred Santell

Art Directors: Hans Dreier and Earl Hendrick.

In a "Variety" review of October 5, 1938, the writer said that the story is a rather simple small-town tale of an itinerant printer who arrives in a rural community in time to save the widow and daughter of an old friend from losing their newspaper to a scheming politician. The "Variety" review goes on to say that Paramount had given the production a suitable small-town background, and Director Al Santell effectively pointed the rural atmosphere through capable direction.¹¹¹

Between 1939 and 1942, there were references in different written sources that the town was not used much at all, by any studio. Photographs corroborate this, due in part to the natural deterioration of the buildings and the paved street.

In 1942, the town was completely rejuvenated by Paramount for the film The Miracle of Morgan's Creek. The buildings were refaced with new signs and re-dressed with paint and details. It was a complete restoration of the old town set that would later become famous.

In the book Between Flops - Biography of Preston Sturges, James Curtis recounted:

Legend has it that the making of The Miracle of Morgan's Creek was prompted by the company's (Paramount) plans to raze a beautiful small-town set that stood unused on the Paramount Ranch. Sturges discovered this and told production head Buddy De Sylva not to tear it down, that instead, he would write a picture for it. And as legend dictates, the little town became Morgan's Creek, and its population included Trudy Kockenlocker, Trudy's mouthy little sister Emmy, and the girls' harried father, Constable Kockenlocker ...

Production began on The Miracle of Morgan's Creek without a completed script, shooting an eight hour day and then writing most of the night ... but the filming began on schedule with Betty Hutton, Diana Lynn, Eddie Bracken and William Demarest, and the usual collection of Sturges character actors.

Sturges shot two largely expository scenes between Hutton and Bracken in long tracking shots that literally covered blocks ... (probably the entire length of Main Street.) At four o'clock in the afternoon, the studio heads would come out to the ranch and have big arguments with Sturges because he didn't have anything for the day (that he could show them.) Eddie Bracken recalled: "But between four and six in the afternoon, he may have eleven pages done." Sturges would spend the day rehearsing the cameramen and his actors, and then, based on the average of three and a half pages a day, suddenly accomplish three days work in a single take ...¹¹²

Filming on The Miracle of Morgan's Creek ran into Christmas of 1942 and finished on December 28, 1942. The film was not released until February 1944.

As previously mentioned, the Paramount Ranch was sold to Eser Wikholm in 1943, and included in the sale were two standing sets, one of which was the midwestern town street.

At this time, there is no research on what happened to the town sets after 1943. There were reports that they were dismantled because the owner, at the time, did not want to pay taxes on the structures that the city deemed taxable. The site is now fully developed with new homes.

Sites marked on the photograph, by legend, include:

34. Caretakers residence:

This is the caretakers residence on the north part of the property, situated within the Western Town complex. It also doubled as a set, and was probably where Mr. Roger Bothell lived in 1931.

35. Water Tanks:

The water tanks located in the northern section of the ranch, were used to supply the western town and its support buildings.

36. Miscellaneous sets: French Village set:

In an article in the Los Angeles Times about the new Paramount Ranch, the French Village set was mentioned:

BRETON SETTING MOVED ... One of the largest of the settings that soon will find itself in unfamiliar territory, is composed of the French Farmhouse, barns and sheds, that were used for the filming of Pola Negri's

Barbed Wire - (filmed on the old Lasky Ranch in Burbank.) This set, created by Hans Drier, Paramount art director, breathes of Breton peasantry to the very apex of its gables.¹¹²

The two earliest uses of this set are documented by several photographs showing the set. Other films which have used this set include:

1. The Man From Wyoming starring Gary Cooper
(rel: 7-12-30)
2. Anybody's War starring Moran and Mack
(rel: 8-2- 30) 115
37. Ranch House (5-room house)
(Believed to be the Waring residence)
This house, located on Cornell Road and seen on the plot plan of the ranch in 1937, was probably the "main House" and headquarters for the ranch.
38. Fire Station - Cornell Road;
Current site of the fire station on Cornell Road at the north section of the ranch, appears on the 1937 aerial photograph but was separated from the original ranch property through subdivision.

39. Grandstand Set:

This set appears on the plot plan of 1937 and is located in the northern section of the ranch.

40. Camp Entrance off Cornell Road:

This was the SOUTH entrance to the Paramount Ranch and was the main entrance to the support facilities and camp headquarters, corrals, and other south sections of the ranch property.

41. Camp Entrance for the NORTH section:

This entrance serviced the Western Town and -- all the sets that were located in the northern section of the Paramount Ranch, as well as the caretakers house there.

SUMMARY OF PARAMOUNT RANCH STRUCTURES AND LAND USES -
1927-1948

The operational core of the Paramount Ranch was in the southerly portion. This was where the corrals and support facilities were located. The support facilities and camp headquarters were near to all that was needed to operate the ranch efficiently. The studio brought livestock to the ranch to be used in the various productions, and they were corralled around the barn. Several existing sheds and outbuildings were used for storage of vehicles,

equipment, machinery, and miscellaneous supplies. Three large pole barns were used in this manner, and were located in the hub of this support facility. The main house and the bunk house were used as the headquarters for the ranch and for the regular wranglers who worked with the livestock. The settings, spread along the entire length of the ranch, were carefully placed around existing oak trees, near Medea Creek, and near the washes on the property. They were placed for good lighting effects, and built in areas that lent themselves to the special environment needed at the time. The Western Town was a permanent set that could be used for years exclusively by the studio, even though many of the sets were not permanent and were designed for one use only.

Dirt roads were added when needed to give access to any set built on the ranch. These roads were linked with one main road, which ran North and South through the center of the property. Between 1927 and 1948, Paramount produced a great many films at the ranch. Other studios leased sets or land areas for their productions as well, and as a result, the Paramount Ranch was listed in location departments at all the other major studios for possible lease.

THE YEARS BEFORE AND AFTER WW1

By the end of the 1930s, when annual profits dropped below the \$3 million mark, when production costs escalated and

and radio competition boomed, Paramount was threatened. The United States Government filed suits under the Sherman Anti-trust Act against Paramount and other film producers in the industry, charging them with violation of the Act by their interlocking controls of film production and distribution, and theatre ownership. This new shock came in 1938, bringing with it a protracted series of legal battles between the major companies and the Department of Justice lasting ten years.

In 1939, Europe was becoming embroiled in war, and one commercial result of this was a loss of many overseas markets for American films. Europe had about twice as many cinemas as America, and revenue from them had often made the difference between a film's financial success or failure. Now many of Europe's movie houses were closed to American films.

By 1940, the beginning of the formation of the House Un-American Activities Committee, resulted in damaging potshots at the film industry. The studios' revenues were already unpredictable and varied, and by 1946 there were only 19 films produced, compared to 71 in 1936. This was probably one of the prime reasons why Paramount sold the property in 1943, with an option to lease it back for five years, until 1948.

THE PARAMOUNT RANCH SITE IN 1989

It wasn't until the late 1950s that many ranch sites were torn down. Eugene Hilchey, a studio historian and craftsman, recounted that he personally dismantled details from buildings, including a bell that was once hanging in the church belfry. He was hired to tear down sets, because the ranch property was being taxed as if the existing buildings were livable structures.¹¹⁶

Marc Wanamaker, Park Rangers Alice Allen and Phil Holmes, explored the "town" site in September 1989 and discovered four buildings that had survived. Two of them had been converted into a house. One was an old barn-garage and the fourth was the old corrugated steel building that was used as the prop house, which we believe was built sometime in 1928. All the oak trees which had played an important part in the layout of the town were still intact. A comparison of old photographs of the town was made, matching skylines with trees to pinpoint building locations. The original entry into the ranch was still there, and the river that runs around the property was still in its original position, even though it is overgrown with willow plants. The property was in the process of being sold, and it covered eleven acres.¹¹⁷

IV. WIKHOLM AND HERTZ RANCHES (1943-1956)

In December 1943, Paramount conveyed virtually the same property its land company had acquired in 1927, to Eser Wikholm and his wife, Myrtle M. Wikholm, retaining ownership of two movie sets - "Midwestern Street" and the "Hacienda," plus other personal property, and retaining the right to use the property storage buildings on the parcel for one more year, and to use the two sets for five more years for \$500 per year. \$43.45 in revenue stamps were affixed and cancelled. The Wikholms conveyed a portion of this land, located in Lots 2,3,and 4 of Tract 2804, to the Cornell Land Corporation at the end of 1953. During the Wikholm period, the probability of the Wikholm family living in the northern portion of the ranch is great. The 5-room house and the "Midwestern town" caretakers house were located in this section of the property. From aerial photographs taken at that time, it looks as if the land between the creek and Cornell Road had been farmed. Abandoned movie sets along the Creek basin appear to have either been removed, or had fallen down. During the Wikholm years, much of the land they didn't need was sold, and many of the sets that once stood on the property disappeared because of the farming, wind, weather, flood, fire and demolition.

By the end of 1953, the Wikholms gave up on the entire property and sold it. Eser Wikholm died on December 12, 1958; the obituary indicated that he was 71 years old and had been a "building contractor."⁴³ He was survived by his wife, Myrtle M., and three of their four children (a son had predeceased him in 1944 without issue.) Mrs. Wikholm (who remarried twice), died on February 27, 1986. The three children were: Wilbur Andrew Wikholm, 17642 Palo Verde Avenue, Cerritos 90701; Patricia Sophia Rose, 12501 Kenny Drive, Granada Hills 91344; and Duane Eser Wikholm, 8407 Loyola Boulevard, Los Angeles 90045.⁴⁴

The new owners of the property, the Cornell Land Corporation (William B. Hertz, President) and his family began to improve the site by cleaning up the old buildings as well as adding some new buildings. The Hertz family had already been leasing the property with an option to buy, since early 1952, but it wasn't until the end of 1953 that they officially purchased the ranch. Dr. William Hertz, a dentist, purchased the ranch primarily for development and enhancement of the site as a recreational area. The family continued to live in their home in North Hollywood while working on the ranch every day. In an interview with Bob Hertz (son of William) and his mother Betty, on March 1, 1981, some

interesting points regarding the history and uses of the ranch during the Hertz period were raised. When questioned why the family came to California, Betty Hertz said that although her husband wasn't born in California, he had been raised there. He loved horses and loved to ride them, and when Bob became 15 years old, the family settled in North Hollywood. In 1953, they found out about an opportunity they couldn't resist, and that was the chance to purchase a ranch. It was an old man named Wikholm whom they went to see, and finally negotiated a deal with him.

Bob recounted that Mr. Wikholm was an elderly gentleman with whom father had negotiated for the ranch. None of us were cowboys. As my mother said, we were all from New Jersey. This was quite a change for us. When we first got the ranch, our first reaction was ... you can tell them, mother ...

Betty continued ... we went to see the ranch and came up old Ventura Boulevard, which was the only way of coming, and we saw the whole property. I gave my consent, and we acquired the property.

Bob recollected that the area was very rural, and there were no communities like Thousand Oaks, etc. yet. The ranch, we were told, was originally about 4,000 acres, but the parcel that we purchased was 326 acres ... and we saw the backdrops of the mountains, with "Sugar Loaf," as we called it. The existing water storage tanks that are still up on the mountain did not need much work, so we could pump water up to them almost immediately. At the time, my father paid \$52,000 for the 326 acres. Some time later, he also bought the adjacent property, which later became the site of the Renaissance Faire. That began our life at the old Paramount Ranch.

Betty recounted ... we began by opening the ranch up to our friends who had horses and it began as a hobby, having a lot of fun there. But, we had bought it also as an investment, and later we decided to bring back the "old west" by changing some of the old buildings.

With some friends of mine, Bob continued, and with my father, who was a very good director, we started at one end of the street and began to re-face the buildings into a Western Town. It all began by our seeing a Western movie on TV or going to the movies and seeing something we liked, so we copied and built what we liked. After we had faced some of the buildings with Western Town fronts, my father got the idea to initiate some income. So we put an advertisement in the Hollywood Reporter and Variety, saying that we had "Movie Sets" available for rent. That was in the fall of 1953 ... and finally the first company, which was not very well known, Realistic Pictures, leased our little street. I don't remember what film it was they were making, but from that first rental we got more requests. More and more companies began to come out to the ranch and then they would help us to put up a particular set, and would pay us the "back-up" rate of \$175 per day, but if they left up what

they built, we would decrease the rate.

This is the way the street began to grow.

The second opportunity for the growth of our Western Town, was the closing of the old RKO Ranch in Encino. It is off of Louise Street in Encino now, where the Balboa Park development is located.

(Note: The RKO Ranch in Encino which was opened in 1929, closed around 1953, and was completely demolished in 1957.)

My family went out there to negotiate the purchase and removal of some of the sets back there. We wanted to take as many sets as we could, without having to dismantle them. With the new additions to our Western Street, it became more desirable, which brought us more rentals.⁴⁵

Between 1953 and 1955 there were many TV Shows, Feature films and other types of activities taking place at the Hertz Ranch. Shows for TV were made in whole or in part at the ranch. Some of these include: Bat Masterson, Have Gun Will Travel, The Cisco Kid, Kit Carson, The Rifleman, and The Bountyhunter.

Four Star Pictures made several films there with such stars as Dick Powell, Ida Lupino, Charles Boyer, and Duncan Renaldo.

The existing facilities at the ranch were maintained and updated and used by visiting film companies. The old steel bridge built by Paramount in 1927, was the main access to the ranch and town set. It was William Hertz who gave the County an easement permission to build another bridge near the Malibu Lake for better access. During the Hertz ownership, the ranch was becoming a center for community activities. The Hertz family kept a scrap-book of clippings and photographs which gave some indication of events that were held during their years at the ranch, of which the following are excerpts:

November 26, 1953 L.A. Times:

The West Hills Hunt Club is using the ranch for many of its outings.

November 27, 1953 L.A. Times:

Cleric blesses hounds to open Hunt Club Run ... Group rode on the William Hertz Paramount Ranch with more than 60 riders.

December 18, 1953:

West Hills Hunt Club event at the ranch.
Joe Stanley manager of the Paramount Ranch.

May 9, 1954 Los Angeles Examiner:

Boy Scouts of West Valley Wilderness Camp used Paramount Ranch for their "Days of the Old West" program. William B. Hertz donated the use of the ranch.

September 1, 1954 Valley Green Sheet:

Square Dancing at the Paramount Ranch.
 At the Longhorn Building at the Paramount Ranch, large square-dancing events were planned with three halls capable of accommodating 16, 25 and 150 squares ...
 Directions given - just two miles south of the Ventura Freeway in Agoura ...The Longhorn Building is at the entrance to the ranch.

November 26, 1954 Los Angeles Examiner:

TALLYHO ! It's a Fox Hunt (Honest) in the Southland. West Hills Hunt Club on the old Paramount Ranch!

April 10, 1955

Easter Services at the Paramount Ranch - (Sunrise).

May 3, 1955 Valley Green Sheet/Van Nuys News:

Expect Thousands to Attend the Indian Powwow Set for the Paramount Ranch. Ceremonies will depict the "Early Days" on Sunday May 8th ... Tribal Rites and Barbeque on the program for the public ... 400 acres once used for making motion pictures is reached by driving on Ventura Boulevard to Cornell Corners, then left.

May 1955 Valley Times:

Ten Gallon Hat Style at the State Ride. The 7th Annual State Ride sponsored by the Equestrian Trails, Inc., held at the Paramount Ranch. Bill Hertz is hosting the riders. Equestrians rode over the 400 acre ranch; the club spent evenings around campfires, chuck wagon dinners and dancing. Ronald Reagan led the parade and Yvonne De Carlo crowned Vivien Anderson as queen.

Other events were also hosted at the Ranch, including hayrides, dances, horse events, Boy Scout meets, as well as a continuing schedule of filmmaking by many different film and TV companies. The Longhorn, which was originally the commissary and kitchens for the Paramount Ranch operation, became the social hall for many of the events now held at the ranch. The ranch manager was also an artist, who did a lot of the carpentry needed around the ranch.

Bob Hertz recalled in 1981:

The building that we are now in (Longhorn) we converted into a dance hall. The walls inside here were all hand-painted before we got here. The ranch

foreman who lived here was also an artist... He was an artistic man and he drew the designs for the sets before we built them. We used to get our lumber in Van Nuys and we built much of our sets from that lumber. We also built a large sign saying PARAMOUNT RANCH near the road. The sign read: PARAMOUNT THREE "B" RANCH. (Bill-Betty-Bob Hertz).⁴⁵

The most successful and memorable TV Show which used the ranch during the Hertz years was the Cisco Kid starring Duncan Renaldo and Leo Carrillo. It was produced between 1950 and 1956, and Bob Hertz recounted:

When Duncan Renaldo died, we remembered him with great affection. At that time there were lots of bullets or blanks shot here; no one was ever hit or hurt, and Duncan Renaldo was very proud of that. I think they shot over 118 pictures here. No one was ever killed in his films; they might have been shot in the arms, but not killed. (Betty Hertz continued): That reminds me of what Richard Boone said when he was making Have Gun Will Travel here. He

said that he wished that he had all
the blood that was shed at our ranch.⁴⁵

The Cisco Kid was one of the most popular kids' Western shows of early television. This show was one of the first big syndicated filmed programs on TV. Renaldo was in his 50s and Leo Carrillo was in his 70s when the TV films were made, but they, nevertheless, did much (though not all) of the hard riding and stunts themselves. The ranch had its problems with keeping all production companies happy and operating smoothly. A small staff of people were needed to help while films were being shot. It was around 1954 that the family decided to expand, and they leased another property at Topanga Canyon that was known as the Ingraham Ranch. Another Western Town was built there to handle the overflow work. Thus the Hertz family was in the rental business in a big way.

The ranch had its natural calamities in the form of floods, fires and winds. The winds would blow down the facings on the Western Town sets, regularly. The Hertz Family had to install telephone pole supports to hold things together when the winds came. One time, almost 60 feet of Western Street blew down, even with the telephone poles installed. They had to install them again, but deeper.

Bob and his mother Betty Hertz, remember many of the different people and events that happened at the ranch:

Betty was reminded that Ronald Reagan was (our) new neighbor. I remember him riding around our ranch on a big black horse with no shirt. He was a very nice neighbor, and he always said hello. Nancy said that it was therapy for ... them to ride around. They had a long fence separating the properties, and they would paint it regularly ... Outside of the movies filmed here , the West Hills Fox Hunt Club was using the ranch for their events. Dan Daly was at the head of it ... Once it was even shown on television ... it was very exciting ... they dressed up so elaborately, and jumped over obstacles. Bob interposed that the hunt clubs dressed in traditional English riding habit; red jackets, black boots and hats ... they were not allowed to kill a real fox, so they put the fox' scent on a bag, and dragged it behind a horse.

Betty continued: Since I couldn't get any help our here, I did a lot of the cleaning myself. We had caterers coming here all the time for the film companies and I would arrange with them where to go and set up. We had many events here and I would be in charge of the people we hired to help out. We had other kinds of events here at the ranch that come to mind ... such as the State of California Democratic Club "outing;" we had a donkey here called "Willie" and he became their mascot while here at the ranch. Bob remarked that (they) had no more than four or five regular horses here which we would use for all kinds of purposes.⁴⁵

By 1955, the Hertz family was advertising the ranch for rental, announcing:

Former Paramount Movie Ranch Star Route,
Agoura, California ...

Now available for Civic Organizations,
Private Clubs, Youth Groups, etc. Beautiful scenic riding and hiking trails, plus dance hall, meeting rooms, kitchen

facilities, modern toilets, recreation hall for ping pong, shuffle board, badminton, archery, ball games, beer and pop served. Many interesting sights to observe.⁴⁶

The Hertz family had created a reputation by now for owning and operating two movie ranches and for becoming well known for their hospitality. But by 1956, William Hertz's health began to fail. The main reason for the Hertz family in selling their ranch was Bill's condition. To raise money, they sold the ranch in December 1955. William Hertz conveyed the entire parcel of land to the Paramount Sportsmen's Ranch, a partnership, recorded with \$183.70 in revenue stamps affixed and cancelled.⁴⁷

Beginning in January 1956, after the ranch was sold to a syndicate of investors, the Hertz family continued as if nothing had happened, to operate the ranch as before. By August 1956, the first road race was to be held at the ranch on the new race track which had been installed through the outlying areas of the ranch, and then into the camp area next to the Western Town sets and ranch house. In the Valley Times there was an announcement:

20,000 fans were on hand for the debut of the sportscars in the West San Fernando Valley ... The first road race to

be held at the Paramount Ranch, was held by the California Sports Car Club. John R. Dixon of Canoga Park was driving an MGA (far right) spin-out at the Sportcar event at the Paramount Ranch.⁴⁸

As mentioned earlier there were many varied events held at the ranch between the years 1952 and 1959. Some of the films made there during those years included:

The Plunderers with Jeff Chandler
 (Mostly made at the Hertz Topanga Ranch)

<u>The Klondike/</u> TV series	<u>Calico Pony</u>
<u>Zane Grey</u> Theatre/TV	<u>Memory Lane</u>
<u>Wanted Dead or Alive/</u> TV	<u>The Rifleman/</u> TV
<u>Have Gun Will Travel/</u> TV	<u>The Virginian/</u> TV
Portions of <u>Gunsmoke/</u>	<u>Rin Tin Tin/</u> TV
<u>Bat Masterson/</u> TV	

With the new owners of the ranch, new facilities were installed, such as Camp Langhorn, which was built as a boys' summer camp. It could accommodate up to 150 children and staff and offered sports such as tennis, basketball, archery, horseback riding, and crafts. The camp had a 200,000 gallon swimming pool and also took advantage of the fact that Malibu Lake extended into the site and offered swimming, fishing and canoeing. This camp provided some small income, but was only one part of the plan to raise money.

V. PARAMOUNT SPORTSMAN'S RANCH/PARAMOUNT LAND CORP.
 (1956-1989)

With the coming of this new company to inject new blood into the Hertz Ranch operation, came many more improvements to the property. More facilities were being built to accomodate the camp, the film companies, the recreational activities for public rental, and the creation of hiking trails and sports facilities. In the summer of 1957, the famous actor, Cornel Wilde, produced, directed and starred in the film, The Devil's Hairpin. It was shot on the racetrack at the Paramount Sportsman's ranch, with all the excitement that was once a regular event at the ranch a year before. The track was not constructed properly as a "race-track" and one of the reasons why sportscar racing stopped being an attraction was because there were too many accidents, blamed on the track not having been engineered correctly. The film, The Devil's Hairpin was released by Paramount in October 1957 and was one of the very last of the Paramount films to be shot at the ranch. The race-track was built by the EDAW Landscaping Company of California, but no record at the company about who built the track or how much it cost, could be found at this time.

The last film produced at the Paramount Ranch was Gunfight at the OK Corral, starring Kirk Douglas and

Burt Lancaster. Directed by John Sturges, the film used the Paramount Ranch for its exterior shots, but used the Paramount Studio in Hollywood for most of the interiors, and its Hollywood Western Street for closeups, etc. To sum up, it was The Devil's Hairpin and Gunfight at the OK Corral which were two of the very last films shot on the Paramount Ranch. At this time there is no further information to dispute this statement.

Between the years of 1954 and 1960, several television series were shot at the ranch. Among them, known to have been filmed there, were: (chronologically)

<u>The Adventures of Rin Tin Tin</u> (Most of this series was shot at Corriganville in the Simi Valley.)	Oct 1954 - Aug 1959
<u>Have Gun Will Travel</u> (This film was shot in part at the ranch)	Sept 1957-Sept 1963
<u>Bat Masterson</u> (This film was shot in part at the ranch)	Oct 1959 - Sept 1961
<u>Hotel De Paree</u>	Oct 1959 - Sept 1960

In July 1959 an agreement between William B. Hertz and CBS TV was drawn up, for the production of a new series entitled Hotel De Paree. The Hertz family would make available their 326 acres known as the Paramount Sportsman's Ranch, together with all existing equipment, improvements and facilities. The agreement went on to say,

the Hertz family would let CBS use this property commencing August 10, 1959; consisting of a 6-month cycle of lease, terminating at the end of each cycle. At the time of this agreement the property consisted of two basic areas: (a) a main street with facilities attached, and (b) open country. CBS would pay the Hertz family \$175 per shooting day for the street area and/or \$125 per shooting day for the open country area.⁴⁹ Dee Cooper, who worked as a stunt man in films and was the operator of the ranch after 1962, said in a 1981 interview:

This hotel here on the Western Street
was used for the Hotel De Paree TV
series with Earl Holliman.⁵⁰

Klondike

Oct 1960-Feb 1961

(This film was shot at
the ranch)

The show was produced by NBC and starred James Coburn. In an interview with Dee Cooper, he said:

The TV show Klondike was shot here on
the main street. I remember that when
I came here, I was knee deep in mud.
They made it that way for the filming.⁵¹

In 1962, stunt man Dee Cooper became the manager/operator for the Paramount Sportsman's Ranch. The ranch property needed an experienced man who knew his way around horses, movie people and the public. But by 1962,

much of the film company rental business had declined. Dee Cooper said that with the lack of location business, the ranch suffered a major setback financially:

I came here in 1962 and there was not much location business at that time, so I started the Rodeo. I had a weekly Rodeo here. I continued the Rodeo for about 12 years. The Rodeo situation here was a weekly affair. I set up a portable arena and brought in people from all over the area. The stock was hired at first, but I eventually kept my own stock. It was not opened to the public; I ran it for the professional cowboy, with some public viewers on occasion only. I had cowboys coming from over the entire country. They would come here to play, and some to learn. Some would come for the jackpot money only. It became very successful here and was the biggest in the area. It was called Cooper's Rodeo. I had about a hundred head of rodeo stock, including Brahma Bulls. The Rodeo ended because of the stock maintenance problems. When the movie rental business

picked up again, I got lazy and quit.⁵²

Cooper had leased the property from the ranch's owners, and continued to rent the ranch for movie companies' filming purposes, commercials, Rodeos and other events. By 1963, an unusual client leased the property adjacent to the ranch, owned by Arthur Whizin of Whizin's Restaurant fame. It was the annual Renaissance Faire, which proceeded to dominate the ranch every Spring, and brought international publicity and awareness about the Paramount Ranch to the public at large. The right of way was leased from Dee Cooper.

There would have been a 25th year Anniversary of the Faire, if it had stayed at the ranch in 1988. But because of the sale of parts of the Whizin property, as well as other properties in the area, the Faire people were forced to move. The Faire, described as a visit to 16th Century England, re-created the era with events, shows, craft booths, entertainments and costumes of the period, food and many other attractions.

It was Phyllis Patterson who brought the Faire to the Agoura area in 1963, and is involved with it to this day. Most of the parking at the ranch was spread along Cornell Road on the leased sections of the original ranch.

In an article in the Los Angeles Times on April 25, 1987, a complete description of the Faire and its doings was outlined.⁵³

By 1963, the original ranch had been subdivided into more sections, making the original boundaries hard to define. Area resident, Jack Dalmeyer said, "On the site where the Renaissance Pleasure Faire has been erected each year, a huge fortress for Marco Polo was built in 1937." [This was the Samuel Goldwyn production, starring Gary Cooper.]⁵⁴

In January 1965, the partnership of the Paramount Sportsman's Ranch had their parcel surveyed. The survey was recorded on August 5, 1965, denoting a slight adjustment in the boundaries.⁵⁵ In December 1966, the partnership, then consisting of Jack Baskin, Paul Drummond and Gary H. Bronneck, conveyed to Paramount Land Company, a limited partnership (no tax paid). They, in turn, conveyed to Union Land Company (another limited partnership) having the same general partner, a corporation named Grande Properties, Inc., two deeds, on which taxes of \$1,413.50 and \$215.60 respectively were paid in December 1970. The Union Land Company returned the land to Paramount Sportsman's Ranch in 1973, and some of the circumstances are recited in the letter of August 17, 1976, from

Ranch partner Garry H. Bronneck to the Los Angeles County Assessment Appeals Board.⁵⁷ The parcel, whose boundaries are indicated in the 1965 survey, was acquired for the National Park Service and is now a part of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area. It was between 1970 and 1978 that the pressure for developing the property was growing. But during this time, there was much activity still going on at the ranch, with Dee Cooper in charge. As mentioned before, he ran the Rodeos, trained horses and leased access to the Renaissance Faire for many years to come. In an interview with Mr. Cooper in 1981, he mentioned some of the activities he and his cowboys were engaged in between 1960 and 1970:

When I came here, one thing stands out in my mind: the area on the other side of the freeway, is where a lot of the rodeo stock was kept, and I would get some of the cowboys to go with me early Saturday morning to drive the cattle here to the ranch, for the Rodeo. You can't do that today. We would drive the animals straight through the pastures that led here to the southern portion of the ranch. There was nothing in the way.⁵⁸

In June 1971, an independent film company came to the ranch to film "Savage Angels" [working title], starring Scott Glenn. The film, directed by Joe Viola and released under the title Angels Hard As They Come, was about the Hells Angels and their motorcycles. In an article from Custom Chopper magazine of June 1971, the reporters describe their visit to the Paramount Ranch and took photographs: "We visited a few friends on the set of the latest movie which is just completed at this writing ... Part of the movie was made at the old Paramount Movie Ranch ..." ⁵⁹ The company was producer Roger Corman's New World Pictures, which was in the business of low budget filmmaking, with high profit margins.

By 1973, Dee Cooper ended his Rodeos which he had operated since 1963, and in an interview he described the different events and changes to the property between the years of 1973 and 1977:

The property had undergone several disasters such as the Agoura fire and the 1977 flood. There was also another flood in 1969 that was bad and did a lot of damage. It seems that we would get a flood every five or six years, plus we had fires (two major ones) in the last 15 years.

The other fire was the Malibu fire of 1970. If it wasn't for the back-fire we lit, none of the buildings would be here now. The location business here at the ranch during those years, was generally good, because this is one of the last Western Towns available. All of the major studios (with some exceptions) were in the market for using western towns, since many of them were eliminated over the years.

... When a western town set was needed for a show, we were considered for rental. We got a lot of still photography coming here and a lot of work from New York. They came here for fashion modeling, with a western town as a background. A lot of independent movies were shot here, in part or in whole. In 1977, one of these companies came here to shoot Shame Shame on the Bixby Boys, a comedy western. The whole thing was made here and around the town. [The film was on Pay TV and Home Box Office.]

The way I did such leasing business is that the location scouts would come to me. I also had a couple of other ranches that I was renting, so that kept me busy all this time.

About some of the facilities here on the ranch, the bunkhouse has been here for many years. It was not a set; it was used as a real bunkhouse. I do know that it was used during the time of the summer camp. The house that I am living in now was built before the turn of the century. It used to be the fire station in the area here. Some local firemen lived there and operated out of the house.

I think there was another fire here in 1958, before I got here. When I came here the ranch was using well water. We used well pumps to fill our tanks.

About the wildlife here at the ranch, well, there was nothing unusual. Coyotes, skunks, foxes, some mountain

lions that show up once in a while. Some of the neighbors had their poultry attacked. The corral by the barn was a practical movie set. We could use it as a set or use it with the animals. I was raising horses here at the ranch.

During the years here at the ranch, I heard stories of just about everything that happened here. I heard that the whole property was farmed years ago. The crop was oats and barley. One of my men here, Garcia, told me that there was a curse here, or something. It was an Indian curse and many horses once died here on the ranch. It has been rumored for years about the curse. I didn't want to talk about it so as to discourage people from coming here. The part of the ranch that was supposedly cursed, has to my knowledge, never been burned in the fires here. It burned around the cursed area, but never in the Indian areas.⁶⁰

In 1976, a major television production began shooting at the ranch. It was Helter Skelter, the four hour TV adaptation of the best selling book on the Charles Manson murders. It was presented as a two-part made-for-TV movie, airing April 1 and 2, 1976. The movie story was centered in and around the old Spahn Ranch of Chatsworth, but it was the Paramount Ranch western town which was used for filming the story. It starred George Di Cenzo and Steve Railsback as Manson.

The filming of commercials for TV, as well as still photography, was to keep the ranch busy in between feature film production, which was not as frequent as in past years.

Near the end of 1977, an advertisement was prepared for selling the ranch. Accompanied by a photograph, the following text describes and ranch and its potential investment:

FOR SALE ... Famous 326-acre Paramount Ranch ... Long range investment opportunity in the fast growing area of greater Los Angeles ... Sportsman's Ranch with income from race track, camp, picnic area and western town movie set ... Adjacent to Malibu Lake residential development ideal for recreational development or subdivision.⁶³

By this time, many of the original sets which once stood on the entire Paramount Ranch property, had either been burned in the fires of the area, torn down because they were some sort of hazard, or were knocked down in the high winds that blow over the property from north to south and south to north.

In 1977, the property was under inspection for improvements by the Los Angeles County Assessor's Office. An inspector wrote:

Subject's property has several Western Town movie set buildings which are presently being reworked so that a new Western TV series can be produced this year ... the old sets ... have not been in use for several years ... you might want to check this out to keep the assessors' values current. The property is currently known as the Paramount Sportsman's Ranch.⁶¹

It is possible that the 1977 TV series that reworked the Western Street set was the Chips TV series of September 1977. According to Dee Cooper: "The last western feature shot at the ranch was the little seen independent production of Shame Shame on the Bixby Boys with veteran actor Monte Markham, Don 'Red' Barry and Dee Cooper, himself."⁶²

Between 1977 and 1981, some of the TV series shot at the ranch included:

Chips Sept 1977-July 1983

[Shot in part at the ranch]

The Dukes of Hazzard Jan 1979- ?

[Many outdoor scenes were shot in and around the ranch, including many automobile chase scenes which made the series so popular.]

B. J. and the Bear Feb 1979-Aug 1981

[Many of the outdoor scenes were shot at the ranch. During one of location shoots, the north side of the western town was knocked down, then re-built.]

Best of the West Sept 1981-Aug 1982

[Comedy show about a Western town and the strange characters living there. An ABC production starring Joel Higgins, Tom Ewell and Carlene Watkins.]

The Fall Guy Oct 1981- ?

[This series was shot in and around the entire ranch property, filming many stunts of all types.]

In 1978, the partnership of the Paramount Sportsman's Ranch sold the property to a developer. By October 1979, the ranch was still untouched by development, and in an article of October 23, the Los Angeles Times carried a report headlined: "The Last Sunset Hovers Over Paramount Ranch." Writer, Lawrence Bassoff interviewed several people directly involved with the ranch. They included Jack Dalmeyer, a retired Bell System supervisor and Agoura native since 1912; and Dee Cooper, who had been operating the ranch since 1962 and was a stunt man/actor. Some of what was written is as follows:

... Back when the weekly posse down at the movie house couldn't eat its popcorn without westerns to whet its appetite, the Hollywood movie ranch location was a fixture in the industry's production line machinery. Everything from Western epics to quickie serials were mounted at such sprawling locations as Corriganville in Simi Valley, the Melody Ranch in Newhall, the Iverson Ranch in Chatsworth, and the Century Ranch in Malibu Canyon. Complete with Western

towns, acres of sagebrush and boulders, strings of horses and supporting crew of wranglers ... the western ranch was the ultimate in moviemaking package deals ...

Well, calamity ... The western streets at Corriganville and the Iverson Ranch [burned down in 1972], Melody Ranch [burned down in 1961], and the others, mostly burnt or torn down, coupled with the drastic decline of production of the western movies themselves, have whittled down the number of locally operating western town locations to only a few, one being the Paramount ranch.

... Now, with the purchase of the 340 acre parcel by the Paramount Development Corporation, which has earmarked the site for the construction of 279 private homes in the next year or two, the historic location is enjoying the last days of its half century as a fixture in the movie biz.

... The original western street is long since gone and what was once the supporting town was re-dressed in the 1950s as a western street. Only now, the street resembles a deserted ghost town, with good reason ... I get more use out of it that way, says Dee Cooper, who has been operating the ranch since 1962. The ghost town look is what is in demand lately.

... Until the bulldozers arrive sometime in the early 1980s, Cooper intends to keep this ghost town of a historical era, and a movie-making era fully operational ... Today Cooper's more steady clientele is of the Datsun or Chrysler commercial variety, as well as of other film production.

... Having seen the ranch through the catastrophic Agoura Fire of 1978, Cooper will remain until the actual construction of homes begins on the land, after which he will retire.⁶⁴

The heading of another article from the Los Angeles Times of November 16, 1979 was: "Paramount Ranch Housing Development Plan OK'd by Victor Merina."

The Los Angeles County Regional Planning Commission Thursday approved a plan to turn the Paramount Ranch, which has been the site of movie productions and the annual Renaissance Faire, into a housing development, despite opposition from some residents and environmentalists.

The commission, after receiving a final environmental impact report [EIR] on the project, voted 2 to 1 in favor of the proposal by the Paramount Ranch Development Corporation to put 159 single-family homes on the 336 acre site ... The development first proposed nearly four years ago, has been the target of homeowners and activists in the Agoura-Malibu Lake area, who fear the project will open the door to further development in the Santa Monica Mountains ...

... Critics also claim the development will adversely affect the area's rustic scenery and wildlife as well as aggravate such existing problems as an overburdened sewage treatment facility and an overcrowded school system ...

Meanwhile, the developers are confident their project will win final approval ... Project Manager, Richard Mark said the developers had agreed to cut down their original project from 336 homes to 279 units and finally to 159. He said they also will leave 80% of the site as open space.

In June 1980, after responding to the concerns of the conservationists and homeowners of the area, the National Park Service exercised the option to purchase the remaining acreage from the Paramount Development Corporation.

On February 21, 1981, the Metro Section of the Los Angeles Times proclaimed: "Meanwhile Back at the ..."

The old Western movie set on the Paramount Ranch, managed by bearded Dee Cooper for the past 19 years, is

about to echo to the sounds of visitors. The Agoura area ranch, purchased by the National Park Service last June [1980], will open to the public on weekends starting today from 9 AM to 5 PM, with free tours of the Western Set at 1 PM. The original date for the official opening was in April. The ranch was used by Paramount Studios for making commercials and a TV film.⁶⁶

From another clipping in the Los Angeles Times on July 19, 1981, the announcement read: "Paramount Ranch to Open Weekends with Movie Set Tour ..."

Agoura - Paramount Ranch, famous in movie industry history, will be open weekends from July 25 through September 13 ... according to officials of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area ... Weekend tours of the ranch's Western movie set will be available from noon to 8 PM upon request ...⁶⁷

Also in July 1981, the NBC Sunday Show was on location at the ranch with host, Pat Sajak. This writer, Marc Wanamaker, was a guest on the show, speaking about its rich history as a movie ranch and the films produced there.

The occasion was the official opening of the ranch to the public, which was prepared for by the dedicated Park Service personnel, who worked so hard to get the ranch in shape for public access. Marc Wanamaker, studio historian for the ranch and a witness to the condition of the property in July 1981, described what was seen that day.

There were many improvements on the main street of the town set. The old hotel building was put in order and painted white with green trim. The rest of the streets of the town were cleaned up and made safe for any activity. There were still several dilapidated buildings in view, such as the old bunk house and the old ranch headquarters/residence to the west of the street. During the Sunday Show, horses and stunt-actors were brought in ... to do a stunt show for the NBC cameras, bringing back the spirit of the days when the town was used for filmmaking ... 68

Just after the opening to the public, the old bunk house and the old ranch headquarters/residence, two of the most important structures built by Paramount in 1927,

were demolished by the Park Service. [They were removed because they were in a state of disintegration and there was some disagreement within the Park Service at this action. At the time, the importance of these structures was not fully known, and some believe that it was premature to demolish the structures without finding out more about them.]

Some of the other structures removed were the chicken coop, water storage tanks, and the remnant structures at Camp Langhorn. The western mining town, built by the Hertz family, was unstable and presented a hazard to visitors. With the collaboration of art director James Clayton, the town was eventually rebuilt with the same old western look and spirit. The old wood barn, the stable, and the Langhorn building are now used for storing equipment and Park Service supplies. Restrooms were added next to the barn, along with other structural improvements.

From a document of the United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, dated July 31, 1981:

To Superintendent, SAMO, Land Resources officer, subject of the Notification of Closing title to the following parcel of land passed to the United States: tract 128-03 from vendor, M/M Larry Rogers,

M/M Peter Zegers of Oxnard California ...

Date title passed August 25, 1980.

\$1,770,000.00 ... 69

Another document was dated September 17, 1981:

To Superintendent, SAMO, Notification of closing. Revised. Name and address of vendor, Paramount Ranch Company c/o Richard Mark, Santa Monica, California. Northwest Corner of Cornell Road and Mulholland Highway. 335.99++ Acres. Date title passed July 2, 1980. Consideration: \$6,000,000.00 ... 70

Another document dated September 23, 1981:

To Superintendent, SAMO, Notification of closing. Name and address of vendor, Richard and Joanne Richonne and Joseph and Anne Nussbaum, La Mirada, California. North Side of Mulholland Highway east of Cornell Road. 39.27+ Acres. Date title passed, September 14, 1981. \$322,000.00 ..71

By 1985, the Ranch had become an important tourist attraction in the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation area. It was described in an article in the "Los Angeles Life" section of the Los Angeles Daily News of August 23, 1985:

It has doubled as Gold Rush San Francisco, biblical Jerusalem and 17th Century New England. It has been the site of blown-up buildings and car and motorcycle stunts galore. And during a special program last Saturday, to be repeated August 24 and 31, Paramount Ranch in Agoura became the place to be if you wanted a nifty mini-lesson in the nuts and bolts of moviemaking.

"We will never have the sharks rising out of the water, like at Universal," said Alice Allen, who conducted the program for about two dozen visitors. Allen ... had planned to show 'the reality' by bringing the public onto the location shoot of the independent production A Present currently filming at the ranch ... Allen's Saturday program consisted of a slide and video show covering the history of Paramount Ranch, the behind-the-scenes goings on in contemporary moviemaking ... and an in-depth look at how some of the stunts on The Fall Guy TV show have been shot at the ranch.

The attendees of last Saturday's tour were primarily adults (some children) with a lay person's interest in movie-making.⁷²

An effort was made to bring more motion picture companies to the ranch for filming. The Western Town was improved once again and shown off for location scouts representing studios and independent companies. An article in Location Update Magazine in 1986, outlined the advantages of the Paramount Ranch as a movie location:

Airstrips, military bases, prison camps and western towns, are just a few of the sets available to filmmakers from independent movie companies. Movie ranches have been a location staple for the film industry since the days of the silent screen. Today, these ranches supplement the backlots available at the major studios, and account for a significant share of on location filming ...

Paramount Ranch in Agoura was originally owned by Paramount Studios ... Today, it is being operated by the Santa

Monica Mountains National Recreation Center and features an old western town set and acres of grassland and scrub oaks. The Western Town has played host to Stephen J. Cannell's A-Team TV show, numerous commercials, and student and video productions. Alice Allen, film permit coordinator for the Ranch, encourages greater use of the facilities by filmmakers ...⁷³

Between 1985 and 1988, the ranch was becoming an integral part of the recreation-attraction facilities which the National Park Service in the Santa Monica Mountains had to offer. Besides the filming crews at the ranch, many other activities, from horseback riding, picnics, film programs, group meetings, as well as boy and girl scout events, were held there.

On August 5, 1988, in the "Metro Digest" section of the Los Angeles Times, the beginning of development pressures surfaced again near the ranch property, were described:

"SURPRISE DEMOLITION" ... Bulldozers hired by a developer planning to build a 160-home gated community on the long-time site of the Renaissance Faire in

Agoura swept through the property Thursday, demolishing about 50 structures belonging to the event's sponsors.

The demolition, which claimed six stages, six drink stands and the Faire's front gate, came as a surprise to Faire supporters and preservationists, who are attempting to block the development.

Stanley Romain, attorney for developer, Brian Heller, said Faire sponsors had agreed to remove the structures by June 30, 1988 ... But Kevin Patterson, son of the Faire's founder, said that he had not been notified that the buildings would be "turned into rubble."

Faire sponsors had rented the property for the last 25 years to stage the event, which transformed the area's rolling hills into an Elizabethan English village for six consecutive weekends.

The property in question is directly to the North of the present Paramount Ranch land, and any development could be harmful to the ranch's integrity as a wilderness location for park visitors as well as for filming purposes.

On Sunday, October 23, 1988, the Paramount Ranch was host to the 10th Anniversary celebration of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, and the announcement read:

OLD WEST REVISITED ... Paramount Ranch's 10th Anniversary is a celebration of California history ... A Wells Fargo stagecoach will roar onto the Main Street of Paramount Ranch ... Sunday ... launching the celebration of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area. The festivities will include an equestrian parade, a display of costumed characters from California history, vintage cars, bands and American Indian dancing ...

Following years of legal controversy with residential developers, the Federal Government, assuming its current dual role as an active film location, notably of Westerns, and site of the park's recreational activities, such as social gatherings,

lectures, horseback riding, nature walks, etc.

IN DEMAND ... Nowadays, the movie ranch is in hot demand. Allen, as coordinator of special projects, issues about 60 film permits each year to producers of feature films, TV films, and commercials. Sets often are altered through the use of props and sign changes, to suggest ... a Mexican Village, etc. Allen also conducts an annual Halloween event, creating special effects for young people ... Paramount Ranch can be explored daily during daylight hours. There is a sylvan green meadow to observe, which serves both as recreation as well as ... a backdrop for photography ... All Events are free. Bring a picnic lunch and wear a Western Costume.⁷⁵

Also in 1988 began the annual "Silents Under the Stars" Sunday Night Silent Movies presented at the Paramount Ranch throughout the summer. An example of the 1989 schedule included: July 31 Harold Teen [1928] starring Arthur Lake; August 28 Thundering Hoofs [1924]

starring Fred Thomson, and September 24 Lilac Time [1927] starring Gary Cooper. The event is co-sponsored by Hollywood Heritage and the Silent Society, with cooperation of the National Park Service.⁷⁶

In August 1989, Alice Allen, Phil Holmes (both Park Service Rangers), and Marc Wanamaker, Paramount Ranch and Studio historian, visited the original site of the Paramount Ranch Western Town on the Northern section of the original Ranch property. The address of the old Western Town is 29008 Silvercreek Road, Agoura, California 91301, which has 11 acres of property surrounded by the meander of the Medea Creek. Almost all the original oak trees survived the years. Most of the old buildings are gone, leaving only three structures. One is a house that was remodeled out of two original town buildings. Another is an old barn, that could pre-date the Paramount Ranch days, and the last is the old Paramount Western Town storage building, made out of the same corrugated steel siding that many of the buildings on the South section of the ranch have. The trees are, of course, still in the same configuration that appear in the historical photographs that still exist. After comparing many photographs, including an aerial photograph of the entire ranch, taken in 1937, the 11 acre Silvercreek Ranch is, the exact site of the old town sets. Most of the area has

been filled with earth to raise it above the flood plain, due to several catastrophic floods the property has suffered over the years. In August 1989, the property was up for sale for over \$1,500,000.00. Empire Real Estate is the agent, located in Westlake Village.⁷⁷

PARAMOUNT RANCH SURVEY:

The most important part of a movie ranch's operation is the "core" of the ranch. The "core" includes its administration headquarters, and is surrounded by all its support facilities, including crafts services (mill, shops, electrical, maintenance, planning, etc.), storage and transportation departments.

The "core" of a ranch almost always survives the life of a movie ranch. Even if a movie company ends its relationship with a ranch, the "core" still serves an important purpose in the operation of its purpose, whether to make movies or raise horses or cattle.

In the cases of existing ranches, the "core" still is the center of activity, even though movie making might not be the sole purpose of the ranch's activities.

Some existing ranches that still use their cores are: Paramount Ranch, Century Ranch, Disney Ranch and Columbia Ranch. The core of the Paramount Ranch is almost completely intact, except for the original ranch house and bunk house that were demolished by the National Park Service in 1981. A new Western Town had been built on to the core of the Paramount Ranch back in the early 1950s, and it is this town that attracts filmmakers and tourists to this day.

VI.

MOVIE RANCHES IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

(A sampling of Ranches Predominantly Used
For Filmmaking Purposes) (1915-1989)

Back in January, 1915, Grace Kingsley wrote in the
Los Angeles Daily Times:

Los Angeles and environs [was] the biggest theater in the world. Southern California is naturally suited to motion picture production, as its vast stretches of uncultivated foothill country, its big deserts and picturesque shore lines lend themselves ideally to the dramatic setting of great spectacular plays.

The great ranches where big pictures are produced are of unique interest. In a morning's drive across one of these you are likely to chance upon big armies of cowboys riding madly to the exigencies of a frontier tale, or you meet a band of fierce Indians, or glimpse a crowd of actors in quaint costume and make-up for a tale of by-gone Spanish days, as in the case of

Lasky's Rose of the Rancho. Or, you will come to life in a foreign country; or you may happen on an oriental village, complete in every detail, from the bazaars with their queer picturesque junk to the camels in the streets, as was the case in the Cairo streets erected by the Selig Company for the production of The Carpet of Bagdad. Or, it may be ancient Greece you encounter in the Temple-crowned hills shown in Damon and Pythias, produced by the Universal. Or, you may find yourself on the battlefield of the Civil War, with thousands of soldiers fighting very realistically around you, as in the case of David Griffith's recent masterpiece, The Clansman.

Soon after the turn of the century, studios were already in business, scheduling regular 20 minute movies for sale to the nickelodeon operators which had proliferated all over the country. Among the most popular pictures with the general public nationally,

were the westerns, and as the city of Los Angeles became ever more urbanized, the better established studios began to buy western location sites on "the other side of the hill," in the San Fernando Valley and beyond.

Studios such as MGM, Universal, Columbia, 20th Century Fox and Paramount, used a great many movie location ranches to re-create such diverse settings as Biblical Jerusalem, a Chinese village, 17th Century New England, Shangri-La, etc. The film Robin Hood was shot in the Conejo Valley, leading to the naming of the community of Lake Sherwood. The wooded area adjacent to the lake became known as Sherwood Forest, and a parcel of land on the south side was dubbed Maid Marian Park. Western films and TV series such as The Cisco Kid, Gunsmoke, The Lone Ranger, Hopalong Cassidy and others dominated production at the Iverson and Spahn Movie Ranches (both in Chatsworth); the Bell Ranch in Canoga Park; the RKO Ranch in Encino; the Monogram Ranch in Placerita Canyon and the Paramount Ranch in Agoura.

In 1912, the New York Motion Picture Company leased many thousands of acres located near Santa Monica, at Port Los Angeles (where Sunset Boulevard meets the ocean) known as Santa Ynez Canyon. Their director, Thomas Harper Ince, thus had the use of the largest moving picture ranch in the world. Its beautiful curving beach line

was two miles long. Within its limits were wonderful canyons and wooded hillsides, streams, picturesque trails and sheer cliffs. The plant core consisted of a huge stage, a carpenter shop, large property room, developing and printing rooms, and houses for the cowboys and employees. It was also home to the Miller Bros. 101 Wild West Show, composed of Indians who lived on the premises in their own village, according to their own customs, and worked in the films. Some of the sets included a mission church faithfully reproduced, and a Dutch village. Among the silent, black and white short films made there were: War on the Plains, Battle of the Red Men, Indian Massacre, and The Lieutenant's Last Fight.

Impressed by the sweeping expanse of hills and plains midway between the Cahuenga Pass and what is now North Hollywood, Carl Laemmle, head of the Universal Film Mfg. Corporation, bought a 600 acre ranch in 1912. The studio core was established there on Lankershim Boulevard, and Laemmle began using it as a location for westerns and comedies. He leased another 1,000 acre location in 1913, adjoining Griffith Park, west of Mt. Hollywood. On Lankershim Boulevard, administration buildings and stages were added to the core in 1915, in time for the gala opening ceremonies. In 1918, more

offices, factories, a huge stage, hotels, restaurants, libraries and homes for the cowboys, Indians and ranch employees were constructed. The backlot, where outdoor films were shot, spread all the way to Barham Pass in the east, and crossed over Barham to the Providencia Ranch further east. This arrangement only lasted into the 1920s, when it was terminated.

The Jesse L. Lasky Feature Play Company leased an important tract of land in 1916, consisting of 1,000 acres west of Mt. Hollywood, situated between Cahuenga Pass Road (sometimes called San Fernando Valley Road) and Griffith Park. It was also known as the "Old Universal Ranch" which Carl Laemmle had leased in 1913 from the Hollingsworth Estate which owned the old Providencia Ranch, in what is now a part of Burbank. In 1915, the most prominent film company to use this location was David Wark Griffith, who staged a Civil War battle there, for his film The Birth of a Nation. A year before that, the vast fields and rock formations were particularly suited for the production of Cecil B. de Mille's full length feature, The Squaw Man. In the 1916 lease agreement between Lasky and Hollingsworth, it was stipulated that "Universal Studio shall have equal rights in renting the property, since it had been one of the first to lease it in 1913." Also, "no trees (were) to be cut down without prior permission."¹¹⁹

The Motion Picture News of August 1918 reported that: "The Lasky Company also leased a third location; a 1,500 acre ranch in the North San Fernando Valley on Roscoe Boulevard, called the Griffith Ranch."

Originally a horse ranch nestled in the hills, the Lasky Ranch was sub-leased to other film companies, including Metro Pictures Corporation, which made The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse on the site in 1921, starring Rudolph Valentino. One of the largest sets ever built for a motion picture (up to that time), the square of a 17th Century Spanish City, was constructed there in 1923 for The Spanish Dancer, a Paramount film starring Pola Negri.

In 1927, Paramount PICTURES purchased 4,000 acres in the area of Agoura in the West San Fernando Valley, setting up a second ranch which they used until 1948, and intermittently after that.

The William Fox Ranch in Silverlake, a suburb of Los Angeles, was established around 1916 on Teviot Street for exterior scenes. It was about four miles from the Fox Studio on Alessandro Street in Edendale. Tom Mix made the ranch famous during his years with Fox, and for a time, the ranch was known as Mixville. It included a full Western Town and support facilities

during the silent era, until the Fox Company gave up the ranch in the early 30s, and it ceased to be a working movie ranch.

On October 13, 1988, Meg Sullivan reported in the Los Angeles Times that: "on Sunday, October 9, 1988, thirty old time Western actors planted gnarled hands and fancy cowboy boots in wet slabs of cement along the Iverson Movie Location Ranch Walk of Fame in celebration of the ranch's founding 100 years ago."¹²⁰

In March 1888, a developer named George Crow filed a map outlining five original ranches in the Northwest San Fernando Valley, to be known as the Chatsworth Park Community. One of the five was a 2,000 acre spread bought by newlywed immigrants from Scandinavia, Karl and Augusta Iverson. This spread, inherited by their son, the late Joe Iverson, a stuntman, was advertised in movie industry publications, offering:

... mountain trails, exotic rock formations, miles of rustic forest and mountain roads, miniature lake and waterfalls, riding trails, tree groves, swamps, valleys, cliffs, caves and canyons, basic structure western buildings, including ranch house sites, barn and corral, bunkhouse, stagecoach stop, and various outbuildings ...

Even a rail line was available, and eventually a western town and villages were added, according to Stephen London in Lifestyle Magazine (1988). The Iverson Ranch became a favorite location for five decades for westerns, until 1969 when the Simi Valley Freeway cut through the mountains to the north of the ranch. After a fire in 1970 which destroyed the movie sets, only 30 acres remained, on which Iverson's nephew, Robert G. Sherman and his wife now live, and which they rent for TV commercials, etc. Mr. Sherman's book, Quiet on the Set recounts the history of the ranch, including some of the westerns made there, such as Ten Tall Men, Combat, Gunsmoke, Rawhide, Tales of Wells Fargo, Wagon Train, Death Valley Days, and the feature film Guns of Navarone made in 1961.¹²¹

Stephen London reported in Lifestyle Magazine of February 1988:

Encino also saw its share of klieg lights and glamour beginning around 1928, when RKO Studios set up shop along Louise Avenue, stretching all the way from Magnolia up to Roscoe Boulevard. It was a big square out in the middle of nowhere then. There was one sound stage on the property, but mostly it was used for outdoor scenes.

It housed two western towns, New York streets, European streets, even a plantation house from Gone With the Wind. Other films made there (in whole or in part) included Cimarron and Hunchback of Notre Dame. The ranch was sold off by 1957.¹²²

IN a Los Angeles Daily News article of February 2, 1986, Gina Shaffer wrote: "in the 1930s, Warner Brothers purchased thousands of acres in Calabasas - 'the last of the West,' - building (army) forts, Western towns and other sets: for pictures that made the studio famous. Stephen London added, in his article in Lifestyle Magazine of February 1988, that:

Legendary movie mogul Jack Warner not only owned the large expanse of land ... he also possessed a sizeable chunk of Calabasas in the 30s and 40s, building a country home for himself on the present day site of the Calabasas Country Club. The eighteen holes scattered about the former Warner Ranch are each named for a film created here ..."

Among them are The Iron Mistress, Calamity Jane, High Noon, Show Boat, Carousel,

Stalag 17, Charge of the Light Brigade,
Dodge City, and National Velvet. In
the latter, Warner's home served as an
Irish country estate.¹²³

In the Ventura County News Chronicle of August 21,
1980, Carol Bidwell wrote that the MGM Studio leased
property for filmmaking on the Conejo Ranch in Thous-
and Oaks and the Porter Ranch in Chatsworth, during
the 1940s and 1950s. Both sites were used for filming
portions of The Good Earth. The MGM Ranch, now Wild-
wood Park in the area of Moorpark in North Thousand
Oaks, was the site for the filming of many movies,
including Welcome to Hard Times, Flaming Star, (with
Elvis Presley), and a number of TV shows, including
Tales of Wells Fargo, Gunsmoke, The Rifleman, Wagon
Train, Rawhide, Bonanza, and Daniel Boone.¹²⁴ On
the movie ranch, Conejo cattleman and historian Joe
Russell wrote of seeing groups of people "sometimes
in strange clothes doing peculiar and outlandish
things." That, the local cowboys soon learned was
movie making - and they and their cattle were soon
a part of the new business." By 1977, MGM was no
longer using the 1,862 acre ranch.

The Columbia Studio in Hollywood established a valley location site in 1934, located at Oak Street and Hollywood Way in Burbank. There they built a Western town and assorted sets, with most of the exteriors specially constructed for Western films. In time, enclosed stages were also added. Among the popular series shot there were: Blondie (from 1939-1950); Superman (starring Kirk Alyn); and The Three Stooges. Feature films include: It's a Wonderful Life (starring James Stewart, directed by Frank Capra); The Wild One, (starring Marlon Brando); and Private Benjamin (both the movie and the subsequent series.) The ranch, now known as the Burbank Studios Ranch, is still in use today.

In Lifestyle Magazine of February 1988, Stephen London wrote:

The Hollywood influence extended to Chatsworth and the Porter Ranch in the northwestern foothills, over which lies the Simi Valley. That was the heart of movie ranch country by the late 1930s. Ray 'Crash' Corrigan, a cowboy star and stuntman, purchased thousands of acres of rugged terrain in the Santa Susana Pass in 1937. Filmed over the course of its

thirty year history, were 3,500 features and TV episodes, in whole or in part. These included: Fort Apache, Jungle Jim, Lassie, Annie Oakley, Rin Tin Tin, The Lone Ranger, The Westerner, Duel in the Sun, Robin Hood (with Errol Flynn) and many Tarzan pictures. Corriganville even offered a "hanging tree," complete with well placed branches, so an actor could be hanged standing on the ground or sitting on a horse.¹²⁵

There was a time in the 1950s, when half the horse operas being made, included footage from Corriganville. Corrigan operated the studio ranch into the early 1960s. It was purchased by Bob Hope in 1968 and called Hope Town. The Simi Valley fire in 1970 decimated the ranch but a few TV companies were able to film their location shots there, even afterwards. Ray 'Crash' Corrigan died in August 1976, and the following year, a two-day motorcycle race was held on the ranch. There are plans for the property to become a city park.

The Monogram Studio in Hollywood rented and later purchased a movie ranch in Newhall, in 1937. Many

western films were made there with John Wayne and other stars. The property later became the Gene Autry Melody Ranch, after his popular film of the same name. The structures built on the ranch, burned down in 1962.

In 1941, the 20th Century Fox Studio found, in Malibu Canyon, the perfect outdoor location (which resembled the craggy mining districts of Wales) for filming their story of a Welsh coal mining town. How Green Was My Valley won an Oscar and became a classic. The area covered several thousand acres and was at first leased by the studio, then purchased in 1946, when its Mixville Ranch (after Tom Mix) was deemed inadequate. The new location site was named Century Ranch.

Josette Germain, writing in the Los Angeles Times on May 21, 1978, described the area:

Hills of porous lava near the lake and tall mountains of sedimentary rock layers - uplifted and set at odd angles on their sides - bespeak the violent geologic activities that shook and reformed Malibu Canyon in prehistoric days, long before the Chumash Indians settled there around 3,000 B.C. Located in the park is the old, defunct Crag's Mountain Clubhouse, a two-story white structure with green trim, that was a popular turn-of-the

century resort for the wealthy. The developers of the Crag's Clubhouse were responsible for damming the creek and building Century Lake. They also planted redwood trees along its bank, attracting bird species rare to the area, which built their nests there. Because of this, the park has become a bird watcher's haven. Here are golden eagles, hawks, owls, white-throated swifts, and blue herons which patrol the lake."¹²⁶

Robert Jones, in an article on January 8, 1976 in the Los Angeles Times wrote: "The wanderers of Lost Horizon once walked into Shangri-La here; Charlton Heston was scooped into a net by his animal hunters in Planet of the Apes; and decades before, Humphrey Bogart was swept off his horse and into Triunfo Creek, when he played the heavy in The Left Hand of God."

In the Los Angeles Herald Examiner on February 3, 1974, Al Stump wrote: "An exact copy of an early American fort rears its pickets (on the site) originally built for the Custer TV series, and is now used in the Kung Fu series. Spilling over rock, spring water splashes into a natural bowl. Here, Tarzan of the Apes

courted Jane. Remnants of the sets of Viva Zapata dot the property. There is a make-believe U.S. field hospital of Korean War vintage. It is the outdoor set for the current *M-A-S-H* series." (The great inferno that destroyed the old sets, was the same fire depicted in the final *M-A-S-H* episode for TV). "Other bidders for the Century Ranch, offered 20th Century Fox more than (what was) offered by the State. But the studio preferred that Californians own the primitive tract.¹²⁷

Purchased by California in 1974 for \$4.8 million (and renamed Malibu Creek State Park,) the ranch has continued to serve as a movie locale under a lease-back agreement with the 20th Century Fox Film Corporation. It is now operated by the State Park Service.

"On 1,011 acres of desert and scrub brush, hills and rocks, in the far northwest corner of the San Fernando Valley, sit the Spahn (and Iverson) ranches, among the last bastions of wilderness in metropolitan Los Angeles." So wrote Michael Szymanski in the L.A. Daily News, after speaking with Spahn Ranch owner, Frank Retz. They (surveyed) the scene, the filming site of many old westerns, such as Stony Point "where Humphrey Bogart dug for gold in The Treasure of the Sierra Madre." The Spahn Ranch is part of an area in the valley sought for annexation by Los Angeles, while developers vie for its former "movie land."

Actor Clayton Moore, 72, the Lone Ranger for half his life, said: "Those hills bring you back to the thrilling days of yesteryear. The Old West is right here in our back yard, the west corner of the valley, and we can't lose it. There is nothing like it anywhere."

In Lifestyle Magazine of February 1988, Stephen London wrote: "In Ventura County, the 70-acre Bell Movie Ranch in Box Canyon will soon be dismantling its 6 acre Western Town. The ranch was started in 1955, with many serials filmed there through the years, including: Roughriders, Mackenzie Raiders, Tombstone Territory, Sheriff Cochise, Gunsmoke, etc. The last theatrical film made there was Blake Edward' feature, The Sunset, the story of a Tom Mix western being made in 1929."¹²⁸

The Hertz Topanga Ranch is located in Topange Canyon near Mulholland Drive. The William Hertz family took over an existing ranch there in 1952, and built a Western street for movie purposes. Among films made there was The Plunderers (1960) starring Jeff Chandler and John Saxon.

"The stomping grounds of Marshal Matt Dillon, Laura Ingalls and about 1,000 head of cattle are up for sale," wrote Nancy Rivera Brooks in the Los Angeles Times

of April 20, 1987. "Big Sky Movie Ranch in Simi Valley, which masqueraded as Kansas for Gunsmoke (1955) and for Little House On the Prairie (1974), among other places, will be auctioned in four parcels totaling 6,711 acres."

The 10,000 acre ranch was owned for more than four decades by the late oil tycoon, J. Paul Getty. He purchased it from the Pacific Western Oil Company, which owned it since the 1920s. Even before that, it was called the Patterson Ranch. A group of investors bought the ranch from the Getty estate in 1981 and re-named it Big Sky Ranch. Films made there include The Miracle Worker, The Thornbirds (1983), the TV series Rawhide, and Father Murphy, among others.

The Golden Oak Ranch in Placerita Canyon, has been operated by the Disney Studios since 1959. TV and feature films, in whole or in part, were made there. These include Daniel Boone, Little House on the Prairie, and The Muppet Movie.

In an interview with Gina Shaffer in the Los Angeles Daily News of February 2, 1986, Marc Wanamaker said that "although a few of these (movie) ranches still are operating, their heyday passed in the sixties, when TV began competing with the film studios, and the value of Valley real estate boomed. A lot of companies began to

sell off their land, finding it cheaper to shoot in their back lots." However, Lisa Rawling, Director of the California Film Office in Hollywood, which promotes filmmaking in the State, says that the San Fernando Valley and surrounding areas remain a popular locale for filmmaking.¹²⁹

OUTLYING RANCHES WHERE MOVIES WERE MADE ON WEST COAST

- 1912 INCEVILLE (Santa Ynez Canyon)
- 1912 UNIVERSAL (Universal City)
- 1916 LASKY RANCH (Burbank)
- 1916 FOX RANCH (Silverlake)
- 1926 IVERSON MOVIE LOCATION (Chatsworth)
- 1926 PARAMOUNT RANCH (Agoura)
- 1928 RKO RANCH (Louise St. from Magnolia to Roscoe)
- 1930s WARNER RANCH (Calabasas)
- 1934 COLUMBIA RANCH (now Burbank Studios Ranch)
- 1937 CORRIGANVILLE (Santa Susana)
- 1937 MONOGRAM RANCH (Newhall)
- 1940 CENTURY RANCH (20th C. Fox: now Malibu Creek
State Park)
- 1940s MGM (Conejo-Moorpark: now Wildwood Park)
- 1940s SPAHN RANCH (NW corner of San Fernando Valley)
- 1952 HERTZ TOPANGA RANCH (Topanga Canyon)
- 1955 BELL MOVIE RANCH (Box Canyon)
- 1955 PATTERSON/BIG SKY RANCH (Simi Valley)
- 1959 GOLDEN OAK RANCH [Disney] (Placerita Canyon)

VII. CHRONOLOGY - PARAMOUNT RANCH PROPERTY
AND SURROUNDING AREA

- 1769-1834 Rancho History (Rancho Las Virgenes)
- 1834-1890 DeLeonis Property
- 1890-1904 Major Bell Property
- 1904-1917 Isabela R. Thornton/Frank T. Davis
Property
- 1917-1923 Bruce and Madge Waring Property
- 1923-1927 John H. Blair, Harry S. Merrick,
Marlow Merrick, Charles E. Raschall,
Harold and Will Thompson.
(Cleveland Land Company)
- 1923-1927 Based on speculation only, Paramount
and possibly other film companies could
have leased the land prior to 1927. At
the time, the owners of the property
were involved with film studios and were
actively leasing and selling film-
related properties.
- 1927-1943 Paramount Land Corporation
(This was a subsidiary to Paramount Pic-
tures Corporation, involved only with
the purchase and maintenance of company
properties.)

- 1943-1948 Paramount sold the ranch in 1943, but leased it back until 1948. This was agreed to on the terms of sale.
- 1943-1953 Eser and Myrtle Wikholm Property
- 1952-1956 Cornell Land Company/Hertz Ranch
(Dr. William Hertz and wife, Betty, leased the ranch from 1952-53. They purchased it in 1953 and operated it as a "Movie Ranch" with their family from 1953-56. After selling the ranch in 1956, they continued to operate it until 1961.)
- 1956-1966 Paramount Sportsman's Ranch
(Jack Baskin, Paul Drummond and Gary Bronnick, owners. In 1962, Dee Cooper became the ranch manager and operator.)
- 1966-1973 Paramount Land Corporation/
Grande Properties
(R.S. Hume and J.S. Mark, owners.
Dee Cooper still operating the ranch)
- 1962-1978 (Dee Cooper leased the ranch for his rodeos and managed it for location filmmaking)
- 1978-1980 The property was sold to a developer for investment. The ranch fell into disrepair.
- 1980- National Park Service became owner and operator of the ranch. (Filmmaking and other recreational activities resume)

VIII. SUMMARY - HISTORIC PATTERNS AND REMNANTS

The historical and physical report on the Paramount Ranch property consists of not only the uses of the ranch as a movie location, but also as an important site in the Santa Monica Mountains. The importance of a site, historically as well as physically, is based on its vitality which has grown with its use by people over the years. Specifically, the Paramount Ranch property has been occupied and used extensively for almost one hundred years. Since its early days in the 1880s, until now in 1990, the property has had many uses. From that of a ranch, farm, movie location, recreational area and now a National Park, the property has been a vital piece of land, serving all who used it or visited it over the years.

The original pattern of its terrain has not changed over the years and one can see today what was seen almost one hundred years ago. The existing structural history of the ranch can be traced back to 1907, when it was used as a ranch-farm by its occupants. One of the original houses on the property still exists and is located on Cornell Road just to the south of the original entrance. Dee Cooper, one of the ranch operators for many years, said that he was told it was built

before the turn of the century.

For the most part, the entire southern section of the ranch has not been altered much over the years. On the other hand, the Northern section of the original property has been developed, and it is difficult to tell how it might have looked, without knowing beforehand. But, after a visit to the original site of the Paramount Western Town, in August 1989, it was found that very little development had taken place there, and original landmarks such as oak trees, still stood on their original land patterns. However, development is surrounding this island of the old ranch, and it will be only a matter of time until that section is gone also.

When Paramount Studios took over the property in 1927, the management used existing land patterns to construct what was needed for filmmaking activities. Many of the roads were already in place, and all that was needed was to build some wooden structures to house equipment and some personnel. There was no major development undertaken by the studio at that time or at any time during their ownership. What remains today of that ownership, are several buildings, now used as the center for the ranch operations. Buildings have been re-faced and serve as a Western Town setting for filmmaking, photography and as a public attraction.

This section of the ranch known as the "core" of the property is only a fraction of what the original ranch encompassed. The property closely adjacent to the "core" was sold several years ago to a developer, who would like to build homes on the site. This site, is literally an integral part of the National Park Service's parcel. What exists now, undeveloped, is the entire southern section of the original ranch. With the proposed development of parts of this area, the wilderness integrity of the Park Service's property is threatened. In short, there will be houses literally built overlooking the "core" area of the ranch, reducing its "unique" character dramatically and limiting its use for the first time in one hundred years. It would also alter the area's landscape setting, which is a significant part of the area and contributes to it being a historic site.

The changes in the existing structures over the years have been established through photographic research. As mentioned earlier, much of the ranch was either taken away, demolished or remodeled. The "core" area is where the majority of buildings exist today. These make up the "Western Town" structures on the property that are still in use today.

The original structures on this street were built as storage buildings, housing and offices in 1927. By 1953, they were re-faced into a Western Street for filmmaking purposes. Over the years, many of the sets blew down in the winds or fell down from disrepair. When the National Park Service took over the property in 1980, many of these sets were re-built or upgraded. The use of this "core" area changed from that of a support facility for the ranch, to the main area of activity, due to the partitioning of the entire property in the 1950s. In short, what is now in existence are the only surviving structures from the most active periods of the ranch's history.

During its ownership of the ranch since 1980, the National Park Service cleaned up the property and made it serviceable for the public. NPS removed one pole barn completely and shortened another, leaving the center barn, the only one of the three, at its original length. Facades of the Western Town were partially destroyed by wind, and the rest was removed by the National Park Service.

A reconstruction of the Western Street is in a continuing state of improvement. Lavatories were added on both sides of the creek and utilities were placed underground. At the request of the California Highway

Patrol, a new entrance was created north of the traditional entrance to accommodate the Renaissance Pleasure Faire traffic. With the Faire leaving the adjacent site next to the NPS property, in 1988, the land has reverted back to the original land patterns which existed years before any public activity.

To date, the structures that have survived the different owners since 1907, include:

1. House on Cornell Road at old entrance to ranch
2. Langhorn/commissary building
3. Hay barn
4. Sand and gravel storage bins
5. Steel bridge
6. Film set street with several false front sets.
One set is a fully functioning house in which a Park Service caretaker lives full time.
7. Horse barn
8. Small log cabin set
9. Long pole barn and shed
10. Storage shed

Today the property is regarded among film historians as well as historians of the Santa Monica Mountains, as an important historical site.

This report on the Paramount Ranch property, from 1769 to 1989, shows the activity on or near it, as significantly important to the history, culture and development of the area in general. Most of the film history dates from approximately 1926 to the present. There were times when the ranch was not used for filming, but for the most part, movie making has been the dominant role the ranch has played for over sixty years.

The ranch is now being used by filmmakers, photographers, schools, film societies, historical societies, and the general public interested in recreational activities.

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FILMS AND TELEVISION SHOT IN WHOLE OR IN
PART AT THE PARAMOUNT RANCH 1927-1989

PARAMOUNT RANCH PERIOD:

(Dates are both releases of
films and when films were
made at the ranch.)

BARBED WIRE	Par/1927
GET YOUR MAN	Par/1927
SENORITA	Par/1927
MADAME POMPADOUR	Par/1927
THE ROUGH RIDERS	Par/1927
ARIZONA BOUND	Par/1927
DRUMS OF THE DESERT	Par/1927
THE GAY DEFENDER	Par/1927
JESSE JAMES	Par/1927
THE LAST OUTLAW	Par/1927
THE MYSTERIOUS RIDER	Par/1927
THE OPEN RANGE	Par/1927
TWO FLAMING YOUTHS	Par/1927
AVALANCHE	Par/1928
THE BIG KILLING	Par/1928
FOOLS FOR LUCK	Par/1928
KIT CARSON	Par/1928
THE MATING CALL	Par/1928
PIONEER SCOUT	Par/1928
THE SAWDUST PARADISE	Par/1928
THE SUNSET LEGION	Par/1928
TILLIE'S PUNCTURED ROMANCE	Par/1928
UNDER THE TONTO RIM	Par/1928
THE VANISHING PIONEER	Par/1928
THE WATER HOLE	Par/1928
STAIRS OF SAND	Par/1929
THE SUNSET PASS	Par/1929
WOLF SONG	Par/1929
MOROCCO	Par/1930
ANYBODY'S WAR	Par/1930

DANGEROUS DAN MCGREW	Par/1930
THE LIGHT OF THE WESTERN STARS	Par/1930
THE MAN FROM WYOMING	Par/1930
ONLY THE BRAVE	Par/1930
THE SANTA FE TRAIL	Par/1930
THE TEXAN	Par/1930
THE FIGHTING CARAVANS	Par/1931
CAUGHT	Par/1931
THE CONQUERING HORDE	Par/1931
DUDE RANCH	Par/1931
GUNSMOKE	Par/1931
THE MAD PARADE	Par/1931
HOT SATURDAY	Par/1932
A FAREWELL TO ARMS	Par/1932
THE BROKEN WING	Par/1932
GHOST VALLEY	RKO-Pathe 1932
SINNERS IN THE SUN	Par/1932
THE THUNDER BELOW	Par/1932
MAKE ME A STAR	Par/1932
THE VANISHING FRONTIER	Par/1932
WILD HORSE MESA	Par/1932
GIRL WITHOUT A ROOM	Par/1933
HELLO, EVERYBODY	Par/1933
HERITAGE OF THE DESERT	Par/1933
THE MYSTERIOUS RIDER	Par/1933
THE LAST MAN	Par/1933
UNDER THE TONTO RIM	Par/1933
THE LONE COWBOY	Par/1934
THE THUNDERING HERD	Par/1934
MELODY IN SPRING	Par/1934
WAGON WHEELS	Par/1934
MISSISSIPPI	Par/1935
RUGGLES OF RED GAP	Par/1935
BAR 20 RIDES AGAIN	Par/1935

CAR 99	Par/1935
ROSE OF THE RANCHO	Par/1935
BEHOLD MY WIFE	Par/1935
SO RED THE ROSE	Par/1935
HOME ON THE RANGE	Par/1935
THE LAST OUTPOST	Par/1935
McFADDEN'S FLATS	Par/1935
MILLIONS IN THE AIR	Par/1935
THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN MYSTERY	Par/1935
WANDERER OF THE WASTELAND	Par/1935
THE TEXAS RANGERS	Par/1936
THE TRAIL OF THE LONESOME PINE	Par/1936
THE ARIZONA RAIDERS	Par/1936
CALL OF THE PRAIRIE	Par/1936
THE PLAINSMAN	Par/1936
DRIFT FENCE	Par/1936
GIRL OF THE OZARKS	Par/1936
HEART OF THE WEST	Par/1936
HOPALONG CASSIDY RETURNS	Par/1936
NEVADA	Par/1936
KLONDIKE ANNIE	Par/1936
THREE ON THE TRAIL	Par/1936
TRAIL DUST	Par/1936
MURDER WITH PICTURES	Par/1936
THE MOON'S OUR HOME	Par/1936
MAID OF SALEM	Par/1937
WELLS FARGO	Par/1937
ARIZONA MAHONEY	Par/1937
BORDERLAND	Par/1937
FORLORN RIVER	Par/1937
HILLS OF OLD WYOMING	Par/1937
HOPALONG RIDES AGAIN	Par/1937
MOUNTAIN MUSIC	Par/1937
NORTH OF RIO GRANDE	Par/1937
PARTNERS OF THE PLAINS	Par/1937
RUSTLER'S VALLEY	Par/1937
THE TEXAS TRAIL	Par/1937
THUNDER TRAIL	Par/1937

BAR 20 JUSTICE	Par/1938
THE TEXANS	Par/1938
BORN TO THE WEST	Par/1938
CASSIDY OF BAR 20	Par/1938
THE FRONTIERSMAN	Par/1938
THE ADVENTURES OF TOM SAWYER IN OLD MEXICO	Selznick/UA 1938 Par/1938
THE MYSTERIOUS RIDER	Par/1938
PRIDE OF THE WEST	Par/1938
RIDE A CROOKED MILE	Par/1938
THE SUNSET TRAIL	Par/1938
ADVENTURES OF MARCO POLO	Par/1937 rel:1938
UNION PACIFIC (scenes)	Par/1938
HERITAGE OF THE DESERT	Par/1939
THE LLANO KID	Par/1939
RANGE WAR	Par/1939
THE RENEGADE TRAIL	Par/1939
SILVER ON THE SAGE	Par/1939
GERONIMO	Par/1939
REMEMBER THE NIGHT	Par/1940
BUCK BENNY RIDES AGAIN	Par/1940
CHEROKEE STRIP	Par/1940
COMIN'ROUND THE MOUNTAIN	Par/1940
HIDDEN GOLD	Par/1940
KNIGHTS OF THE RANGE	Par/1940
THE LIGHT OF THE WESTERN STARS	Par/1940
RANGERS OF FORTUNE	Par/1940
SANTA FE MARSHALL	Par/1940
THE SHOWDOWN	Par/1940
STAGECOACH WAR	Par/1940
TEXAS RANGERS RIDE AGAIN	Par/1940
THREE MEN FROM TEXAS	Par/1940
CAUGHT IN THE DRAFT	Par/1941
REACHING FOR THE SUN	Par/1941
BORDER VIGILANTES	Par/1941

BUY ME THAT TOWN	Par/1941
DOOMED CARAVAN	Par/1941
IN OLD COLORADO	Par/1941
PIRATES ON HORSEBACK	Par/1941
THE PARSON OF PANAMINT	Par/1941
RIDERS OF THE TIMBERLINE	Par/1941
THE ROUND-UP	Par/1941
SECRETS OF THE WASTELAND	Par/1941
THE SHEPHERD OF THE HILLS	Par/1941
TWILIGHT ON THE TRAIL	Par/1941
WIDE OPEN TOWN	Par/1941
TOMBSTONE, THE TOWN TOO TOUGH TO DIE	Par/1942
THE FOREST RANGERS	Par/1942
WILDCAT	Par/1942
MIRACLE OF MORGAN'S CREEK	Par/1942
HIGH EXPLOSIVE	Par/1943
STORY OF DR. WASSELL (scenes)	Par/1944
TAKE IT BIG	Par/1944
THE VIRGINIAN	Par/1946
GOLDEN EARRINGS	Par/1947
THE PERILS OF PAULINE	Par/1947
WHISPERING SMITH	Par/1948
PALEFACE	Par/1948
ALBUQUERQUE	Par/1948
MR. RECKLESS	Par/1948
STREETS OF LAREDO	Par/1949
DYNAMITE	Par/1949
SONG OF SURRENDER	Par/1949
THE REDHEAD AND THE COWBOY	Par/1950
IN FANCY PANTS	Par/1950
THE EAGLE AND THE HAWK	Par/1950
THE GREAT MISSOURI RAID	Par/1950
RED MOUNTAIN	Par/1951
WARPATH	Par/1951

HERTZ RANCH PERIOD:

THE DENVER AND THE RIO GRANDE	Par/1952
THE VANQUISHED	Par/1953
SON OF PALEFACE	Par/1952
THE DEVIL'S HAIRPIN	Par/1956
GUNFIGHT AT THE OK CORRAL	Par/1957

MISC FILMS:

SHAME SHAME ON THE BIXBY BOYS	
REDS	Par/1981
HELTER SKELTER (TV Movie)	Lorimar/1976
ANGELS HARD AS THEY COME	New World/1971
(Roger Corman film. Director: Joseph Viola 926 N. Harper Avenue Los Angeles 90046 telephone: (213) 656-2812 1989)	

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CISCO KID	ZIV-TV/1952
RIN TIN TIN	ABC/CBS 1958-62
THE FALL GUY	ABC/1981-85