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FINAL

NPS Form 10-900  
(Rev. 10-90)

OMB No. 1024-0018

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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Peaceful Valley Ranch  
other names/site number Lamb Ranch; 32BI 67

2. Location

street & number North of Medora, North Dakota not for publication   
city or town Theodore Roosevelt National Park (THRO) vicinity             
state North Dakota code ND county Billings code 007 zip code 58645

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination        request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets        does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this        property be considered significant        nationally        statewide X locally. (        See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature] 6/6/94  
[Signature] 5/17/94  
Signature of certifying official Date

National Park Service, Rocky Mountain Region Office  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property X meets        does not meet the National Register criteria. (        See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature] 5/20/94  
[Signature] 5/20/94  
Signature of commenting or other official Date

North Dakota State Historic Preservation Office  
State or Federal agency and bureau

Peaceful Valley Ranch  
Name of Property

Billings County, North Dakota  
County and State

=====

4. National Park Service Certification

=====

I, hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register  
\_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.  
\_\_\_\_\_ determined eligible for the  
National Register \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.  
\_\_\_\_\_ determined not eligible for the  
National Register \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ removed from the National Register \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

*for* *Billings* *7/13/94*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Keeper Date  
of Action

=====

5. Classification

=====

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

\_\_\_\_\_ private  
\_\_\_\_\_ public-local  
\_\_\_\_\_ public-State  
 public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

building(s)  
\_\_\_\_\_ district  
\_\_\_\_\_ site  
\_\_\_\_\_ structure  
\_\_\_\_\_ object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>  3  </u>	_____ buildings
_____	_____ sites
_____	_____ structures
_____	_____ objects
<u>  3  </u>	_____ Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register   0  

Name of related multiple property listing - N/A

=====

6. Function or Use

=====

Historic Functions

DOMESTIC: single dwelling  
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE: animal facility  
GOVERNMENT: office  
OTHER: dude ranch

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION AND CULTURE: outdoor recreation  
DOMESTIC: multiple dwelling  
AGRICULTURE: animal facility

Peaceful Valley Ranch  
Name of Property

Billings County, North Dakota  
County and State

=====  
7. Description  
=====

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Late Victorian  
Other: Vernacular

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation	CONCRETE
roof	WOOD: shingle; ASPHALT; STONE: scoria
walls	WOOD: log, horizontal siding, weatherboard
other	STONE; BRICK

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

(See continuation pages.)

=====  
8. Statement of Significance  
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Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

N/A

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

AGRICULTURE  
ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION  
CONSERVATION  
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance - 1885-1936

Significant Dates - 1885; 1905; 1920

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)  
N/A

Cultural Affiliation  
N/A

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Architect/Builder

Lamb, Benjamin F.  
Burgess, George

Narrative Statement of Significance  
(See continuation pages.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.) (See continuation pages.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.  
 previously listed in the National Register  
 previously determined eligible by the National Register  
 designated a National Historic Landmark  
 recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_  
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Location of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation Office  
 Other State agency  
 Federal agency  
 Local government  
 University  
 Other

Name of repositories: Theodore Roosevelt National Park (Medora, ND);  
NPS, Rocky Mountain Region (Denver, CO)

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property .5 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone	Easting	Northing
13	613860	5201450

Verbal Boundary Description (See continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (See continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Dori M. Penny and Thomas K. Larson;  
final revisions, Kathy McKoy, NPS, Rocky Mountain Region (April, 1994)  
organization Larson-Tibesar Associates, Inc. date May, 1993  
street & number 421 S. Cedar St. telephone (307) 742-4371  
city or town Laramie state WY zip code 82070

Peaceful Valley Ranch  
Name of Property

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County and State

=====  
Additional Documentation  
=====

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.  
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage  
or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items).

=====  
Property Owner  
=====

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Department of the Interior, National Park Service

street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

=====  
Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Peaceful Valley Ranch  
Billings County, ND

**Description**

Summary

Three historic buildings are located at Theodore Roosevelt National Park's Peaceful Valley Ranch -- a one and one-half story frame ranch house (ca. 1885), a one-story log barn (1905), and a one-story log bunkhouse (1920). Typical of most rural dwellings, the ranch house has experienced modifications through time in response to evolving uses. The only significant post-historic alterations to the bunkhouse is a 1950 frame addition made to the rear. The barn has experienced very little change, and has the highest degree of architectural integrity of the three buildings. While in need of some repairs, the buildings are generally in good condition. The ranch house, barn, and bunkhouse possess integrity of location, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association from the historic period.

Past and Present Setting

Peaceful Valley Ranch is in the South Unit of Theodore Roosevelt National Park. The park is in the Little Missouri badlands of western North Dakota. The ranch is on a terrace above the Little Missouri River, near the confluence of Paddock Creek and the river. It is approximately three miles northeast of the town of Medora.

Prior to acquisition of the land for park development, the areas surrounding the ranch were used for grazing cattle and horses. Today, these same areas are no longer public grazing lands; they do, however, provide grass for bison and mule deer. The present grazing pattern by native species is less of an impact on the grassland than was the past cattle pasturage, and this has served to return the prairie to a condition somewhat similar to its appearance prior to Euroamerican settlement.

The bunkhouse is located directly north of the ranch house; the barn and adjoining corral are located approximately 200' the east of the ranch house. North and northeast of the barn are six modern buildings. The small scale and siting of the modern structures do not intrude upon the historic setting of the ranch. The exact location of all nine buildings is shown on the accompanying site map.

To the north of the ranch buildings, the floodplain of the river is vegetated by a thick stand of cottonwoods. Although these trees have been thinned out periodically by both human and natural actions, the general appearance of the wooded area has changed very little through time.

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The ranch is accessed by an unpaved road off of Scenic Loop Drive, a paved park road (also known as the Medora Scenic Loop). Scenic Loop Drive, and other roads constructed in the park since the 1930s, have gradually replaced the older ranch roads that once ran up the valley.

In addition to the modern road, the setting of the ranch has been changed through time by various building and dismantling episodes. Some of the most significant of these include: erection of dude ranching cabins between 1918 and 1936; the construction of park-related buildings in the late 1930s; the moving and dismantling of both of these types of the buildings in the 1950s and 1960s; and the construction of six small modern buildings for use by the National Park Service (NPS) and the concessionaire in the last decade. Concomitant with all of these changes, building interiors have been somewhat modified and the fencing and corral pattern within the ranch yard has undergone several changes. Except for the construction of the six modern buildings, the majority of the changes at the ranch took place during the property's period of significance (1885-1936).

There are three known or suspected features just outside of the present building complex at Peaceful Valley Ranch that are of importance to its inception and development. The first Euroamerican building in the immediate area of the ranch may have been a trapper's dugout. Tom Olsen (son of prior ranch owner, Carl Olsen) described this log roofed dugout as being approximately 10 feet by 12 feet in size, dug back into a bluff edge southeast of the ranch. (Olsen, January 1992). Mr. Olsen visited the feature on a number of occasions during his childhood and estimates that the distance between the valley road and the dugout was about 100 yards. The age of this dugout, its builder, and its present condition are not known. It was not recorded during the University of North Dakota's cultural resource inventory of the South Unit (Kuehn 1990).

The Paddock cabin was also in the immediate area of the ranch. It was build by Gerry Paddock in the summer of 1883 (letter from S. N. Lebo to Arnold Goplen, February 13, 1939). This cabin was near the "Y" in the road immediately south of the Peaceful Valley Ranch. It seems likely that the cabin ruins were obliterated in the 1930s by the Civilian Conservation Corps and later road construction in this portion of the valley.

A third important feature outside of the main building complex was a training track for eastern thoroughbreds. The track was in the flats southeast of the ranch buildings (Olsen, January 1992). The exact distance from the buildings is not known. The turns on this training

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Peaceful Valley Ranch  
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track were banked and were still visible at the time the Olsens sold the ranch to the National Park Service. It is Tom Olsen's understanding that both Ben Lamb and Gerry Paddock were involved in the training track venture. The training track is not visible on aerial photographs inspected by the park's Chief Naturalist, Bruce Kaye. The vegetation in the area of the training track has changed considerably since the Olsens lived at the ranch and this may be obscuring any physical evidence. In the 1930s, the track was in grass; today this area has been taken over by sagebrush (Olsen, January 1992).

**Description of Individual Buildings**

Ranch House

The ranch house (HS-1) is a one and one-half story wood frame and log building that measures 58 feet north to south by 22 feet east to west. Much of the information about the date of construction is derived from interviews conducted by Arnold Goplen, Chester Brooks, or Ray Mattison. Interviews with Mr. and Mrs. J. C. (Chris) Rasmussen, S. N. Lebo, Mary Lebo Gilham, J. J. Tomamichel and Jack Reid, early residents and/or contemporaries of Benjamin Lamb, all state that the frame portion of the house was built by Ben Lamb between 1883 and 1890. (see "Modifications Through Time" for more detail). The Peaceful Valley house is therefore contemporary with Theodore Roosevelt's Elkhorn Ranch house (ca. 1884-1885; Torres 1980:27, 58). The ranch house is the only surviving example of a dwelling in its original location associated with open-range ranching in the South Unit of the Theodore Roosevelt National Park.

With the exception of the northernmost log addition, all of the house has clapboard siding. An enclosed porch on the south elevation extends out 10 feet from the original house. A porch on the east elevation is also enclosed. This porch measures 22 feet 6 inches north to south by 6 feet east to west (this is the maximum width; there is a one foot difference between the north and south elevations of the porch). The house is gable-roofed with wood shingles. A dormer window is present on the south side of the roof. The roof cap, vent, pipes, chimney flashing, valley flashing, gutters, and downspouts are all sheet metal. Two different roof lines are present on the building, which has evolved into a T-plan: an east-west line on the original house and the north-south line of the additions. Both of the porches and the dormer are shed roofed.

The house's windows are all wood frame. Double hung, 2/2 windows are present on the original south, east, and west elevations. More recent double and single hung 1/1 windows are located in both porches, the



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Peaceful Valley Ranch  
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dormer, and on the west elevation. A 1/1 sliding window is located on the south face of the east elevation porch. Two square windows on the east elevation of the upper story are single light, fixed.

The doors of the ranch house are wood. The foundation is concrete. The main portion of the house is over a basement area that was enlarged and finished in 1947 (see "Modifications Through Time").

Two brick chimneys vent the heating system in the house. The chimney on the original portion of the house is centered on the exterior gable wall (east). The chimney for the addition is on the west slope of the roof.

The northernmost addition to the house is log. The logs are square notched at the corners. The French doors (casement doors) on the north elevation are more consistent with the period in which the cabin was clad with clapboarding rather than its current rustic appearance (see "Modifications Through Time").

Bunkhouse

The log bunkhouse (HS-4) was originally a lodge and recreation hall, first described in Carl Olsen's Peaceful Valley Ranch advertising pamphlet (n.d.). The lodge, constructed in 1920 by Olsen, was used for dances and socializing by the ranch guests. It measures 20 feet north to south by 37 feet 8 inches east to west. The round, rough hewn cottonwood logs are joined together by double saddle notching. The building has a gable roof covered with roll roofing and crushed "scoria" -- a term used regionally to describe natural red clinker produced near burning coal seams. A large scoria chimney is present on the west elevation. All of the windows are wood frame, single light casement or 1/1 single hung.

The doors of the bunkhouse are wood. The foundation is concrete poured along the sill logs. The 1950 addition to the bunkhouse has a concrete modular unit foundation, horizontal wood siding, and a flat roof. This addition is on the north elevation of the original lodge and measures 13 feet 6 inches north to south by 19 feet east to west.

The interior of the bunkhouse has two bedrooms, a bath, a living room divided by a central hallway in the front portion; the rear addition has three bedrooms.

Barn

The log barn (HS-15) was constructed by J. C. Rasmussen and George Burgess in 1905. This one story, rectangular plan log barn was constructed in two sections. Walls are double saddle notched logs with

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6 x 6 horizontal timbers, and the roof is 2 x 2 foot roof joists and 1" decking with wood shingles. The southern two-thirds of building is built on a concrete foundation; the north end has a dirt floor. The barn measures 70 feet 9 inches north to south and 23 feet 9 inches east to west. The windows are wood frame and sash with a 2/2 configuration. On the east elevation, three pairs of these 2/2 windows are arranged in a horizontal sliding pattern with one fixed panel. The central of these three pairs is boarded over but can be seen in earlier photographs. The doors are 1-by-6 tongue and groove; all are recent replacements put in during 1982 and 1983 (Justesen, November 1991). The gable ends are clad with wood plank siding. The south half of the barn uses longer timbers, and therefore a different construction method, than the short segments in the north half of the building. A metal chimney on the ridge line vents the heating system in the south half of the barn. The barn foundation is concrete poured around the sill logs.

The interior of the barn has exposed log walls of the north end. The south end walls are fiber wallboard and wood. Wood floors are laid over concrete in the concession office. The middle section of barn has exposed concrete floors and the north section has dirt floors. Ceilings are fiber wallboard in the south and middle sections, and exposed rafters on the north end of the barn.

Modern Structures

The remaining structures at Pleasant Valley Ranch are recently constructed facilities for use by the concessionaire and the NPS. They include a surrey shed, pumphouse, toilets, storage shed, open hay shed, and parking area. The buildings are wood frame and painted brown. All are located northeast of the ranch house. The parking area is surfaced with a combination of asphalt on the west end and gravel on the east end. While ~~the~~ these developments are modern, they are necessary for the current use of the ranch and are nonintrusive. None of these structures fall within the boundaries drawn for the historic resources, as shown on the accompanying site map.

Modifications Through Time

Three buildings were constructed by Ben Lamb during his ownership of the ranch: a house (the southernmost portion of HS-1), a barn, and a blacksmith shop. Of the three, only the house remains. The earliest known photograph of the house probably represents the ranch much as it was during the Lamb's ownership. A handwritten date of "1903" has been inscribed on the back of this photo. In this photo, the vertical log barn and outbuilding (probably the blacksmith shop) are still in place. The house is a simple side gabled, one and one-half story frame building

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with a small gable roofed extension. The photo shows a central chimney. The upper story was accessed by an exterior stairway.

The house has undergone five major additions since its construction. These include a frame addition to the north elevation of the original house, a log addition adjoining the frame addition, a dormer window, a shed roofed porch on the front (south) elevation and the porch/entryway on the east elevation. In a 1956 interview, Chris Rasmussen stated that the first addition (frame construction) was made in or before 1893.

The first modifications to the Lamb buildings by George Burgess took place in 1903 with the construction of the log addition to the house. This was used as a kitchen area. It was built of Washington cedar imported into the region for railroad bridge construction (Arnold Goplen interview with J. C. Rasmussen, February 23, 1939).

A description of the interior of the Lamb house, ca. 1906, was obtained by Sally Johnson, Curator of History for the Nebraska State Historical Society, from Mrs. J. C. (Chris) Rasmussen in 1959. Chris Rasmussen worked for George Burgess. During a period when the Burgess family were living in town, the Rasmussens lived in the house. This information is now available as a transcription of Johnson's notes. Emendations, presented here in brackets, were added by Weldon Gratton.

The Rasmussens moved into the Burgess home, furnishing it themselves. Burgess had added the log kitchen and center room to the original frame house when he occupied it. The original house had consisted of two rooms and an attic. An outside stairway led to the attic.

The part of the house that was made of railroad ties [she means the log portion at the north end of house] was used by Mrs. Rasmussen as her kitchen. In it she had her stove against the north wall. The stove was a wood range with a warming oven above it. Her oak dining room table . . . stood to the northwest of the room and to the right of the stove. . . . In the southwest corner of the room between the door leading to the living room and the door to the porch stood her ice box. On the east wall there was a wash stand, a commode. In the northeast corner there was another table-top cabinet . . . . The walls of this room were calcimined, except for the logs. The logs were chinked and left scrubbed and bare because they were "pretty." The floor was of maple . . . . At this time the kitchen had a dirt roof.

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The living room was in the center of the house [This is the part made of railroad ties or bridge timbers]. . . . The room was entered from the porch or from the kitchen. In the northeast corner of the room Mrs. Rasmussen placed her daveno. In the center of the room was a square center table, on which she placed her chrome nickel plated Rochester kerosene lamp . . . . Near the west wall she placed her Morris chair. The furnishings were sparse because the couple were newly wed. On the floor was a grass rug. The walls were papered with pink or red flowered paper, because Mrs. Burgess had wall paper on her walls. The other rooms, excluding the kitchen, were also papered. The window leading onto the porch had a box for flowers.

From the living room, a door led into the master bedroom . . . a ladder on the west wall about where the present stairway is was tacked to the wall and led to a trap door into the attic. In this bedroom, Mrs. Rasmussen had a brass bed, a dresser with a triple mirror, and a scatter, braided or crocheted, rugs. The windows and door were the same as those in the house today. A door led from the bedroom into the second bedroom, which was roughly partitioned from the other room. This second room was smaller. Both of these rooms are now part of the living room.

In the attic there were two bedrooms, which were not used by the Rasmussens except as storage areas. Mrs. Rasmussen always used the outside stairway for access to the attic rather than the ladder in the bedroom.

The porch was open and supported by posts. It did not extend out even with the bedroom wing but was slightly recessed. There was a pump on the south end of the porch, covering an 80 foot well.

A plan of the house drawn by Johnson shows the additions and the interior arrangement from the period 1906 to 1908. The plan shape parallels the winter or spring 1910 photo of the ranch buildings. This indicates, as does Mrs. Rasmussen's account, that both additions were present during Burgess's ownership of the ranch.

Some relatively early changes to the Lamb house took place that are not accounted for in the oral accounts and interviews. They include the modification of the roof of the log addition (which appears to have both shed and gable elements), the clapboard siding on the log addition, and the addition of the window immediately north of the attic entryway.

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Carl Olsen replaced the roof on the Burgess log addition in 1914 and then added the dormer window on the front of the house in 1922 (Goplen interview with J. C. Rasmussen, February 23, 1939; Olsen, January 1992). Marge Gratton stated that the enclosed entryway on the east elevation was added between 1936 and 1939, after Olsen sold the ranch. This entryway is only visible on photographs taken after this period. Other alterations include the closure of the outside entrance to the upper story, an additional window on the east elevation, south of the gable end chimney, and alterations to the roof line of the additions. The roof line alterations were made in 1942, when the Grattons lived in the house. Originally, the roof lines of the additions were at slightly different levels; these were altered to form a continuous line. The Grattons also planted evergreens around the house, some of which are still in existence.

While other alterations to the house undoubtedly took place in the years after the ranch was purchased by the National Park Service, the next major documented changes took place in 1947 as the result of the flood damage. Information about the 1947 flood and post-flood remodeling is available from documents now on file at the NPS office in Medora. Torres (1980:36) summarizes the changes made to the house as the result of the 1947 remodeling:

After the flood, the partial basement, which had consisted of a combination of earth, brick, plank, and cement walls, was enlarged into a full basement with new beams, and a cement foundation was installed under the main portion of the house. New cross members in the floors of the main house were also installed. The floors in the living room and utility room were replaced, the closet in the living room was converted to a stairway to the attic bedroom, and the bathroom was remodeled. Finally, the main chimney was replaced by a new brick chimney on the outside of the house.

The first floor of the original, Lamb-built, portion of the house now contains a large living room and a stairway leading to the half story bedroom. The later additions contain a kitchen, a bathroom, and a bedroom. More recent maintenance activities involving the Lamb house include shingling, painting, replacement of kitchen cabinets, remodeling the bathroom (new fixtures, cabinetwork), and the replacement of coal and oil burning stoves with electric devices. Some of the glass in the windows has been replaced but the "CO" [Carl Olsen] scratched into one of the west elevation windows is still intact. The four-inch softwood flooring was covered by resilient floor covering about 1976. The

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plaster ceiling of the half story bedroom fell in 1967 and was replaced with sheetrock [drywall] (Torres 1980).

Despite various changes to the house, the fenestration pattern has not been substantially altered. The windows on the south elevation were not altered when the porch was enclosed. By 1910, the two windows that are on either side of the east elevation chimney had been added. The removal of the door that provided access to the half-story space and the addition of the dormer window are the most substantial alterations to the fenestration pattern. Both of these changes took place during the ranch's period of significance. The additions and alterations were done in such a way that it is still possible to recover the essential form of the building.

Burgess built another house in 1903 that he initially used as a bunk house and storeroom (Goplen interview with J. C. Rasmussen, February 23, 1939). This house is no longer standing, but may have been the shed roofed building immediately east of the Lamb house. This building is visible in the 1910 photograph of the house.

In 1905, the barn and blacksmith shop built by Benjamin Lamb were torn down by J. C. Rasmussen and George Burgess. During that same year, a new barn (HS-15) was constructed from Washington cedar. As already mentioned in relation to the log addition to the house, this building material was originally introduced into the area for bridge construction on the railroad (Goplen interview with J. C. Rasmussen, February 23, 1939).

During its use by the NPS, the south end of the barn was a carpenter shop and Einar H. Olstad had a blacksmith shop in the north end. In addition to producing utilitarian ironwork for the park, Olstad was the artist responsible for a number of the sculptures used in the park. These pieces include Theodore Roosevelt on horseback, placed at the Painted Canyon Overlook, and two images of a mounted rider, possibly Will Rogers. These latter two sculptures were placed at the Cottonwood Campground and the entrance to the North Unit. Torres (1980:25) states that "The art represented by these three sculptures is associated with the rustic style of architecture prevalent in the 1930s at Roosevelt Recreation Demonstration Area." They are also representative of the naturalistic, "public art" supported by New Deal programs in the 1930s.

The original sod roof on the barn was replaced with trusses, rafters and shingles about 1914. Siding on the south elevation was added in the 1950s. Historic photos document that the five windows on the south end were installed some time after 1977, replacing a pair of six-light

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windows and one 1/1 window. The barn doors were replaced in 1982 and 1983.

The original interior plan of the barn is not known, nor what changes may have taken place prior to 1949. In 1949 the barn was remodeled creating a shop room on the south end, a storage, feed and saddle rooms in the center, and horse stalls on the north end. In 1954 a concrete foundation was placed under the building and the barn was converted into a carpenter shop and storage area with a small portion retained for a horse barn. The conversion involved erecting an interior partition on the south end. It is believed that the current interior walls and ceilings were built either in 1949 or 1954.

Except for the addition of new doors and some windows, all changes made have been to the interior of the barn. Of the three ranch buildings, the barn retains the highest degree of architectural integrity from its date of construction.

As previously stated, the bunkhouse (HS-4) was built by Carl Olsen in 1920. Originally, the building was a single, open room that was used as a lodge and recreation hall for the dude ranch. His son, Tom Olsen, remembers the lodge furnishings included stuffed birds, a piano with a mounted eagle on it, big oak and leather couches, big chairs, Theodore Roosevelt's desk (now at the Maltese Cross cabin), the Elkhorn Ranch snubbing post, Navajo rugs, cow and deer hides, a wind-up phonograph, and a mounted deer head on the wall. A guest register for the dude ranch was kept on a stand in the lodge. An interior photograph of the lodge was reproduced for a early Peaceful Valley Ranch advertising pamphlet and mirrors the description provided by Tom Olsen (Olsen, January 1992).

The bunkhouse has undergone a number of changes. In 1950, a 19' x 12'6" frame addition was added to the north elevation, creating two bedrooms. The original open room was converted into two bedrooms, a bath, central hallway, and a living room in 1947 (Torres 1980:39). The scoria fireplace, now located in the living room, was enclosed behind a partition in the 1950s. Resilient flooring was installed in the bunkhouse ca. 1976. The bunkhouse is now seasonally used by the concessionaire to provide housing for wranglers.

The Olsens built five guest cabins at the ranch between 1920 and 1936, including one they lived in while the Halliday's occupied the Lamb House (Olsen, January 1992). One of these cabins was built for the use of a Dr. Frieze (or Friese) and his family from Columbus, Ohio. It was common practice for the more established dude ranches to provide special

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housing for guests who returned year after year and this seems to be an example of that practice. These guest cabins are no longer standing.

Carl Olsen is known to have torn down a two-room log bunkhouse (Olsen, January 1992). This may have been the bunkhouse and storeroom built by George Burgess and Chris Rasmussen.

Between 1934 and 1937, the Emergency Relief Administration constructed at least seven wood frame buildings at the ranch, including the park headquarters building (Justesen, November 1991). Many of these buildings are visible in a ca. 1956 photograph of the ranch. The buildings were arranged along the main road and in a group to the south of the Lamb house (HS-1).

The location of concrete trailer pads are marked by the two trailers south of the house on a 1956 aerial photo of the ranch. Einar Justesen (personal communication, November 1991) believes that the pads were constructed in the 1950s. These pads have since been removed. Sometime during 1959 or 1960, the original park headquarters building was sold and moved into Medora. Between 1961 and 1965, the NPS moved or tore down many of the buildings that had served federal agency or dude ranching functions, including all of the remaining public works constructed buildings from the 1930s (Justesen, November 1991). The house that was just south of the Lamb house was initially moved to the airport at Golva, North Dakota, and has subsequently been moved to Belfield, North Dakota (Justesen, November 1991). The Civilian Conservation Corps office building is now in the campground at Medora (Gratton, November 1991).

Integrity

Except for the addition of a paved road to accommodate visitors to the park, and the absence of Olsen's guest cabins, the setting of Peaceful Valley Ranch is much the same as it was in the early 1930s. All three buildings retain the massing, materials, and fenestration patterns of the ranch's period of significance. Due to alterations and/or additions of modern materials, the interiors of the buildings do not retain sufficient integrity from the historic period to contribute to the significance of the buildings. While there have been some changes over time to the exteriors, the ranch house, barn, and bunkhouse still possess sufficient integrity of location, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association from the historic period for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.



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**Statement of Significance**

Summary

The Peaceful Valley Ranch is significant at the local level under criterion A, for its historical association with open-range ranching, dude ranching, and the early development of Theodore Roosevelt National Park. The ranch buildings are also locally significant under criterion C, as architecture representative of late nineteenth and early twentieth century design and construction techniques. The buildings provide a physical link to the historic and economic development of western North Dakota and exemplify the three major economic influences that shaped the character of the area -- open-range ranching, the transition to farming and fee simple ranching, and dude ranching, which was the harbinger of tourism and recreation activities in the state. The period of significance for the ranch dates from 1885, the approximate date of construction of the ranch house, to 1936, when the ranch buildings were acquired by the NPS and development of the headquarters area began.

Early History of Peaceful Valley Ranch (1883 -- 1890)

The earliest known Euroamerican occupant of land in the immediate vicinity of the Peaceful Valley Ranch was Eldridge G. (Gerry) Paddock. His cabin, built in the summer of 1883, was approximately one-quarter mile south of the present Peaceful Valley Ranch buildings (letter from S. N. Lebo to Arnold Goplen, February 9, 1939). Morris (1979:207) refers to Paddock as the "eminence grise of the Bad Lands." He had been a guide for George Armstrong Custer and for the Northern Pacific surveying parties (Robinson 1966:185). In the late 1870s and possibly the early 1880s, Howard Eaton (who later founded the Custer Trail Ranch with his brothers) and Paddock sold buffalo, elk, deer, sheep, bear, and antelope meat to the Northern Pacific Railway crews and "made money by returning lost horses to the railway camps" (Borne 1983:20). In partnership with Frank Moore of the Pyramid Park Hotel in Medora, Paddock also provided guide service for hunting parties (Robinson 1966:185). With the establishment of the early ranches, he became an employee of the Marquis de Mores, founder of Medora. (Morris 1979:207-209).

Gerry Paddock did not occupy the cabin for long, as the Lebo family moved into the cabin on December 15, 1883, and lived there until the first part of March, 1884. Norman Lebo was a hunter and guide for Theodore Roosevelt during his 1884 trip to the Bighorn Mountains. Upon leaving the Paddock cabin, the Lebo family spent a short time in Medora and then moved to the Custer Trail ranch where Norman was employed (letter from S. N. Lebo to Arnold Goplen, February 9, 1939).

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In March of 1885, the *Bad Lands Cow Boy* reported that "By the sale of Billy Paddock's [E. G. Paddock's son] ranch to B. S. Lamb and with the stocking of this range the Little Missouri river front will be pretty well occupied for fifty miles up the river and fifty miles down" (Mattison 1950:62). In 1885, Benjamin Lamb constructed the first buildings at what is now the Peaceful Valley Ranch proper. The 1885 Billings County census lists Lamb as a 22-year-old white male rancher from Ohio.

Very little information is available about Benjamin Lamb's personal life or background. Contrary to the census records, other accounts refer to Lamb as having been from Boston rather than Ohio. J. W. Foley, area resident and the poet laureate of North Dakota in the early twentieth century, in 1914, wrote the following for the *Dickinson Press*: "B. F. Lamb was another son of a wealthy family; handsome, finely educated and an excellent musician. The West was too quiet for Ben who sold out in 1890 and went back to his father in Boston" [Mattison 1950:62].

Due to the close knit nature of Medora at the time, it would seem that Lamb must have had at least passing acquaintance with Theodore Roosevelt, but he is not mentioned in any of Roosevelt's published works. If there is any connection between the architects Lamb and Rich -- planners for Roosevelt's proposed Leeholm estate in New York (Morris 1979) -- and Ben Lamb, this cannot be readily established. Based on references to his being "another son of a wealthy family" and going back "to his father in Boston," it seems likely that he was a "remittance man," supported during his western adventures by his family (this same conclusion is reached by Mattison 1961:3). Such arrangements were a common practice among wealthy families during the late nineteenth century.

Mary B. Gilham, the daughter of Norman Lebo, remembered Ben Lamb when asked by an interviewer about him:

Yes, we knew him [Ben Lamb] quite well, in a way, and ah, the brick hotel [the Pyramid Park] was running when he was here and ah, he never married but he had a housekeeper, you know, so she used to go to the saloon with him and every place he went and so of course us, we wouldn't, none of us visited with her, we didn't even speak to her and wasn't allowed to, of course [Gilham 1963:3].

Lamb is known to have owned 200 head of cattle in 1885 (Mattison 1950:62) and is listed as a "leading cattleman" by the *Bad Lands Cow*

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Boy. Other accomplishments by Lamb during his tenure in the badlands are summarized by Mattison (1950:62):

The Montana Brand Book for 1886 states his range was four miles north of Medora on the Little Missouri and Tayler creek. At the present there is no creek in the vicinity known as Tayler creek. In the opinion of the writer, it is probably currently known as "Paddock" creek.

Although a small operator, Lamb apparently was quite active in community affairs while in the Badlands. He became a member of the Little Missouri Stockmen's Association in September, 1885 and the Montana Stockgrower's Association. He was an early probate judge and county treasurer for Billings county. The assessment rolls for Billings County show he paid taxes in 1886 on 40 cattle valued at \$640; in 1887 on 42 cattle valued at \$672. The assessed value of his property in 1888 was \$2,115. His name last appears on the assessment rolls in 1889 when he paid taxes on property valued at \$2,815. In March of that year the *Dickinson Press* carried an item that "Ben Lamb will reach Medora with a carload of blooded stallions Saturday, Ben will soon have a fine bunch of horses."

Both Lamb's membership in stockmen's associations and his holding of early public office in Billings County serve to point out that he was held in some prominence by his contemporaries. In the west during the 1880s, stockmen's associations were highly important quasi-governmental organizations that dictated policy on the open range. Smith (1967:26-27), for instance, describes the Wyoming Stockgrower's Association as

. . . one of the greatest forces for good and ill in the history of the western cattle business . . . the men who built this engine of influence and stayed with it to the end were the sooners -- the early birds who captured the one and only financial worm. They were on hand well ahead of the beef extravaganza of the eighties; they were still there when it had run its course.

Partly because of the character of the first ranches, and partially the result of intentional selection procedures, early membership in these organizations was often limited to the larger and/or more wealthy ranchers (e.g., Smith 1967). Although best known for pursuing rustlers

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and conducting communal roundups, these associations were also concerned with "squatting" and "overstocking."

Open-Range Ranching in Western North Dakota

Following the near extinction of the American bison and the virtual confinement of the Plains Indian to reservations, vast areas of public grasslands became available for Euroamerican use in the 1870s. Seeing the rapidly developing demand for beef in the eastern United States and the availability of these grasslands, many entrepreneurs seized the opportunity to develop large cattle operations in the Northern and High Plains regions of North America. This early practice of raising cattle on large tracts of unfenced public land has come to be known as open-range ranching.

In North Dakota, open-range ranching centered around the grasslands on both sides of the Little Missouri River. Although early ranchers endured extreme weather conditions, they were never confronted with the near open warfare between cattle "barons," wool growers, and small operators which came to typify the open ranges in the Powder River country to the west. During this period, an emphasis was placed on cattle, such as Texas longhorns, believed to be less susceptible to climatic extremes. In the early days of the industry, very little emphasis was placed on livestock shelter or the stockpiling of feed. This strategy proved to be disastrous during the winter of 1886 and 1887.

Early open-range ranchers in the badlands included E. G. Paddock, Howard Eaton, and Frank Moore. Together, these individuals established the Custer Trail Ranch around 1879 or 1880 (Robinson 1966:188; Borne 1983:7). Howard Eaton came west from Pennsylvania in 1879 and engaged in a number of enterprises with E. G. Paddock. A. C. Huidekoper, an acquaintance of the Eatons, became a partner in the Custer Trail Cattle Company in 1882 (Borne 1983:20). Huidekoper later owned his own ranch, the HT, near Amidon in Slope County.

Theodore Roosevelt, perhaps the best known of the region's open-range ranchers, may have heard about the badlands through letters (including one written by Howard Eaton) published in New York newspapers. Roosevelt traveled alone to the badlands in 1883 on a hunting trip. It was during the hunting trip that Roosevelt decided to invest in a ranch (Morris 1979:216-225). He chose Sylvane Ferris and William Merrifield to manage his first ranch, the Maltese Cross. When the Maltese Cross ranch performed within Roosevelt's expectations, he decided to establish the Elkhorn Ranch the next year, hiring Bill Sewall and Wilmot Dow to operate it (Morris 1979:276-279). Roosevelt continued to finance the

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Elkhorn Ranch until sometime between 1890 and 1892 and the Maltese Cross until 1898 (Brooks and Mattison 1983:45-46).

Other ranching operations established in the Dakota badlands between 1883 and 1884 included Texas-based operations such as the Three Sevens (the Berry, Boice Cattle Company), on the Little Missouri River south of the Maltese Cross, and the Hashknife (the Continental Land and Cattle Company), also on the Little Missouri River. According to Brooks and Mattison (1983:30), the Three Sevens and the Hashknife ran a combined herd of as many as 15,000 head of cattle in 1885.

Also related to open-range ranching are the business ventures of the Marquis de Mores. The Marquis was a French aristocrat who, like many foreigners and Americans, came to the west hoping to make a fortune from the cattle industry. In addition to ranching, however, the Marquis had grander plans of developing a complete meat production, packing, and distribution system. In 1883 he established the town of Medora and a packing plant. His intent was to ship meat on refrigerated cars to the eastern consumer (Morris 1979:208). Unfortunately, the Medora meat packing plant failed. Despite the failure, the Marquis de Mores left a lasting influence on the development of western North Dakota which can be identified by the town he founded and the home he built, which is toured by thousands of visitors every summer. The Chateau de Mores, the de Mores Packing Plant, and St. Mary's Catholic Church, all located in Medora, are three historic properties listed on the National Register of Historic places which are associated with the Marquis. His story is the subject of a least two major biographies and numerous articles. In his relatively brief stay in Dakota, as in his relatively brief life, the Marquis left a legacy marked by bold initiative, romantic adventure, and tragic defeat.

The winter of 1886 and 1887 was devastating to the cattle industry in western North Dakota. Drought conditions had prevailed for most of the preceding summer and the range was overstocked. Thousands of cattle starved to death during the winter. Estimates of the loss run as high as 75 percent of the herds (Robinson 1966:190). As a result, many ranches either closed or significantly reduced their operations. Soon after, Theodore Roosevelt wrote:

The best days of the ranching are over; and though there are many who still make money, yet during the last two or three years the majority have certainly lost . . . . In its present form stock-raising on the plains is doomed, and can hardly outlast the century. The great free ranches, with their barbarous, picturesque, and curiously fascinating surroundings, mark a stage of existence as surely as do the

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tracts of primitive forests, and like the latter must pass away before the onward march of our people . . . [Roosevelt 1983:24].

Peaceful Valley Ranch is significant for its association with the development of open-range ranching in North Dakota. From this 1873 to 1895 period, only six sites with buildings that relate to open-range ranching have been documented in North Dakota (Schweigert 1987; State Historical Society of North Dakota n.d.). Only five of these six sites are ranches, and of these five, only the Peaceful Valley Ranch has a wood frame dwelling dating from the era.

In terms of the functioning of the ranch during its early history, Peaceful Valley Ranch appears to be generally representative of many open-range ranches in western North Dakota. Borne, for instance, in discussing the history of the Huidekoper and Eaton operations, describes the switch over from cattle to horse raising in the late 1880s:

They persevered and were soon building up their cattle herd just as hundreds of other ranchers were doing in the 1880s. The harsh winter of 1886-87 hit the Custer Trail Cattle Company also. At the roundup that year an accurate count was made, and the partners learned they had about the same number of cattle as when they had started the business several years earlier . . . . Huidekoper got out of the cattle business . . . . when he learned horses had fared much better than cattle in the brutal weather, he began a horse ranch [Borne 1983:21-22].

This is quite similar to the switch made by Ben Lamb and many other ranchers in the region. In Lamb's case, the change to horse raising apparently took place in the spring of 1889, as it is reported by the *Dickinson Press* in March. The development of a thoroughbred training track at Peaceful Valley Ranch (see "Modifications Through Time" in Section 7) further emphasizes Lamb's dedication to horse raising during this period.

Both within the park, and in western North Dakota in general, there is very little physical evidence remaining from the open-range ranching era (e.g., State Historical Society of North Dakota n.d.; Schweigert 1987). Within the South Unit of the park there are known to have been approximately 23 ranches, some of which dated from the open-range era, and some of which were later homesteads. Photographically, perhaps the best documented of these park ranches was the Chris Rasmussen place, approximately 1.5 miles upstream from the Peaceful Valley Ranch. All of

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these log and frame buildings, however, postdate the open-range ranching era (the Rasmussens homesteaded the ranch in 1908). With the exception of the Peaceful Valley Ranch and the Rasmussen place, all of the ranch buildings within the Roosevelt Recreational Demonstration Area were either destroyed or moved prior to World War II (the Rasmussen ranch buildings were razed at a somewhat later date).

Schweigert (1987) presents a summary of the known open-range ranches in western North Dakota. At the time of that study, only six such sites had been recorded that retained architectural components related to the open-range ranching period. One of these six sites is the Peaceful Valley Ranch. The remaining five are the H-T Ranch in Slope County, the Birdhead Ranch in McKenzie County, the Maltese Cross Cabin in Billings County, the Tipi Bottoms Ranch in Billings County, and the Chateau de Mores in Billings County. Of these recorded sites, only the Chateau de Mores and the Peaceful Valley Ranch are cited as having frame dwellings. The Chateau, however, is not a ranch house per se; during its period of use, the Marquis was primarily involved in the operation of a packing plant at Medora and other non-ranching business ventures.

In considering the significance of Peaceful Valley Ranch, it must be taken into account that the original concept for the Theodore Roosevelt National Park was to interpret "late 19th century 'open range' cattle ranching history" (USDI, National Park Service 1987:1). Today, the Peaceful Valley Ranch contains the only remaining ranch buildings in their original setting. The importance of the site is further accentuated by the fact that it contains the only known example of wood frame architecture (the Lamb house) still in existence from an open range ranch in North Dakota.

The Transition to Fee Simple Ranching at Peaceful Valley

The badlands were surveyed by a party employed by the General Land Office in the late 1890s and early 1900s (Billings County was surveyed in 1905). This was the final step prior to opening federal land to homesteading or sale to the public. In addition, the sale of Northern Pacific lands to settlers increased the size of the individual homestead and provided a greater margin for success (Robinson 1966:246). Many of the homesteads in the badlands were smaller ranching operations. Through either homestead patent, outright purchase, or some combination of both, these lands were acquired and owned, and thus became known as "fee simple" properties. This private ownership, combined with laws and regulations standardizing the leasing of public range land, effectively ended the open-range ranching era.

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Lamb sold the ranch buildings at Peaceful Valley Ranch to Joe Caughtin and Tom McDonahue in 1890. While early residents of the area consistently identify these two men as the next owners of the ranch buildings, no other information was obtained about them (Goplen papers). Between 1896 and 1898, Caughtin and McDonahue sold the ranch to George Burgess. Burgess and his wife Nettie received homestead patents for the lands surrounding the ranch buildings in 1906.

Dude Ranching in the West

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, many ranch owners in scenic areas of the western United States began accepting paying guests as a means of supplementing their stock raising revenues. Lawrence R. Borne (1983:21) recognizes the Eatons' Custer Trail Ranch, which was just north of the Maltese Cross Ranch on the Little Missouri, as the first dude ranch in the United States.

The Custer Trail dude operation began in 1882. Bert Rumsey of Buffalo, New York, is recorded as the ranch's first paying guest (Borne 1983:21). The Eaton brothers sold the Custer Trail Ranch in 1903 and opened their new dude ranch near Sheridan, Wyoming in 1904 (Borne 1983:30). Many of their guests followed them from North Dakota to Wyoming. The Eatons' Wyoming ranch is still in operation.

Accounts of Theodore Roosevelt in the badlands were the impetus for many easterners to want to experience the western lifestyle. His six articles in *Century Magazine* (a popular illustrated magazine of the day), later published as *Ranch Life and the Hunting Trail* (Roosevelt 1983), seemed to particularly enhance the popularity of western adventures (e.g., Borne 1983; Morris 1979). Roosevelt became a frequent visitor of Howard Eaton's (Borne 1983:21) and he discussed the colorful aspects of ranch life in a number of his articles.

According to Borne, there were two major phases to the development of dude ranching. Since the first phase was largely dependent on railroad transportation, ranches near depots such as Medora were the first to benefit from the new industry. The second phase is associated with the increase in automobile travel and the development of the state highway systems. By 1920, increased leisure time and the availability of the automobile made dude ranches popular destinations for highway travelers.

Dude ranches contributed to the economic development of both the community and the state. The ranches frequently offered activities and meals at neighboring ranches, thus proving a needed source of supplemental income. In addition, new employment opportunities became available and local services, such as mercantile businesses, all



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benefited from the guests. Of particular regional importance was the symbiotic relationship that developed between the railroads and the dude ranches. The Northern Pacific, for instance, produced advertising brochures that described attractions along its route. These attractions included Peaceful Valley Ranch, which was described in one of the company's brochures from the 1920s (Northern Pacific Railway n.d.). These efforts, in turn, no doubt benefited both the ranch and the local community.

Although dude ranching provided some supplemental income to ranches during the Great Depression, its heyday was earlier, at the end of the 1920s (Borne 1983:80). The industry survived the Depression by stressing simplicity and escape from economic turmoil (Borne 1983).

Dude Ranching at Peaceful Valley Ranch (1918 -- 1934)

County deed records establish that George Burgess sold the property to H. (Harry) W. Olsen in 1915. Intermediate land transfers within the Olsen family between 1915 and 1924 eventually left Carl B. Olsen with ownership of the ranch. Like many ranch operators, Carl Olsen began taking in guests and eventually acquiesced to their requests for ranch-related activities (Olsen, January 1992). This led to the establishment of an organized dude ranching operation at the Peaceful Valley Ranch by 1918. With the movement of the Eaton's dude ranching operations to Wyoming, the Custer Trail Ranch reverted back to a "stock ranch" (Halliday, August 19, 1970). This left Peaceful Valley Ranch as the only active dude ranch in the Medora area (Olsen, January 1992).

Tom Olsen, Carl's son, states that the proximity of the ranch to the petrified forest (approximately four miles to the northwest) attracted visitors and people began camping in the cottonwood trees near the ranch. Olsen began to offer trips to the petrified forest, and by 1920 had developed guest facilities. Like many dude ranches of the time Peaceful Valley had a log main lodge with a large fireplace, guest cabins, a bath house, barns, and corrals. Activities for the guests included trips to neighboring ranches, overnight campouts, cookouts, branding, roundups and moonlight rides. The Neuens ranch was a particularly popular stop on Sunday afternoons; Mrs. Neuens is remembered as a wonderful cook and Mr. Neuens as a great story teller (Olsen, January 1992).

On March 9, 1922, Carl Olsen filed a Farm Name Certificate with the Register of Deeds, Billings County and, for the first time, the property became officially registered as the Peaceful Valley Ranch. Despite citations referring to the "Old Lamb Ranch" (e.g., Mattison 1961), Peaceful Valley is the name most prominently associated with the ranch

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after this date. Although it is not specifically known why the name Peaceful Valley was chosen, the images such a name evokes were used prominently in advertising material of the period, including that of the Northern Pacific Railroad (Northern Pacific Railway n.d.).

Peaceful Valley Ranch is significant for its association with the development of dude ranching during the second, or "golden era," of that industry. The house, barn, and lodge were all in use as part of the dude ranching facilities. While other elements of the dude ranch (such as the guest cabins) are no longer in existence, Peaceful Valley Ranch is still believed to be the best preserved (if not the only) example of early twentieth century dude ranching within the state. From the standpoint of local significance, Peaceful Valley Ranch was almost certainly the most important guest ranch in the Medora area after the Eaton brothers moved their operations to Wyoming in 1903-1904.

Peaceful Valley Ranch and Development of Theodore Roosevelt National Park (1934 -- 1959)

Shortly after the National Park Service (NPS) was established in 1916, various initiatives were launched to establish a national park within the North Dakota badlands. Some of the principal proponents of such a park were the Roosevelt Memorial Park Association (later the Greater North Dakota Association), North Dakota Congressman William Lemke, and Carl Olsen, owner of the Peaceful Valley Ranch. Largely at the urging of Olsen (Brooks and Mattison 1958:49), in 1921 the North Dakota Legislature passed a resolution urging the United States Congress to establish Theodore Roosevelt Park.

Although this initiative was unsuccessful, the impetus for a park continued. While the National Park Service, between 1916 and the early 1920s, advocated the enlargement of the park system, by 1924, a flood of questionable schemes for new parks caused the service to begin actively discouraging most proposals (Harmon 1986:2-4). This meant that any groups wishing to establish a new park had to vigorously promote their areas with both Congress and NPS. One of the many ways of "selling" the idea of the park in the 1920s was to sponsor promotional tours through the badlands. Hosted by Roosevelt Memorial Park Association, at least two such tours were conducted, one in 1925 and one in 1928 (Gratton 1984). These trips took North Dakota officials, congressmen, and NPS representatives through the proposed park area to acquaint them with the scenic beauty and historic character of the area. The 1928 trip included then NPS Director Stephen Mather. Harmon (1986) believes the trip was instrumental in gaining Mather's support for the idea of a national monument designation for the area.

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One of the main stop overs on the badlands trips of 1925 and 1928 was Olsen's Peaceful Valley Ranch. The ranch served as a focal point of the trip and introduced the visitors to ranch life as it might have existed during Roosevelt's stay in the area. An account from the 1925 trip summarizes the activities that took place at the ranch:

About 5 o'clock the party was conveyed by car to Carl B. Olsen's Pleasant [sic] Valley ranch, five miles north of Medora, from which point the trip through the Bad Lands really began. Eight tents were up, each accommodating eight persons, the sleeping accommodations being cots -- as far as they went -- and ticks filled with straw, with plenty of blankets. The cook wagon and its attendants, just as arranged on the old-time round-up trips, was in charge of [sic] "Bill" Nueun, a rancher whose place is eight miles down the river from the Olsen ranch, with crops of assistants, and right here we want to say a better cook was never on the range . . . .

After the supper and the smokes, "Bill" McCarthy put on a good show of bronco busting, riding, roping, etc., in the ranch carrol [sic] that was greatly enjoyed by all . . . . In due and lengthy course of time that night the weary bunch "hit the hay," but were roused up at 2 a.m. by a bunch of cowboys coming into camp with all the gusto of the olden days . . . .

After breakfast wagons were hitched and ponies saddled for the trip to the petrified forest. There were 67 guests in the procession besides the drivers . . . .

Returning to the Peaceful Valley ranch the members of the party were guests of Carl Olsen at a chicken dinner after which the real start was made down the river with wagons and saddle horses . . . . [The Beach Advance 1925]

Peaceful Valley Ranch played an important role in the development of Theodore Roosevelt National Park. Carl Olsen was a major advocate for a national park in the badlands of western North Dakota and, as noted above, the ranch setting itself was used as one of the major focal points for the 1925 and 1928 tours of the proposed park area. Without the influence of Carl Olsen and the "old-time" ranch life demonstrated at Peaceful Valley Ranch, it is questionable whether or not Theodore Roosevelt National Park would have come into existence. *The Beach Advance* (June 25, 1925), for instance, refers to Olsen as the 'daddy' of the national park idea," while Harmon (1986:11) credits the 1928 fact-finding tour as influencing Director Mather and other NPS personnel

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to "cautiously, and tentatively, recommend national monument status."

In 1936, Carl Olsen sold the Peaceful Valley Ranch to the federal government. This large block of land became the core of the southern unit of what became the Roosevelt Recreation Demonstration Area. The Emergency Relief Administration erected a number of new buildings at the ranch and these, along with the older ranch buildings, served as headquarters, first for the Demonstration Area and later (until 1959) for the National Memorial Park.

Peaceful Valley Ranch served as headquarters for the first 25 years of the park's existence (i.e., 1934 through 1959; this calculation takes into account the various forms of administration that the park went through in its early history). The ranch house served as the park custodian's (later, superintendent's) residence. These early years were instrumental in the development of the park's basic facilities and formulation of its overall orientation as both a scenic and a historic resource.

From 1956 to 1966, as a result of the work of Conrad Wirth, director of the National Park Service, funds were made available to make a number of improvements possible within parks nationwide. Dubbed "Mission 66" because the development period spanned from 1956 to 1966, the program resulted in a number of developments in Theodore Roosevelt National Park, including the construction of a park Visitor Center/Headquarters building in Medora in 1959. Direct NPS use of the Peaceful Valley Ranch was gradually phased out between 1959 and 1965 and the buildings that had sprung up as part of headquarters development were subsequently removed. In 1967, Peaceful Valley Ranch was opened as a concession area specializing in horseback rentals and trail rides. While the current buildings are only a remnant of the park's first headquarters area, they are still significant reminders of the park's earliest period of development.

Architectural Significance of Peaceful Valley Ranch

The historic buildings at Peaceful Valley Ranch are also significant examples of late nineteenth and early twentieth century architecture. Although they have experienced some changes, they retain sufficient integrity to embody distinctive characteristics of their type, period, and method of construction. Taken together, the three buildings represent the changing functions of the ranch from the period of open range ranching through early park development. These buildings are some of the last vestiges of these periods, in their original settings, within Theodore Roosevelt National Park. Through the scene created by

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these three buildings, it is possible to visualize some of the most important aspects of the development of rural western North Dakota.

The frame construction of the ranch house (HS-1) is rare for the open-range ranches of western North Dakota (Schweigert 1987). This is supported by statements made by Chris Rasmussen that the Lamb house was the first frame structure on the Little Missouri (Arnold Goplen interview, July 23, 1956). Dimensioned lumber was available only through ordering from an outside source and having it shipped in on the railroad. Based on the number of log buildings constructed, many residents of the Medora area did not have the means to purchase dimensioned lumber or even adequate methods of transport for the lumber during the open range ranching era. It is unknown exactly why Ben Lamb had both the desire for and the means to acquire these hard to get building materials for his home. Although it cannot be conclusively demonstrated, it seems probable that Lamb took advantage of the large quantities of lumber being brought into Medora for the Marquis de Mores' building projects. It may not be a simple coincidence that the suggested 1883 to 1885 construction dates for Lamb's house correspond with the 1883 through 1885 building of the Chateau de Mores and the de Mores packing plant (Tweton 1972:33-39), both of which contained dimensioned lumber.

Its construction methods aside, the ranch house is one of only two remaining buildings from the open-range ranching era in the park (the other being the relocated Maltese Cross cabin), and one of only a few in the state. As such, it provides an important physical link to both the history and the economic development of western North Dakota. The adaptation of the house to meet the needs of a dude ranch and park headquarters took place during the ranch's period of significance and "illustrates changing tastes, attitudes, and uses over a period of time" (USDI, National Park Service 1991:19).

The basic form of the log bunkhouse (HS-4), if recovered, represents the dude ranching era at Peaceful Valley Ranch. As far as can be presently documented, this is the only remaining early dude ranching lodge in North Dakota. Previous research (e.g., Schweigert 1983), for instance, does not indicate that the Custer Trail Ranch lodge is still in existence. As discussed in Section 7, a poor quality, but usable, illustration of the bunkhouse interior does exist. This illustration could be a valuable asset in reestablishing the appearance of the original interior when the building was used as a lodge and recreation hall. The fireplace, an important feature of the lodge's main room, is known to be intact behind more recent wall covering. While a frame addition was added to the back of the building in 1950, the lodge's

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facade and gable ends are essentially unchanged from the period of construction.

Built in 1905, the log barn (HS-15) is significant as a good example of early 20th century vernacular architecture, and as the only animal facility relating to early ranching activities that survives in the park. It was used originally as an animal facility, first as part of a cattle ranch, subsequently as part of Olsen's dude ranch. Beginning in the late 1930s the barn was used by the NPS as a multipurpose facility: a blacksmith shop, horse barn (N. end), carpentry and maintenance shop, and storage area (S. end). It is now used in the summers as a horse riding concession, with the north end used for the storage of feed and equipment, and the south portion used as an office and tack room.

The barn is also significant because it represents the transition between open-range and fee simple ranching. It is evidence of the recognized need for more substantial animal shelters on the Northern Plains (it replaced less substantial shelters of simple upright pole construction). In most respects, the barn's appearance is much as it was when it was constructed. Although the interior has gone through a number of modifications, these changes reflect simple maintenance and improvements; they did not alter the essential form, fabric, or function of the barn. As the history of the ranch has evolved, the barn has remained an important and integral element of the facility.

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(Interviews)

Three basic types of interview data were available for this study: (a) present day interviews conducted both by phone and in Medora during the field investigations, (b) taped interviews on file at Theodore Roosevelt National Park, and (c) Arnold O. Goplen's notes on interviews conducted in 1939.

Mary Lebo Gilham knew Benjamin F. Lamb, one of the early owners of the ranch. An interview with Mrs. Gilham is on file at Theodore Roosevelt National Park, Medora, ND.

Marge Neuens Gratton is the daughter of W. M. Neuens, an area rancher, and the widow of Weldon Gratton, an employee of both the Civilian Conservation Corps and the National Park Service during the development of the park. Mrs. Gratton was interviewed in November 1991 at Medora. She also visited the ranch with the authors of this nomination.

Weldon Gratton was a landscape architect and National Park Service employee. Mr. Gratton was active in the development of the park. An interview conducted by Dick Maeder with Mr. Gratton is on file at the National Park Service, Medora.

Lena Halliday lived at a nearby ranch and was familiar with the history of the Peaceful Valley Ranch and its buildings. An interview with Mrs. Halliday conducted by James Eckman, National Park Service, is on file at Theodore Roosevelt National Park, Medora. She was interviewed August 19, 1970.

Einar Justesen, a National Park Service employee, is familiar both with area history and with the maintenance history of the Peaceful Valley Ranch. He was interviewed in November of 1991 at Medora.

S. N. Lebo was an early resident of the area and had knowledge of ranch history. An abbreviated version of the letters that Mr. Lebo

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wrote to Arnold Goplen is in the Goplen Papers at the State Historical Society of North Dakota.

W. M. Neuens, a local rancher, participated in the Peaceful Valley Dude Ranch operation, worked for the Civilian Conservation Corps, and lived at the ranch during the 1940s. The historian Arnold Goplen conducted several interviews with Neuens. Some information from those interviews was found within the Goplen Papers stored at the State Historical Society of North Dakota.

Tom Olsen is the son of Carl Olsen, operator of the Peaceful Valley Dude Ranch in the 1920s and 1930s. Mr. Olsen now resides in Idaho and was interviewed by phone in January 1992.

Wally Owen is the present concessionaire at Peaceful Valley Ranch and a Medora resident. He was interviewed in November of 1991 near Medora.

J. C. (Chris) Rasmussen worked for G. E. Burgess, an early owner of the ranch, and was familiar with the history of the ranch and its buildings. Information obtained from Mr. Rasmussen is in the Goplen Papers at the State Historical Society of North Dakota.

Mrs. J. C. Rasmussen lived with her husband at the Peaceful Valley Ranch from 1906 to 1908. Sally Johnson's condensation of her interview with Mrs. Rasmussen is on file at Theodore Roosevelt National Park, Medora.

J. J. Tomamichel was an early twentieth century resident of the area. Information he provided Arnold Goplen is available in the Goplen Papers at the State Historical Society of North Dakota.

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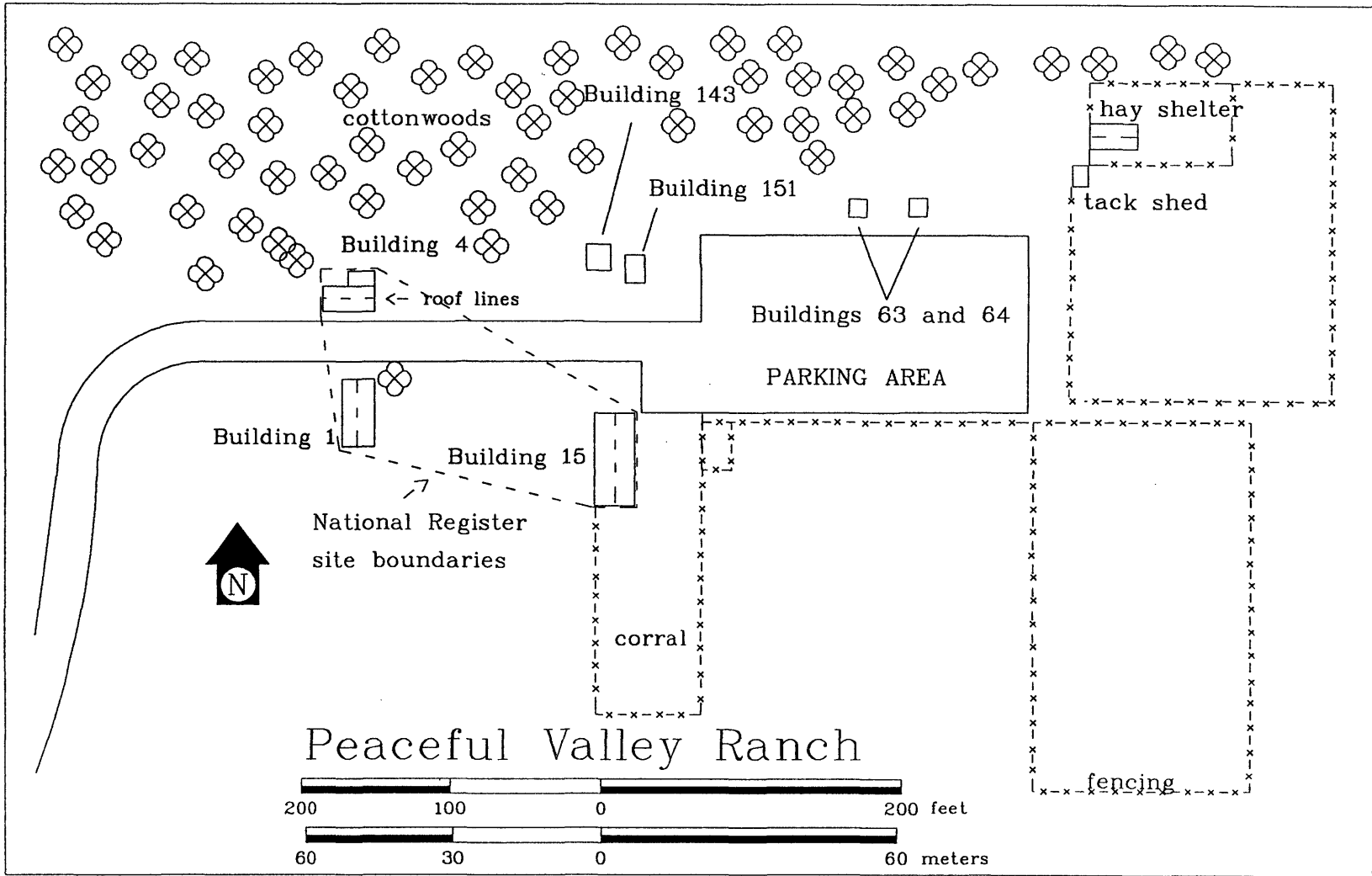
**Verbal boundary description**

SE 1/4 of the NE 1/4 of the NE 1/4, Section 11, T 140 N, R 101 W;  
and  
SW 1/4 of the NW 1/4 of the NW 1/4, Section 12, T 140 N, R 101 W

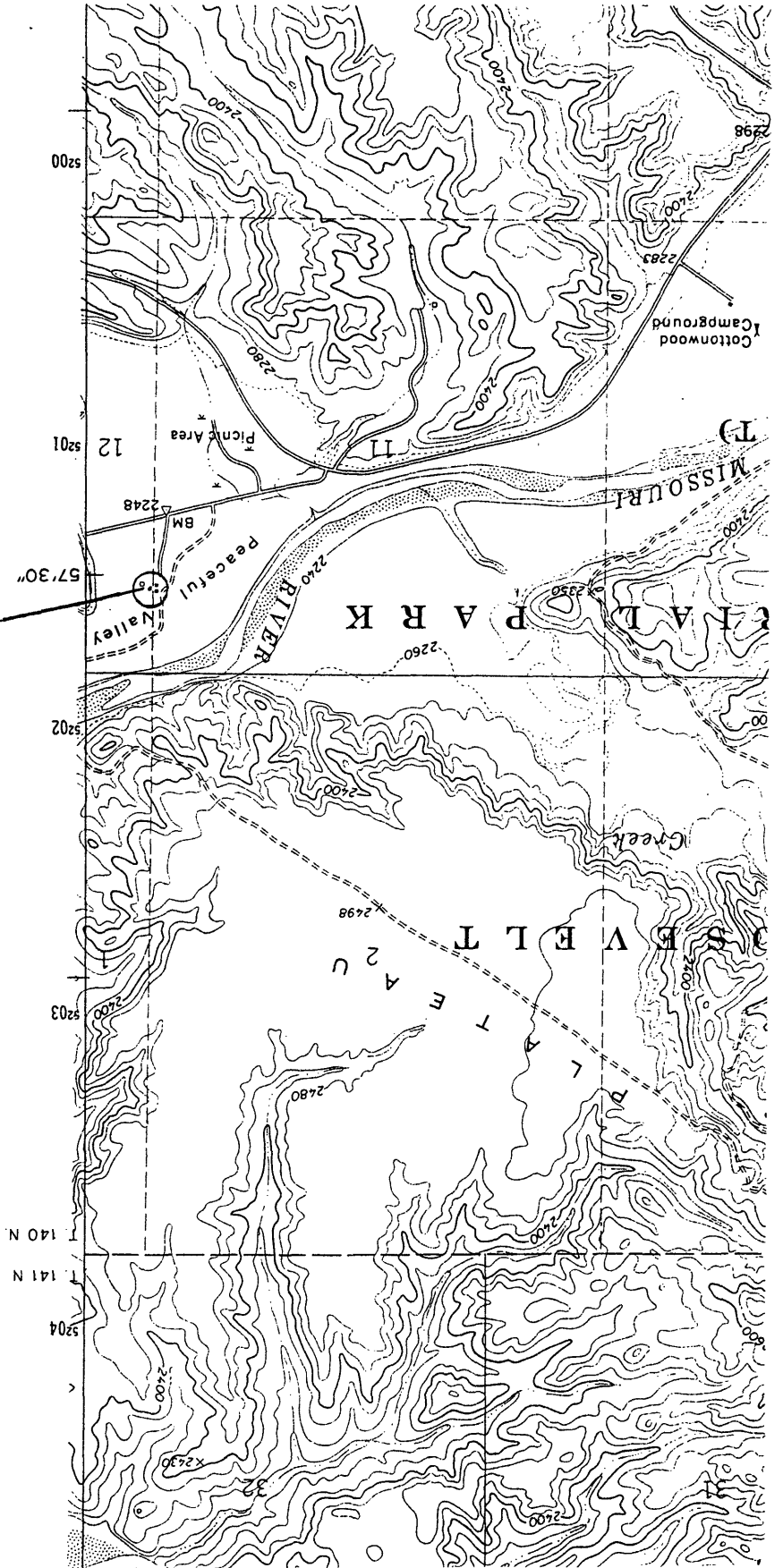
The boundary of the property is shown as the dotted line on the accompanying site map entitled "Peaceful Valley Ranch."

**Boundary Justification**

The nominated property includes only the three ranch buildings historically associated with Peaceful Valley Ranch. The boundary is drawn to immediately encompass the resources and excludes modern structures.



Quadrangle: Medora, North Dakota  
Scale: 1:24,000  
UTM Reference: Zone 13, 613860 mE, 5201450 mN



Peaceful Valley Ranch  
Billings County,  
North Dakota  
UTM Reference:  
13/613860/5201450

