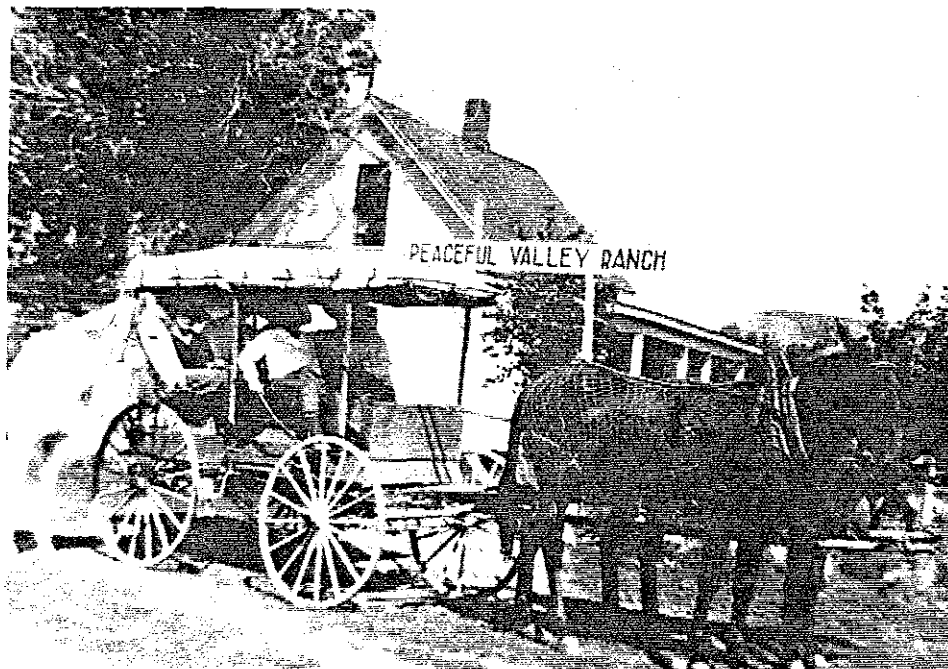


PEACEFUL VALLEY RANCH:
AN EXTENDED NARRATIVE HISTORY



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cover photo: ca. 1925 photo from Peaceful Valley Ranch, courtesy of Wally Owen,
Medora, North Dakota

PREFACE STATEMENT
TO
PEACEFUL VALLEY RANCH: AN EXTENDED NARRATIVE HISTORY

This report was prepared under contract with Larson-Tibesar Associates, Inc., with generous financial support from the Theodore Roosevelt Nature and History Association. The contract also called for preparation of a National Register of Historic Places nomination for the historic resources at Peaceful Valley Ranch. Subsequent to the contractor's submittals of these products, review comments required that some changes be made to them. Most changes were editorial in nature, with one exception: reviewers (in the regional office, the North Dakota State Historic Preservation Office, and the National Register of Historic Places) agreed that the property did not meet National Register criteria for eligibility under Criteria B, which the contractor had argued in their report and nomination. Consequently, revisions were made to the documentation to drop references to it being eligible under this criterion. (Historical information about Benjamin Lamb, however, was left in the report.) A request was also made to revise some of the information written about the Marquis de Morés. All technical and substantive changes to the original report and nomination were made by Historian Kathy McKoy, Rocky Mountain Regional Office, June 1994.

ABSTRACT

The Peaceful Valley Ranch was founded by Benjamin Lamb in the 1880s. Three buildings survive from the ranch's historic period -- the barn, lodge, and ranch house. These buildings reflect significant associations with the development of open range cattle ranching, recreational dude ranch operations, and the National Park system in the region. Because these late nineteenth and early twentieth century resources illustrate the changing tastes, uses, and building traditions associated with typical ranch development, the Peaceful Valley Ranch is eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places under criteria A and C.

I. INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

The research documented in this extended narrative history was completed by Larson-Tibesar Associates, Inc. under Purchase Order PX1540-1-0231 issued by Theodore Roosevelt National Park. The purpose of the study is to discuss the history and character of Peaceful Valley Ranch. The property, presently within the boundaries of the South Unit of the park (Figure 1.1), is the site of an early open range cattle ranch and a later dude ranch.

The National Park Service (USDI, National Park Service 1991a) has listed a set of specific objectives for the Peaceful Valley Ranch study. The study is to provide:

- 1) Extended narrative history of Peaceful Valley Ranch, its owners, buildings, and land use, from its inception to present;
- 2) Development of historic context for evaluation as to eligibility for National Register of Historic Places; and
- 3) National Register Documentation.

A set of specific criteria has been developed (e.g., USDI, National Park Service 1991b) for determining eligibility for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. From the standpoint of Peaceful Valley Ranch, the most important of these criteria are its association with historic events and distinctive physical characteristics. The rationale for these assessments is presented in the final chapter of this report as well as in the National Register documentation supplied to the National Park Service.

In addition to National Register eligibility standards, the North Dakota State Historic Preservation Plan must also be taken into account in the assessment of eligibility. Within the state plan, existing or proposed contexts that are viewed as especially important to the Peaceful Valley Ranch study are: (a) open range ranching, (b) rural settlement (dude ranching), and (c) the development of Theodore Roosevelt National Park (the contextual terms used here are in agreement with those in use, or proposed for use, by the North Dakota State Historic Preservation Office). These are discussed in detail in Chapter 3. While a preliminary context statement for open range ranching has already been developed (State Historic Society of North Dakota n.d.), contextual information has had to be developed within this report for rural settlement (dude ranching) and the development of Theodore Roosevelt National Park.

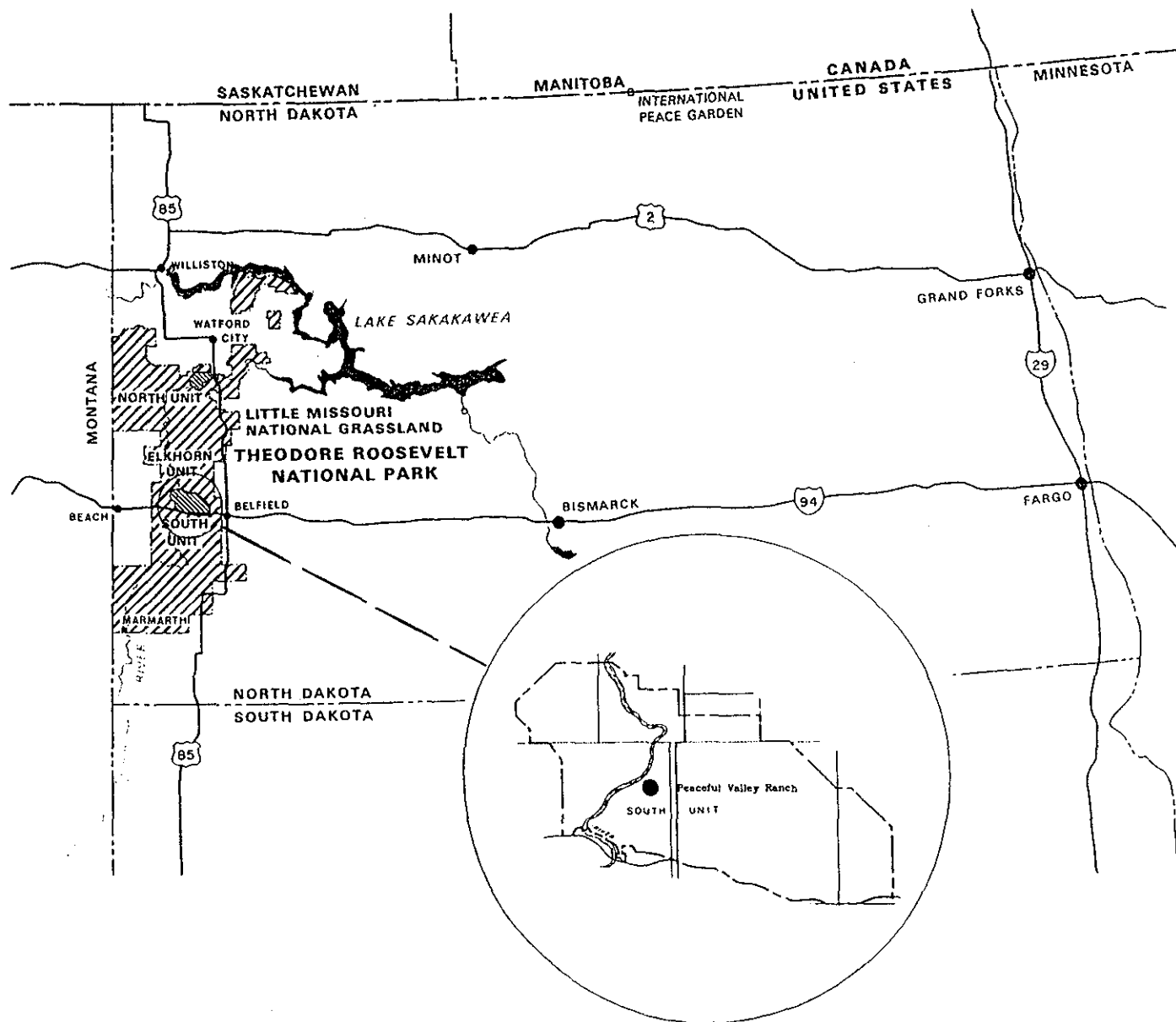


Figure 1.1. Map of North Dakota illustrating the location of Peaceful Valley Ranch (adapted from USDI, National Park 1987).

All of the architectural recording and much of the archival research for the project were completed between November 4 and November 10, 1991 by Dori M. Penny and Thomas K. Larson. Additional phone interviews and photo documentation were carried out from December, 1991 through March, 1992.

PROJECT SETTING

Theodore Roosevelt National Park is in the badlands of western North Dakota.

Brigadier General Alfred Sully wrote the following description of the badlands in 1864:

When I came in sight of this country from the top of the table-land we were marching on, I became alarmed, and almost despaired of ever being able to cross it, and should have been very much tempted, had I rations enough, to turn back . . . I have not sufficient power of language to describe the country in front of us. It was grand, dismal, and majestic. You can imagine a great basin, 600 feet deep and twenty-five miles in diameter, filled with a number of cones and over-shaped knolls of all sizes, from twenty feet to several hundred feet high, sometimes by themselves, sometimes piled up into large heaps on top of one another, in all conceivable shapes and confusion. Most of these hills were of a gray clay, but many of a light brick color of burnt clay; little or no vegetation. Some of the sides of the hills, however, were covered with a few scrub cedars. . . we marched through a most wonderful and interesting country. It was covered with pieces of petrified wood, and on the tops of some of the hills we found petrified stumps of trees, the remains of a great forest . . . The banks of the Little Missouri are thickly timbered with cottonwood, and the river resembles very much the Missouri on a small scale [Brooks 1953: 77-78].

Within the South Unit of the park, the Little Missouri has cut a moderately wide trench through highly dissected Paleocene deposits. The Peaceful Valley Ranch is on a terrace above the Little Missouri River, near the confluence of Paddock Creek and the river. The ranch is in an area that is subject to periodic flooding; a near 100-year flood caused some damage to the buildings at the ranch in 1947 (Torres 1980).

Western North Dakota has a semiarid continental climate with warm summers and cold winters. About half of the precipitation occurs as thunderstorms during the early months of the summer (Kuehn 1990:21). Accumulations of snow are common during most of the winter months. As a result, roads are often closed from December until April (USDI, National Park Service 1987:9).

II. METHODS

ARCHIVAL RESEARCH

To gather pertinent historical information for the project, documentary information was examined at Theodore Roosevelt National Park, the Billings County Courthouse and Museum, the North Dakota Heritage Center, the Western History Collections at the University of Wyoming, and the Special Collections section, Chester Fritz Library, University of North Dakota.

Materials consulted at Theodore Roosevelt National Park include reports of previous cultural resource studies conducted in the park, the research notes of Chester Brooks, Arnold Goplen, Ray Mattison, and Sally Johnson, list of classified structures cards (a system used by the National Park Service to inventory and trace the physical history of their buildings), taped and/or transcribed oral history interviews, and museum collections (including photographs).

The Billings County Courthouse contains deed records and plats for areas in and around the Peaceful Valley Ranch. The county's museum contains copies of the various newspapers that have operated in the area. The State Archives section of the North Dakota Heritage Center contains the papers of Lewis F. Crawford and Arnold O. Goplen.

Materials related to open range ranching and dude ranching were inspected at the Western History Collections, American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming. Additional open range ranching materials and general historic data for southwestern North Dakota were examined at the Special Collections section of the Chester Fritz Library at the University of North Dakota. In addition to the above sources, newspaper articles, photographs, and other memorabilia from private collections were examined.

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.

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 report.

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 Theodore Roosevelt National Park.

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.

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

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 early 1992.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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

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.

ARCHITECTURAL RECORDING

Architectural recording was conducted using standard methods that conform to State Historical Society of North Dakota requirements. The information recorded for each building includes, but is not limited to, plan shape, structural system, primary and secondary exterior finishes, foundation materials, roof type, window condition, and overall condition. Each building was photographed from opposing corners. Where possible, all elevations of a building and any significant details (e.g., log joinery) were also photographed. English system measurements of each building's exterior plan and a site map were also completed.

It should be noted that a great deal of architectural information for the ranch was compiled during a study by Conservation Services (Goodall 1985). That study constitutes a preservation plan and includes condition assessments of the three oldest buildings at the Peaceful Valley Ranch.

III. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

EARLY HISTORY

Human occupation in the badlands began about 10,000 years ago and is marked by the presence of Agate Basin projectile points (Kuehn 1990:26). These artifacts are the earliest evidence of what was probably nearly continuous utilization, if not occupation, of the badlands (Gregg 1985; North Dakota State Historic Preservation Office 1990). During the Late Prehistoric period, Woodland groups, Plains Village tradition horticulturalists, and Plains hunter-gatherers probably all utilized the area at least on an intermittent basis.

In the 1500s, when Europeans were first encountering the Native Americans in what is now eastern Canada and the United States, the badlands were occupied or utilized by the Crow, Mandan, Hidatsa, Arikara, and Assiniboin peoples (McNickle 1970:Map 1). Later, equestrian nomads such as the Cheyenne, Shoshoni, Dakota, and Atsina were present in the badlands and surrounding areas.

The desire for new fur trading partners was the impetus for much of the early exploration of western North America. Between 1738 and 1743, the La Verendryes explored a large area southwest of present day Winnipeg, Manitoba, including much of what is now North Dakota. The first expedition, led by the Sieur de la Verendrye, visited a number of locations along the Missouri River. The record of European travel and utilization of the badlands begins with the 1742 to 1743 journal of the Chevalier de la Verendrye, a son who led an expedition attempting to discover the "Sea of the West." In 1742, the Chevalier describes passing through "a region of many-colored earths" before reaching the "mountain" of the Gens de Chevaux.

The region of many-colored earths is surely in the western Dakotas, where the badland topography is so colorful Although no identification of the "mountain" is really possible, a clear candidate is White Butte in southwestern North Dakota it is the highest point in the state -- surely an excellent place for the signal fires the Verendrye brothers were to kindle [Smith 1980:117-119].

The next well recorded expedition is that of Francois Laroque and Charles MacKenzie, who traveled in or near the badlands in 1805 during their passage from the Assiniboine River to the Yellowstone River (Burpee 1910). The expedition was sponsored by the North West Company for the purpose of enlarging the company's fur trading area (Burpee 1910). Fur traders continued to travel through the badlands up until the time the market diminished (ca. 1850; Brooks 1953).

John Palliser, an English sportsman, hunted in the badlands in 1848 and later published a book entitled *Solitary Rambles and Adventures of a Hunter in the Prairies*. The book is believed to have stimulated the hunting expedition boom in the area later in the century (Brooks 1953:40,43). Palliser is also noted for having commanded the 1857 British expedition that participated in establishing the boundary between Canada and the United States west of the Red River (Lass 1980).

The route of a number of trails, including the Sully 1864 Expedition Trail and the 1876 Custer Trail, are south of the boundaries of the South Unit of the park. Charles Larpenteur, a fur trader and Brig. Gen. Sully's commissary for the expedition, later reminisced about Sully's desire to take a route through the badlands -- "This made me observe that I thought he would have a great deal of trouble in getting through with his command; but with a map and some good brandy in Chouteau's office, one can get through anywhere" (Brooks 1953:66). Sully has been quoted as saying that the badlands were "hell with the fires put out" (Morris 1979:212; Brooks 1953:78).

The 1876 Custer Trail is part of the route that Lt. Col. George A. Custer took from Fort Abraham Lincoln to his engagement with Dakota and Cheyenne in southern Montana. Custer's "snow camp" is near the South Unit. Following Custer's defeat at the Battle of the Little Bighorn, extensive military campaigns were carried out against the Indians during the rest of 1876 and through 1877. The Black Hills, the Powder River Basin, and other traditional hunting areas were forcibly seized and Native American domination of the Northwestern Plains ended. Most Dakota bands were forced onto reservations bordering the Missouri River in Dakota Territory.

The Northern Pacific Railroad reached the Little Missouri River in 1880 and was linked with the western portion of the line by 1883. While protecting the Northern Pacific construction workers, the army camped at Cantonment Bad Lands about three-fourths of a mile northwest of what is now Medora (Robinson 1966:185).

Large, open spaces and an apparent abundance of grass were present in the Little Missouri region. The construction of a railhead provided the final element necessary for successful open range ranching, a way to ship the cattle to market.

OPEN RANGE RANCHING

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.

Open range ranching depended on (a) controlling large areas for grazing, and (b) transportation for shipping the cattle to market. While early elements of an open range operation involved a southern "home ranch" for breeding and the famous trail drives to the northern grasslands, these factors became less important as transportation routes were constructed and northern ranch communities developed.

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 (see Chapter 4). 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. Stories about the area were also related to him by the publisher George H. Putnam and George C. Lee, Roosevelt's father-in-law (McCullough 1981:317-318; Morris 1979:198). It was a conversation at a party, however, that prompted Roosevelt's first trip to the badlands in 1883.

There was at the party a certain Commander H. H. Gorringe, who happened to share Roosevelt's dreams of a more powerful American Navy The papers were full of newspaper articles about hunting ranches in the Far West, where wealthy dudes from New York were invited to come in search of buffalo. By a strange coincidence, Commander Gorringe had just been West, and was in the process of opening a hunting ranch there himself. When Roosevelt wistfully remarked that he would like to shoot a buffalo "while there were still buffalo left to shoot," Gorringe, scenting business, suggested a trip to the Bad Lands of Dakota Territory.

The Commander said that he had bought an abandoned army cantonment there, at a railroad depot on the banks of the Little Missouri. Although the cantonment was not yet ready to receive paying guests, there was a hotel -- of sorts -- at the depot, plus a few stores and a saloon where hunting guides might be found and hired . . . Gorringe added that he was returning to Little Missouri in the fall. Perhaps Roosevelt would like to come along [Morris 1979:198].

Gorringe withdrew from the planned trip shortly before it was to begin, in September of 1883. Roosevelt traveled alone to the badlands. At Medora, he engaged Joe Ferris as his guide for the buffalo hunt. 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. Prior to Roosevelt's purchase of the Maltese Cross, Ferris and Merrifield had managed the ranch for two investors operating as Wadsworth and Hawley of Minneapolis (Brooks and Mattison 1983:21). For approximately \$12,000, Roosevelt's initial investment involved the purchase 400 cattle and "range rights" (Brooks and Mattison 1983:21). In the West, range rights are the claims to the use of public land, grazed on, but not actually owned, by the rancher.

When the Maltese Cross 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 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 Morés. 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.

De Morés was a colorful and complex personality whose business and political ventures had impacts in both America and Europe. In his biography of the Marquis, Tweton (1972:213-214) describes him as approaching life

. . . with vigor, optimism, boldness, and determination; yet, frustration and failure dogged his footsteps in Medora and Paris. . . .

The Marquis confronts the modern biographer, just as he did the people of his day, as an almost unfathomable personality: a capitalist with little of his own capital, a "revolutionary" who on the first May Day opposed obstructing traffic, an anti-Semite who borrowed money from a Jew, a socialist who defended property, an aristocrat who hobnobbed with butchers and street politicians. To many Frenchmen he was a disruptive and violent force; others hailed him as a champion and perhaps a savior. Some Dakotans thought him "a bit crazy" and looked at him through hostile eyes as an outsider; others called him the *avant-garde* of civilization and culture. On one thing, however, most could agree: he was not a man who could be ignored.

Despite the failure of his meat packing plant, the Marquis de Morés 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 Morés, the de Morés 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.

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

Those ranching operations that survived changed to include the stockpiling of winter feed and the construction of shelters for their stock. 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. Additionally, 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). The homesteading of the badlands was part of the second boom of settlement recognized by some historians (e.g., Robinson 1966). 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. Characteristics that developed during the period, however, continue to operate in western North Dakota and other parts of the West up to the present time.

The transition from open range ranching to fee simple ranching was not rapid or dramatic, however. The typical homestead settler in many areas of the region raised livestock as well as cash grain crops, and homesteaders often ran stock in common with others on open public and private lands. Some range lands remained in the public domain throughout the homestead period. The out-migration of homesteaders allowed ranchers and neighboring settlers to purchase patented lands at little cost, which resulted in a gradual reaccumulation of territory controlled and used by stock growers. Grazing leases on the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation in eastern McKenzie and Dunn Counties provided summer grazing for relatively large herds, which helped to maintain the dominance of the range cattle industry in the local economy. In the 1930s the federal government bought cattle which were otherwise unmarketable, and it bought patented lands to be returned to grazing status as the Little Missouri National Grasslands, both of which encouraged retention of the ranching lifestyle in the region.

DUDE RANCHING

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. Borne (1983:21) recognizes the 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. A dude is defined as "someone who lived elsewhere, usually the Midwest or East, came west, and paid for riding, lodging, meals, and other services" (Borne 1983:39; in this paper the words dude and guest are used interchangeably).

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 Custer Trail Ranch was operated by a partnership until the mid-1880s (see above). While it is not clear when the other partnerships were dissolved, A. C. Huidekoper's amicable departure after the winter of 1886 and 1887 left the ranch solely in the ownership of the Eaton brothers (Borne 1983:22). 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). The Custer Trail Ranch was near the Maltese Cross Ranch. 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 (1983), 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.

In a curious way, the war [World War I] had a beneficial effect on dude ranching. Because Europe was virtually closed to travel, Americans began exploring their own country for vacation sites and areas of scenic beauty. The U. S. Department of the Interior was also increasing its advertising of U. S. national parks as a virtual "See America First" campaign developed, and this helped draw many Americans westward All these factors, especially the "discovery" of the West by easterners, plus the ranches already in existence, set the stage for the golden decade of dude ranching from 1919 to 1929. During this period many new ranches began, dude ranching spread to other states, existing ranches matured, and there were attempts to organize this new industry [Borne 1983:39-40].

The Peaceful Valley Ranch, owned by Carl Olsen, began to offer dude ranching services in 1918 and had formalized its facilities for guests by 1920. With the movement of the Eaton's dude ranching operations to Wyoming, the Custer Trail Ranch reverted back to a "stock ranch" (interview with Lena Halliday, August 19, 1970 conducted by James Eckman, National Park Service). This left Peaceful Valley as the only active dude ranch in the Medora area in 1918 (personal communication, Tom Olsen, January 1992).

Like many dude ranches of the time (e.g., Borne 1983:122), Peaceful Valley had a log main lodge with a large fireplace, guest cabins, bath house, barns, and corrals within view of the guest cabins. These buildings are discussed in Chapter 4.

Dude ranches contributed to the economic development of both the community and the state. The ranches frequently offered activities through neighboring ranches, such arrangements between the Peaceful Valley Ranch and the Neuens Ranch. This relationship, described in Chapter 4, included providing meals and activities for the Peaceful Valley guests. In addition, new employment opportunities became available and local services, such as mercantile businesses, all benefited from the ranches' 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 years of 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).

PARK DEVELOPMENT

A number of histories (e.g., Brooks and Mattison 1958; Harmon 1986; Petty 1965, 1968; Strand 1962) have been compiled for Theodore Roosevelt National Park. No attempt is made here to expand upon the information provided in those studies. What follows is a brief descriptive summary of the development of Theodore Roosevelt National Park with special emphasis on the roles played by Peaceful Valley Ranch and its owners or occupants.

Shortly after the National Park Service was established in 1916, various initiatives developed to establish a national park within the North Dakota badlands. Some of the main 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. Apparently 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.

Although the National Park Service was, between 1916 and the early 1920s, advocating 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 Park Service representatives through the proposed park area to acquaint them to the scenic beauty and historic character of the area. The 1928 trip included Stephen Mather, then National Park Service Director. Harmon (1986) believes the trip was instrumental in gaining Mather's support for the idea of a national monument designation for the area.

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].

While these activities no doubt greatly influenced the ultimate development of the park, it was the New Deal programs of the 1930s which provided the funding and manpower to get the developments started. In 1934, a cooperative agreement was signed by the Resettlement Administration, the Civilian Conservation Corps, and the state of North Dakota for the purpose of implementing the Roosevelt Regional Park project.

. . . most of what was purchased under the auspices of the Resettlement Act is now part of the Little Missouri National Grasslands. Part of the new federal holdings was earmarked for a park, though.

Franklin Roosevelt's secretary of the interior, Harold L. Ickes, . . . was determined to expand the federal presence in conservation and used the newly-formed Civilian Conservation Corps to involve the National Park Service in developing the state park systems

It was always the intention of Park Service that the project should lead to a state park. Circumstances worked against this outcome, however. The magnitude of submarginal land purchase put the amount of land beyond the administrative capability of the State Historical Society [Harmon 1986:8-9].

From the time of its inception up to the present, the badlands park has gone through a number of name changes. The entity was called the Roosevelt Recreation Demonstration Area from 1936 to 1947. From 1947 through 1978, it was a National Memorial Park. Since 1978, it has been Theodore Roosevelt National Park. The remainder of this section provides additional information on each of these phases.

The Civilian Conservation Corps established its first badlands camp in August of 1934. Other public works agencies conducting projects included the Emergency Relief Administration and its successor, the Works Progress Administration. Working first on state owned sections and later on lands purchased by the Resettlement Administration, the federal work programs began to develop the first roads and facilities within the proposed park area. 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. As noted by Brooks and Mattison

(1983:49), the activities of all these agencies were coordinated and supervised by the National Park Service.

The Roosevelt Recreation Demonstration Area was approved for study for inclusion within the National Park system in 1942 (Harmon 1986:11). For a short period during 1946 and 1947, the demonstration area was administered as a national wildlife refuge by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

In April of 1947, Congress established Theodore Roosevelt National Memorial Park and turned its administration back to the National Park Service. At first, the memorial park included only the Elkhorn Ranch property and the south unit of the old recreation demonstration area. In 1948, the South Unit was slightly enlarged to include the petrified forest and the North Unit was added to the park.

From 1956 to 1966, as a result of the work of Conrad Wirth, director of the National Park Service, MISSION 66 funds made a number of improvements possible within the park. The objective of MISSION 66 was to provide funds for "boosting staff and facilities in NPS historic areas and aiding States and communities in preservation efforts" (Kahler n.d.). These included the establishment of a park Visitor Center/Headquarters building in Medora in 1959. Direct Park Service use of the Peaceful Valley Ranch was gradually phased out between 1959 and 1965. In 1967, Peaceful Valley Ranch was opened as a concession area specializing in horseback rentals and trail rides.

Theodore Roosevelt National Memorial Park was renamed Theodore Roosevelt National Park on November 10, 1978. The same law which effected this name change also established certain parts of the North and South Units as wilderness areas. In the South Unit, the wilderness designation takes in most of the area west of the Little Missouri River.

IV. DESCRIPTION OF THE PEACEFUL VALLEY RANCH

HISTORY OF THE RANCH

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 ("his right-hand man") of the Marquis de Morés (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 Big Horn 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).

In March of 1885, a Medora newspaper, *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). As Paddock could not have held title to the land, he must have sold only range rights to Lamb. 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 a 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 and was 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 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 Stockgrowers 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 the stockgrowers 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.

With specific mention to the Montana Stockgrowers Association, which, as noted above, Lamb was an early member, Malone and Roeder (1976:121-122) write "The Montana Stockgrowers Association wielded great economic and political power from the day of its birth"

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

As Granville Stuart wrote, "Cattle men found ways to control the other difficulties but the ranges were free to all and no man could say, with authority, when a range was overstocked. So the great open range boom mounted steadily through the mid-1880s, and the ranges became more and more dangerously overcrowded. At its 1886 meeting in Miles City, the Montana Stockgrowers Association discussed the problem of overstocking with intense anxiety; and during the fall of that year the Little Missouri Stock Growers' Association even announced that its members would not cooperate with any more new outfits . . ." [Malone and Roeder 1976:124].

The fact that Lamb held an early Billings County office may also have been due, either directly or indirectly, to his participation in the stockmen's associations. Theodore Roosevelt, for instance, held the office of deputy sheriff by virtue of his chairmanship of the Little Missouri Stockmen's Association (e.g., Morris 1979:323), and it seems likely that other county officials may have been selected from the association's membership. Regardless of the methods of appointment, all of the original county officials were "filled with men well and favorably known to the community" (Lang 1926:266; emphasis added). Roosevelt also describes the importance of these officials in putting down lawlessness.

Generally some form of stable government is provided for the counties as soon as their population has become at all fixed, the frontiersmen showing their national aptitude for organization. The lawlessness is put down pretty effectively. For example as soon as we organized the government of Medora -- an excessively unattractive little hamlet, the county seat of our huge, scantily settled county -- we elected some good officers, built a log jail, prohibited all shooting in the streets, and enforced the prohibition . . . [Roosevelt 1983:90].

Lamb sold the ranch buildings 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 (i.e., the W 1/2 of Section 12, T. 140 N., R. 102 W.) in 1906. It was during this period that both the Rasmussen and the Halliday families started working at the ranch (see below).

County deed records establish that Burgess sold the property to H. (Harry) W. Olsen in 1915. Harry Olsen was in partnership with his brother Carl. Harry and Carl's three sisters and mother homesteaded nearby and were also involved in ranching (Tom Olsen, personal communication, January 1992).

Intermediate land transfers within the Olsen family between 1915 and 1924 eventually left Carl B. Olsen with ownership of the ranch. By 1925, Carl Olsen owned a total of 11 sections (Tom Olsen, personal communication, January 1992). In addition to the cattle, the Olsens kept a large number of horses (exceeding the number of cattle), chickens and turkeys. They also grew oats, alfalfa, corn, and wheat. Marge Gratton (personal communication, November 1991) states that such farming was common among area ranchers, at least to supply feed grains for their own livestock. At least one other wheat farm, owned by Tom Johnson (Carl Olsen's father-in-law) at the Johnson Plateau, operated during this same time period (Tom Olsen, personal communication, January 1992).

The Olsens conducted the first season of dude ranching at Peaceful Valley as early as 1918 (Tom Olsen, personal communication, 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 all day trips to the petrified forest, and by 1920 had developed facilities for the dudes or guests. Activities for the guests included trips to neighboring ranches (e.g., the Neuens ranch), overnight campouts, cookouts, branding (at the Rasmussen's ranch or Coburn's VA ranch), roundups, and moonlight rides. The Neuens ranch was a particularly popular stop on Sunday afternoon; Mrs. Neuens is

remembered as a wonderful cook and Mr. Neuens as a great story teller (Tom Olsen, personal communication, January 1992).

Lena Halliday was the cook and Nate Halliday was a wrangler during the time the ranch accepted guests. Other cowboys working for the Peaceful Valley Ranch included Ernie Osterhout, Paddy Baker, and Johnny Phil (Tom Olsen, personal communication, 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 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.).

During the 1920s and 1930s, Carl Olsen worked for the establishment of a national park oriented around the petrified forest. The Peaceful Valley Ranch was the starting point of a well publicized promotional tour for such a park in 1925 and again in 1928 (see Chapter 3). The promoter for this tour was the Greater North Dakota Association (Marge Gratton, personal communication, November 1991; Harmon 1986:4).

In 1936, the Olsens sold the ranch to the National Park Service. (This land sale was ultimately recorded with the Billings County Register of Deeds on April 27, 1941.) Carl Olsen, despite his dedication to seeing a park established, regretted selling the ranch (Tom Olsen, personal communication, January 1992). The Olsens later bought a ranch north of the South Unit.

Civilian Conservation Corps, Emergency Relief Administration, and Works Progress Administration activities in the Roosevelt Recreational Demonstration Area between 1934 and 1939 resulted in the completion of all weather roads up the valley and construction of seven headquarters buildings at the ranch. During this period, the ranch buildings were used as headquarters for the Emergency Relief Administration and the Works Progress Administration. While no construction camp was associated with the Emergency Relief Administration at the ranch, Weldon Gratton, the Park Service senior foreman landscape architect at that time, stated that "there was a [ERA] project manager

and a small staff [at Peaceful Valley] . . . many of the people engaged on that project came from the surrounding communities of Belfield, Sentinel Butte principally, in fact trucks picked up the men from both locations every day and took the men home every night on a single truck" (interview with Dick Maeder, National Park Service historian, June 1963).

The Longhorn Ranch Project, a plan to turn Peaceful Valley Ranch into a working ranch and demonstration area, was considered by the National Park Service during the early 1960s. If the plan had been implemented, the buildings at the Peaceful Valley Ranch would have been demolished or moved and a "more typical" open range ranch comprised of log buildings would have been built in its place (Mattison 1961). The design, however, was never implemented.

The National Park Service used the Peaceful Valley Ranch as the park headquarters until 1959, when MISSION 66 funds were used to construct the Visitor Center/Headquarters building in Medora (Harmon 1966:227, 237). The construction of the Visitor Center/Headquarters building coincided with the centennial of Theodore Roosevelt's birth. Many of the buildings at the ranch related to federal agency use, Olsen's dude ranching-related cabins, and other buildings were moved or torn down between 1961 and 1965 (Einar Justesen, personal communication, November 1991). The ranch continued to be used as housing for park personnel until 1965.

In 1967, the National Park Service advertised for a concessionaire to provide saddle horse services using the Peaceful Valley Ranch as a base of operations. The first concessionaire was Alvin Tescher, who maintained the saddle horse concession at the ranch until 1982. In 1982, Wally Owen acquired the concession. Mr. Owen continues to operate the concession today.

DESCRIPTION OF EXTANT ARCHITECTURE

There are currently nine standing buildings at Peaceful Valley Ranch (Figure 4.1). The physical characteristics of these buildings are described in the following paragraphs. Where possible, official building/structure numbers assigned by the National Park Service have been used to designate the various buildings. Additional information concerning changes to the ranch throughout its history, including interior changes, is presented in the next section of this report.

Building 1 is a one and one-half story frame house built by Benjamin Lamb (Figure 4.2). The house 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 the Rasmussen, S. N. Lebo, Mary Lebo Gilham, J. J. Tomamichel, and Jack Reid all state that the frame portion of the house was built by Ben Lamb sometime between 1883 and 1890 (these accounts are discussed in greater detail in the "Modifications Through Time" section of this chapter). The Peaceful Valley house is therefore contemporary with the Elkhorn Ranch house (ca. 1884-1885; Torres 1980:27, 58). Because of past demolition and dismantling activities in the park (see pages 48 and 49), Building 1 is the only surviving example of an open range ranch house in its original location in the South Unit of the Theodore Roosevelt National Park.

With the exception of the northernmost 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; 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 present in both porches, the dormer, and on the west elevation. A 1/1

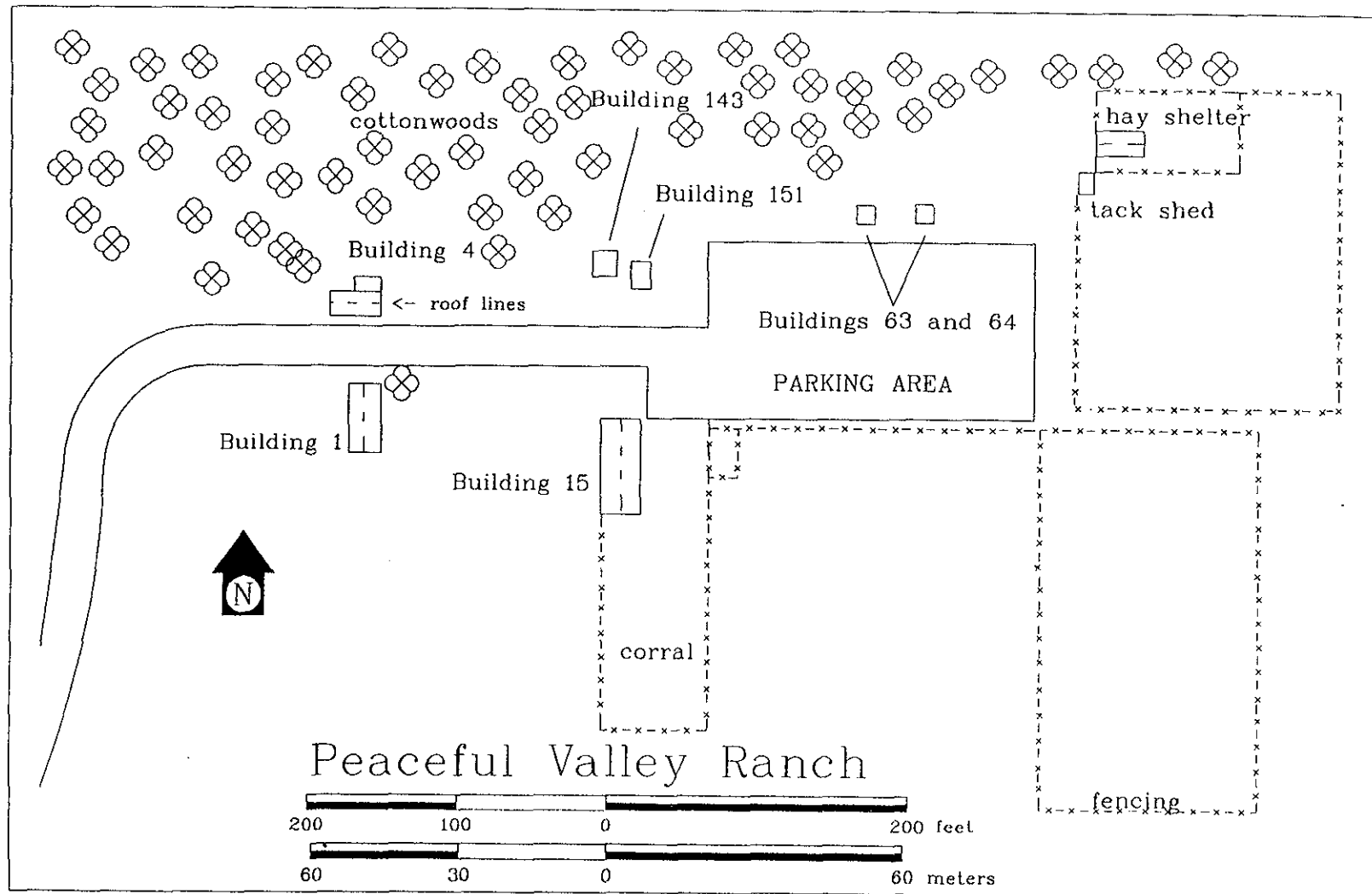


Figure 4.1. Map of the buildings on the present-day Peaceful Valley Ranch. Adapted from a map prepared by the National Park Service (1987:52).

sliding window is present 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 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 next section).

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.

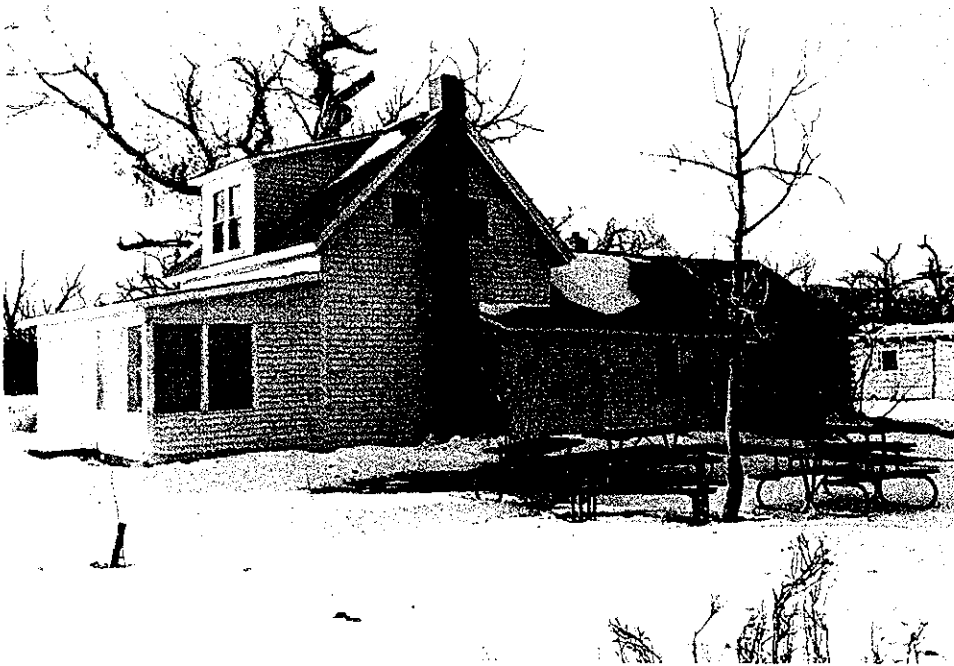
The northernmost addition to the house is log. The logs have a square notch joining method. The French doors (casement doors) on the north elevation are more consistent with the period in which the cabin was clad with clapboarding (see "Modifications Through Time") rather than its current rustic appearance.

Building 4 is the cottonwood log lodge (Figure 4.3a) first described in Carl Olsen's (n.d.) Peaceful Valley Ranch advertising pamphlet. The lodge/recreation hall, 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 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 (Figure 4.3b). All of the windows are wood frame, single light casement or 1/1 single hung. The doors are wood. The lodge foundation is concrete poured along the sill logs. The 1950 addition to the lodge 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.

Building 15 is a log barn constructed by J. C. Rasmussen and George Burgess in 1905 (Figure 4.4). The joining method is not visible but Torres (1980:37) states that it is double saddle notching. The barn measures 70 feet 9 inches north to south and 23 feet 9 inches east to west. The barn has a gable roof with wood shingles. 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 (e.g., Torres 1980:38). The doors are 1-by-6 tongue and groove; all are recent replacements

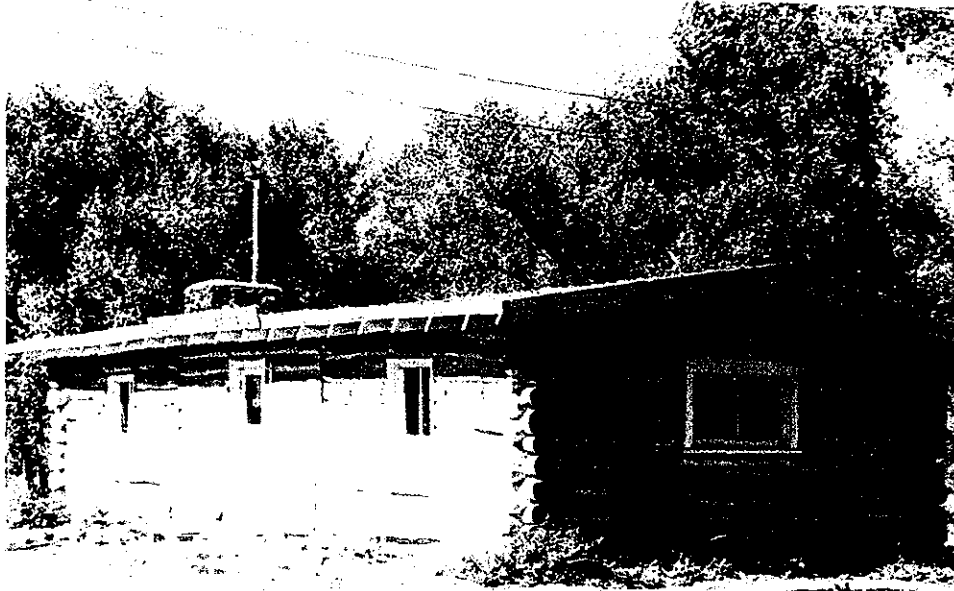


a



b

Figure 4.2. Modern photos of Feature 1, the Lamb house; south elevation (a) and east and south elevations (b).



a

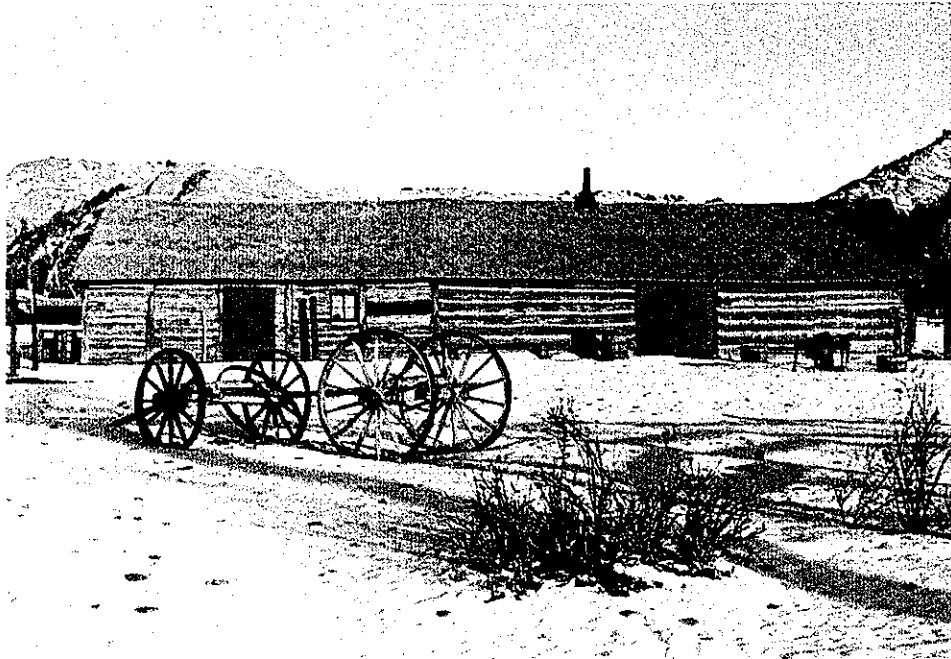


b

Figure 4.3. Photos of the lodge (Feature 2) as it appeared ca. 1956 (a; south and east elevations; from Mattison 1961) and west elevation as it appears today (b).



a



b

Figure 4.4. Photo of the west elevation of the barn (Feature 3) as it appears today (a) and a Peaceful Valley Ranch photo from ca. 1956 illustrating the appearance of the barn on the left side of the photo (b; from Mattison 1961).

put in during 1982 and 1983 (Einar Justesen, personal communication, November 1991). The gable ends are clad with wood plank siding. This building may have been constructed in two sections (see "Modifications Through Time"; Torres (1980:37) also reaches this conclusion). 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 remaining five buildings in the ranch yard are recently constructed facilities for use by the concessionaire and the National Park Service. They provide storage space, toilets, and water. While the appearance of these buildings is not in keeping with the house, lodge and barn, they are necessary for the current use of the ranch. The buildings are east of the house and lodge, along the north and east sides of the road and the parking area (see Figure 4.1). The parking area is surfaced with a combination of asphalt on the west end and gravel on the east end.

Buildings 63 and 64 are two identical vault toilets. The toilets are typical wood frame, shed roofed buildings. They each measure 4-by-5 feet.

Building 143 is a 15-by-15 foot surrey shed. The south elevation of this vertically sided, shed roofed building is open to provide access to the horse drawn vehicles stored inside.

Building 153 is a pumphouse. The pumphouse is accessed through a door on the south elevation of the building. The 17-by-14 foot, vertically sided building has a gable roof with an open eave. The building has a concrete foundation.

Two unnumbered modern buildings are present at the east end of the parking area. One is a 14-by-10 foot wood frame tack shed. The building has horizontal siding and a gable roof. The other building is a 17-by-32 foot hay shelter. The shelter has a gable roof supported by vertical poles. The building is open on all sides.

A modern board and pole corral structure, 170 feet north to south by 75 feet east to west, extends out from the south and east elevations of the barn. This corral roughly covers the same area encompassed by earlier corrals illustrated in historic photos (see the ranch illustrations presented in the next section of this chapter). In addition to this corral, the present ranch yard contains approximately an additional 900 feet of board and pole fencing south and east of the parking area (see Figure 4.1).

MODIFICATIONS THROUGH TIME

In the paragraphs that follow, the discussion attempts to, as much as possible, follow the changes to each individual building through time. Additionally, information is presented on other buildings and structures that are no longer in existence at Peaceful Valley. Individuals mentioned in the following paragraphs are discussed in the "History of the Ranch," above.

There are three known or suspected features just outside of the present building complex at Peaceful Valley that are of importance to the inception and development of the ranch. The first European/Euroamerican building in the immediate area of the Peaceful Valley Ranch may have been a trapper's dugout. Tom Olsen (personal communication, January 1992) describes this log roofed dugout as being approximately 10-by-12 feet in size, dug back into a bluff edge southeast of the ranch. 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). A description of the Paddock cabin was provided to Arnold Goplen in a February 13, 1939 letter from S. N. Lebo. Ray Mattison's (1950) distillation of this letter is as follows:

The dimensions of the house was about 14 x 16 ft. It was built of cottonwood logs, four on each side. There was one door of rough boards on the east end, and a window with four panes or lights on the south side. The roof was constructed of poles covered with hay and dirt. There was no floor and the walls were not insulated. The house consisted of only one room. The place was heated by a cook stove. He [Lebo] said they were quite comfortable after they got the stove, indicating that for a time they were without one. The only furnishings besides the stove were four bunks. This log house was the only building on the site. It has been in ruins about 38 years. At the time the Lebo's lived there, their closest neighbors were two miles down the river.

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

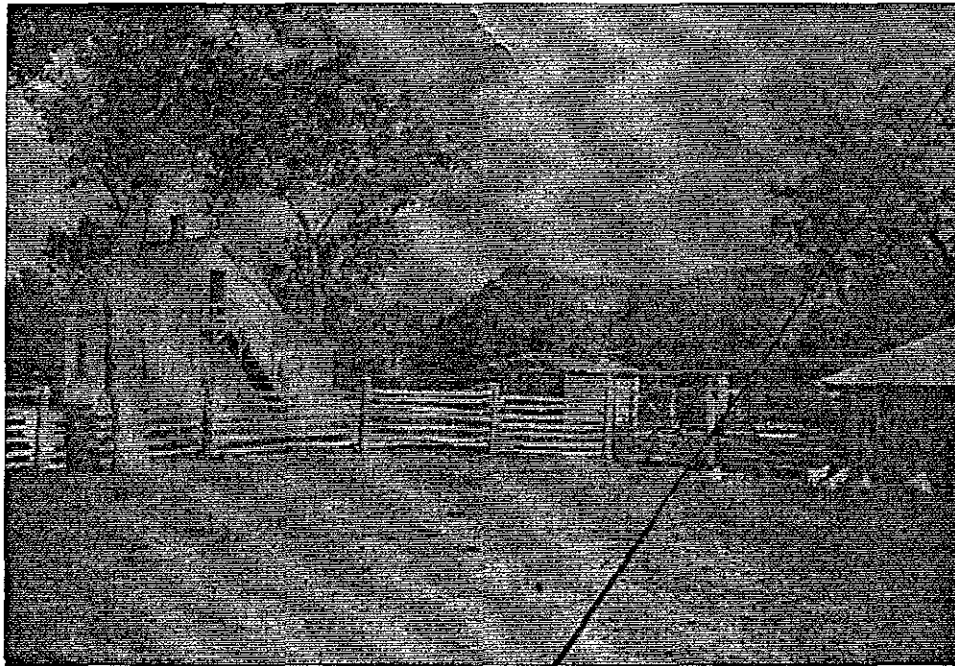
(personal communication, Tom Olsen, January 1992). The exact distance from the buildings is not known. The turns on this training track were banked and were still visible at the time the Olsens sold the ranch to the National Park Service. It is Mr. Olsen's understanding that both Ben Lamb and Gerry Paddock were involved in the training track venture. The training track is not visible on aerial photographs inspected by Bruce Kaye, Chief of Interpretation, Theodore Roosevelt National Park. 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 (Tom Olsen, personal communication, January 1992).

In addition to the training track, three buildings were constructed by Ben Lamb during his ownership of the ranch. These buildings are the house (the southernmost portion of Building 1), a barn, and a blacksmith shop. Both the barn and the blacksmith shop, neither of which are in existence today, were constructed of vertically placed logs (Figure 4.5a). This construction method was widely used in the badlands during the open range ranching period. Extant examples of this method of construction are present at the Con Short Ranch (Marge Gratton, personal communication, November 1991) and the Birdhead Ranch (Schweigert 1987). Theodore Roosevelt refers to this method of construction in his description of a typical ranch in the badlands.

The small ranches are often quite close to one another, say within a couple of miles; but the home ranch of a big outfit will not have another building within ten or twenty miles of it, or, indeed, if the country is dry, not within fifty. The ranch house may be only a mud dugout, or a "shack" made of logs stuck upright into the ground; more often it is a fair-sized, well-made building of hewn logs, divided into several rooms. Around it are grouped the other buildings -- log-stables, cow-sheds, and hay-ricks, and outhouse in which the cowboys sleep [Roosevelt 1910:8-9].

While only eleven such buildings from North Dakota were counted on historic photos examined at the State Historical Society of North Dakota (Schweigert 1987:16), many more probably once existed and simply were never photographed, or their photographs no longer exist.

The earliest known photograph of the house (see Figure 4.5a) probably represents the ranch much as it was during 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 with a small gable roofed extension. The



a



b

Figure 4.5. Ca. 1903 (a) and 1910 (b) photos of the Lamb house (both on file at the South Unit Visitor Center, Theodore Roosevelt National Park; Catalog #'s 1204 and 1033, respectively).

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 immediately behind the original house, a log addition adjoining the frame addition, a dormer window, a shed roofed porch on the front, or 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. Gratton] 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.

The living room was in the center of the house [This is the part made of railroad ties or bridge timbers] present-day kitchen. 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.

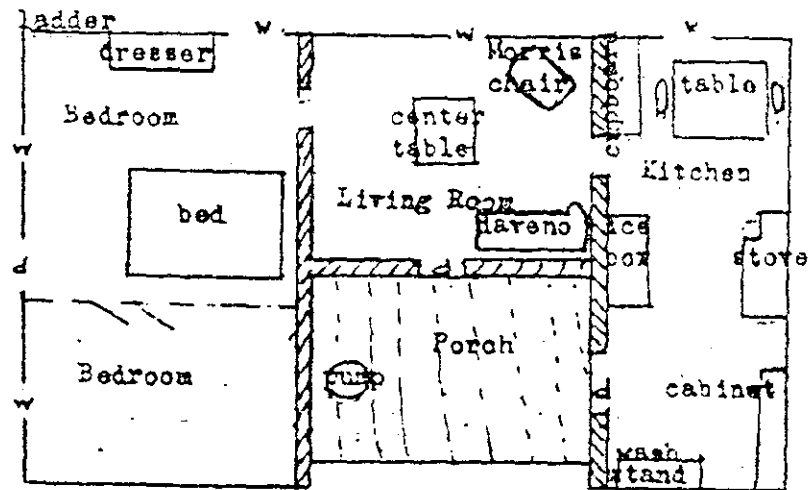
In the attic there were two bedrooms, which were not used by the Rasmussens except as storage areas. Mrs. Rasmussen always used the outside stairway for access to the attic rather than the ladder in the bedroom.

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 (Figure 4.6) 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 (see Figure 4.5b). This indicates, as does Mrs. Rasmussen's account, that both additions were present during Burgess's ownership of the ranch.

It is obvious that some relatively early changes to the Lamb house took place that are not accounted for in the oral accounts and interviews. These undocumented changes can be seen in Figure 4.5b. 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.

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; personal communication, Tom Olsen, January 1992). Marge Gratton stated that the enclosed entryway on the east elevation was added



PEACEFUL VALLEY RANCH (1906-1908)

The house, as furnished by Mrs. Chris Rasmussen. The two additions had been made to the house at the time the Rasmussens occupied it.

Figure 4.6. Plan of the first floor of the Lamb house, drafted in conjunction with Sally Johnson's 1959 Interview of Mrs. J. C. Rasmussen.

between 1936 and 1939, after Olsen sold the ranch (personal communication, November, 1991). 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 National Park Service 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 (Einar Justesen, personal communication, November 1991). 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 (Einar Justesen, personal communication, November 1991). Mr. Justesen stated that the four-inch softwood flooring was covered by resilient floor covering in ca. 1976. The plaster ceiling of the half story bedroom fell in 1967 and was replaced with sheetrock [drywall] (Torres 1980).

It should be noted that, despite various changes in the appearance of the house, the fenestration pattern has not been substantially altered. The windows on the south elevation (see Figure 4.5) 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. 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 bunkhouse and storeroom (Arnold 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 (see Figure 4.5b).

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, the new barn (Building 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 (Arnold Goplen interview with J. C. Rasmussen, February 23, 1939).

During its use by the National Park Service, 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 dirt roof on the barn was replaced with trusses, rafters, and shingles about 1914. Siding, visible on the south elevation, was added in the 1950s along with a celotex

ceiling (Einar Justesen, personal communication, November 1991). In 1982 and 1983, the barn doors were replaced, the rafters were "tied together," and the chinking was repaired (Einar Justesen, personal communication, November 1991). Today, the barn is divided into four rooms. The south half of the building is partitioned into an office and tack room. The north half of the building is divided into a smaller tack room and a storage area.

As previously stated, the lodge (Building 4) was built by Carl Olsen in 1920. Originally, the building had no interior partitions. Tom Olsen (personal communication, January 1992) remembers the lodge furnishings as including 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 Peaceful Valley Ranch advertising pamphlet (Olsen n.d.) and mirrors the description provided by Tom Olsen.

The lodge has undergone a number of changes. With the exception of the frame addition, built by the National Park Service in 1950, most of these changes have involved interior partitioning. The single large room was converted into five rooms in 1947 (Torres 1980:39). The scoria fireplace is still present inside the lodge, but it was enclosed behind a partition in the 1950s (personal communication, Einar Justesen, November 1991). The lodge is now used by the concessionaire, Wally Owen (personal communication, November 1991), to provide housing for his wranglers.

The soft wood flooring and the fenestration pattern in the lodge are original (Einar Justesen, personal communication, November 1991). Resilient floor covering was added to the lodge in ca. 1976. Chinking is added periodically to prevent further deterioration to the log walls (Einar Justesen, personal communication, November 1991).

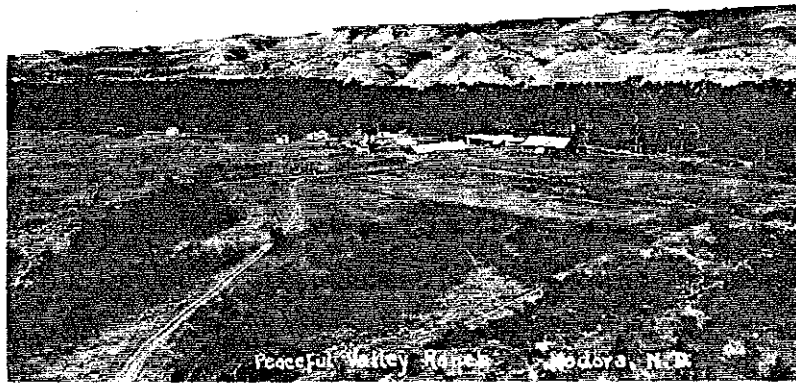
Figure 4.7a is a photo of the ranch as it appeared during the Carl Olsen years. The Olsens built five guest cabins between 1920 and 1936, including one they lived in while the Halliday's occupied the Lamb House (Tom Olsen, personal communication, January 1992). One of these cabins was built for the use 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 housing for guests who returned year after year (e.g., Borne 1983) and this seems to be an example of that practice.

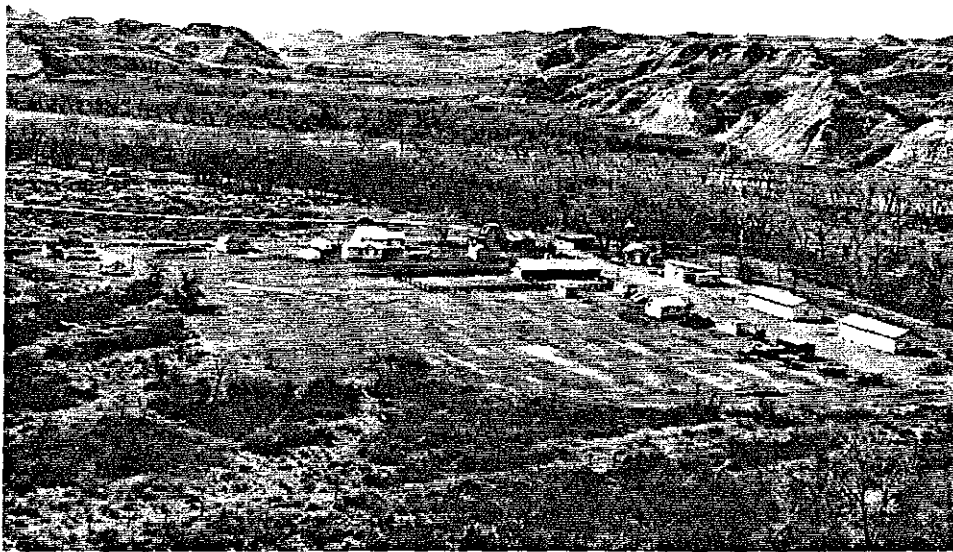
Carl Olsen is also known to have torn down a two-room log bunkhouse (Tom Olsen, personal communication, January 1991). This may have been the bunkhouse and storeroom built by George Burgess and Chris Rasmussen (see above).

Between 1934 and 1937, the Emergency Relief Administration constructed at least seven wood frame buildings at the ranch, including the Park Headquarters building (Einar Justesen, personal communication, November 1991). Many of these buildings are visible in a ca. 1956 photograph of the ranch (Figure 4.7b). The buildings were arranged along the main road and in a group to the south of the Lamb house (Building 1).

The location of concrete trailer pads are marked by the two trailers south of the house in Figure 4.7b. 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 National Park Service 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 (Einar Justesen, personal communication, 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 (Einar Justesen, personal communication, November 1991). The Civilian Conservation Corps office building is now in the campground at Medora (Marge Gratton, personal communication, November 1991).



a



b

Figure 4.7. A pre-1922 photo of Peaceful Valley ranch (a; on file at the South Unit Visitor Center, Theodore Roosevelt National Park, Catalog # 1005) and a 1956 aerial photograph of Peaceful Valley Ranch (b; from Mattison 1961).

COMPARISONS

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., North Dakota State Historical Society 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. Arnold Goplen compiled the following list of those ranches from a map of Billings County copyrighted by Oscar Becker in May of 1913 and revised in April, 1934:

<u>Name of Ranch</u>	<u>Section</u>	<u>Township</u>	<u>Range</u>
W. Braden	7	141	101
K. Bye	30	141	101
L. Godfredson	6	141	101
Gross Bros.	3	141	101
Gross Bros. (Old P.D. Ranch)	20	141	101
Gross Bros.	32	141	101
A. Oyhus	4	141	101
C. Ekblom	2	140	102
N. Holiday [SIC]	12	140	102
T. E. Johnson	14	140	102
Carl Olson [SIC] (Peaceful Valley)	12	140	102
Chris Rasmussen	10	140	102
Jake Tomamichel	4	140	102
A. E. Boicourt	2	140	101
Chris Decker	34	140	101
Frank Goines	14	140	101
Neal Goines	26	140	101
Philip Schultz	28	140	101
A. Burian	31	140	100
Frank Eckland	32	140	100
T. G. Eckland	32	140	100
Gus Johnson	20	140	100
Wayne Trowbridge	19	140	100

Photographically, perhaps the best documented of these park ranches was the Chris Rasmussen place, approximately 1.5 miles upstream from the Peaceful Valley Ranch. Much of this record was compiled as part of the government's attempt to catalog real property within the park. All of these log and frame buildings, however, postdate the open range ranching era (the Rasmussens homesteaded the ranch in 1908). The Rasmussen ranch buildings were razed around the time of modifications to Cottonwood Campground.

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. This was part of the effort to develop the lands acquired by the Resettlement Administration into a scenic area. Twelve ranches, including the "Gotfredson [sic], Oyhus, Gress, Eckblom [sic], Johnson, Boicourt, Goins, Mrs. Gust [sic] Johnson, Abraham, Hafstrom, Eklund and Thomas" ranches, are listed as demolished in a Job Completion Record dated April, 1941 (on file at the National Park Service office in Medora). The remaining ranches were probably dismantled or moved about the same time.

Ironically, the destruction of these ranches was shortly followed up by a strong desire on the part of the Park Service to develop an interpretive ranch site for visitors. To this end, a great deal of data were gathered in the 1950s and 1960s in order to formulate a plan for a "typical" open range cattle ranch to be located at Peaceful Valley. The "Longhorn Ranch Plan" was initiated with a planning study authored by Chester L. Brooks in 1956.

In this report, Mr. Brooks recommended the development of Peaceful Valley Ranch into a typical ranch of the 1880s. He proposed that the former superintendent's residence [Lamb's house], the guesthouse [the lodge], later used as ranger's residence, and barn of that ranch be retained and adapted respectively into the ranch house, bunkhouse, and barn of the typical ranch. Since that date a careful study of these structures indicates that they are not typical ranch buildings and are ill-suited for this purpose for the following reasons:

. . . The architecture of this building [the Lamb house] is not typical of the region. This structure is very much unlike the low, log, dirt or sod roofed ranch houses generally built on the Northern Plains during the 1880's. The structure is in poor condition.

. . . This barn is a more permanent type of structure than that found on most of the ranches.

. . . The hewed-log former ranger residence . . . is not suitable to convert into a typical bunkhouse. The bunkhouses were very crudely built of logs and covered with a low dirt roof. The present structure contains several rooms with polished floors and plastered walls and ceilings. Most of the pioneer bunkhouses were unfinished and contained no ceiling except the roof of the building [Mattison 1961:5-6].

Using Brooks' data and other regional information, Mattison (1961:9-12) developed a description of what he considered the "typical Badlands ranch" in terms of both building type and function. He identifies the necessary buildings and structures as: a ranch house, a bunkhouse, a horse barn, cow sheds, a corral and stock lots, a blacksmith

shop and store room, a vegetable garden surrounded by a rail fence, a privy, and a well. A schematic of the proposed Longhorn Ranch (Figure 4.8) is suggestive of some of the buildings shown in photographs presented by Mattison (1961) in his planning report.

As Mattison (1961) demonstrates, many of the open range era buildings were horizontal or vertically placed log construction. To demonstrate this fact, Mattison's report includes photographs of the Deacon Wade ranch house south of Medora, the OX ranch house near Marmarth, the Huidekoper ranch house near Amidon, the VI (Eaton) ranch house near Medora, and a number of other one-story log ranch houses in Montana and Wyoming. Mattison (1961) indicates that most of these ranch houses were built during the 1880s. It is also well known that both the Elkhorn and the Maltese Cross dwellings were log.

In a later study, Schweigert (1987) presents a summary of the known open range ranches in western North Dakota. At the time of that study, 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 Morés in Billings County. Of these recorded sites, only the Chateau de Morés 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.

The extensive use of log in these early ranch buildings probably has to do with a number of factors including the availability of cottonwood logs, distance to the railroad, and availability of cash for the purchase of non-local materials. Another, somewhat different, example of the use of locally available materials is the dwelling at the Neuens ranch that was downstream from Peaceful Valley. The Neuens ranch house (ca. 1897) was built with "firewood lengths" of wood with straw inserted between the logs. Both the interior and the exterior surfaces were then plastered. A similar technique was used for the "stone and cement" segment of the house. These materials were built up inside

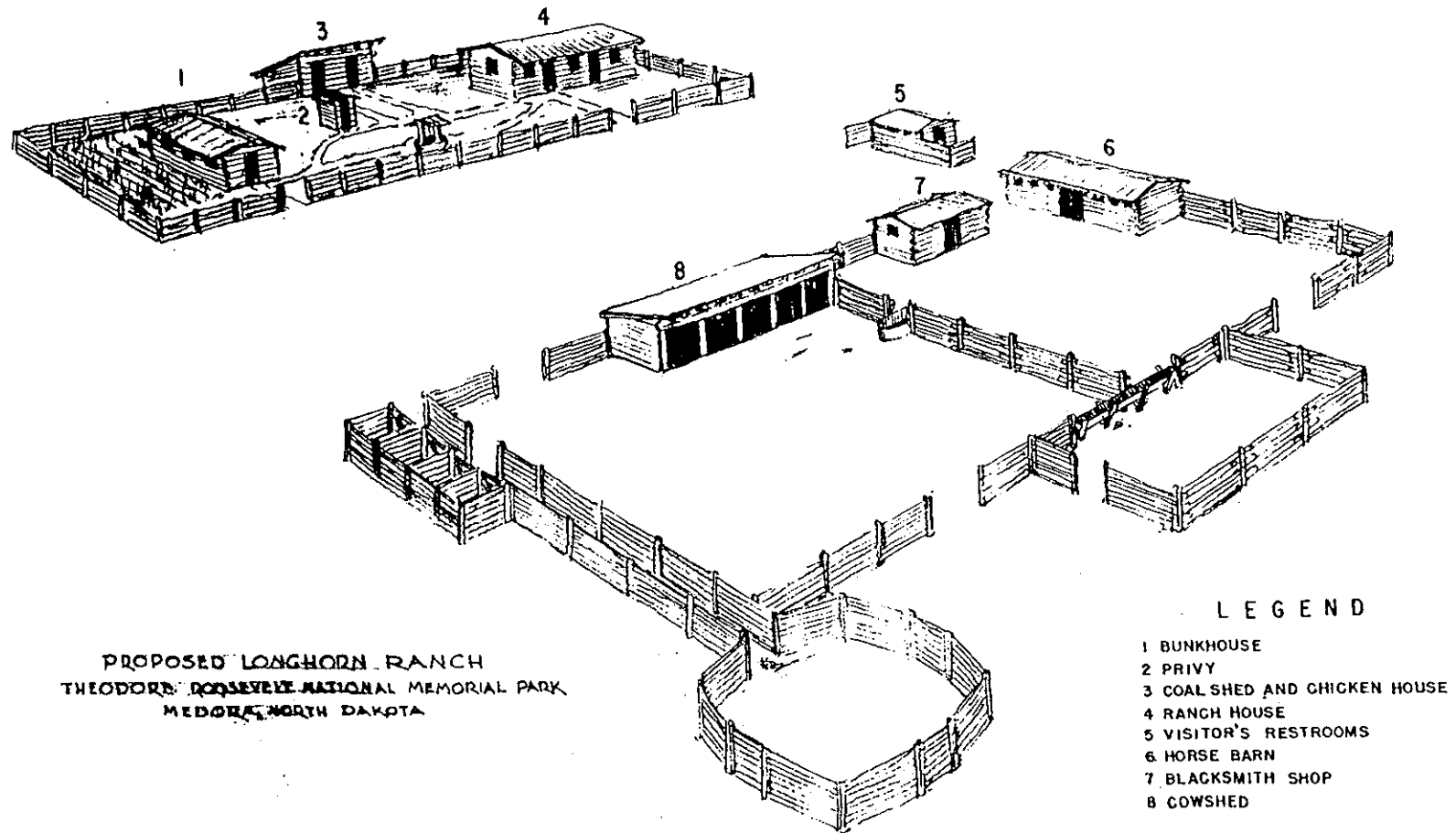


Figure 4.8. Sketch of the idealized Longhorn Ranch interpretive area drafted by Mattison (1961).

forms. When the forms were removed, the interior and exterior surfaces were plastered (Marge Gratton, personal communication, November 1991).

In comparison with other known open range ranches of the period, therefore, Peaceful Valley Ranch appears unique in the use of wood frame building methods in the house. 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 Morés's building projects. It may not be a simple coincidence that the suggested 1883 - 1885 construction dates for Lamb's house correspond with Morés's 1883 through 1885 building of the chateau and the packing plant (Tweton 1972:33-39), both of which contained dimensioned lumber.

As noted above in "Modifications Through Time," the use of railroad bridge timbers was employed at Peaceful Valley in the Burgess construction of both the house addition and the barn. The use of railroad-related building materials was apparently a common practice in the Medora area during the early part of the twentieth century. Regarding the Tomamichel ranch, Goplen writes in 1939 that "The buildings are still standing and were built by Tomamichel in 1914. The buildings are constructed of ties which he procured from the railroad." These materials, manufactured from pine, cedar and occasionally oak, were no doubt desired because of their greater durability in comparison to cottonwood and their squared, easily stackable, dimensions.

In terms of the functioning of the ranch during its early history, Peaceful Valley 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 1889, as it is reported by the *Dickinson Press* in March. The development of a thoroughbred training track at Peaceful Valley (see "Modifications Through Time") further emphasizes Lamb's dedication to horse raising during this period.

The addition of dude ranching to the cattle and horse raising operations at the ranch is also representative of a broad trend within the region (Borne 1983:6-8). Like many ranch operators, Carl Olsen began taking in guests and eventually acquiesced to their requests for ranch-related activities (Tom Olsen, personal communication, January 1992). This led to the establishment of an organized dude ranching operation at the Peaceful Valley Ranch by 1918.

V. NATIONAL REGISTER ELIGIBILITY

INTRODUCTION

The Peaceful Valley Ranch is believed to be eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places under criteria A and C.

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

* That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history (Criterion A); or

* That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction (Criterion C) . . . [USDI, National Park Service 1991b:2].

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERION A:

BROAD PATTERNS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF WESTERN NORTH DAKOTA

The buildings remaining at Peaceful Valley Ranch -- the barn, the lodge, and the house -- 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 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 considering the significance of Peaceful Valley, it must be taken into account that the original concept for the national park was to interpret "late 19th century open range cattle ranching history" (USDI, National Park Service 1987:1). Due to the dismantling episodes of the 1930s and 1940s, however, nearly every trace of the open range and fee simple ranching within the park has been obliterated. 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. As the other open range ranches within the state continue to

deteriorate, as many almost certainly will, the preservation and interpretation of Peaceful Valley Ranch will become even more important.

The ranch is also 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 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 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.

The ranch also played an important role in the development of Theodore Roosevelt National Park. As explained in Chapter 3, Carl Olsen (the last private owner of the ranch) was a major advocate for a national park in the badlands of western North Dakota. The ranch setting itself was also used as one of the major focal points for the 1925 and 1928 tours of the proposed park area. These visits were designed to sway congressmen and National Park Service representatives in favor of establishing such a park, and, from all accounts, they seem to have served their purpose well. Without the influence of Carl Olsen and the "old-time" ranch life demonstrated at Peaceful Valley, 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 (much of which was sponsored by Olsen at Peaceful Valley Ranch) as influencing Director Mather and other National Park Service personnel to "cautiously, and tentatively, recommend national monument status."

Peaceful Valley Ranch also served as headquarters for the first twenty-five 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). 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.

*NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERION C:
THE ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE OF PEACEFUL VALLEY RANCH*

Although Peaceful Valley Ranch has been subjected to a number of modifications, it is believed that the three remaining ranch buildings retain sufficient integrity of setting and design to embody distinctive characteristics of their type, period and method of construction. The frame construction of the house (Building 1) appears to be unique for the open range ranches of western North Dakota (Schweigert 1987). Its construction methods aside, it is one of only two remaining buildings from this era in the park (the other being the relocated Maltese Cross cabin) and one of only a few within 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 1991b:19). The basic form of the lodge (Building 4), if recovered, represents the dude ranching era at Peaceful Valley ranch. Finally, the log barn (Building 15) is representative of the transition between open range and fee simple ranching, dude ranching, and park activities.

All three of these buildings retain the massing, materials, and fenestration patterns of the ranch's period of significance. More importantly, "the essential form and integrity of the structure" (36 CFR 1208) could be recovered (e.g., the windows on the south elevation of the house were not removed at the time the porch was enclosed and they appear the same as in the 1903 and 1910 photographs). Additionally, the changes that have been made to the buildings over time do not impair the significance of the property because of the overriding historic values they exemplify.

Finally, integrity of setting must take into account more than just the built environment. Except for obvious modifications to accommodate visitors to the park, the Little Missouri valley in the vicinity of Peaceful Valley Ranch is much the same as it was during the time periods when Ben Lamb established the ranch and Carl Olsen took in his first dudes. The fact that these areas are now part of the National Park system tends to ensure that this continuity of setting will be maintained for many years to come.

VI. ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Morris, Edmund

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