Cultural Landscape of the Upper Tongue River Valley in Rosebud County, Montana

Submitted to:
National Center for Preservation Technology and Training
The National Park Service
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July 2007

Acknowledgements

The Tongue River Digital Archive Project was made possible by the generous cooperation of the people and families of Birney, MT:

- Bones Brothers Ranch ~ Irv Alderson, Jr.; Jeanie Alderson and Terry Punt; Gerritt and Carson Punt
- 4D Ranch ~ Ann and Bill McKinney
- Elmer "Butch" Fjell
- Knobloch Ranch ~ Jack and Margie (Fjell) Knobloch
- Quarter Circle U Ranch ~ Kay (Brewster) Lohof
- UCross/SH Ranch ~ Jay Nance; Brett and Susanne (Nance) Boedecker
- Three Circle Ranch ~ Art Hayes Jr. and Marilynn Hayes; Art Hayes III and Susan Hayes

Videography and Film Production:

- Helena Civic Television ~ Steve Maley, Kirsten Faubion, and Jeanie McLean-Warden
- Light Sensitive ~ Lee Buric

Research and Project Support:

- Birney School District
- Montana Bureau of Land Management.
- Fulmer Public Library, Sheridan, WY
- Trails End State Historic Site, Sheridan, WY
- Montana State Senator Robert Hawks
- King Saddlery
- Montana Historical Society Library
- Montana State Historic Preservation Office
- Otto Braided Hair and Steve Brady, Northern Cheyenne Sand Creek Committee
- Conrad Fisher, Northern Cheyenne Tribal Historic Preservation Officer and Northern Cheyenne Sand Creek Committee
- Western Heritage Center
- With special thanks to Kathryn Hampton, Montana State National Register Coordinator, for her contributions to the early phase of this project, 2000-2002.

Funding for the Tongue River Digital Archive Project was made possible by grants from the National Park Service's National Center for Preservation Training and Technology and Montana's Lore Kann Foundation.

Summary

This report is an overview and assessment of the cultural landscape of the Tongue River Valley, its historic themes and cultural resource site types. Designed to accompany other project deliverables (the video documentary and map-based digital archive), the goal of the project is to demonstrate the national, state and local significance of the layers of prehistory and history located in one small corner of southeastern Montana.

Information collected here minimally defines broad historic themes and contexts, delineates cultural landscape types, and anticipated property types found within the Tongue River Valley. While beyond the scope of this project, this information can readily be expanded to analyze National Register individual properties and historic districts, National Historic Landmark significance, produce detailed historical contexts for the Tongue River Valley and create evaluative tools for documenting sites, assessing significance and formulating preservation strategies within this cultural landscape.

The cultural resource information included here was gathered through interviews, GLO records, literature searches and sites currently on file with the Montana State Antiquities Database. Information discussed here is linked to maps using GPS recordation techniques (i.e. the digital archive). The digital archive is a resource for recording and formulating a comprehensive overview of the cultural resources in the valley and patterns of their distribution. This visual and informational record now holds information on some 125 known sites and can provide a baseline for analyzing the kinds and extent of historic landscapes and potential National Register districts that exist in the drainage. Inquiries regarding this resource may be directed to Montana Preservation Alliance.

The research collected during this project will be on file and disseminated through the entities below following protocols for restriction and protection of sensitive cultural and site information. All recorded site information will be assigned Smithsonian numbers and filed with the state's database through the Montana State Historic Preservation Office and the University of Montana. Copies of the data will be archived onto CDs and DVDs and housed with the Montana Preservation Alliance, and the Montana State Historic Preservation Office.

Copies of the report and documentary DVD will also be made available to the Birney community, as well as regional repositories such as the Fullmer Public Library in Sheridan, WY and Western Heritage Center in Billings, MT.

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Among the Cattle-Ranching people of the Montana-Wyoming area, rivers and their tributary creeks (usually, cricks) were the main points of reference and probably always will be to some extent… Therefore, peoples tend to group themselves and each other according to creeks and rivers. The most western of this particular area system would be the Big Horn River and Little Big Horn River people. They tend to be the larger operators of the encroaching machine age and the less closely knit socially: reservation people who, besides working with livestock, also lean toward great agricultural operations, especially sugar beets and wheat. They are paved-road people, whose beat is the U.S. 87 highway mostly between Billings and Sheridan, where no one would ever consider stopping to offer help to a stalled car.

To the east of them would be the Rosebud River people. They are mostly of cheerful, hardy, old-time cattle families. They have beautiful green valleys with a few millionaires nestled among them and a creek appropriately named Cache Creek nearby. They have more timber and shale roads. They almost always stop to help each other or – until the 1960s, anyway – just to talk and be pleasant.

Then come the Tongue River people. They have both shale and gumbo roads and can almost always be spotted in town by their muddy cars. They are most likely to stop and help each other or even strangers on the lonely stretches and high divides between the Rosebud and Miles City. They are friendly and warm to an unusual degree for this day and age, and they never lock their doors.

Next come the Otter Creek people with mostly gumbo roads, who are always rescuing each other. They are separated from Tongue River by the high land of the Custer National Forest, dominated by its widely known butte, Poker Jim, which accommodates a key Forest Service lookout station fire tower. They don't visit back and forth very much with the Tongue River people. No hard feelings. It just isn't the custom.

A tributary tribe of the Tongue River people includes the Hanging Woman Creek dwellers. They count as original, basic Tongue River, with its pioneer aura and hospitality, not only among their own families but to later settlers and temporary visitors as well.

All these people are resourceful and fiercely independent, above the bourgeois concept of social distinction by automotive scale. They don't even wash the mud off their cars very often. They are people whose money, or lack of it, doesn't show and isn't important as in a sort of silent, unplanned aristocratic pattern…

At 60 miles, Sheridan is the nearest town for the Tongue River people, who have their immediate nerve center and post office, Birney, at the junction of Hanging Woman Creek and the river, complete with grade school, church, two general stores and a few small houses. All rolling hills and red shale buttes, the area consists of sage, and timber-covered cattle country, mostly owned and controlled by a few large, old-time livestock outfits…"[1]

~ from "Tongue River Panorama" by Edmund "Ned" Randolph, *Beef, Leather and Grass,* 1981

Introduction

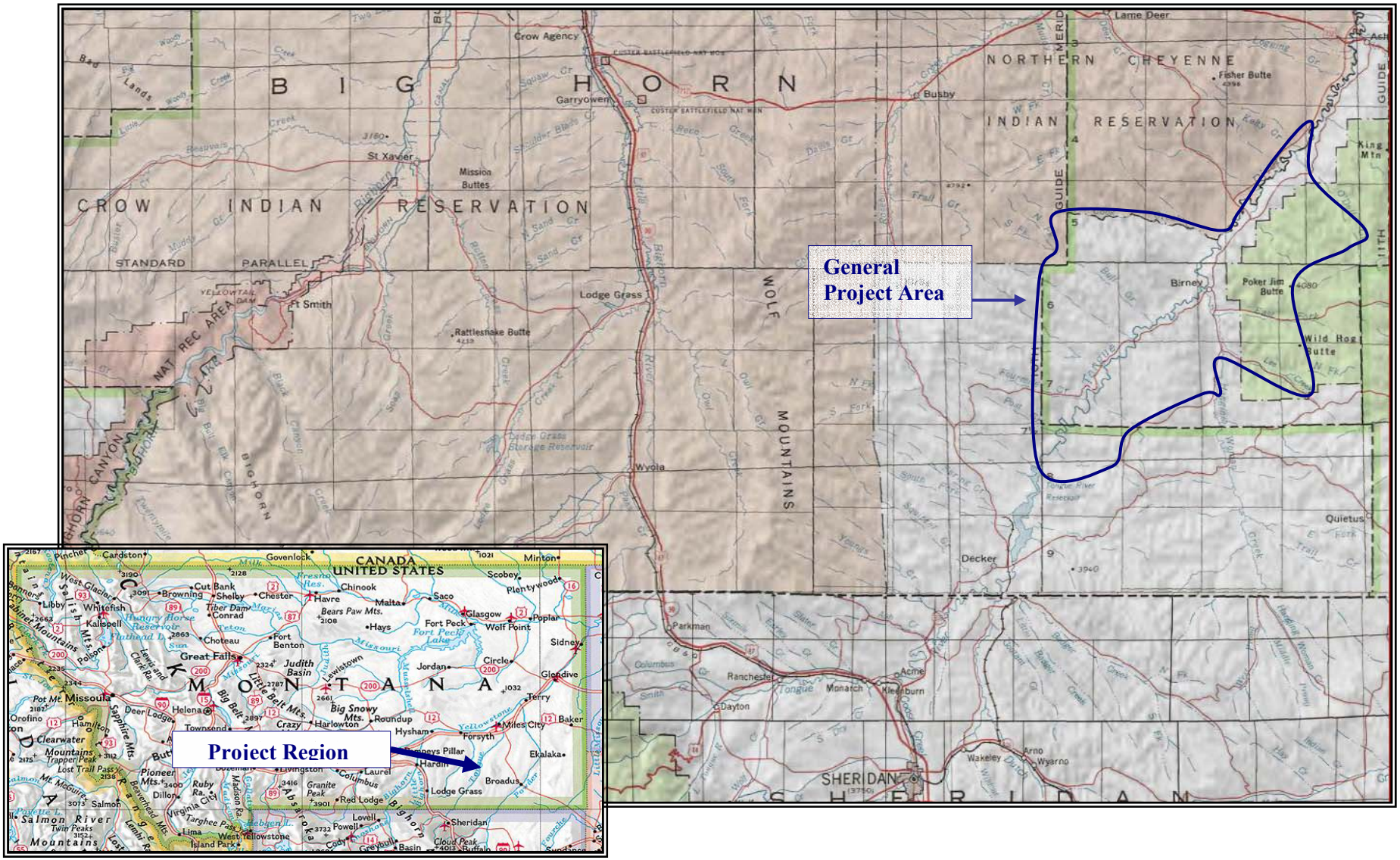
One of the most remote settings in the American West, the Tongue River valley is a historic place of tremendous cultural and historical significance. This is a valley where indigenous cultures and ancient traditions, 19th century Indian Wars, ranching settlement of the West, homesteading and dude ranching, and modern energy development all converge. From vision sites and buffalo traps to battlefields and cattle ranches, the valley tells a complex story.

The landscape is characterized by low, orange-banded mountains, buttes and scrubby pine forest that stretch in all directions. The narrow river shaped this landscape, breaking the earth's crust and carving its layers into a maze of valleys and side canyons. While the arid high plains of Eastern Montana pose a challenge to human occupation, the Tongue River breaks are an oasis, a respite from surrounding rocky slopes. An extra inch or two of rain, a scattering of springs and a greener, more diverse collection of vegetation have made the difference for human survival here over time.

These Ponderosa Pine parklands break out into prairie-grasslands and moist slope pine forest, supporting a rich diversity of animal, bird and plant life.[2] For thousands of years, the valley has been a backdrop to successive cultural groups who took advantage of the wildlife and native plants that grew here; the river and springs in this arid domain served those who learned the valley's extreme cycles of wet and dry, cold and hot, fertile and barren.

The Tongue River valley is a landscape where changes through the years have not obscured evidence of the layers of time. Places of historic interest, ancient and recent, are readily detected, from prehistoric sites dating back perhaps 8,000 years, to modern ranching and recent oil and gas development. The themes of history associated with changing lifeways in the valley are clearly represented and the level of significance for a number of themes, is of the highest order, that of national significance. An overview of the major themes identified through this project is provided below, along with a discussion of the cultural landscape property types documented in the valley project area.

Map 1. Location and Project Area Map



Methodology

The complexity of Tongue River cultural resources, together with the varied historical landscape of the project area and the fact that the vast majority of the region's historic values have not been documented, created the need for a diversity of research methodology. Further, a variety of research was required to meet each component of the project: the written report, video documentary, and digital map archive used to record cultural site locations. The bulk of the background research was conducted by Chere Jiusto, MPA Executive Director and Jim Jenks, MPA project historian, with significant early contributions by Katherine Hampton, National Register historian with the Montana State Historic Preservation Office.

Phase I ~ Background Research

Phase I began with a documentary effort to identify the range of heritage resources up and down the Tongue River valley, and lay out historical contexts and significant values by which they can be understood. Montana Preservation Alliance (MPA) began with research into existing historical data. During Phase I research, MPA compiled the following materials:

- Record search of the State of Montana Antiquities Database; collection of site forms of known historic locations.
- Collection of cultural resource compliance reports related to the project area from the State Historic Preservation Office.
- Research at the Montana State Historical Society Research Library, which included:
    - Collection of General Land Office Survey maps of the project area;
    - Secondary source material, including regional historic narratives.
- Research at the Bureau of Land Management in Billings, MT to gather surveyor field notes from original survey, as well as federal mineral development plat maps.
- Research at the Fullmer Public Library Research Room, in Sheridan, WY.
- Photographic and historic narrative research at the Trails End Wyoming State Historic Site, the Sheridan, WY, home of Wyoming Governor, U.S. Senator, and area rancher John Kendrick.

Phase II ~ Photography & Oral Interviews

MPA used phase I research to build historic contexts for use in interviews with Birney area ranchers. Contexts included initial settlement; development of Birney community familial connections; the homesteading era and ethnic traditions; ranch and homesteading architecture; the dude ranching era; social life; ranch economics; mineral extraction; water; and ranching today and into the future. In interviews; MPA used these contexts as queries/material intended to draw-out the history of the region.

This, the most significant phase of project research involved the video documentation and on-camera interviews with project participants. This process involved several components, perhaps the most critical involving the creation of trust between MPA and project area ranchers. Using Bones Brother Ranch as home base for the project, a bond was created through numerous extended visits with area ranchers over a two-year period. MPA interviewed the following members of the Birney ranching community:

- Irving Alderson, Jr; Bones Brothers Ranch, Alderson/Cox family descendent.
- Anne McKinney; 4D Ranch, Brown family descendent.
- Bill McKinney; 4D Ranch, homesteading family descendent.
- Butch Fjell; Norwegian immigrant family/homesteading family descendent.
- Margie (Fjell) Knobloch; Norwegian immigrant family/homesteading family descendent.
- Jack Knobloch ; homesteading family descendent
- Art "Bunny" Hayes; Three Circle Ranch, Brown Cattle Company and Brown family descendent.
- Kay Lohof; Quarter Circle U, Brewster family descendent.
- Jay Nance; SH Ranch and Brown/Nance/Powell family descendent.
- Susanne (Nance) Boedecker; SH Ranch and Brown/Nance/Powell family descendent

To create and craft the documentary, MPA teamed with Steve Maley, Kirsten Faubion, and Jeanie McLean-Warden of Helena Civic Television and Lee Buric, professional videographer. Interviews were conducted by Chere Jiusto.

Phase III ~ Field Work

The creation of the digital archive formed another important component of the project. The need to create an interactive archive of cultural sites for use in a variety of formats (federal, state, community) was a main goal of the project. MPA purchased National Geographic TOPO! software for use as a database, as it met several project requirements. First, it provided a simple and inexpensive mapping tool compatible with existing MPA handheld GPS units. Further, the software provided an instrument that allowed for the integration of visual images of sites (and accompanying site forms) with the mapping technology.

Sites gathered from the state antiquities database were entered into the digital map, along with the site data form. Site photographs, if available, were also entered. Additionally, twenty (20) new sites (homestead sites, rock art locations, cemeteries and cultural landscapes) were recorded to the digital archive by MPA, based on knowledge provided by project informants during phase II. Phase II field work was conducted by Chere Jiusto and Jim Jenks.

Phase IV ~ Deliverables

As required in the original scope of work, MPA has provide the following to the National Park Service's National Center for Preservation Technology and Training:

- A one-hour DVD documentary on the ranching history of Birney, MT.
- A written report providing an overview of project area cultural resources and landscapes, including area historic themes and site types.
- A digital archive of project area cultural resources. The digital archive is a map-based instrument intended to visually demonstrate the layers of culture within the project area. Within the archive, cultural sites are represented in three ways; first, as labeled waypoints on a topographical map. Waypoints are linked to a photograph (if available) of the particular site, as well as a State of Montana antiquities site form describing the location. Within the project area, MPA has mapped approximately 125 sites. These include:
    - Previously recorded sites;
    - New sites recorded by MPA;
    - Major project area ranches; and,
    - Sites recorded the General Land Office survey maps from 1884-1886, the earliest known maps of the project area.

Future Study

At the outset of this project, the intent was to also extend the study to include ethnographic and tribal cultural resources of interest to the Northern Cheyenne people. Initial research was documented with tribal cooperation, however, a memorandum of agreement to work on a cultural study of interest to the Northern Cheyenne was not secured within a timeframe that would allow that work to be conducted under this project. There are highly skilled and talented staff with the Northern Cheyenne Tribal Historic Preservation Office, Chief Dull Knife Memorial College and with the Sand Creek Massacre/Rosebud Battlefield Committee who hold a high interest in documenting tribal history. In partnership with them, an ethnographic survey of the Tongue River valley would yield tremendous benefit to both the tribe, and to historians and to tribal, federal and state government agency managers who work with the resources culturally associated with the Northern Cheyenne and other Native American groups of the region. We highly recommend a study of that nature be conducted in the very near future, using this project for background and the digital archive landscape model as applicable.

Cultural Landscapes of the Upper Tongue River

Historic Themes

Prehistoric Occupation of the Tongue River Valley

The broad sweep of grasslands called the Great Plains has been peopled for more than 11,500 years. In very distant "paleo" times, mammoths, ancient bison, and other megafauna coexisted with humans although evidence of the earliest plains cultures is scant. Remnants of small circular dwellings, stone, antler and bone tools, bone beads and whistles are among the clues to understanding life here so long ago.[3]

Rock art still grace the sandstone cliffs and caves of the Tongue River Valley. MPA

People of the Bighorn-Powder River Basin followed a semi-nomadic path, building a circle of life around the seasons and the buffalo.[4] During the archaic era, people here lived in small family bands and traveled on foot, moving within a large territory to hunt with atlatls and harvest indigenous plants of the plains. Hunting the buffalo required cooperation, and small bands would have needed to join forces with others to corral or trap the large, powerful animals.[5]

In the Tongue River valley there is ample evidence of human activity during the archaic era—a time stretching from 8,000 years ago and ending roughly 2,000 years ago, when the bow and arrow came into use. During this long and environmentally-chaotic period, the region did not support large settlements, ancient agricultural fields or complex infrastructures, and their building traditions were of a temporary, pragmatic nature. Evidence remains of the ways that people modified the natural clefts along ridgelines and cliff faces, and built simple stone constructions—rock cairns, enclosures and various alignments. Indigenous groups often took advantage of higher terrain overlooking the river bottoms, siting summer camps away from buggy bottomlands, and winter camps where the sun would warm them. Thousands of stone rings remain where conical lodges were once anchored to the ground; dry, comfortable, and highly portable rock shelters that gave protection from the elements.[6] In Rosebud County alone, where the Tongue River winds its way northward to meet the Yellowstone, one federal agency has counted nearly 1,700 prehistoric sites, though only 6% of the county has been surveyed.[7]

In the side canyons of the Tongue River valley, where rock shelters were used repeatedly over many centuries, archaeological excavations offer glimpses into a long span of habitation. At Horseshoe Cave, levels of occupation ranged across a period of at least 1,500 years and maybe far longer.[8] While it is difficult to identify distinct migrations and intercultural influences at that distant point in time, changing styles of projectile points or methods of game procurement indicate the evolution of thinking, introduced ideas or the arrival of new culture groups. By the middle of the archaic period, for example, about 4,000-5,000 years ago, projectile points and stone tools were skillfully crafted, and large kill sites from the Besant complex point to a highly organized, communal buffalo-hunting lifeways.[9] Later Besant sites around the Northern Plains region bear the hallmarks of an exchange of ideas with people farther east; Woodland-related pottery vessels and burial mounds evidence linkage between Central Plains cultures and Missouri River villages.[10]

Late Prehistoric collections unearthed at the Highwalker site just east of the Tongue River drainage reflect regional connections. Pottery related to Middle Missouri village ceramics and a broad range of stone tool materials, including exotics quarried at sites as distant from the valley as the Knife River in North Dakota and the Big Horn Mountains, speak of wide-ranging influences and breakthroughs in technology.[11]

According to the archaeology of the Tongue River Valley and its surroundings, the people here knew the value of cooperative economics. While the Plains provided an array of foods and tools, there were other goods essential to survival and the balance of their lives. In the Northern Plains, Yellowstone obsidian, Knife River flint, and marine shells from the Pacific and Gulf Coasts indicate the extensive nature of this trade.[12] They obtained these objects through trade with other cultural groups, along networks that spread across the continent, giving rise to a complex sign language shared by every people in the region during the historic past.[13] By the time of white contact, the earliest traders here reported the fullness of this interaction: newly introduced guns and horses, and traditional products including skins, clothing, stone, corn, beans, dried meat, oils and more.[14]

Tribal Homelands

After 1500, the pressures of encroaching European settlement in eastern North America pushed native people onto the Plains from homelands farther east. Bringing with them technologies and lifeways from distant woodland settings, indigenous groups migrated onto the Northern Plains and adapted their cultures to fit the new setting. The country that stretches from the Yellowstone River to the Bighorn Mountains was occupied by several tribes; in the Tongue River valley, the Northern Cheyenne and the Crow people were the most prominent, and they continue to reside in the area today.[15]

The migration stories of the Apsàalooke (Crow) and the Tsitsístas (Cheyenne) people exemplify adaptive resilience to a world exploding with change. The Apsàalooke were formerly part of the Hidatsa nation, with whom they shared an ancestry at the Knife River villages on the Missouri River, and a common but dialectically distinct language. They lived in earthen lodges, made pottery

and farmed. Their history relates drought, famine and venturing onto the plains, "either looking for better hunting and farming grounds or fleeing from hostile tribes from the east."[16] A century's sojourn took various Hidatsa bands across northern grasslands to western Canadian, south to the Great Salt Lake, and around the interior west before regrouping in the Big Horn-Powder River basin. Here the Apsàalooke settled in two distinct groups: the Mountain Crows in the foothills and high valleys surrounding the Big Horn Mountains, and the River Crows who gravitated northward nearer the Yellowstone River.[17] The Crows grew attached to their adopted homeland, territory that chief Arapaoosh described as "a good country because the Great Spirit had put it in exactly the right place."[18]

The Northern Cheyennes, too, ventured in from the east, where they had lived a farming life in earth lodge villages along the Missouri River and near the Black Hills. Driven out by hostile tribes to the east, the Tsitsístas split in two, with Southern Cheyenne bands moving to the Arkansas River in present-day Colorado, and the Northern Cheyennes establishing territory in the High Plains and river valleys of southeastern Montana.

Both tribes rapidly adapted to this new country. By the early 19th century, the once agricultural Apsàalooke and Tsitsístas had shed their farming ways, abandoning planting and pottery making. Instead, they acquired horses and developed mobile, equestrian societies that revolved around buffalo hunting and were elegantly suited to high plains living. Migration and the transition to equestrianism brought changes in the architecture of everyday life. For thousands of years, until circa 1880, dependence on the bison for subsistence was a chief characteristic of Northern Plains people. In pre-horse times, Northern Plains people followed the wandering bison herds on foot, using a dog travois to transport possessions. Tribes on the periphery of Spanish possessions would have likely begun to acquire horses as early as the mid-17th century, but the diffusion of the horse northward, the primary path of circulation, took at least another century. A Cheyenne born in 1725 could have witnessed the acquisition of the first horse by his band, and would have lived to see the horse become a relatively stable part of tribal culture by 1800. Once adopted, tribal people rapidly acculturated themselves to an equestrian-based form of life.

The 18th century saw the widespread adoption of horses into a nomadic life in three primary ways: to ride in hunting, to rise in warfare, and as beasts of burden. The subsistence shift was the foundation of the great tribal movement onto the higher Northern Plains, where bison were most numerous, during the 18th century. With the introduction of horses, an agriculturally-based life based in sedentary villages became a handicap—fixed villages were easy targets for highly-mobile horsemen during intertribal warfare, and they became centers for non-Indian diseases that began to spread to Plains tribes beginning in the late-18th century.

As the powerful Lakota bands and the Cheyenne moved west, they came into contact with the Crow and Shoshone people. This meeting and mixing of former strangers resulted in new alliances, and exchanges of material goods and cultural expressions. Close proximity also caused conflict, and horse raiding became a common way to enhance social status, increase military capabilities, and economically enrich the band.

The Plains tipi became home to both tribes and traditions grew up that embedded these lodges deep within their cultures. Light and portable, built with materials gained from the hunt and the land, the tipi fit this place with simplicity, sturdiness and beauty.[19] But the mid-1800s ushered in an era of turbulent change, as white society invaded western Indian Territory and Euro-American notions about prosperity, progress and development collided with Native American ideas of status, tradition and survival.

Clash of Cultures

In 1851, the U.S. Government invited regional tribes to a council at Fort Laramie, Wyoming. An estimated 10,000 Indians attended. The Fort Laramie Treaty of 1851 for the first time set territories for the signatories: the Cheyenne, Lakota, Crow, Arapaho, Hidatsa, Mandan and Arikara nations. The treaty confined the Crows to southeastern Montana from the Powder to the Yellowstone rivers, and the Cheyennes to the east with their allies the Lakota. The Powder-Tongue River areas became unceded Indian lands, closed to general white entry, and available for seasonal hunting but not permanent occupation by the Indians. The treaty also designated travel routes for whites through the region and government annuities for the tribes.

Military campaigns against the Santee Sioux, and the Cheyenne in Colorado which ended with the 1864 Sand Creek Massacre, and the 1868 Battle of Washita in Oklahoma (led by Lt. Colonel George A. Custer and the 7th Cavalry) destroyed the peace. This was further aggravated by continued encroachment on tribal territory as miners poured into the region by the thousands following gold strikes in the Black Hills of the Dakotas and Montana's western mountains.

In Wyoming's Powder River Country, conflict brewed during the years between 1865 and 1875, as natives and non-natives struggled against each other—Indians holding fast to the last buffalo grounds on the high plains, and whites looking to clear the pathway for railroads and regional development. The Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868 attempted to stem the tide of conflict and created what became known as the "Great Sioux Reservation," occupying territory in South Dakota west of the Missouri River. The following year, President U.S. Grant articulated a "peace policy" that relegated all Indians to reservations where they would receive agricultural training.

However, gold strikes in the Black Hills upended those plans as miners poured into the region in violation of the treaty. The federal government attempted negotiations to buy the Black Hills; the Lakota refused to sell their sacred land. In 1875, Grant ordered the military to stop blocking miners from entering the region leading to the so-called Great Sioux War of 1876-1877. The Tongue and Powder Rivers were at the center of the maelstrom as a series of battles unfolded across southeastern Montana.

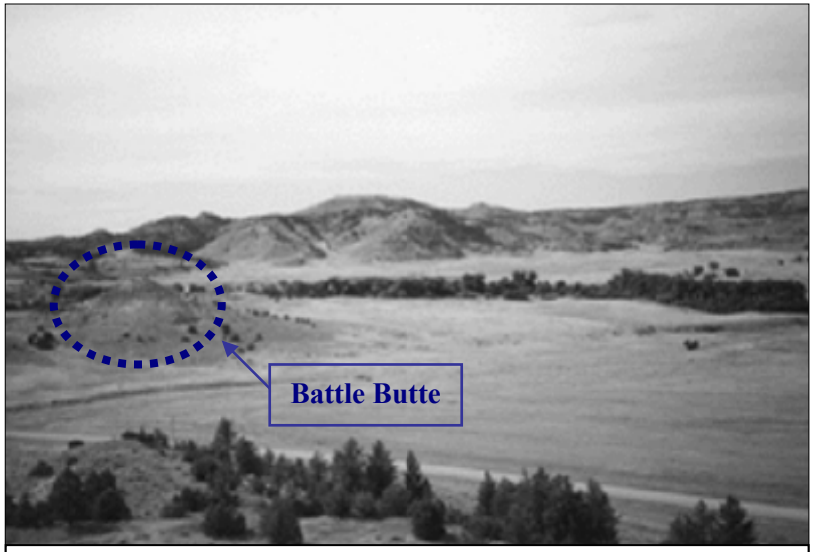
The war opened with the Battle of Powder River on March 17, 1876 (aka the Reynolds Battlefield), where Col. Joseph J. Reynolds, under the command of General George Crook, attacked a Cheyenne village after mistaking it for Crazy Horse's camp.

The Northern Cheyenne and Lakota united, and fought Crook again on June 17, 1876 at the Battle of Rosebud Creek, where some 1,500 warriors defeated Crook's soldiers. This battle was followed a week later by the war's most famous episode, the Battle of the Little Big Horn, where the U.S. Army, aided by Crow and Shoshone scouts, was defeated again by the Sioux and Northern Cheyenne.

The Battle of the Butte/Wolf Mountains Battlefield[20]

The nationally-significant Wolf Mountains Battlefield is located three miles south of Birney, on Quarter Circle U land. The January 8, 1877 Wolf Mountains battle was the decisive battle and last large-scale engagement of the so-called Great Sioux War, following on the heels of the twin tribal victories at the Rosebud and Little Bighorn battlefields in June 1876. Stirred by the desire for revenge following Lt. Colonel George A. Custer's defeat and death, the United States Army had been relentless in its pursuit of the combined Lakota and Northern Cheyenne bands, led by Crazy Horse and the Northern Cheyenne Two Moons.

Colonel Nelson Miles began devising a winter campaign strategy to be used against the Lakota and Northern Cheyenne. Miles believed that the best way to defeat a nomadic people was to campaign against them during Montana's arctic-like winter when the tribal bands had settled in their winter camps. On December 28, 1876, Colonel Miles led his force (supplemented by Crow scouts) up the Tongue River to where he believed were the winter camps of the Lakota and Northern Cheyenne bands. Temperatures had dropped to thirty degrees below zero, but Miles followed the trail through the Tongue River Valley for the next several days, fighting harsh winds, bitter subzero temperatures, deep snows, and over one hundred icy river crossings.



The Wolf Mountains battlefield landscape, with the Tongue River flowing south to north through the image, and Battle Butte, as indicated. Lohof family.

One event proved decisive in initiating the battle, when on January 7, Miles captured a party of nine Northern Cheyenne women and children attempting to reach Crazy Horses' camp. However, their warrior escort witnessed the capture, and rode to Crazy Horses' camp. Lakota and Northern Cheyenne immediately began to prepare for war and to rescue the captured Cheyenne.

The battle began at approximately 7 a.m. with warriors attempting to ambush soldiers, followed by a direct assault on Miles encampment at the base of Battle Butte. Tribal and Army forces fought on both sides of the Tongue River, around Battle Butte, and along a creek now called Battle Butte Creek. Charge and counter-charge by both Lakota and Cheyenne warriors and soldiers marked

the engagement, and Miles was able to shake the resolve of the warriors with the use of two field artillery pieces, situated near Battle Butte.

As the weather degenerated into blizzard conditions, the warriors engaging Miles' troops withdrew from the battlefield, using the blinding snowfall to cover their retreat. After nearly five hours of fighting, the battle was over. Miles believed that the bands were in full-flight toward the Bighorn Mountains, some seventy miles to south, where the Colonel knew supplies to be meager. Miles decided the expedition's objectives had been met and announced that the army would begin its march home the next day.

Although the Indians fought to a draw at Wolf Mountains, the battle ultimately proved to be a tactical victory for the army and an unrecoverable military defeat for the Lakota and Northern Cheyenne. The losses in supplies and ammunition suffered at the battle meant that neither the Lakota or Cheyenne warriors could mount anymore large-scale attacks against the U.S. Army.

In late January the first of many government messengers arrived at the Lakota and Northern Cheyenne camp near the headwaters of the Bighorn River. These messengers bore promises of good treatment from the military, which was now trying to convince these bands to surrender before campaigning renewed in the spring. One by one they surrendered, and on May 6, 1877, Crazy Horse led his people into Camp Robinson. The Great Sioux War was over.

Since the early 1880s, much of the Wolf Mountains Battlefield has been under private ownership. Owned by the Quarter Circle U, the ranch grows hay and other forage for their livestock in the river bottom near the Battle Butte. Ranch livestock also grazes upon this ground and throughout the surrounding fields.

Significantly, the battlefield landscape retains much of its integrity. Although the passage of time has altered the site to a small degree, the battlefield retains a high level of integrity of location, setting, feeling and association, the most important aspects of integrity for a battlefield. The battlefield spans the width of the Tongue River Valley for approximately two-and-a-half-miles, and extends along the axis of the river about two miles. It is naturally divided into three sections by the two streams passing through the site. The Tongue River passes through the center of the site and winds its way to the northeast in a series of horseshoe bends, separating the eastern and western portions of the field. Flood plains extend from western opening bends to form lowland pastures on the north central and southeastern portions of the battlefield. These lowland areas are disrupted by a towering rock-faced bluff that projects finger-like onto the field from the hills lying farther to the north and west.

The battlefield was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2001, and is a pending National Historic Landmark.

The Reservation Era

In the aftermath, the U.S. Army with more than 2,500 soldiers and 150 provisioned wagons, set out to vanquish the tribes of the area. Skirmishes continued into the fall, with a devastating attack on Nov 25, 1876, led by Colonel Ranald Mackenzie against Morning Star (or Dull Knife) and Little Wolf's Cheyenne village in Wyoming. The final battle took place deep among the conical buttes and choppy bottomlands of the Tongue River Valley at the Battle of Wolf Mountains on January 7, 1877. Though relatively few soldiers and Indians were killed, the fierce fighting on that cold, snowy day effectively signaled the end of Sioux and Cheyenne resistance.[21] After a few more months of skirmishes, the Lakota were returned to their reservations. Sitting Bull managed to escape to Canada, while Crazy Horse was killed during his incarceration by the U.S. Army.

Noted Northern Cheyenne war leader Little Wolf. Dull Knife Tribal College

Many Cheyenne, meanwhile, were shipped away to inhospitable "Indian Territory" in Oklahoma. There, reservation conditions were dire and many Cheyenne fell ill with malaria. Two principal Chiefs, Little Wolf and Morning Star (Dull Knife) pressed for the release of the Cheyenne so they could return to their homeland. In 1878, an estimated 350 Cheyenne fled Indian Territory to travel north. It is estimated that a total of 13,000 soldiers and volunteers pursued the Cheyenne, who divided their group. Little Wolf and his band journeyed back to Montana; Morning Star and his band were captured and incarcerated at Fort Robinson, Nebraska.

The Cheyenne were ordered to return to Oklahoma but refused to submit. Conditions grew tense through the end of 1878 and soon the Cheyenne were confined to barracks with no food, water or heat. In January of 1879, Morning Star and his group broke out of Fort Robinson. Most of the group was gunned down as they ran from the fort. It is estimated that only 50 Cheyenne survived the breakout to be reunited with the tribe in Montana.

Once back in southeastern Montana, they settled into the Tongue River drainage, claiming homesteads on both the east and west sides of the river. In 1884, by Executive Order, a small reservation near the Tongue and Rosebud Rivers was created for the Northern Cheyenne out of land formerly assigned to the Crows; in 1900, the Cheyenne land base was extended to the Tongue River. The current western border of the Cheyenne reservation is the Crow Indian reservation, while the Tongue Rivers forms the eastern border. With a secure land base now open to them, the Cheyenne relocated west of the Tongue River, and homesteads to the east were abandoned or sold for a fraction of their value to ranchers in the vicinity. Some of those "Indian cabins" are marked on the earliest General Land Office maps of the area.

The Crow, meanwhile, in 1880 sold the western portion of their reservation to the United States, and by 1883, had settled on today's vast Crow Agency centered near Hardin, MT. Since that time, reservation lands were reduced, most recently in the 1950s when the tribe was forced to sell land rights in Wyoming's Bighorn Canyon for a federal dam project. Still, both tribes remain and occupy a portion of their original homelands in southeastern Montana.

Government agents at the Northern Cheyenne reservation carried out federal plans to assimilate native tribes by introducing agriculture and discouraging native culture. In 1892, under the auspices of the federal Dawes Severalty Act, tribal lands were divided into 160-acre tracts and assigned to individual Cheyennes. Unassigned or surplus land was made available to white settlers, and the Tongue River Day School opened at so-called "Indian" Birney on the reservation. ("White" Birney exists just across the Tongue River.) Developed in the eastern states, the government's initial farming methods were not suited to the natural environment of southeastern Montana, and Tongue River valley history includes failed farming and assimilation projects promoted by government agents at the Northern Cheyenne Reservation.

Beginning in 1910 and intended to promote agriculture, a decade-long project to construct an elaborate earthen dam, headgate, and ditch system was completed. However, plagued by flooding, seepage and collapse, the irrigation system met with failure and within eight years was abandoned. Another attempt to impose small-scale agriculture on the reservation is evidenced by the remains of a demonstration wheat field on the divide between Birney and Lame Deer, abandoned in 1932 after years of severe drought.[22]

The Cheyenne fared far better at livestock production, especially horse-raising. In 1912, reservation herds reached 12,000 cattle and 15,000 horses, a way of life that the Cheyenne found compatible with traditional ways. However, in the early-1920s, the Bureau of Indian Affairs sought to reduce the size of herds and create communal ownership of the herds. BIA mismanagement led to the destruction of the Cheyenne economy, and by 1924, the cattle herd was down to 4,000. By the end of the 1920s the remaining herd was slaughtered to provide government rations and thousands of acres of reservation land was leased by the BIA to area white ranchers. This practice continued for decades.

Ranching Settlement

Following the end of the Indian Wars, white settlers moved rapidly into southeastern Montana, seeking open grazing land to establish new cattle operations along with range for resting cattle from western Montana that were being trailed south to market. The very first settler known to take up land along the upper Tongue River in Montana territory was Andrew Andersen, a Norwegian immigrant who moved in along the river in 1877, just months after the battle of Wolf Mountains ended fighting between the U.S. government and the Cheyenne nation. Andersen left Norway at the age of 16, and after finding Mississippi disagreeable, traveled northwest to St. Louis, Missouri. There he heard that the government was giving away free land for homesteading and he went to

Miles City where he filed a claim for land downriver from Decker, near today's Tongue River Reservoir. Others followed, and the *Rocky Mountain Husbandman* observed this land rush in December 1879, declaring that "Eastern Montana is booming. The shackles that have bound it in years past have suddenly burst asunder and its latent resources are beginning to be aroused and developed…Stock is pouring from every hand; farmers are locating land, and the mountains are alive with prospectors."[23]

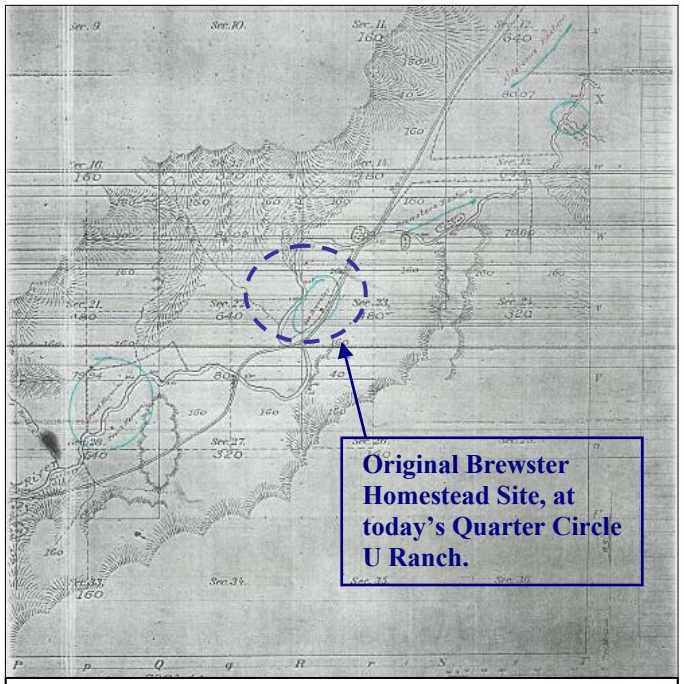
General James Brisbin's 1881 book, *The Beef Bonanza or How to Get Rich on the Plains* sent a rush of settlers to eastern Montana after he declared that "Montana has undoubtedly the best grazing grounds in America…The Yellowstone, Big Horn, Tongue River and Powder River regions contain the maximum advantages to the cattle-grower."[24]

For established cattle raisers in Western Montana, these newly opened ranges offered an alternative route to market. In 1879, pioneering cattlemen Kohrs and Bielenberg drove their cattle east from the Deer Lodge valley, following what became their "eastern route"—to the Sun River valley, on along the Missouri River and Musselshell rivers, then through the Yellowstone basin and on south by way of the Tongue and Powder Rivers. From there, they continued on along the North Platte to Fort Laramie and western Nebraska. According to Kohr's biography, once established, this trail served for the next few years as a primary corridor for moving cattle to the railheads and eastern markets as well as bringing cattle up into Montana from Texas.[25]

Granville Stuart suggested that the first cattle came to southeastern Montana in 1879. In 1880, Englishman Sydney Paget's Anglo-American Cattle Company trailed one of the first large herds of cattle to the Tongue River—2,000 longhorns from Texas—and wintered them near present-day Ashland. The cattle arrived hungry and thin, and the winter months that followed were harsh enough to kill most all. By spring, only a reported 120 had survived. That same year, Conrad Kohrs had better luck, wintering his cattle near the Goose Creek & Tongue River confluence, but rather than continuing south, Kohrs shipped them out in the spring on the newly completed Northern Pacific railroad at Miles City. These early herds are thought to have reached southeastern Montana via a branch of the Texas Trail that led to the head of the Little Powder River in Wyoming then down that stream to the Powder River. The trail continued down the Powder to what is now Powderville, crossed to Mizpah Creek and down Pumpkin Creek to the Tongue River and ultimately the Yellowstone River at Miles City.

The success and persistence of these early livestock ventures were noticed by others and stocking of the southeastern Montana ranges continued through the 1880s and into the 1890s. Many eastern Montana towns owe their existence to the success of early ranching efforts in the project area as well as to the construction of the Northern Pacific Railway in 1881 and 1882. Although a drought in the summer of 1886 followed by a crushing winter, decimated cattle herds in eastern Montana, the livestock industry survived as ranchers began to raise more winter feed and depended less on the open range.

The Quarter Circle U Ranch



This 1884 General Land Office survey map shows both the original Brewster homestead, as well as the overall slow rate of development during this era. BLM

George W. Brewster entered the American West looking for the last herd of buffalo, and he became the first to settle in direct proximity to present-day Birney. Born in 1856, Brewster was an adventurous man who grew up in Boston, and as a teenager struck out for Virginia City, Nevada, where his sister was a schoolteacher, in 1874. Brewster found work there in a quartz mill and subsequently moved to California and then to Butte, Montana. According to family history, he learned of the last free roaming buffalo in southeastern Montana and "wanted in" on that last bit of Montana history.

George Brewster arrived in Miles City in 1882 and headed up Tongue River with "a team, saddle horse and wagon with all of his worldly possessions."[26] Near the mouth of Hanging Woman Creek Brewster found country that seemed a good place to settle and start a cattle ranch. He settled on 160 acres by squatter's right, built a log cabin and launched the Quarter Circle U ranch.

By 1896, Brewster had built a more substantial log home and a successful ranch. That year, he met and married Grace Sanborn, a resident of Greeley, Colorado and visiting friend of Mrs. John B. Kendrick.

John B. Kendrick, the founder of the nearby OW Ranch on Hanging Woman Creek, and the Kendrick Ranch out of Sheridan, WY, became a powerful local cattleman, Governor, and U.S. Senator from Wyoming. Brewster became a successful rancher on the Tongue River, operating the Quarter Circle U Ranch with leased range on the neighboring Cheyenne reservation. He helped to form, and served as president of, the Montana Stockgrowers Association. He also served in the Montana House of Representatives for three terms.

George and Grace Brewster had three sons—George Jr., Lyman, and Burton. When George Sr. died, Grace married Jack Arnold, though Lyman and Burton Brewster took over ranch operations in the early 1930s, and operated the Brewster Arnold Ranch Co. and G.W. Brewster Estate along with family members John and Grace Brewster Arnold and George Brewster, Jr. It was during this era that dude ranching operations began. As Burton Brewster noted in one history of the ranch, "[T]he ranching business was not very lucrative in those days and some sources of outside money was most welcome."

In 1947, the operation split; Lyman Brewster and his wife Anne became the X Diamond Bar Cattle Co. and Burton took over the Quarter Circle U Ranch. Burton's daughter Kay Lohof still operates the ranch at the Quarter Circle U.

The U Cross/Scott & Hanks' SH Ranch

As word spread of the opening of the range, a succession of eastern, British and Scottish outfits trailed into the newly opened plains of Wyoming and Southeastern Montana. Among them, the Joseph Scott & Hanks livestock operations in Idaho and Nevada expanded into southeastern Montana in 1880, drawn to the wild hay meadows near where O'Dell Creek flows into the Tongue River. Established after Scott and Hanks drove an estimated 20,000 cattle to the Tongue and Powder River basins, the SH Ranch home place was established at the confluence of the Little Powder and Powder Rivers and a horse ranch, known as the Hat Ranch, was established near the mouth of O'Dell Creek on the Tongue River. By 1886 Scott had business partners from San Francisco and they formed the Northern Cattle Company. The early ranch reportedly included a house trimmed out in redwood, a stable, bunkhouse and corrals.[27]

In the late-1880s, the horse ranch was acquired from Scott and Hanks by Captain Joseph Brown, who had arrived in the Tongue River Valley two years earlier, and who began another important Birney area ranch, the Three Circle. The SH became one of the five ranches that eventually encompassed the entirety of the Brown Cattle Co. In 1909, one of Joseph Brown's sons, Albert Gallatin Brown, married Annie May Powell. When Annie's youngest sister, Willie, came to Birney on a visit, she met and married Captain Brown's other son, Joseph, Jr. The Powell family was based in Mississippi, and Albert met Annie while attending a southern military school. Annie and Willie relocated to Birney and began life on a Montana ranch. Meanwhile, a third Powell sister, Mamie, had married Marcus Nance, a Mississippi physician. She had a son, Marc, Jr in 1916, but Dr. Nance died when his son was still a young boy.

In the early 1920s, with Birney area ranches struggling for survival, Mr. and Mrs. W.B. Powell, the parents of the Powell daughters, moved to Birney, along with daughter Mamie and her son Marc. Mr. Powell, owner of several successful Mississippi businesses, took over the presidency of the Brown Cattle Co. Mamie, meanwhile, opened a general store in Birney called The Nance Trading Company. When Mr. Powell passed away, ownership of the SH passed to Mamie and Marc Nance. Mamie's single-story, stone commercial building remains in Birney today, though the store is no longer in operation. The SH remains under the ownership of the Nance family, operated today by Jay Nance, a son of Marc Nance. The U Cross brand is used by the Nance family for cattle; the Scott and Hanks SH brand is still used by the family today as a horse brand.

Map 2. Map Demonstrating Primary Ranch Locations near Birney & Battlefield Site

The Three Circle Ranch

In 1884, Ed Brown, a Mississippi native, founded a ranch on the Tongue River near Hanging Woman Creek; two years later, his brother Captain Joseph T. Brown, a veteran of the Confederate army, trailed the first herd of 1,000 Texas cattle from what was then Indian Territory (Oklahoma) to establish the Three Circle ranch.[28] Joseph Brown had survived the Civil War and afterward studied law at the Virginia Military Institute. He married Mary George Humphreys, a fellow Mississippian, in 1883 and the following year made the cattle drive to Montana. Joseph and Mary Brown had their first child Albert in 1886; following his birth, Mary traveled to Miles City by train and from there rode in a buck board wagon to the Three Circle Ranch. In the years to follow, two more children, Joseph Jr. and Natalie were born. For the first few years, the original Brown cabin site sat on a low rise over the Tongue River, on land still owned today by the Brown Cattle Co.

To bring those first cattle in, the Browns had purchased an interest in a herd owned by John Wyeth of Philadelphia; thus the operation was named Wyeth-Brown Cattle Co until 1898. That year, Joseph T. Brown purchased the Zook-Alderson Homestead a couple of miles up the river and moved the Three Circle home ranch headquarters there. In 1902, they had masons from Sheridan build a substantial stone house and outbuildings, and in 1916 added a massive stone horse barn. Captain Brown's original log cabin was sold and moved to the Quarter Circle U where it still serves as a bunkhouse.

The Three Circle further expanded their range in 1899, purchasing the SH Ranch from Joseph Scott. Captain Brown also served as a President of the Montana Stockgrowers and as a member of the Montana legislature. Nearby, Brown's wife, Mary and her brothers Nat, Will, and Dan Humphrey bought a horse ranch founded by Englishman Peter Wylie, who had settle in the early 1880s. This 4D Ranch remains in the extended family today. After Captain Brown took sole ownership, he formed the Joseph T. Land and Cattle Company with his children, which later became the Brown Cattle Company and consisted of several ranches, which operated as a single company until 1949, when the ranches were divided among the children and organized as separate companies. The following is an overview of Brown family descendents and related ranches:

The Three Circle Barn includes two iconic bison skulls embedded in the first floor sandstone façade. MPA

- Captain Joseph T. Brown married Mary Humphreys; they had three children, Albert Gallatin Brown, Joseph T. Brown Jr., and Natalie Brown. They resided at the original homestead site of Joe and Ed Brown until purchasing today's Three Circle Ranch.
    - Albert G. Brown married Annie Mae Powell. They had two children; Albert (Buster) Brown Jr., and Josephine Brown.
        - Buster never married. Josephine Brown married Jack Carrell and had Ann Carrell. The Carrell family still resides on the FL ranch south of Birney.

          Ann Carrell married Bill McKinney, and they currently reside on the 4D ranch.
    - Joseph T. Brown Jr. married Willie B. Powell; they had one child, Nancy Brown.
        - Nancy Brown married Arthur Hayes; they had three children, Art Jr., Joe and Patricia.

          Art Jr. currently operates the Brown Cattle Co, and he resides at the R Bar ranch with his wife Marilynn; they had two children, Arthur III and Patrick. Arthur III reside at the Three Circle ranch and works for the Brown Cattle Co.
    - Natalie Brown married Gilbert Woodard; they had one daughter, Mary Brown Woodard, who died as a teenager. Natalie and Gilbert resided at the R Bar prior to the Hayes family.

- As noted, there were three Powell Sisters. Mamie Powell married Dr. Marcus Nance in Mississippi and had a single son, Marc. Mamie later received the SH/UCross Ranch.
    - Marc Nance married Ruth Ellison; they had three children, Mark, Jay, and Susanne. Jay currently operates the Nance Cattle Company, and resides at the SH/UCross Ranch.
- A second Powell sister, Annie Mae Powell, married Albert G. Brown (see above). They resided at the 4D ranch prior to the McKinney family. That ranch had been owned by the Nat Humphrey family. Nat Humphrey was a brother of Mary Humphrey, who married Captain Joseph T. Brown (see above).
- The third Powell sister, Willie B. Powell, married Joseph Brown, Jr. (see above). They resided at the Three Circle Ranch.

The FL and the 4D ranches went to Albert, and his son Buster and daughter Josephine. This unit is still owned by Anne and Bill McKinney. The Three Circle and the R Bar went to Joseph Brown, Jr., and was passed to Joe's daughter Nancy. Nancy married veterinarian Dr. Arthur Hayes, and the ranches are still owned are operated by Art Hayes, Jr. and still called the Brown Cattle Co. Finally, the SH passed to Mamie Powell Nance and her only offspring, Marc Nance. The SH is still owned today by Jay Nance and Sue Nance Boedecker, two of Marc's children. The Powell sisters introduced the ways of southern society to the valley, holding socials, and in many ways accounting for the emphasis on education, social activities and hospitality that came to characterize the Birney community.

ZT Cox ~ Bones Brothers Ranch

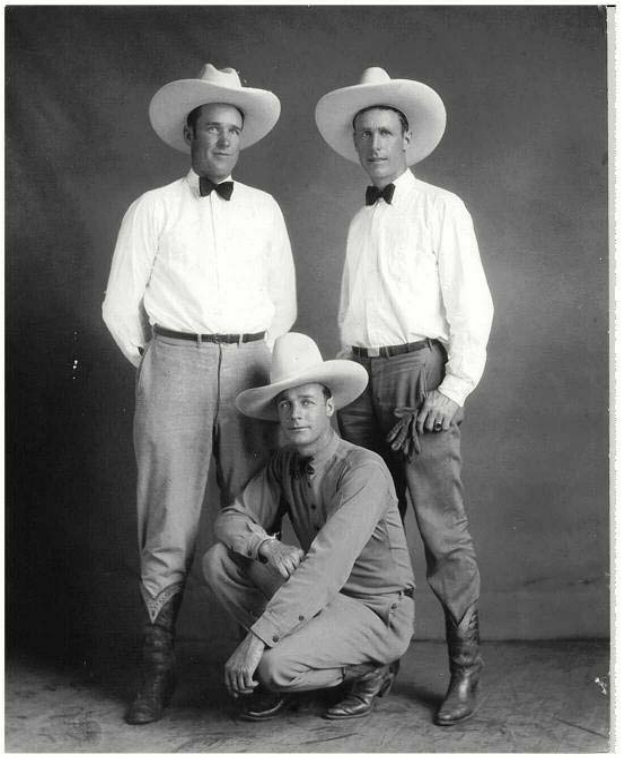
Walter and Tiffany "Nannie" or "Domo" Alderson were among the first settlers in the area, arriving in 1883. Walter and John Zook founded the Zook-Alderson cattle ranch and the Alderson's took up a homestead on Lame Deer Creek. They moved to the Tongue the following year after their first cabin was burned by Indians, settling below the confluence of Hanging Woman Creek and Tongue River. As Nannie Alderson summed up in *A Bride Goes West,* her recounting of frontier life along the Tongue River:

> *"We didn't expect to live on the ranch our whole lives – oh my no! We used to talk and plan about where we would live when we were rich … It all looked easy; the cows would have calves, and two years from now their calves would have calves, and we could figure it all out with a pencil and paper, how in no time at all we'd all be cattle kings."*[29]

Irving Alderson, Jr., the son of Little Bones, on today's Bones Brother Ranch. MPA

In 1885, Zachary Taylor Cox traveled to Lame Deer to become chief clerk at the new Northern Cheyenne agency. He married Mary Peachy Roberts, a cousin to the Browns, in 1887. In 1889, the Cox's settled on the ZC Ranch at the confluence of Hanging Woman Creek at the East Fork of the same creek. The Coxes' were joined by Mary Peachy's parents and two sisters. In 1892, Cox filed for a homestead entry for 160 acres on which he had already resided for three years, finally receiving the patent in 1896. Z.T. and Mary had four sons and a daughter, and in common practice, each child began to patent nearby lands through various federal public land laws to increase the size of the ranch.

Other family members also immigrated and settled in the valley. West of the Z.T. Cox homestead sat the homestead of Lew Alderson, the brother of Walter Alderson. In 1894, Lew married Emma, one of Mary Peachy's sisters and they had three sons: Floyd, Allan and Irving. Lew Alderson sold his ranch to his brother-in-law in 1902 and moved his family to Sheridan, WY. However, with the death of his wife in 1907, Lew left his three sons with the Cox family and left the country. Raised by their uncle and aunt, and noted for their individual builds, the brothers were known as Bones (Floyd), Big Bones (Allan) and Little Bones (Irving).



The Bones Brothers, c. 1925. Irving Alderson, Jr., a son of Little Bones, still owns and operates the Bones Brothers Ranch as a working cattle ranch. Bones Brothers Ranch.

Big Bones and Little Bones worked as wranglers until 1919, when a terrible winter killed thousands of cattle. After that experience, the brothers spent three years working on the Eaton ranch, learning the dude ranching trade and bringing that experience back to the Cox ranch in 1923. Together with the Cox brothers, Allan and Irving began both dude and cattle operations. By the late-1930s, the Cox brothers had sold out to the Alderson Brothers, and the ranch officially became today's Bones Brothers Ranch. Financial diversification also continued. During both world wars, the ranch (like others in the valley) sold hundreds of horses to the army remount station at Fort Keogh, maintaining a herd of several hundred horses during that time.

One Bones Brother left ranching. Floyd Alderson arrived in Hollywood in 1915, and became a cowboy star of lower echelon films during the silent era. He migrated to "talkies" but his starring efforts were plagued by low end productions. During his early film career, he used several monikers including Floyd Taliaferro and Walt Williams, but the most well-known was Wally Wales.

As Wally Wales Floyd continued a successful career, working in films with John Wayne and other regular Western actors. He changed his name again, this time to Hal Taliaferro, and became a great supporting player in scores of westerns and serials, including a performance in the epic western "Red River" which won raves from noted film director Howard Hawks. Disillusioned with Hollywood, the aging cowboy retired from the screen in the early 1950s. He returned to his Montana roots and the Bones Brothers Ranch. He built a cabin on the ranch and spent much of his later life devoted to his favorite hobby—painting landscapes of the rugged Tongue River Valley.

Back at the ranch**,** dude operations halted in 1963 and today's Bone Brothers Ranch is dedicated only to cattle. Owned and operated by Irving Alderson, Jr., and his three daughters, Natalie, Jeannie and Mary, the Bones Brothers Ranch was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2004.

Birney

Downtown Birney today, with Mamie Powell's quarried rock mercantile (foreground, right). MPA

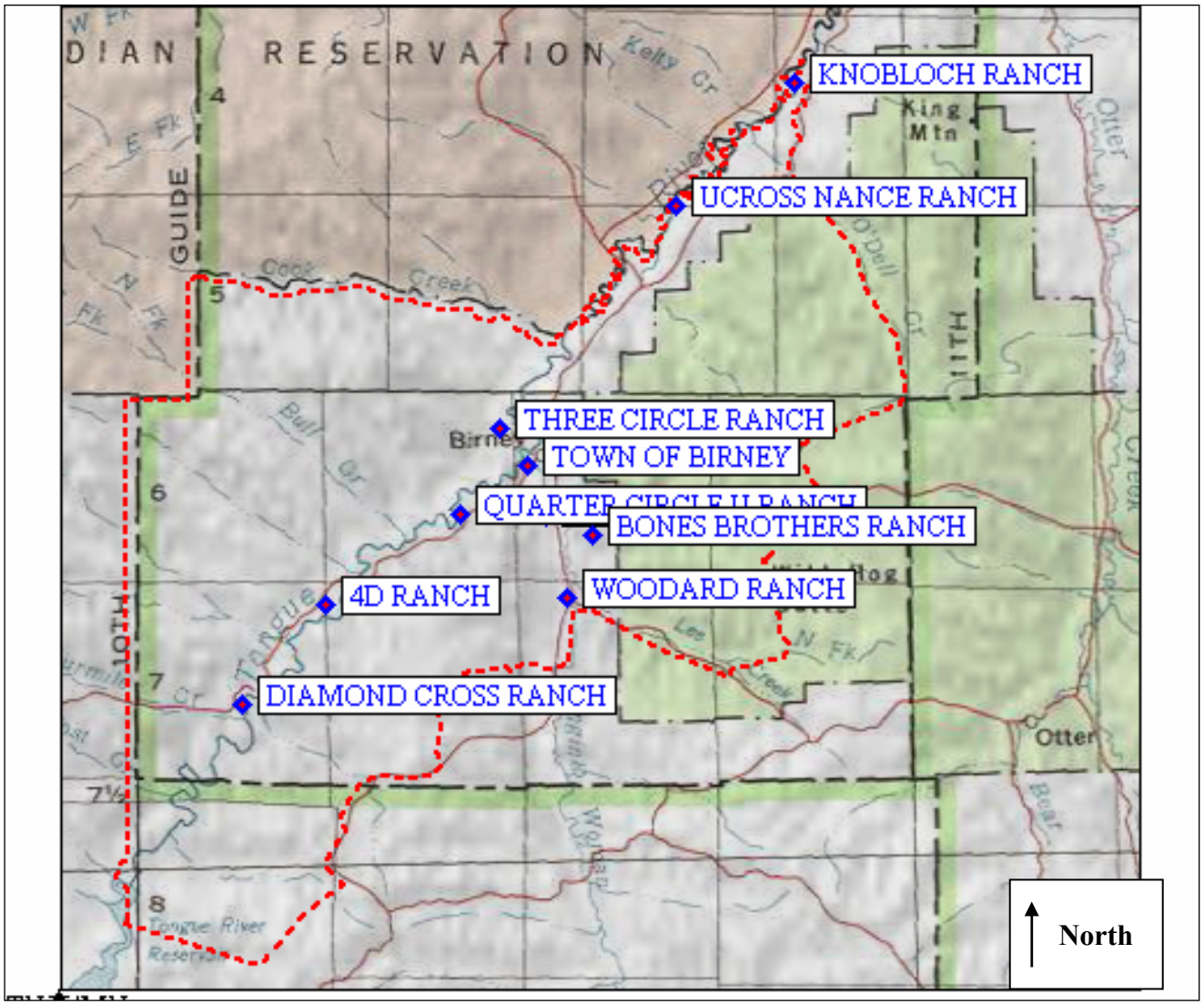
The Tongue River range quickly filled with cattle, as the *Yellowstone Journal* out of Miles City reported in 1884, "Mr. Scott has just returned from Nevada where he has purchased 5,000 head of fine stock cattle which will be driven to his range on upper Tongue River as soon as the weather opens up."[30]

Growth of livestock operations led to assignment of a post office in 1881-86, reportedly operated by Arthur M. Birney and first located on the west side of the river. The post office moved to the original Three Circle home ranch with Ed Brown as postmaster, and on to the Ed McGhee homestead dugout, and then Jack and Annie Hope's ranch 8 miles south of Birney. Hope was an early settler; he carried the mail along a route up the valley from Miles City once a week and dumped the mail on the floor at his ranch for all to sort through. The actual town of Birney at the confluence of Hanging Woman Creek and Tongue River was founded when Mrs. Lottie Ebaugh, mid-wife and housekeeper for Hope's daughter following the death of Mrs. Hope, built a home at Birney.[31] Postal duties passed to Nannie Alderson who moved into Birney several years after her husband's death, erected a log building and operated a store and post office at this location. The Birney PO remained in the town from that time forward.[32]

She described Birney at that time looking "like a town in a wild western movie – with its log homes, its wide dusty street, and the horses tie to hitching racks in front of the stores."[33] The hamlet of Birney grew with the expansion of ranching and arrival of homesteaders to the valley. Duke and Will Hogan gifted land from their adjacent homesteads at the juncture of the rivers, in the mid-1890s. Building of the Birney church was a community effort with the local families all pitching in to finance and raise money, beginning in February 1895 – fundraising dances and suppers were held at McGee's store; Zook and Alderson donated logs from the original Three Circle Ranch, and these in turn were hewed by William Ebaugh and Walter Henderson.[34] Although registered as a Methodist Missionary church, the building was non-denominational and used by other faiths.

Map 3 (following page) demonstrates the minimally-defined boundaries of a rural historic district centered on the town of Birney, MT. Currently, the proposed district is drawn to encompass the primary and contributing sites located on the Tongue River and associated drainages. Further research will likely increase the size of the district as more sites are discovered.

Map 3. Proposed Minimum Boundaries for the Birney Ranching Historic Rural District.



The first organized school opened in 1897 on the East Fork of Hanging Woman Creek, with seven students in a square-hewn log schoolhouse. Three years later, students moved into the Birney Church and finally in 1904 into a newly constructed frame schoolhouse that served the community until it burned in the 1960s. Each schoolhouse became a center of community activity, and as families grew or moved on, the school houses were sometimes relocated closer to families with school-age children.

The Red Bluff Schoolhouse (center), nestled along the Tongue River. It is the last standing one-room school house in the valley. MPA.

The Red Bluff School, for example, down by the big bend of the Tongue River between today's 4D and Diamond Cross ranches, had formerly been located up a nearby drainage to serve homesteaders. Children of the community were educated in one and two room schoolhouses through the 8th Grade, and then attended high school in the towns of Sheridan, or Miles City. Reflecting the strong eastern ties of the original families, a number of the local children also went to boarding schools in the east and mid-west. Education was valued among the settlement families, with a number of them attending such institutions as Cornell, Tulane, and the Virginia Military Institute (a demonstration of the continuation of southern sensibilities) as well as state universities including University of Montana, Montana State University and the University of Minnesota.

The Birney community is generally defined in the minds of local residents as extending from the Tongue River dam north to the Nance (the former SH Ranch) and Knobloch ranches, and east - west from the Otter Creek Divide to Tongue River. Included is the Hanging Woman drainage to Lee Creek and north to Poker Jim Butte in Custer National Forest.

Homesteading and the Persistence of Ethnicity

A Birney resident and descendent of Norwegian immigrants, Butch Fjell stands near his grandfather's homestead cabin, where his father was born. MPA

The valley's most successful stockmen were those who had arrived early and occupied the major drainages and the river bottom, where access to water made all the difference in successful hay production. Lessons learned following the collapse of the range during the Hard Winter of 1886-1887 led ranchers along the Tongue River to wean their cattle in spring, fence their ranges and round up the cattle in fall for winter feeding. Control of springs for stock watering was essential to maintaining herds in this arid region, and as standard 160 acre homestead tracts were claimed and improved, they were often then joined together with existing ranches to provide enough grazing land to sustain cattle ranching; the generally accepted carrying capacity is about 35 acres per cow in the upper Tongue River drainage.

Homesteaders were drawn to the region through the late-1800s, and passage of the Enlarged Homestead Act in 1909 and aggressive promotion by the railroads increased that pace. Those who arrived during the homestead boom to the Tongue River valley tended to settle the side drainages, where water was less plentiful and farms were isolated. At one time, there were dozens of homesteads up the Four Mile and Canyon Creek drainages; small schools served families who remained isolated much of the year.

A sizeable ethnic community composed of Norwegian settlers settled near Birney, following the initial claim by Andrew Andersen. The Norwegians who settled the Tongue River were from a handful of extended families—Andy Andersen and his relations the Lees, the Paulsens and the Petersons who came from the Nordfjord valley, and the Hansens, Salvesons, Larsens and Thompsons who all were from the Flekkefjord region. All were farmers and raised animals, and most were from areas where subsistence farmers scraped out a living on limited arable land. Thus in the 1880s, as immigration picked up, they uprooted and moved to America, seeking new opportunities.

Andersen's nephew Rasmus Lee emigrated to Wisconsin in the late 1880s; four years later, in 1892, Andersen invited Rasmus and his wife Agatha Belle Lee to join him on the Tongue River. That year the Lees traveled by train to Miles City, and from there rode in a covered wagon to Andersen's place near Decker. When they arrived, Andy Andersen gave them logs that he had prepared for building his own cabin to make their home with. Andersen continued living in his dugout for some years -- it was not until 1901 that he built his own log cabin and moved in. Over time the family built up a large ranch; Andersen owned 4,000 acres of prime bottom

land along the River, just below today's dam and reservoir. At the time of his death in the 1910s it passed to his nephews Bob Lee and Paul Paulsen.

Stone outbuildings stand today as testament to the masonry skills brought by Norwegian immigrants to the Tongue River country. MPA.

The immigrants brought trades not held within the small ranching community, including high quality masonry and carpentry skills. Rock quarries, stone houses and other improvements were the direct result of their expertise. In addition, many were employed as ranch helpers and cooks to help provision the many ranch hands and haying crews essential in those days to operate a large livestock operation.

Walter Alderson recruited some of the early Norwegians to the valley, bringing Toby Larsen from Minnesota to help with the farming. Prominent in the Birney community and among the Norwegians, Larsen's friends Tobias Salveson and Toby Thompson had all immigrated together from Hittero near Flekkefjord (the Salvesons and the Hansens had farmed on opposite sides of the mountain in Flekkefjord) and initially settled in Minnesota.

Work at the Alderson ranch drew them to the valley in 1890, and in turn they encouraged relatives and other Norwegians to move to Tongue River and take up homesteads in the drainage. Larsen and Salveson enlisted with Captain Brown to serve in the Spanish American War of 1898. Returning back to the valley, Salveson hired on at the Quarter Circle U, and retrieved his parents, sister Sophie, brother and Molly Thompson to work for the ranch. Tobias Salveson married Molly Thompson, her brother Knut married Toby's sister Sophie and brother Tom Salveson married Letha Ebaugh, daughter of the local midwife. The families took up homesteads along the Tongue River, with Toby and Molly settling what is still called the Salveson Place south of the Brewster Ranch (part of today's 4D Ranch) where they raised 6 children.

Several of Toby Salveson's brothers followed him to the Tongue River, helping to build the Norwegian community. Along the way, his brother Pete met Eivind (Avon) Fjell in Wisconsin and they moved together to Birney where Fjell worked on the Quarter Circle U, met his wife Anna Person there, and then took up a homestead neighboring the Brewster's ranch to the north on Cook Creek. They sold their claim to the Brewsters and continued to work for the ranch, moving onto the ranch permanently and working for the family for decades.

The Knobloch's were among the fortunate homesteaders who weathered the bust and remained in the valley. First to arrive was Bill Knobloch in 1905, who worked as a ranch cook and opened a bakery with his wife Josephine in the old parsonage across from the Birney Church, In all, there were 9 siblings who came from Ohio and took up homesteads near Birney between 1905 and 1914, at the height of the homestead boom. These were consolidated into a home ranch known as the OX, which remains in the family; the next two generations of Knobloch's still remain and operate the family ranch.

But when homesteaders, working a 160-acre piece of land granted under the Homestead Acts or the Desert Lands Act, almost inevitably failed, families up and left. One local, long-time rancher labeled the old land grant laws as "cruel," noting that it was impossible for families to ranch on only 160 or 320 acres. Many families didn't learn this until it was too late. In the end, most of the homesteaders could not last, the acreage was insufficient for subsistence farming and it was not possible in this arid climate to farm without irrigation. Most sold their claims to the larger ranches based along the river, and the families either moved on or remained in the area, moving into Birney, Ashland and Sheridan to operated businesses or live and work on the valley's larger ranches. Today, the remnants of many abandoned homesteads still stand in the drainages along the Tongue River as reminders of the era.

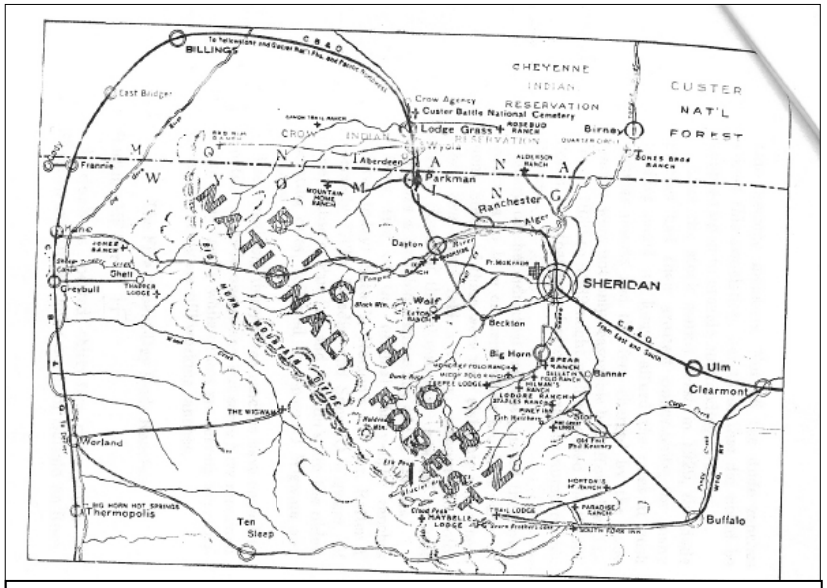
Carrying capacity of the ranches in the Tongue River valley came down to two factors: water and grass. The successful ranches were those that could irrigate and grow enough hay for supplemental feeding of the cattle, and have active springs and stock tanks out on the range so that cattle could be moved through the year to fresh pastures with good grass. The size of the range for each ranch was a major factor, in this country 35 acres was found to be optimal to support one cow, thus each ranch required many acres for grazing to sustain a successful operation, to sustain 100 cows approximately four sections were required. As a result the land use patterns are large and extensive, with much uninterrupted range and few buildings. That pattern persists to this day, with active buildings clustered near the river, between long, empty stretches of rangeland.

Ranches added to their holdings by claiming and purchasing homestead lands, and by acquiring so-called "script land" from military veterans. The federal government held numerous isolated parcels of land throughout the west, and as compensation to war veterans for their service, deeded them to returning soldiers. The soldiers in many cases sold off these lands, and those in the vicinity of the Tongue River were frequently purchased and added to expand the ranches. Larger, established ranches added to their holdings in this way, and still today refer to certain ranch holdings as script land.

In addition, the large ranches leased nearby rangeland, on the Northern Cheyenne reservation, and on the 1.3 million acre Custer National Forest after it was established in 1905. These leases remain in effect today, and have become part of the annual cycle in the valley, with ranchers running their cattle up onto the higher ranges of the Custer Forest in the spring and rounding them up in fall for sale and wintering over. The new national forest had another effect: fencing the open range that ranchers had used for a generation. Albert Gallatin Brown of the Brown Cattle Co. recalled the last large-scale round-up of the era in 1904,

"Nine wagons working together, sometimes a hundred and fifty men on a circle, three or four roundups at the same time, reps from all over our cattle world…But this was the last big roundup. Never again would so many cattle or so many horses and men, so many different interests come together. The old open range cattle business was approaching the end. The day of the wire fence and dry farmer was almost here."[35]

Thus the larger ranches came to encompass several original ranches—the Brown Cattle Co. consolidating five big ranches and numerous homestead claims, with the Quarter Circle U, in one example, taking in several homesteads and large leases on the Cheyenne reservation until 1960.



This map illustrates dude ranches in the Tongue River region, including the rail routes to Sheridan, WY from the East. The town of Birney, the Quarter Circle U, and Bones Brothers ranches are shown in the upper right hand corner of the image. From *The Dude Connection*. 1983.

Dude Ranching

The formation of Yellowstone National Park in 1872 was an important factor in bringing tourists to the West. The landscapes and recreational aspects attracted many visitors to the Yellowstone area, and its designation as a National Park gave the area national publicity. These factors attracted more people to the area that ever before. This publicity, along with the scenic appeal and popularity of hunting succeeded in bringing many new visitors to the West.

Further, people who lived in the West embraced the notion that money could be made from the increase in tourism. The new twentieth century brought economic hardship to the Tongue River Valley. For much of the 1910s, the faltering local ranch economy was bolstered by demand for horses for use in World War I. Thoroughbred stallions were bred to brood mares, and as part of the army's remount program, the young horses were trained and sold to the U.S. Military. When the Three Circle barn was constructed in 1916, for example, it serviced a herd of 300 brood mares on the ranch.[36]

Just a short three years later, the bottom fell out of the trade, with the ending of World War I and a severe drought that coincided with that event. As a result, valley ranchers were hard pressed to maintain their operations and looked for new ways to supplement their income.

Following World War I and a collapse in demand for beef and horses, many stockmen found themselves struggling financially, and the stage was set for an expansion of the informal practice of taking in paying guests on western ranches. Dude ranching turned out to be the answer for many, growing out of the fascination of the American public for the Old West. Western entrepreneurs seized upon the opportunity to attract paying guests. This era coincided with a marked increase in rail access, and combined with the drop in cattle prices (rural America's Great Depression began long before the Stock Market crash of 1929) many ranchers realized the fiscal importance of dude ranching.

The first dude ranchers in America were the Eaton brothers—Alden, Willis and Howard—who hailed from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and had moved west in 1879 to establish a horse and cattle ranch by the badlands near Medora, North Dakota. The Eaton's had frequent visitors from the east and started with their first paying guest in 1882. Among their guests were an enthusiastic Theodore Roosevelt, who was drawn to the opportunities for buffalo hunting and cow punching.

The Eaton's moved their ranch in 1902 to the Wolf Ranch at the base of the Big Horn Mountains in Wyoming and nearby Sheridan became the epicenter of the industry. As Bucky King wrote in the *Dude Ranch Connection*, "The one-hundred-mile area between Buffalo, Sheridan and Birney, Montana was the Dude Capitol of the West during the twenties and thirties."[37] King notes that there were 38 dude ranches accepting guests in this region during the industry's heyday, ranging from large lodge-centered outfits to smaller family run places, many of which took guests on reference from the larger operations.

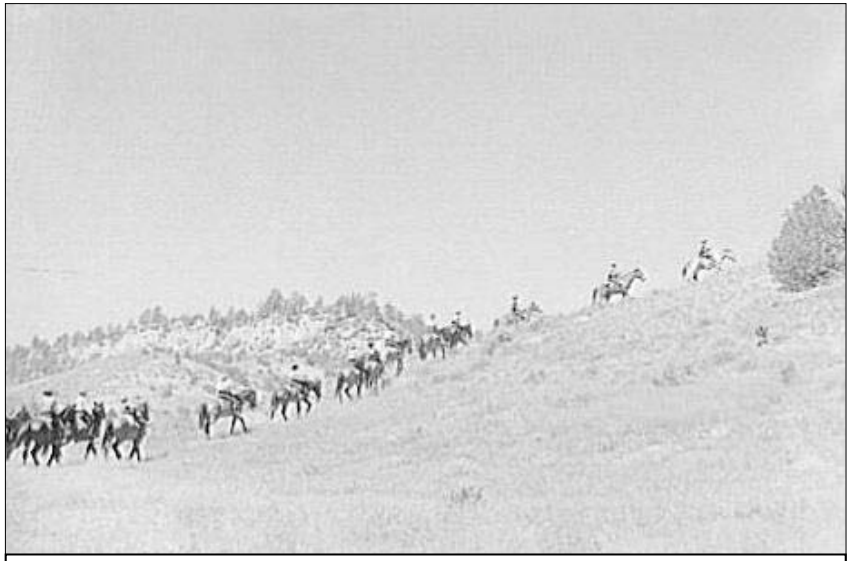
Three Circle Ranch

Birney, Montana

THE Three Circle Ranch is beautifully situated in the Tongue River valley, and consists of about 15,000 acres, located one mile from Birney, Montana, and sixty-five miles from Sheridan, Wyoming. On the north lies the Cheyenne Indian Reservation, where live the last subdued of the northern fighting tribes on their hunting grounds of former days in their picturesque tepee homes. To the east lies the vast acreage of the Poker Jim forest reserve, where picnics and long rides may be em-

This dude brochure for the Three Circle Ranch boasted the opportunity to "see the real cowboy in his daring feats of a wild bucking horse contest…" Fullmer Public Library, Sheridan, WY.

The Dude Ranchers' Association (DRA) was formed in 1926 in Bozeman, Montana, and as one newspaper noted, "dude ranching as a business had grown from a boarding house proposition with an occasional summer visitor into an industry that had brought an estimated revenue of $1,000,000 to Montana" that year.[38] The DRA directory that first year included 35 ranches from the states of Montana, Wyoming and Colorado.



Quarter Circle U dudes on a trail ride in this 1930s-era image. LOC

By the late- 1920s, the combination of nationwide advertising by railroads and Ranch outfits alike create a "Golden Age" of duding in the West. In one 1928 DRA meeting in Sheridan, WY, the convention was addressed by both the Governor of Wyoming and railroad officials. E.E. Nelson of the Northern Pacific Railroad told the ranchers that the NP had spent nearly $30,000 in magazine, newspapers, promotional literature, and even motion picture reels. It was money well spent, as Nelson reported a 20 percent increase in dude ranch vacationers from 1927 to 1928.[39]

By 1930, dude ranches had spread to include the states of Nevada, California, Arizona, Texas, New Mexico, as well as Canada and one in Hawaii. Ranch work, horseback riding, hunting, fishing and socializing were all part of the cowboy experience offered at these ranches.

Nearby Sheridan, Wyoming became a center of the dude-ranching trade; Eaton's and Horton's HF Bar were among the largest and best known. The railroads capitalized on the trend, and a "Dude Rancher Special" train ran from the East to the Sheridan station, where passengers disembarked across from Buffalo Bills' Sheridan Inn.

Tongue River ranchers became connected to the trade through family ties—Allen and Irving Alderson, Sr. were cousins with the Eaton family and went to work at Eaton's, helping wrangle the dudes, in 1918. Their experience at Eaton's Ranch suggested that they too could go into the business. Beginning in 1923, the Alderson brothers, along with Percy and Ned Cox added 12 cabins, an outdoor arena, mess hall, recreation hall and horse barn to their ZT Cox ranch to accommodate some 50 guests and christened it the Bones Brothers Ranch. From 1923 until 1963, the Bones Ranch provided a working ranch vacation to the sons and daughters of Eastern business families, with horseback riding, roping, branding, visits to Lame Deer, baseball, fishing and swimming in Tongue River, all part of the experience.

The larger ranches all took advantage of this opportunity to diversify the ranch income, on a smaller scale. By 1943, six dude ranches operated around Birney—the Bones Brothers, the Quarter Circle U, the R Bar, the Three Circle, the 4D, and the FL, with the latter three ranches owned by the Brown Cattle Co. At the Quarter Circle U, Grace Brewster Arnold operated a dude business from 1924 until 1941. The Brewster-Arnolds provided lodgings for up to 25 guests in the ranch's spacious main house and bunkhouse as well as in six white canvas tent houses that stood in a row across the back lawn of the house. The dudes ate in a large dining room attached to the main house.

From 1926 until 1945, the Three Circle Ranch used its large houses to good advantage, converting bedrooms in the main house and bunkhouse space to house guests. The R Bar Ranch, operated by Natalie Brown and her husband Gilbert Woodard, took paying guests from 1930 until 1946, billing itself as "a playground where boys and girls can come from the cities to enjoy themselves." R Bar guests were lodged in the main house, as well as two log cabins and two tent houses.

The ranches were located in proximity to one another—the R Bar lies across the road from the Bones Brothers ranch, and the Three Circle and Quarter Circle U are within a few miles. Many joint activities were held—dances, baseball games and rodeo. Historic sites of interest that were routinely visited with the dudes included Castle Rock, Brown's Mountain, Rubber Point, and the ice well that remained frozen throughout the year. Highlights of the summer included rodeos and baseball games at Sheridan and Lame Deer, and even polo, along with visits to the Little Big Horn Battlefield and campouts in the Big Horn Mountains.

Many illustrious American celebrities were numbered among the guests to the Birney guest ranches, including cowboy writer Will James, Mary Roberts Reinhart and Gary Cooper, who in 1937 starred in a Cecil B. DeMille movie, "The Plainsman", shot in part at the Quarter Circle U.[40] As Cooper wrote later, "The dude ranches have given many people an appreciation of the West, which, though it may not be as wild and wooly as it was, retains all of its vigorous beauty. And running a dude ranch is my idea of a great occupation. I've tried it once and may have another fling at it one of these days."[41]

There was a wealth of literature and artwork that depicted the lives of the ranching community along the Tongue River. The daily work and western romance of life on Birney area ranches were captured for posterity at the Quarter Circle U and the Three Circle by the Farm Service Association photographers Marion Post Wolcott and Arthur Rothstein. Jim Ryan, a local art teacher and an exceptional talent sketched and painted the many scenes and events in Birney through the 1940s and 1950s and helped the school put out its own newspaper, the *Birney Mirror*. In addition, outstanding writing on the region's history includes *A Bride Goes West*, by Nannie Alderson, *Nomad's Land* by Mary Roberts Rinehart, and by Ned Randolph, *Beef, Leather and Grass*, and *Hell Among the Yearlings.*

Overview of Historically Significant Property Types

As noted, the Tongue River valley is a many-layered cultural landscape that reflects many eras and culture groups – from prehistoric Native Americans and native tribal nations, to non-native American settlers and European immigrants. Each of these groups used the resources of the land and shaped the landscape as a result of their being here. The following property types are not entirely comprehensive, but do represent most of the kinds of properties commonly encountered in the valley. All of these properties that represent the cultural traditions in this valley are potentially eligible for National Register listing if they retain integrity and an association to valley history, particularly within the context of an intact rural historic district. (For an extensive list of the property types of this region, please see Appendix A.)

TRADITIONAL CULTURAL PROPERTIES: WATER

River, creeks, swamps, springs

Water is the most essential resource to survival in the valley; one could argue that the Tongue River itself is a traditional cultural resource that dictated the cultural patterning of lifeways in this valley. Indeed, the climate is dry enough that in any place a spring occurs, one can locate evidence of human activity—campsites, homesteads, windmills, stock tanks and sometimes spiritual offerings.

The Tongue River watershed is also a culturally and religiously important area for the Northern Cheyenne and several other tribes, including the Crow and the Sioux. These tribes profess a cultural and spiritual tie to the Tongue River. The Northern Cheyenne, especially, consider the region as a sanctuary necessary to ensure their survival as a people. They hold a spiritual connection with the river, its water and the springs of the Tongue River Valley.

There is a spiritual and cultural tie between the Northern Cheyenne and the Tongue River.[42] Offerings of cloth and tobacco are made to the Tongue River, and important ceremonial events, such as fasts, sweats and the Sun Dance, Sacred Hat and Ghost Dance ceremonies, have been performed in the Tongue River valley.[43] Since the Tongue River valley has been home to the Northern Cheyenne for centuries, the people have developed a relationship with the river and the valley in terms of everyday activities, as well as in a spiritual context. In just one example, Cheyenne elders note that "Grandmothers ensure that babies born away from the reservation will know their home by hanging part of the child's afterbirth from a tree near the river."[44]

To the Northern Cheyenne, springs, rivers, swamps and ground water are living beings with spirits. According to the 2001 *Northern Cheyenne Reservation Survey on Traditional Economy and Subsistence*, over 97% of the people believe that springs have spiritual value. Furthermore, over 90% recognize that water is very important to their social, economic and spiritual way of life. Joe Little Coyote, a Northern Cheyenne traditionalist and historian described that "The conceptual meaning of water to us would be the physical manifestation of the essence of life, of life itself, the fabric of life." And he noted that the Sacred Buffalo Hat "came to us out of the waters" [of the Great Lakes Region].[45]

As a result of the survey, the Northern Cheyenne Natural Resources Department is conducting a survey of springs on the reservation. This work will include not only the physical characteristics of these springs but also ongoing traditional cultural uses and the medicinal plants that are often associated with springs.[46] The traditional water drum is still used by the members of the Native American Church. "When you take those drums apart after ceremonial use, the breath of life comes out of them." Water drums must be taken apart after every ceremony. The water must be disposed of in a ritually specific fashion.[47] Cheyenne traditionalist Bill Tall Bull continues, "Certain springs have certain spirits in them. Like you go to Birney and see all the offerings hanging there. Their life depends on that water and they give thanks by putting the things there. Each spring has watermakers. ... There's one ... back up the coulee there's a spring. A small spring. You can hear him, he calls you."[48]

Mr. Tallbull describes another spirit, Icky-wicky [sic], who lives south of the reservation near the Tongue River Reservoir: "There's some sites that people never bothered because they are too powerful, spiritually powerful. Stay away from them. Not too far from there, for instance, there is a hill. A red-shaled hill. In there is a spirit that used to walk among the camps along Tongue River."

Swamps are filled with many spirits and may be dangerous due to the accumulation of power at these localities. The Northern Cheyenne also recognize the spiritual qualities of ground water. There are special prayers for digging wells, and ground water represents the quiet nature of the earth. The ongoing traditional cultural importance of these water locations can be seen in the respect shown to these locations and in the offerings made at these locations. Further, routine archaeological survey on the reservation always takes into account water sources and their cultural meaning. A good contemporary example of this is the current widening of U.S. 212 southeast of Lame Deer. The cultural survey documented the ongoing use of three springs for traditional cultural purposes and design changes were made to avoid affecting these properties/areas.

The people of Birney Village, on the eastern edge of the reservation, on the western banks of the Tongue River, is one of the most traditional settlements on the reservation, acknowledge a close relationship with the Tongue River. They pray to the east and fast in the hills overlooking the Tongue River. Birney Village residents use the river for watering horses, watering gardens and washing hides. Basic wild food plants are dependent on this water source. Medicinal and ceremonial plants are collected along the banks of the river.[49]

In 1990, when the Tribe was considering test well locations on the eastern portion of the reservation, Birney Village Community members and the Cheyenne Culture Committee expressed concerns about damage to the spiritual qualities of the area. Here, the cottonwood grove along the Tongue River floodplain was used as a winter camp for small group of lodges under the Cheyenne Black Eagle from at least the 1800s until 1930. Religious ceremonies, including the annual renewal of the medicine bundles took place at this camp.[50] Black Eagle Creek, a tributary of the Tongue River, is named for this Cheyenne. This camp is just west of the original cabin site of Ed and Joe Brown.

One issue raised by Cheyenne traditionalist George Elkshoulder, and previously by Bill Tallbull, is the concern that exploration for methane gas may be in opposition with general religious principles that call for respect of the land. More importantly the exploitation may be in direct conflict with direction received in the sacred Arrow Ceremony to avoid coal development on the Reservation. Because the methane gas is associated with coal seams, any drilling through these seams to extract or even test the gas could be considered a violation of this direction.[51]

Overall, the Tongue River region also retains a critical cultural significance for the Northern Cheyenne as a sanctuary and a homeland. During the late 1800s, the Northern Cheyenne came very close to extinction. The Tongue River area was their last refuge and is still recognized as the place where they were able to survive and come together as a people. The reservation is viewed as a last sanctuary where the Northern Cheyenne could retain their unique cultural identity. Consequently, protecting the environmental surroundings of the Reservation is viewed not only as a spiritual responsibility but also as being necessary to ensure the survival of the Northern Cheyenne as a people.[52]

HISTORIC ARCHITECTURE

Native American Architecture

The indigenous building in this region included lodges of hide, branches and perhaps other native materials that were anchored by circles of stones, as well as stone enclosures. Lodge construction included tipis; and tipi rings to anchor down the base of the tipi cover remain on the landscape. Often these may be seen on benches and places near to water and travel corridors. Such locations may represent single occupations or places that were repeatedly used over time. Larger circles are considered ceremonial sites, perhaps used as sun dance lodges and for other purposes.

Low-lying ovoid enclosures of stone frequently represent fasting beds, eagle catching sites, and other activities, many of a spiritual nature. Dozens of such sites have already been recorded in the state Antiquities database, and additional research in consultation with tribal historic preservation and cultural staff will shed further light on the potential for documenting such properties in the region.

Historic Ranch Architecture

The stone residence at the R Bar Ranch, in this image from the 1940s. The dwelling represents the evolution of architecture on Birney-area ranches. Bones Brothers Ranch.

The level of preservation of the log structures in the valley speaks of the arid conditions that make agriculture in the valley challenging. Settlement-period architecture in the valley reflects the early ranching and reservation periods, and ranges from homestead shacks, dugouts and early log cabins to more architectural buildings. The buildings constructed during the settlement period in the Tongue River valley are typical of many pioneering settlements, and began with rudimentary shelter. Some early settlers referred to the settlement period as "the dugout period" reflecting that form of shelter which was common in their history. Andrew Anderson, for example, had not only a dugout house, but a chicken house, barn and root cellar all formed in the dugout method.[53]

The first log cabins were crudely made, one-room shelters offering basic protection from the elements. With time, housing standards were set higher and a second generation of building with carefully hewn pine logs, tongue and groove ceilings, and smooth floorboards took place. As Nanny Alderson recalled, "Our little dirt-roofed shack didn't matter because our other house was building. And even the new house was only a stepping stone to something better."[54]

The more substantial dwellings include skillfully built Rustic log houses, Victorian and Craftsman family homes, and most impressive, the home of George Brewster. In 1907, the Brewster's hired a New York architect, R.N. Cranford, to transform their log cabin into a formally designed, spacious, gambrel-roofed building reminiscent of what they had known in Michigan.[55] At the OW Ranch on Hanging Woman Creek, the sturdy log residences, barns and outbuildings show evidence of tight Scandinavian notching styles. The stone houses and barn at the Three Circle Ranch north of Birney are made from sandstone quarried on the property, yet the masons and designer were brought in from the flourishing town of Sheridan, Wyoming.[56] Impressive stone masonry was also executed at the R Ranch, whose ranch house was constructed by a Mr. Hartman for Will Humphreys, ca. 1910. Hartman also built a smaller house using the same style of masonry, on Anderson Creek for Charlie Florrie (today a part of the Diamond Cross Ranch).[57]

Year-round self sufficiency was key to success in this remote locality and the range of rural outbuildings reflects that fact. Common outbuildings throughout the study area include barns of various types, ice houses, root cellars, blacksmith shops, granaries, tool sheds, and bunk houses.

Dude Ranching and Ranch Architecture

Dude ranches contain some of the greatest collections of agricultural and folk architecture. This architecture came from the necessity of the farmers and ranchers who built them to house themselves, livestock, hay, other ranch materials and eventually dudes that would come and stay at the ranch. Every building and structure served a purpose and it served it well.

Most dude ranches were fully operating ranches before dude operations were included. Older structures reflect the previous use on the ranch before guests were the main critters found there. The agricultural architecture on most dude ranches gave way to utility. Most of the buildings served a purpose that helped the ranch operate. Buildings usually consisted of bunk houses, barns, and cabins. Some of the other structures include chutes, corrals and pens for livestock. Nonetheless, all were used to facilitate ranch operation. For guests at dude ranches the buildings and structures added to the scenery and the spectacular views of the west.

Agricultural architecture is the main architectural theme you will find on most dude ranches. Within the "ranch architecture theme," folk architecture helps explain the specific influences by settlers and ranch owners who constructed these buildings. Folk traditions are often apparent in the methods and materials with which these structures were built.

HISTORIC IRRIGATION

Irrigation, Dams & Ice Cutting Sites

Ice was an essential commodity to subsistence living in this valley, critical for keeping perishable foods stored through the warm months. Until well after the advent of electrification in the 1940s, ranches retained and used their ice houses. Each winter, community ice cutting was an event in which most families participated. It was heavy work to cut, lift, haul and store the ice. A natural bend in the river east of the Quarter Circle U houses was the usual location for this activity. The SH ranch boasts owns the oldest water right on the Tongue River in Montana, created in the late 1870s during the Scott and Hanks era of ownership and the construction of gravity-fed irrigation canal still in use by the Nance family. Meanwhile, the historic dam at the Quarter Circle U ranch created the conditions for community ice-cutting events that began in the early-20th century and continued for decades. Preservation of cut ice was an important need in a rural area that did not receive electricity until the late-1940s, and most every ranch had an ice house.

HISTORIC AGRICULTURE

Fields and Pastures

General Land Office maps from the 1880s and 1890s demonstrate the historic pastures, including fenced bottom lands, used by the original ranchers. While Tongue River bottomlands were often fenced by property owners during the 1880s, the hills above the river were open range during the first generation of regional cattle ranching. However, the open range era began to close due to two early twentieth century events: the expansion of the Northern Cheyenne reservation in 1900, and especially with the creation of Custer National Forest in 1905.

Roundup Camps

Herding livestock, trailing cattle, spring branding and fall roundups are an essential part of annual ranching operations, both historically and in the modern day. During the open range era, roundups were conducted across extensive geographic grazing areas upon which cattle and horses from many ranch outfits were turned out in spring to roam freely though the summer and into the early fall. Roundup camps were staged in the fall in areas where it was conducive for collecting and corralling the cattle, and preparing to move them out for fall shipment. Stories abound of legendary early round ups, Albert Brown's memoir of the last big round-up of 1904 depicts the scene:

> *"Nine wagons working together, sometimes a hundred and fifty men on circle, three of four round-ups at the same time, reps from all over our cattle world, even from the CY, that cattle empire of the Carey's south of the North Platte. It had happened before in the history of the cattle business, tradition tells us of the twenty wagons that down the Platte after '86-'87 and of the cattle they never found. Here and there two wagons would work together, sometimes three. But this was the last big-round-up. Never again would so many cattle or so many horses and men, so many different interests come together. The old open range cattle business was approaching the end. The day of the wire fence and the dry farmer was almost here."*[58]

The locations of roundup camps consist of natural features where roundup wagons and tents were arranged for camping out while the work of collecting and separating cattle was completed. In the 20th century, increased ownership and fencing of land, and the establishment of the Custer National Forest constricted the range and roundup locations shifted. Historic localities are recorded in early diaries, memoirs, histories and oral accounts of the region and are significant sites in the landscape of work and cultural activities related to ranching.

HISTORIC HOMESTEADS

Homesteads

The Homestead Acts of 1862 and 1909 and the Desert Land Act of 1877 provided land to settlers east of the mountains for a nominal fee and the promise to reside on the land and cultivate it for a period of five years. These programs reflected the desire of the Federal government to keep land ownership in the hands of many rather than under the control of a few. Beginning in the late 1870s, homesteads were settled, although many were not officially filed for and claimed until a Government Land Office survey made possible legal property descriptions. During this time Northern Cheyenne homesteads were claimed following their return to the valley in 1879; when the Northern Cheyenne reservation was created in 1884, those holding claims east of the river sold or left them, and relocated onto the reservation. The Northern Cheyenne Cultural program and Custer National Forest have been conducting research into these early homestead claims, many of which are clearly marked on the early GLO maps.

Arid and harsh climate doomed many small homesteads to failure. Those that were able to weather the difficult times generally acquired larger tracts of land to make their farms more profitable. Many others left the state and their homesteads behind. Amid a steady decline in the number of producers since the mid-1930s, average farm size has increased correspondingly. Birney ranches now encompass many old homesteads that include cabins, barns, outbuildings, wells, and windmills.

Homesteads from the era decades of the late-nineteenth and early twentieth century are located on nearly every large ranch, generally located up the east and west drainages which flow into the Tongue River. The Salveson homestead, on today's 4D ranch, is both a reminder of the Norwegian influence as well as the homesteader era. The remains of the stone outbuildings, a representation of ethnic building traditions, demonstrate the persistence of ethnicity. Likewise, the Avon Fjell Homestead reflects Norwegian immigration, and the cold reality that most homesteads failed.

Other project area homesteads demonstrate how the size of allotted acreage under federal land acts contributed to the failure of many homesteads. The Crackenberger, Votova and Knobloch homestead sites, each with standing, recognizable structures, show the need for expanded land holdings to support cattle. In an interview with MPA, Irv Alderson, Jr., the son of Little Bones, stated that the acreage allotted under the Homestead or Desert Land Act was woefully inadequate for raising cattle, "that [historically] it took 35 acres to run a cow, and that it took 500 cows to support a family." The 160-acre parcels allocated under these federal land acts were ill-suited for ranching, and farming in that drought-ridden climate was difficult above the subsistence level, which many homesteaders were reduced to.

Finally, homesteading and the fate of the homesteaders reveals, to some extent, economic and social divisions among Birney area families. Those early ranch families, supplemented by family connections as well as extended family land holdings, have remained the dominant economic and social powers in the Birney area. In many cases, such as with the Fjell family, the failed homesteaders came to be employed on the larger ranches, which also consumed the homesteader's patented lands. In this way, the larger family ranches grew and were able to sustain larger herds, increasing their economic hold on the region. As cattle operations grew and as dude ranching took hold, so to did the need for employees, whether as cowhands, wranglers, guides, or domestic help. While younger, male members of the dominant ranch families certainly took part in outdoor ranch responsibilities, and relations between the ranch families and the homestead families were cordial and warm, former homesteaders supplemented the ranks of this type of employment, and domestic service was demonstrably reserved for female members of former homesteader families.

Significantly, these divisions have weakened over the last three decades. First, dude ranching has ended in the Birney area, with focus of area ranchers now strictly on cattle. Second, new technology has enabled ranch operations to continue without a large manpower base. For these reasons, employment (as well as overall population) on the Birney ranches has shrunk to its lowest levels since the initial establishment of today's ranches. Today, the sons and daughters of both rancher and homestead families leave the Birney area for economic opportunities outside the Birney region.

HISTORIC COMMUNITIES

Towns and villages in this region are small, with primary institutions and commercial buildings clustered in the center, and houses and cabins set nearby within walking distance. Early anchors essentially included a post office, school and church, as well as store, saloon or two. Two towns of Birney lie within our study area, Birney Village on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation, and the Town of Birney across the Tongue River.

Birney Village

While a number of Cheyenne likely lived in this corner of the reservation since its inception, the creation of Birney Village dates from the early 20th century. Early efforts to create the village date from the first decade of the twentieth century, when the Birney Ditch was built to encourage agricultural projects by tribal people adjacent to the Tongue River. While that project ended in 1910, the construction of a local day school was completed by 1910. The building was destroyed in 1936, though not before the institution was attacked as an instrument of segregation. The current school was built in 1940. A teacher's quarters also still stands at the school site. Further, approximately 19 historic log cabins still stand at the village. They were likely moved to today's town site after the reservation was extended east, to the Tongue River, in 1900. Later, the population of the village was further enhanced by the local regrouping of Cheyenne that were employed in federal New Deal projects in the area during the Depression.

The creation of both the reservation and town represents federal attempts to acculturate Northern Cheyenne people to the dominant society. Further, the development of towns like Birney Village represented the advancement of federal policy toward tribal people by centralizing government services, grouping of built institutional structures by Indian Agency officials, construction of permanent housing and dominant European American churches. In Birney, a Mennonite (built in 1910) and Catholic Church (1929) still stand.

Town of Birney

The town of Birney was officially established in 1886 when the Birney post office moved near to the confluence of Hanging Woman Creek and Tongue River. Lottie Ebaugh's house was the first in the settlement, and the Birney Church was constructed in 1895. The 1904 building of a two room, frame schoolhouse was the final step in creating a community that was central to the needs of the surrounding non-Indian ranching community. In addition to these community anchors, two stores -- the ZT Cox Ranch store and the Birney Cash Store -- sold goods for both Birney Village and Town of Birney communities. A dance hall also once stood on the north end of the town, and was well documented in photographs by Arthur Rothstein (1939) and Marion Post Wolcott (1941), with the Farm Securities Administration. Formerly a center of social life, the building burned and today all that remains is the stone chimney.

HISTORIC BATTLEFIELDS

Battlefields & Skirmish sites

Within the Tongue River drainage lie two battlefields that qualify for National Historic Landmark status, for their association with the Great Sioux Wars campaign of 1876-77. The Tongue River Heights Fight site and the Wolf Mountains Battlefield are nationally significant properties that reflect this series of events which shaped the future of the westward movement and settlement of Montana. There is also potential that intertribal battlefields lie within the valley; this aspect of ethnographic history should be explored for this region.

HISTORIC ROADS/TRAILS

River Crossings: Fords & Bridges

The meandering nature of the river led early travelers to make many crossings as they traveled along the Tongue River. U.S. Army General Nelson Miles reported dozens of Tongue River crossings as he pursued the Lakota and Cheyenne prior to the Wolf Mountains battle. Commonly used fords are still known and bridges over the river were critical to making pastures and distant grazing

grounds useful. One such example may still be found on the Three Circle Ranch. With ranch headquarters located on the west side of the river and hay and grazing fields on the east, the suspension footbridge, arcing high above the Tongue River, was the only way for ranchers and cowhands to bridge the river during flood season. While our project recorded several such locations, these are critical properties that should not be overlooked by researchers.

Horse & Wagon Trails and Roads

Circulation throughout the Tongue River valley for centuries was by foot or on horseback. Horse and wagon trails follow natural contours of the land along the river and up the side drainages. In addition, cattle and horse trails occur throughout the study area, there is very little area where these animals are not routinely grazed.

The Tongue River Road is itself a gravel road that extends 90 miles from the Decker, MT area north along the Tongue River to Ashland. While the road has been graded and graveled, this route is grounded through prehistory and more recent historic periods as a major travel corridor between the Yellowstone River Valley and the Big Horn region. The route or portions of it were used in prehistoric travel, tribal movements, military expeditions, 1880s cattle drives and other important patterns of history.

Railroads

Plans for large-scale resource extraction and transportation systems sparked construction of a railroad grade in 1924. Despite a Herculean effort in constructing the grade, investors were few and the project was abandoned before a single rail was laid. The grade reflects decades of discussion over moving resources to market and the interests of cattle ranchers versus extractive mining industry, a conflict that persists to this day with renewed interest in a Tongue River Railroad from Decker to Miles City. Portions of the extant grade have been surveyed, recorded, and listed in the Montana Antiquities Database.

HISTORIC ROCK ART

Inscriptions, Pictographs and Petroglyphs

Rock art is a timeless method of expressing human and spiritual aspects of culture. In this region of Montana, where sandstone boulders, buttes and cliff faces abound, there are thousands of rock art panels. Some are ancient, others as recent as the current day, as people continue to inscribe initials and images in the rocks. Any rock art site should be considered significant for its artistic and expressive values, and treated with care as such images are fragile and erode over time. Petroglyph images observed in the Prairie Dog Creek drainage and on the Custer National Forest included a bear figure, shield bearing figures, counting lines and more.

Historic rock inscriptions exist in many valley drainages as well. The Castle Butte site is a community landmark, and is heavily inscribed with initials, brands and dates from those who visited. It was a long-standing challenge to carve one's initials as high up the butte as possible, and tales of standing on horseback and balancing are likely true, since the sandstone column is impossible to climb.

HISTORIC MINING

Quarries

Through the centuries, people have quarried stone in the Tongue River valley primarily as a building material and for making tools – projectile points, scrapers, knives and the like. Prehistoric tool-making quarries are located at outcrops of high grade stone; in this drainage, the stone hard enough for this is a local chert called *porcellanite* that overlies coal seams and was heated and hardened when those seams burned in geological time. It ranges in color from red-maroon to light gray to very dark gray, almost black.

Coal Mines

Coal is an abundant mineral in this part of Montana, as the Fort Union coal formation is present throughout the study area. Coal was a useful fuel for early ranchers and homesteaders, and places were it was mined from riverbanks and other areas can still be identified. The Quarter Circle U ranch and the Knobloch homestead maintained small coal mines that supplied their yearly needs.

HISTORIC TIMBER HARVESTING

Lumber

Lumber was a precious commodity during settlement times, and so early ranch-era and reservation-era buildings were small log cabins or built as dug outs with limited timber framing. Suitable logs for building construction frequently were cut and hauled from a distance, and the craftsmanship of Rustic log buildings at ranches, most notably the OW, speaks of the high level of skilled building that took place in the Tongue River drainage early on. The most impressive scale was the large-diameter pine logs hauled from the Yellowstone River vicinity up the Tongue and East Fork Hanging Woman Creeks for construction of Floyd Alderson's 1930s cabin on the Bones Brothers Ranch.

Identified Cultural Landscapes

The Birney, MT project area is remarkably layered by human activities that have left both overt as well as subtle changes on the landscape. Those changes, imposed upon a rugged, arid environment, were filtered over a period of several thousand years through the lenses of cultural values, traditions, lifeways, economies and technologies by people who lived and worked here.

MPA has identified at least five component landscapes within the cultural landscapes of the project area. All are suggested by both the extant resources on the land and a wealth of historic and ethnographic documentation. The first three are historic landscapes associated with cattle-ranching and homesteading of state and local significance. In addition, the dude ranching landscape appears to be nationally-significant and merits further study for listing as a National Historic Landmark district. All of these landscapes are deserving of more study to assess significance and potential boundaries for designation as National Register districts. The landscapes that were studied and documented through this project are:

Historic Agricultural Landscapes

- The Birney Ranches Historic District/rural historic landscape: Period of significance, 1884-1950. This district would encompass over several thousand acres along the Upper Tongue River and Hanging Woman Creek, highlighting the origin of ranching in the region and emphasizing the history of the Alderson, Brown and Brewster families. The existing ranches are operated by descendents of the original Birney ranchers. The Bones Brothers Ranch, now on the National Register, would be joined by the other operating ranches in the near future. Boundaries were based on information gathered from local ranchers, who commented on the historic extent of the Birney ranching neighborhood, as well as the contributing drainages and landforms that help form the margins of the historic district.

- The Birney Homesteading Historic District/rural historic landscape: Period of significance, 1900-1930. This large district encompasses the many homesteads that stand along the Canyon Creek, Coal Creek and Deadman's Gulch drainages that flow into the Upper Tongue River. Extant buildings are now generally limited to two to four building clusters within a given site representing a homestead withdrawal. These homestead withdrawals would comprise the Birney Homesteading District/rural historic landscape. Associated landscape features include fence and corral systems; ditch systems; remains of domestic dumps; and the cultivated fields and pasturage cleared by the original homesteads

- Dude Ranching National Historic Landmark District/rural historic landscape. Period of significance, 1925-1963. Dude ranching is a distinctly western tourist activity that is the single most unique contribution of the Intermountain West to the ever-growing national vacation industry. Dude ranching did not begin at a defined time; it evolved from several divergent sources in different locales. The first organizational gathering of these ranch owners occurred in Bozeman, Montana in

September of 1926 at the urging of the Northern Pacific Railroad. The railroad, looking for an additional source of revenue and a means to combat the new method of travel, the automobile, saw dude ranches as natural partners in the burgeoning tourism industry of the West. While not the oldest dude ranching region in the United States, the Big Horn Mountains and Sheridan, Wyoming gained national prominence in the movement to take in paying guests after the Eaton Ranch, the oldest known dude ranch in the United States, moved its operations to the area. Birney-area dude ranches directly benefited from their connections to the Sheridan dude ranches, and were clearly among the important early dude ranch operations by the mid- 1920s, as ongoing financial problems created by the ongoing drought/winter cycles led ranch families to begin dude ranching operations. Supported by the advertising dollars of major transcontinental railroads, dude ranching filled a cultural niche for Easterners facing life in crowded cities. Further, the popular cultural view of the West by the East was exposed through views of dude ranching, as the West has been supposedly been "settled" and made safe (i.e. Indian removal) for those who sought a Western experience made famous by stories of natural wonders.

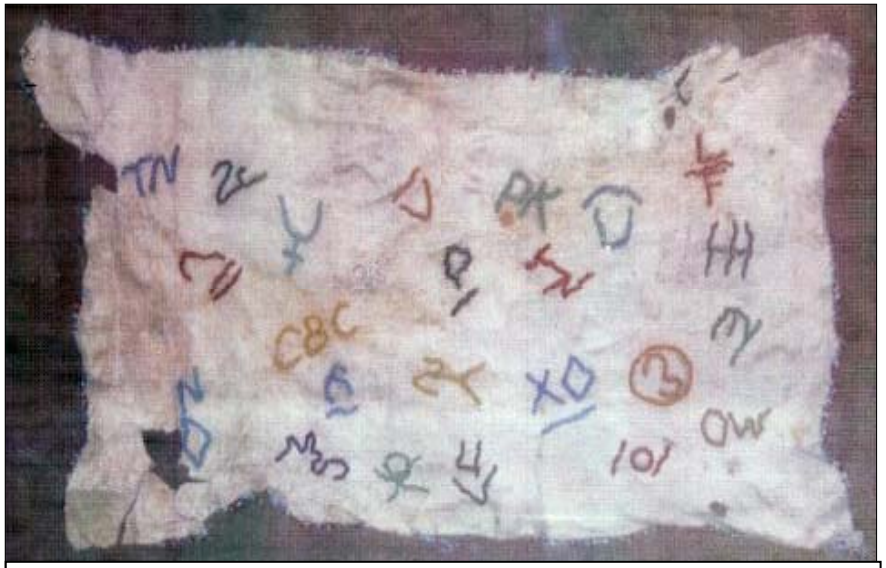
In addition, two distinctive eras of Native American tradition have indelibly marked the landscape of the upper Tongue River valley. This study did not extend to evaluation of important archaeological and Native American landscapes in the Tongue River valley, however, the site density and variety of archaeological sites in the valley is impressive to anyone who spends time there.

Prehistoric and Traditional Ethnographic Landscapes

- Prehistoric Archaeological Landscape, containing any number of intact archaeological districts and individual sites
- Tribal Ethnographic Landscape, containing any number of intact ethnographic historic districts and individual sites.

These both are worthy of further research in cooperation with tribal historic preservation and cultural staff, as well as tribal historians and traditionalists. Site densities in the region and an impressive array of significant sites including cave shelters, buffalo kills and traps, tipi ring clusters, large ceremonial rings, fasting sites, sacred springs, tool making stations all exist in this landscape and generally with outstanding levels of integrity. Thus this region holds very significant potential for archeological and ethnographic historic districts and sites of outstanding National Register eligibility.

Conclusion



This beading sampler from a Crow artisan show the Bones Brothers, Three Circle, and Quarter Circle U brands imprinted on a steer hide, and suggest the idea of the Tongue River region as a cross-section of cultural influences. MPA

The human history of the Tongue River Valley is reflected by layers of culture that converge in a valley where time has done little to change the landscape. From the pre-contact period, rock art, buffalo jumps, tipi rings, burial sites, and vision sites comprise a rich physical record of the ancient history of the region's First Peoples. From the 19th century, there are battlefields and other sites that reflect the cultural turbulence of the period, both between indigenous cultures, and between Plains tribes and the US Army. And from the late 19th - early 20th century settlement period, family ranches with a wealth of stone, log and wooden buildings reflect more than a century of agriculture along the Tongue River.

Today, the world of the Tongue River is changing in a new, industrialized way. Prospects for renewed coal mining, coalbed methane drilling, and a renewed effort to build a Tongue River Railroad are being explored. The first coalbed methane wells in Montana have been drilled above the Tongue River reservoir and begun to produce, thousands of others are planned by regional oil and gas companies. Some see the potential of the Tongue River area to be exploited for its natural resources and as a transportation corridor as new opportunities and a way to keep future generations in the place they love. Others worry about degradation of water and depletion of the ground water and vigorously oppose such development.

Clearly, there is growing recognition that mounting pressures on the West for energy and rural development demand better cultural resource management and protection. In the Tongue River Valley, we have the opportunity to model good approaches, employ technology to support the research, and provide the documentation to guide meaningful preservation of one of the West's most outstanding cultural landscapes. The Tongue River valley is a truly remarkable historic place where heritage and tradition live on in the people who carry forward the legacy of their ancestors, the very definition of a traditional cultural landscape/historic districts.

Appendix A

Tongue River Property Types Table

The Montana Cultural Resource Information System (CRIS), which serves as the state's antiquities database, includes 71 site type classifications for historic sites. Within the database, some historic sites are assigned to two site type categories with the primary site type generally listed as Site Type 1. Some of the site types on the database duplicate site characterizations of other types. For instance "Historic Education" site types include schools, which can also occur in the "Historic School" type. Likewise, "Historic Agriculture" sites can include features also typed as "Historic Irrigation System" or "Historic Cattle Camp".

Below is a table of the CRIS historic site types and possible property types and themes that could be associated with the types within the project area. Property/resource characterizations presented for each site type were derived from database queries that listed site numbers for each site type. Only site types represented in the project area are included.

Table 1. Historic site types and associated resources and themes.

Site Types	Associated Resources and Themes
Historic Agriculture	Birney area homesteads, ranches, barns, irrigation systems & features, dug outs, residences, trash dumps, campsites, ranches (residence, outbuildings, foundations, roads, ditches), cattle camps, industrial developments (agri-business, fences and corrals, log structures, settlement site, Euro-American site, cairn or landmark (property markers, section markers, sheepherder or cattle herder monuments; Theme - agriculture
Historic Architecture	Can include any structure with preserved (standing) architecture; Theme – could include community history and development, ranching operations; dude ranching history, transportation history, or other themes.
Historic Battlefield	American Indian Inter-tribal battle sites such as Wolf Mountains Battlefield, U.S. military-American Indian battle sites, Indian-non/Indian battle sites (e.g. settler-Indian battles, fur trader-Indian battles), and other battle sites; Theme – American Indian history, American Indian U.G. Government hostilities, Fur Trade, Exploration
Historic Building Foundation	Generally no standing architecture, stone foundations, wood foundations, depressions found at Birney area homestead sites and ranches; Theme – generally Historic Agriculture in Birney.

Site Types	Associated Resources and Themes
Historic Homestead/Farmstead	Birney ranch residences and associated outbuildings, wells, walkways, roadways, foundations, depressions, cisterns, barns; Themes – agriculture, community history and development
Historic Irrigation System	Canals, ditches, laterals, pumping stations/houses, headgates, reservoirs, dams; Themes – agriculture, community history and development, U.S. government agency history
Historic Log Structure	Cabins, residences, outbuildings, Forest Service buildings, fences and corrals, homesteads/farmsteads, outbuildings & barns, CCC structures; Themes - various
Historic Mining	Coal mines (surface and subsurface) and associated buildings and features, could include other mineral extraction mines. Themes – economic minerals/industry, industrial, community history and development
Historic Outbuildings	Catchall for buildings associated with homesteads and ranches, industrial sites, residences, churches, schools, ranger stations; Themes - various
Historic Railroad Stage Route Travel	Railroads (grades, sidings active lines, bridges (foot, vehicular, RR), roads, trails, highways, some associated buildings; Themes – transportation, community history and development, recreation, industrial history
Historic Reclamation	Irrigation systems (canals, ditches, dams, pumping stations, laterals, etc.) such as the SH Ranch ditch, gate tender residence, Quarter Circle U dam site; Themes – agriculture, U.S. agency history
Historic Recreation/Tourism	Birney dude ranching and associated features; Themes – transportation, tourism, community history and development
Historic Residence	Catchall for Birney community residential structures and associated outbuildings, such the individual residences for each Bones Brother on the ranch; Themes – various but primarily community history and development and agriculture
Historic Road/Trail	Tongue River Road, trails, highways and associated features; Themes – transportation, tourism, recreation, community history and development
Historic Rock Art	Graffiti (e.g. names, initials, brands, dates), painted and pecked images, signs; Theme – community history and development, business/industry, agriculture, traditional cultural property
Historic Religion	Birney town church, Paddy's Hill; associated outbuildings, cemeteries, clergy residences and associated outbuildings, church camps and associated features; Theme – community history and development, religion
Historic Sawmill	Nance/Powell sawmill on O'Dell creek; Temporary/portable sawmills, commercial sawmills; Theme – business/industry, agriculture community history.
Historic School	Birney School and Birney Day School (on Northern Cheyenne Reservation) Rural and Red Bluff School. associated out buildings and features; Themes – community history and development

Historic Sheep Camp	Sheepherder monuments/cairns, sheepherder camp and debris, sheep dipping site; Themes – agriculture, community history and development
Historic Stock Raising	Branding camps, line camps, ranchs and associated features, sheepherder camps, cattle herder camps, pictographs and petroglyphs (with names, initials, brands, and dates), reservoirs and dams; Themes – agriculture, community history and development, livestock industry
Historic Timber Camp	Sites presumed to associate with timber cutting or sawmills based on artifacts and depressions; Theme – agriculture, logging industry
Historic Timber Harvesting	Some presumed timber harvest related sites as above, temporary sawmill sites, lumber yard and associated features; Themes – logging industry, agriculture, community history and development
Historic Urban Business Block	The Nance Trading Post and the Fjell Store in Birney, Commercial buildings and associated features often part of historic business district; Themes – community history and development
Historic Vehicular/Foot Bridge	Tongue River Ranch Bridges at the Three Circle and 4D ranches, Road and highway bridges, pedestrian bridges, irrigation bridges, some RR bridges; Themes – transportation, agriculture, community history and development

Appendix B

Historic Landscapes in Birney, MT

Historic Landscapes in Birney, MT

As described in *National Register Bulletin 30*, *Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Rural Historic Landscapes,* the rural historic landscape is one of the categories of cultural property qualifying for listing in the National Register as a historic site or district. For the purposes of the National Register, a rural historic landscape is defined as a geographical area that historically has been used by people, or shaped or modified by human activity, occupancy, or intervention, and that possesses a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of areas of land use, vegetation, buildings and structures, roads and waterways, and related natural features.

Historic integrity, a measure of a property's evolution and current condition, is critical. A comparison of the changes experienced by a group of properties related by common historic contexts helps define the historic characteristics and qualities of integrity that qualify a rural property for listing. Recent changes that have erased historic characteristics, and do not have exceptional importance, make a property ineligible, even if scenic qualities are still present.

Guidelines provided in *Bulletin 30* have been adapted into a table (below, adapted from table of Paleontological & Cultural Resources in Eastern Montana, prepared by Aaberg Cultural Resource Consulting for Montana BLM, Miles City Field Office) to illustrate historic landscape characteristics in the Birney, MT project area that demonstrate eligibility as a historic landscape district.

Table 2, Historic Landscape Characteristics and Birney-area Features

Characteristics	Birney Area Features
Land Uses and Activities ~ Land uses are the major human forces that shape and organize rural communities. Human activities, such as farming, mining, ranching, recreation, social events, commerce, or industry, that have left an imprint on the landscape.	Present, with historic uses intact. Fields, pastures, open range, terraces, cemeteries, playing fields, small-scale mining areas, quarries, irrigation, and logging areas remain intact in the project area
Patterns of Spatial Organization ~ The organization of land on a large scale, where organization is reflected in road systems, field patterns, distance between farmsteads, proximity to water sources, and orientation of structures to natural resources.	Present, with overall pattern of the circulation networks intact. Features include areas of land use for agriculture, natural features, clusters of structures, and division of property near natural (water, timber, mineral, grasslands) resources.
Response to the Natural Environment ~ Major natural features, such as mountains, prairies, rivers, lakes, forests, and grasslands, influenced both the location and organization of rural communities. Climate, similarly, influenced the siting of buildings, construction materials, and the location of clusters of buildings and structures.	Present and intact. Ranch dwellings constructed with stone instead of limited timber. Adaptations to climate and natural features seen in land use, orientation of clusters near the Tongue River, construction materials (stone), design of buildings (natural shale used as roofing materials), and methods of transportation. Continuing use of natural hay bottomlands for agricultural production, gravity fed-irrigation systems, dams and related ice-cutting areas. Reliance on aquifers for agricultural uses.

Cultural Traditions ~ Cultural traditions affect the ways that land is used, occupied, and shaped. Cultural traditions determined the structure of communities by influencing the diversity of buildings, location of roads and village centers, and ways the land was worked. Social customs dictated the crops planted or livestock raised. Traditional building forms, methods of construction, stylistic finishes, and functional solutions evolved in the work of local artisans.	Present and intact. Land use practices (cattle ranching), buildings and structures (ranch residences, dude ranch housing and related outbuildings, ranching-related outbuildings), community organization, construction methods, technology, trades and skills, craftsmanship, methods of transportation, and patterns of land division. Continuation of tribal spiritual traditions related to water and waterways (especially the Tongue River) as well as other cultural areas.
Circulation Networks ~ Circulation networks are systems for transporting people, goods, and raw materials from one point to another. They range in scale from livestock trails and footpaths, to roads, canals, major highways, and even airstrips. Some, such as farm or lumbering roads, internally served a rural community, while others, such as railroads and waterways, connected it to the surrounding region.	Present and intact. Tongue River Road, related secondary roads along creek drainages (related to Homesteading era) footbridges across the Tongue River, single-span bridges, ranch airstrips, remains of railroad grade. Historic cattle-drive routes. Dude ranching-era equestrian routes. Paths, roads, streams, or canals, highways, remains of railway grade, and waterways.
Boundary Demarcations ~ Boundary demarcations delineate areas of ownership and land use, such as an entire farmstead or open range. They also separate smaller areas having special functions, such as a fenced field or enclosed corral. Fences, walls, tree lines, hedge rows, drainage or irrigation ditches, roadways, creeks, and rivers commonly marked historic boundaries.	Present and intact. Divisions between in-ranch activities clear, as well as demarcations between separate ranches. Marked by fences, walls, land use, vegetation, roadways, bodies of water, and irrigation or drainage ditches.
Vegetation Related to Land Use ~ Various types of vegetation bear a direct relationship to long-established patterns of land use. Vegetation includes not only crops, trees, or shrubs planted for agricultural and ornamental purposes, but also trees that have grown up incidentally along fence lines, beside roads, or in abandoned fields.	Present and intact. Shelter belts present around main ranch residences. Hay fields (both naturally-occurring and human produced) along the Tongue River and related drainages intact as main source of economic development as well as original settlement. Functional and ornamental trees and shrubs, fields for cropping, tree lines along walls and roads, native vegetation, woodlots, pastures, gardens, forests, and grasslands.
Buildings, Structures, and Objects ~ Various types of buildings, structures, and objects serve human needs related to the occupation and use of the land. Their function, materials, date, condition, construction methods, and location reflect the historic activities, customs, tastes, and skills of the people who built and used them.	Present and intact. Original ranch buildings (residential, dude ranch, ranch outbuildings, barns remain). Community buildings (church, historic schoolhouses remain. Buildings and structures: residences, schools, churches, dugouts, root cellars outbuildings, barns, stores.
Clusters ~ Groupings of buildings, fences, and other features, as seen in a farmstead, ranch, or mining complex, result from function, social tradition, climate, or other influences, cultural or natural. The repetition of similar clusters throughout a landscape	Present and largely intact. The town of Birney, historic ranch complexes, locations of round-up circles, crossroads.

may indicate vernacular patterns of siting, spatial organization, and land use.	
Archeological Sites ~ The sites of prehistoric or historic activities or occupation, may be marked by foundations, ruins, changes in vegetation, and surface remains.	Present and intact. Hundreds of known prehistoric and historic sites related to regional cultural history—prehistoric and protohistoric occupation, military, settlement, ranching. This includes road traces, abandoned homestead sites, sawmills, small-scale mines, irrigation systems, and quarries.
Small-scale Elements ~ Small-scale elements, such as a foot bridge or road sign, add to the historic setting of a rural landscape. Collectively, they often form larger components, such as circulation networks or boundary demarcations. Small-scale elements also include minor remnants—canal stones, road traces, mill stones, individual fruit trees, abandoned machinery, or fence posts—that mark the location of historic activities, but lack significance or integrity as archeological sites.	Present and intact. Foot bridges across the Tongue River, cow paths, road markers, gravestones, isolated vegetation, fence posts, trail ruts, culverts, foundations, and minor ruins.

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[1] Edmund Randolph, *Beef, Leather, and Grass.* 1981. p 18-19.
[2] Michael R. Beckes and James D. Keyser, *The Prehistory of the Custer National Forest: An Overview* (Billings: United States Department of Agriculture, National Forest Service, Custer National Forest, May, 1983), pp. 57-66. (Hereinafter referred to as *Prehistory*.)
[3] Jack L. Hofman and Russell W. Graham, "The Paleo-Indian Cultures of the Great Plains," in *Archaeology of the Great Plains*, ed. W. Raymond Wood (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1998), pp. 87-137.
[4] It is not possible today to link specific ethnic or tribal groups to sites in the region beyond a few centuries in age.
[5] George C. Frison, "The Northwestern and Northern Plains Archaic, "in *Archaeology of the Great Plains*, pp. 140-172 (Hereinafter referred to as "Plains Archiaic"); Beckes and Keyser, *Prehistory*, pp. 81-121.
[6] Frison, "Plains Archaic," ibid.; Beckes and Keyser, *Prehistory*, pp. 264-306.
[7] Draft Supplement to the Montana StatewideOil and Gas Environmental Impact Statement andAmendment of the Powder River and Billings Resource Management Plans, Bureau of Land Management, Miles City Field Office. 2007, p. 3-9.
[8] Beckes and Keyser, *Prehistory*, pp. 272-276.
[9] Frison, "Plains Archaic," pp. 147-165; Ann Mary Johnson and Alfred E. Johnson, "The Plains Woodland," in *Archaeology of the Great Plains*, pp. 201-234. (Hereinafter referred to as "Plains Woodland.")
[10] Johnson and Johnson, "Plains Woodland," pp. 217-225.
[11] Carl M. Davis and James P. Keyser, "The Highwalker Site: Late Prehistoric Period Hunters of the Powder River Basin," *Archaeology in Montana*, vol. 23, no. 1 (1982): 43-97.
[12] Johnson and Johnson, "Plains Woodland," p. 218.
[13] W. Raymond Wood, "Plains Trade in Prehistoric and Protohistoric Relations," in *Anthropology on the Great Plains*, eds. W. Raymond Wood and Margot Liberty (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1980), pp. 98-109. This commerce of mutual cooperation was codified in the ritual of the pipe ceremony that allowed even hostile enemies to suspend their conflicts long enough to trade and exchange goods that ensured the longevity of each party to the trade.
[14] Ibid., p. 100-103.
[15] There were numerous others who made periodic forays into these parts of the Northern Plains during this time of great mobility and shifting populations -- the Miniconjous, Oglalas and Arapahos from the east, the Shoshones from the south, and the Gros Ventre and Blackfeet from the north.
[16] Joe Medicine Crow, "The Crow Migration Story," *Archaeology in Montana*, vol. 20, no. 3 (1979): 63-72. (Hereinafter referred to as "Crow Migration.")
[17] Jeffery R. Hanson, "The Late High Plains Hunters," in *Archaeology of the Great Plains*, pp. 456-480.
[18] Chief Arapaoosh as quoted in Medicine Crow, "Crow Migration," p. 69.
[19] For an in-depth discussion of the evolution of the tipi on the Northern Plains, including details regarding Cheyenne tipi camps, see Peter Nabokov and Robert Easton, *Native American Architecture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), pp. 150-159.
[20] Pearson.

[21] Jeffrey V. Pearson, "National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form: Wolf Mountains Battlefield," (Helena, Montana: Montana State Historic Preservation Office, 2000).
[22] Resource and Planning Department, *Chronicle of the Northern Cheyennes*, pp. 37-52.
[23] As quoted in Patterns of the Past, A Brief History of the Ashland-Birney Area, Historical Research Associates, Missoula, 1980.
[24] James S. Brisbin, *The Beef Bonanza; or How to Get Rich on the Plains* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippencott & Co., 1881), p. 90.
[25] Viewable at www.nps.gov/archive/grko/hrs/hrsf.htm#2-127
[26] They Came and Stayed: Rosebud County History, pp. 35-38; Nomination George W. Brewster, Cowboy Hall of Fame, Sept 14, 1970.
[27] Historical Research Associates, *Patterns of the Past,* a report for the Montco. Coal Company issued in Missoula, Montana, April 1980, p. 12
[30] Ibid, p. 14.
[29] Nannie T. Alderson and Helena Huntington Smith, *A Bride Goes West*. pp. 54-55.
[30] As quoted in Patterns of the Past, HRA, p. 46.
[31] Gladys Salveson Kegerreis, *Mama's Memories.* p. 28.
[32] Alice Orr. Ms. Orr came to the community as a dude and befriended many in the area; she still maintains a house on the edge of Birney.
[33] *A Bride Goes West*, p. 10.
[34] Gladys Salveson Kegerreis, *Mama's Memories.* p. 32.
[35] Albert Gallatin Brown.
[36] Art Hayes, Sr. Interview with MPA, 2006.
[37] Bucky King, p. 53.
[38] As quoted in Joel Bernstein's *Families that Take in Friends*, p. 53.
[39] "Centennial Minutes," p. 105-106.
[40] The Tongue River Valley captured the attention of western-crazed audiences when it was used as a scenic backdrop to the 1937 movie *The Plainsmen*. Oral Interview with Mark Nance, U Cross Ranch, Birney, Montana, August, 2001.
[41] Ibid, 2006.
[42] Deaver and Tallbull, 1988:9-10.
[43] Stands In Timber and Liberty, 1972; Marquis, 1978
[44] Deaver and Tallbull,1988.
[45] Little Coyote, 1/8/02.
[46] Rollofson, 1/8/02, Appendix F
[47] Little Coyote, 1/6/02.
[48] Bill Tallbull, 10/30/92
[49] Deaver and Tallbull, 1991:9-10.
[50] Keller, 1990d:1
[51] Ibid, 1990d: 2-3.
[52] Deaver and Tallbull, 1991:9.
[53] Belle Lee Kirkemo, p. 107

[54] *A Bride Goes West*, p. 54.
[55] Oral Interview with Kay Lohoff, Quarter Circle U Ranch, Birney, Montana, September 2000; original architect's drawings, Brewster House.
[56] Kirk D. Michels and Joan L. Brownell, "National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form: OW Ranch" (Helena, Montana: Montana State Historic Preservation Office, 1992), section 8, pp. 4-6; Oral Interview with Art Hayes, Three Circle Ranch, Birney, Montana, August, 2001.
[57] Personal communication, Marilynn Hayes, Birney, Montana April 2007.
[58] Albert Gallatin Brown.