THE CATTLEMEN'S EMPIRE
SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT

THE NATIONAL SURVEY
OF HISTORIC SITES AND BUILDINGS
On the Matador, about 1900.
THE NATIONAL SURVEY OF HISTORIC SITES AND BUILDINGS

THEME XV

Westward Expansion and the Extension of the National Boundaries to the Pacific 1830-1898

THE CATTLEMEN'S EMPIRE
(Supplemental Report)

1963

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
PREFACE

The purpose of this supplemental report is to evaluate a number of Cattlemen's Empire sites in the Southwest, which, because of time limitations, were either passed over too hurriedly or overlooked during the original subtheme work in 1959. Regional Historian Robert M. Utley, who conducted the survey in 1959, suggested that this resurvey be made to do full justice to sites that he was unable to evaluate at that time.

William E. Brown
Historian
## CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sites of Exceptional Value</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>San Bernardino Ranch, Arizona</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sierra Bonita Ranch, Arizona</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LC Ranch Headquarters, New Mexico</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horsehead Crossing, Texas</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other Sites Considered</th>
<th>22</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Matador Ranch, Texas</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T-Anchor Ranch House, Texas</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XIT Sites, Texas</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Also Noted Sites                                                | 26   |

APPENDIX
LOCATION OF CATTLEMEN'S EMPIRE
SITES MENTIONED IN THIS REPORT

1  SAN BERNADINO RANCH
2  SIERRA BONITA RANCH
3  LC RANCH
4  HORSEHEAD CROSSING

a. Matador Ranch
b. T-Anchor Ranch
c. Channing
d. Escarbada
e. Bell Ranch
f. Cross-L Ranch
g. Chisum Ranch
h. IOI Ranch
i. Government Springs
j. Loving Ranch House
SITES OF EXCEPTIONAL VALUE
SAN BERNARDINO RANCH, ARIZONA

Location. About 17 miles east of Douglas on the international line.

Ownership. Private.

Significance. The San Bernardino Ranch provides the finest illustration of the continuity of Spanish-Mexican and American cattle ranching in the Southwest. The springs at the ranch were a crossroads of travel, military expeditions, stock drives, and emigration from Spanish times. And at one time a presidio here marked the northernmost extension of the Spanish imperium in Eastern Arizona.

One of the oldest cattle ranches of Arizona, San Bernardino's origins are lost in Spanish colonial days. It was a well-known watering place on the Spanish military trail from Chihuahua via Janos to the Santa Cruz valley in the 18th century. Juan Bautista de Anza stopped here during a campaign against the Apaches in 1773. While traveling the Chihuahua-Santa Cruz route in the mid-1770's Father Garces noted the increase in Apache depredations against Sonoran and Arizona settlements and recommended that a presidio be established at San Bernardino to guard the trail and the northern frontier. The presidio at Fronteras was soon moved to San Bernardino, but this left the Sonoran towns undefended, and the presidio was transferred back to Fronteras. At the same time the Western Apaches increased their raids on the ranches in Arizona, and San Bernardino and other outposts were abandoned. A remembrance of presidio days is the name of a mesa near the present ranch - Mesa de la Avansada, "Mesa of the Advance Guard."
In time, treaties were negotiated with the Apaches resulting in a period of relative peace. Rancheros again moved north from Sonora to the lush valleys of southeastern Arizona. In 1822, Lt. Ignacio Perez applied to the Mexican Government for a large tract of land surrounding San Bernardino Springs on which to graze cattle, asserting that he wished to create a buffer between Apache country and the Sonoran settlements. He was sold four sitios of land, 73,240 acres, but he effectively controlled a range of at least 1 million acres.

At its peak the Perez ranch supported 100,000 cattle, 10,000 horses, and 5,000 mules. Like other haciendas of the period, San Bernardino was a regal establishment. Spacious adobe structures were surrounded by patios and flowering gardens. Acequias watered orange, lime, peach, fig, and apricot orchards and extensive vineyards.

But all too soon the Apaches resumed their attacks and San Bernardino was again abandoned in 1831. Many of the range cattle were left to their own devices, and quickly adapted to a wild and free life. They were preyed upon by the Apaches but still multiplied and overran the country.

When Lt. Col. Philip St. George Cooke led the Mormon Battalion through Guadalupe Pass to the San Bernardino Springs in December 1846 he found the country teeming with herds of these wild cattle. A few days' march from San Bernardino, on the San Pedro, his troops were attacked and some gored by the curious, crowding beasts, and other travelers, too, noted how the rampaging herds impeded travel.
Cooke's Wagon Road across southern Arizona was the best southern emigrant route. And San Bernardino, with its numerous springs and rich pasture, became a major stop for the surge of humanity and stock that almost immediately followed Cooke's Trail. Cattle, sheep, and Forty-niners throned the way to California.

Bancroft says an estimated 60,000 emigrants crossed the Colorado following the California gold strike. Many, perhaps most came by way of San Bernardino Springs. In addition to the men were the thousands of Texas and New Mexican cattle that fed them. Most of the cattle drives came by way of San Bernardino Springs, for it was by far the best watered route.

During the United States-Mexican boundary survey, in 1851, John Russell Bartlett stopped at San Bernardino. He described the Perez ranch as

a collection of adobe buildings in a ruined state of which nothing but walls remain. One of the buildings was about 100 feet square with a court in the centre, and adjoining it were others with small apartments. The latter were doubtless the dwellings of peons and herdsmen. The whole extending over a space of about two acres, was enclosed with a high wall of adobe, with regular bastions of defense. Being elevated some 20 or 30 feet above the valley, this hacienda commands a fine view of the country around. Vast heads of cattle were formerly raised here, but the frequent attacks of the Apaches led to the abandonment of the place. Some cattle which had strayed away and were not recovered at the time have greatly multiplied since and now roam over the plains as wild and more fierce than buffalo .... This establishment was abandoned about twenty years ago; since which time no attempt was made to reoccupy it."

During the Apache campaigns San Bernardino Springs figured prominently as a rendezvous for both Indians and soldiers. It was used a number of
times as the jumping off point for campaigns against Apaches holed up in the mountains of Sonora.

The American phase of the cattle industry at San Bernardino began with John Slaughter's purchase of the grant in 1884. Though remembered most often as the solitary and deadly sheriff of Cochise County, which he effectively cleaned up, Slaughter was best known as an important cattleman in his own day.

Slaughter came to Arizona from Texas in 1877. After several years as a contractor and wholesaler of beef, he purchased the San Bernardino grant in 1884 and began running cattle on both sides of the international line. He built his ranch headquarters near the old Perez ranch, just north of the line. Damming the springs and building irrigation networks in the beautiful valley, Slaughter soon had about 30 Mexican families located on his ranch to harvest his hay, vegetable, and fruit crops.

In 1886 the famous trail driver, George W. Lang, bought the Bato Pico ranch on the Bavispe River some 50 miles south of the Arizona-Sonora line and adjoining the San Bernardino on the south. This was a splendid range, well watered, of some 50,000 acres. He bought 1,500 head of cattle but had to hold them on the San Bernardino until he could get possession of the Bato Pico. That same fall Slaughter and Lang formed a partnership, engaging in buying beef in Arizona and Sonora, holding them on the San Bernardino and Bato Pico until they could be shipped to the California markets. They ranged 30,000 to 50,000 head
at this time. The partners also operated a slaughter business in
Los Angeles which took much of the beef. In the fall of 1890,
Slaughter bought the Bato Pico from Lang, along with the cattle, and
the partnership was dissolved.

John Slaughter died in 1922, and, having no sons, Mrs. Slaughter sold
the property.

Present Status. San Bernardino Springs break out on the boundary line
and flow south into the Yaqui River, of which San Bernardino River is
the extreme head. San Bernardino Valley lies east of the Chiricahua
mountains and the Perillos, and east of the Peloncillos. The ranch
headquarters is just north of the boundary, within sight of its granite
markers, and about 17 miles east of Douglas by dirt road. The ranch is
presently owned by Mr. Marion L. Williams of Douglas. Given the great
historical significance of this site, the Arizona Parks Board is
attempting to have the San Bernardino Ranch set aside as a State Park.

The headquarters complex dates from 1884, with some buildings as late
as the 1890's. These buildings are intact and are still being used.
They include the main ranch house, to which a screened porch has been
added, and stone and adobe cook-house, bunk-house, and utility
buildings. A number of ruins of the stone houses Slaughter built for
his Mexican farmers still stand at various points in the valley.
Evidences of the Perez Ranch may be seen nearby. They consist of
ruined foundations and traces of melted adobe walls.
After the absolutely dry drive from Douglas, the San Bernardino Springs appear as a true oasis in the desert. Stock ponds, irrigation ditches and numerous running springs in the shade of cottonwood groves make one feel that nature is here being profligate with such a precious resource. A small herd of cows and a number of horses in green pastures add validity to the scene.

San Bernardino Springs
San Bernardino Headquarters.

Original stone bunkhouse, 1884, San Bernardino Ranch.
Original stone utility buildings, 1884, San Bernardino Ranch.
Adobe Kitchen, 1890, San Bernardino Ranch.

Ruins of tenant's hut, 1884, San Bernardino Ranch.
SIERRA BONITA RANCH, ARIZONA

Location. Southwest of Bonita in Graham County.

Ownership. Private.

Significance. Col. Henry C. Hooker founded the Sierra Bonita Ranch in 1872 in the shadow of the Graham Mountains, overlooking the Sulphur Springs Valley. It was the first permanent American/ranch in Arizona to challenge and survive the Apache terror, and here was introduced the first graded stock into the territory. With establishment of the Sierra Bonita, the American cattleman succeeded to the lush grasslands of southeastern Arizona that had witnessed the rise and fall of an earlier Spanish-Mexican cattle empire.

At this time southeastern Arizona was geographically a cattleman's paradise. Its broad valleys at an average 4,000 feet elevation sustained luxuriant stands of man-high grass that elicited praises of wonder from all who traveled the territory. Nearby mountains provided winter shelter and forage. Water was available from springs or shallow wells.

With resumption of the army's war against the Apaches after the Civil War, one-fourth of the regular army came to Arizona's 14 military posts. Feeding these men laid the basis for the Arizona cattle industry. Also important in this regard were many new mining camps, and, with the gradual roundup of hostile Indians, the need for beef at the Indian agencies.
Beginning in 1867, Colonel Hooker became the most important military beef contractor in Arizona. From Texas, California, New Mexico, Oregon, and Idaho he drove as many as 15,500 cattle per year to holding ranges in Arizona, there to await orders from the army camps and Indian agents. Apaches raided his herds, so Hooker leased range land from the Papago Indians south of Tucson.

In 1872, while camped at Oak Grove, returning excess cattle to his holding range, Hooker followed a stampeding herd to a cienega in the Sulphur Springs Valley. Impressed by the beauty of the place and its excellent prospects as a cattle range, he homesteaded there, calling the ranch Sierra Bonita in salute to the nearby mountains.

Some years before, a large Spanish hacienda had occupied this same spot, the last to be forced out by Apache raids in the early 1800's. Hooker erected his ranch buildings on the site of the abandoned hacienda. The ranch house was a large rectangular affair, 80 by 100 feet, with thick adobe walls and gunports in the parapets—an almost impregnable fortress that could not be set afire.

Colonel Hooker was an aristocratic New Englander, and though a true pioneer, was not of the primitive frontier sort. He dressed immaculately and left the rough stuff to his small army of cowboys. Under his direction they fought Indians and rustlers and preserved the growing Sierra Bonita from every challenge.

The Sierra Bonita was watered by five springs and several cienegas. Water flowed in the stream beds in the spring and fall months. There
was an underground river flowing through the valley only a little below the surface, making additional water plentiful and easily attainable. Wells tapped this source. This water gave Hooker control of a range some 30 miles long and 30 miles wide, extending back into the slopes of the Galiuro Mountains. Red clover was found growing on a portion of the cienega lands, planted there, doubtless, by the previous Spanish settlers. The Sierra Bonita, at 4,000 feet elevation escaped extremes of heat or cold and was an ideal breeding range.

Besides the Sierra Bonita home ranch, the Hooker property comprised a number of outlying ranches: The Sonora, six miles east of the Sierra Bonita, irrigated by a stream flowing from the Graham Mountains; the Cienega Ranch four miles to the north, used for stock; Mud Springs, seven miles southwest supplied water for 5,000 head of cattle; the Riley ranch a mile farther on; High Creek breeding ranch in the Galiuros Mountains; Box Springs, six miles west of Bonita; and three other ranches at Point of Mountain, Hooker's Hot Springs, and Arivaipi Canyon. With the importation of Hereford graded stock in the eighties, Hooker improved his ranches, fenced portions of land, and planted alfalfa and other hay crops.

Hooker was one of the few Arizona ranchers to survive the disastrous drought of 1891. He formed the Sierra Bonita Land and Stock Company with capital of $500,000 and bought out surrounding ranchers, extending his range to 250,000 acres carrying 20,000 head.
At the time of his death in 1907 Hooker was the cattle king of Arizona. So he had been for 40 years.

Present Status. The Sierra Bonita is an operating cattle ranch still in the Hooker family. Mrs. Harry Hooker, granddaughter of Colonel Hooker, is the present owner.

The adobe ranch house has been remodelled inside but still retains the fortress-like appearance of early days. Surrounding the ranch house, which is shaded by gigantic cottonwoods, are the original adobe corrals, bunkhouses, and barns. The integrity of the site is exceptional in three ways: continuity, appearance of the buildings, and the same magnificent setting that attracted Hooker here in the first place.

Sierra Bonita Ranch House.

Patio, Sierra Bonita Ranch House.
Original barn (above) and bunkhouse, Sierra Bonita Ranch.
Original adobe corrals and stables,
Sierra Bonita Ranch.
LC RANCH HEADQUARTERS, NEW MEXICO

Location. Gila.

Ownership. Private.

Significance. The LC completely overshadowed all other ranching operations in Southwest New Mexico. It was one of the truly great ranches of the West - at its height in the 1890's controlling a million-acre range carrying 60,000 head. Tom Lyons, baron of the upper Gila, carved a kingdom out of mountain, plain and desert, and left for posterity a ranch house and headquarters complex that overshadows all other surviving historic ranch establishments in the Southwest.

At the outset it must be stated that the LC Ranch is not well-known today; though in its prime, newspaper and other contemporary sources listed it as a "well known and wealthy cattle raising firm" (The New Mexican, May 28, 1890). The reason for the LC's present obscurity is found in anachronism. The LC came late and recapitulated the cycle of open range, water-rights struggles, and sod-buster wars a good 20 years after these matters had become history on the Llano Estacado. Thus the LC escaped the historical coverage that marks the story of better known ranches on better known ranges.

The historian is fortunate who can tap the oral traditions and remaining records in Grant county and get to the people who know the story. The present writer benefitted from contact with four people who are experts on the LC - Mr. L. E. Foster of Silver City, employee of Lyons
from 1910 on and later general manager of the LC; Mrs. Foster, daughter of Angus Campbell and step-daughter of Tom Lyons (Lyons married Mrs. Campbell after Mr. Campbell's death in 1893); Mr. Steve Villarreal of Pinos Altos, bookkeeper of the ranch during the Lyons reign; and Mr. Lamar Moore of Winslow, Arizona, leading contemporary expert on the cattle industry of southwestern New Mexico and southeastern Arizona. What follows is a summary of interviews and documentary synopses provided by these individuals, plus less valuable material cited from published sources listed below.

Tom Lyons was born in England and raised in Kenosha, Wisconsin, where he worked in a foundry. He came to New Mexico in 1878 or 1879 and went into the mining business with Angus Campbell, a Silver City prospector. In 1880 the partners sold their "Cosette" mine and Silver City foundry interests and embarked in the cattle business. They bought the Nogales or White House Ranch, 10 miles north of Gila and immediately began to monopolize water-rights in the vicinity.

Within 10 years the LC claimed all the range from the mouth of Duck Creek (a tributary of the Gila) to above Mule Springs, on both sides of the Gila, and every waterhole and meadow within a day's ride. This great domain was their possession either directly or through their men.

In 1890 the ranch headquarters was moved 10 miles south to the town of Gila. Here Lyons began construction of the great adobe ranch house that survives today.
The LC kept expanding its operation and, like other extensive cattle outfits, broke into separate ranches: The Upper LC, headquartered at Gila; the Lower LC at Red Rock; and the Flying Circle at Mangus. Another ranch at Kane Springs in the Burro Mountains served strictly as a breeding range for the purebred shorthorns by which Lyons improved his herds.

Meanwhile, Angus Campbell concentrated on the irrigation and farming operation on Duck Creek and the Gila. Under his direction the LC built dams and reservoirs for storing water. He had constructed three large wooden tanks on the summit of Legal Tender Hill, at the crest of the Continental Divide. Water was lifted 475 feet from Silver City over the divide, then piped far out onto the range. The LC raised all its own feed and vegetable sustenance on the farms along the Gila.

Lyons was the moving force behind the cattle end of the business. By 1885 he had interested Eastern capital in his ranching operation and that year organized the Lyons and Campbell Ranch and Cattle Company with capital of $1,500,000. Lyons and Campbell owned two-thirds of the shares. This firm was incorporated under laws of New Jersey, with its head office in New York City. Lyons established commission houses in Denver and Los Angeles, and in the latter place he operated his own slaughter house. His idea was to breed cattle on the LC, ship them from Silver City to leased finishing pastures at Denver and Los Angeles, then slaughter the cattle himself and market the beef. Thus he would control his beef from the breeding pasture to the finished product. Though this grandiose project was apparently short-lived, it shows the
thrust Tom Lyons brought to the business.

Selected statistics on the ranching operation give an idea of its scope. According to tally books and other records in Mr. Villarreal's possession, and the recollections of Mr. Foster, the ranch employed 100 wagons, 750 riding horses, 400 work horses, 75 cowboys in season, and 3-6 chuckwagons. The farming operation employed 100 Mexican families, most of them imported from Chihuahua. At its greatest extent, the LC range stretched east-west from Silver City to the Arizona line, and north-south from Mule Creek to the lower reaches of the Animas Valley. Lyons' general store at Gila employed 6 clerks and sold everything from Studebaker wagons to sewing machines. Though the analogy is false, for the entire operation depended on the marketing of beef to outside buyers, the notion is irresistible to compare Tom Lyons' great domain to a self-sustaining feudal principality.

Lyons' every act as proprietor encouraged this notion. He and Mrs. Lyons were people of culture and their ranch headquarters with well-stocked library, music, and lavish entertainments became a mecca for the famous and wealthy. Historical photos in Mrs. Foster's possession show that the ranch house was beautifully furnished with tasteful importations from all over the world. Lyons built a large hunting lodge, reached only by pack trail, high in the mountains on the Gila headwaters. Furnished with a grand piano, among other luxuries, this eyrie entertained hunting parties of 40 to 60 persons. Bear and elk were the favorite game; and when hunting paled, unexcelled fishing took its place. William Goodrich was a guest here, and Theodore
Roosevelt accepted an invitation but had to cancel at the last moment for reasons of state.

Lyons' entertainments and expansive way of life attracted money from wealthy stockholders in the LC, but the pace was too terrific and the LC went in the red. With Lyons' death in 1917 in El Paso, the establishment lost its driving force and was gradually sold off until only the 5-acre headquarters complex remained.

Present Status. Today the LC is a memory except for the headquarters complex at Gila and the hunting lodge at Gila Hot Springs. Owner of the headquarters complex is Mr. Arthur L. Ocheltree, former grand opera singer and a noted collector of European period furniture. He is presently restoring the ranch house to its former grandeur, as is shown in the colored photo album attached to this report. Mr. Ocheltree has consulted Mrs. L. E. Foster's historical photos and is refurbishing the house in the spirit of the Lyons period. Included in the property owned by Mr. Ocheltree is the great 25-room adobe ranch house and numerous outbuildings, including a 10-room bunkhouse. He intends to purchase Lyons' nearby adobe store and restore it to the ranching period.

An apt description of the ranch house in its heyday and in its present becoming is offered in Ross Calvin's River of the Sun:

The house itself was a symbol of lavishness. Built in the shape of an E from sun-dried bricks, it conformed in everything save size to the ordinary plan for ranch houses. But its size was immense. Adobe is a material which lends itself to treatment in blank, unbroken walls free from arches
and fussy angles; consequently, the typical adobe structure is a long, cell-like row of rooms, though commonly, in houses of the better class, bent at the ends to enclose a patio or court. One-storied, thick-walled, straight-sided, the great ranch house at Gila conformed to the traditional type, even to the covered porch (portal) which ran along its southern side. But this portal was so extensive (187 feet long) as to suggest the cloister of a monastery.

In front of it stood a hedge in whose shadow ran an acequia where on summer evenings water dimpled and rippled on its way to refresh the rose bushes. The north side of the house gave upon the patio, open toward the Gila a little distance away and the dark blue scarp of the Mogollon Mountains in the distance. The prospect was superb, the situation free from bleakness in winter, sheltered from excessive heat in summer.

The LC headquarters is an impressive legacy that recaptures the baronial element of the Cattlemen's Empire. The self-made man who conquered the land and his enemies to erect a cattle kingdom is epitomized here.

References. Interviews with Mr. and Mrs. L. E. Foster of Silver City and Mr. Steve Villarreal of Pinos Altos; documentary synopsis provided by Mr. Lamar Moore of Winslow, Arizona, and including citations from the following sources: G. L. Brooks Papers; the following newspapers from the period 1878 to 1895 — Deming Headlight; Colfax County Stockman, Springer, N. M.; San Marcial Reporter; Northwestern Livestock Journal, Cheyenne; Cimarron, N. M., News & Press; White Oaks Golden Era; Socorro Times and Bullion; Stock Grower, Las Vegas, N. M.; Southwest Sentinel, Silver City; and others —; Tax Assessment Rolls, State Records Center, Santa Fe; William French, Some Recollections of a Western Ranchman (New York, n.d.); Frank M. King, Pioneer Western Empire Builders (Pasadena, 1946); Ross Calvin, River of the Sun (Albuquerque, 1946).
Portal of LC Ranch House.

Rear Wings of LC Ranch House.
LC Bunkhouse.

LC Post Office and Store.
HORSEHEAD CROSSING, TEXAS

Location. Approximately 65 miles east-southeast of Pecos City on the Pecos River where that stream forms the line between Pecos and Crane counties.

Ownership. Private.

Significance. Horsehead Crossing is the most noted ford of the Pecos River. Landmark for early Spanish explorers, watering place on the great Comanche War Trail into Mexico, route of Forty-niners, emigrants, surveyors, and the Butterfield Overland Mail, Horsehead Crossing is most important in this context as the intersection of the Far Western cattle trails.

Long before the "Long Drive" to Kansas became famous after the Civil War, pioneer Texas cattlemen had established the 1500-mile drive from southern Texas via Horsehead Crossing to California. These drives, beginning in 1848, fed the California miners, reaching their highpoint in 1854. Later, Texas cattlemen used the Horsehead Crossing route to supply military posts and Indian agencies in Arizona and New Mexico, leading to establishment of the great cattle ranges in these territories. In 1866 Charles Goodnight and Oliver Loving used Horsehead Crossing when they blazed trail from central Texas to Fort Sumner, New Mexico, and Pueblo, Colorado. Goodnight and other Texans later extended the trail into Wyoming. They swung south via Horsehead Crossing to avoid Comanche and Kiowa haunts on the more direct route across the Llano Estacado. The Goodnight-Loving Trail was one of the most famous of
the Texas cattle routes, opening the way for the northern range cattle industry.

John Russell Bartlett's boundary survey party encountered Horsehead Crossing in 1850. Approaching from the east through Castle Mountain Pass, the party marched another 12 miles to the Pecos. In this area the river is enclosed by sheer banks 8 to 12 feet high. No trees or shrubs rise above these canyon walls - thus the river is invisible from the plains on either side. Bartlett noted that the banks were impassable except at the crossing itself, where they stepped down to the water, and, with a little cutting, could be made negotiable for wagons. Few places on the lower, rock-cut course of the Pecos can thus be crossed. That is why Horsehead Crossing funneled travelers in its direction.

Speculating on the name of the crossing, Bartlett noted many horse and mule skulls on the river banks. Arranged in lines and patterns by previous travelers, they seemed the obvious cause for the singular name. J. Evetts Haley limns the dismal history of these animals, who, plagued with thirst after long marches across waterless chaparral, drank too deeply of the saline Pecos waters and died on the spot.

Best described of the cattle drives over Horsehead Crossing is the Goodnight-Loving Trail-blazing expedition of 1866. J. Evetts Haley's splendid biography of Goodnight quotes the old cattleman's observations on the treacherous Pecos - "Graveyard of the Cowman's Hopes." After the 80-mile drive from the headwaters of the Concho, Goodnight's thirst-crazed cows scented the Pecos waters and stampeded over its
banks; hundreds mired in the sands of the river bottom. Marooned under the overhanging banks, they were left to die.

Other trail accounts tell the same story of hardship and disaster on the Pecos. But for the trail driver who chose the southern route, Horsehead Crossing remained the prime access to trans-Pecos country. As such it is one of the great landmarks of the early cattle industry.

It should be noted that classification of Horsehead Crossing in the Cattlemen's Empire is arbitrary. As stated above, the site was of great significance from Spanish times. The geography of the Pecos country and the scarcity of crossings that passed essential springs both east and west forced most trans-Pecos travelers to this particular crossing. Thus the thousands who traversed the Southern Emigrants' Road crossed here, and great wagon trains, and Butterfield's jolting mail coaches. Horsehead Crossing could be justifiably classified in at least two other subthemes of Theme XV, "Overland Migrations West of the Mississippi River" and "Transportation and Communication."

Present Status. This site has not been visited by the writer. But from published accounts and inquiries of local sources, it appears that Horsehead Crossing is in pristine state. Isolated from main travel routes, it remains what it was in the historical period, a landmark on the barren Pecos desert, infrequently visited. The old crossing is easily accessible from Crane over a good country road which passes the Cowden ranch.
OTHER SITES CONSIDERED
Matador Ranch, Texas

The Matador Ranch was founded in 1879 when H. H. Campbell and A. M. Britton entered partnership, acquired range rights from a buffalo hunter, and bought 8,000 head of cattle. The firm prospered and in 1882 sold out to the Matador Land and Cattle Co., Ltd., of Dundee, Scotland. Campbell was retained as superintendent of the ranch, and laid the foundations for its remarkable growth and prosperity. In 1891, however, he was replaced by Murdo Mackenzie, under whose able management the Matador grew into one of the largest cattle enterprises in Texas, exceeded in scope of operations and extent of holdings only by the King Ranch. During a time of heavy British investment in American cattle, the Matador was the only British-owned ranch to return a decent profit to its investors. In its first two decades, the Matadors' principal outlet was Dodge City, Kansas, to which the cattle were trailed for shipment east. In 1903, 500,000 acres in South Dakota were leased, together with another 15,000 in Saskatchewan. Thereafter, the Texas cattle were sent to northern ranges for fattening before shipment to Omaha and Chicago. Meanwhile, the original Matador grew through purchase and lease of additional tracts in Texas. By 1910 the company owned 861,000 acres in Texas and had 650,000 acres under lease in the north, making a total of 1,511,000 acres. Some 66,000 head of cattle stocked these ranges. Murdo Mackenzie continued to preside over this vast cattle empire until the 1930's, when he retired. In 1951 Lazard Bros., an American syndicate, bought out the Scottish investors and continued to operate the ranch, which, however, has since been subdivided. The core of the old ranch, which is entered one-half mile south of the Matador city limits, now occupies 190 sections and is owned by Mr. Fred C. Koch of Wichita, Kansas.

Interviews in March 1963 with Mr. H.H. Campbell, son of the ranch founder, and Mrs. J. M. Jackson, widow of a former ranch superintendent—both of whom live in the town of Matador—established the fact that only four buildings now extant on the ranch antedate 1906. These are an old stone bunkhouse, now used as a dump for used machinery; a deserted stone icehouse near the Ballard Springs dam; ruins of a windmill, milk house and well house; and a small white frame building which was an annex to the original "White House" ranch headquarters. The major complex of stone buildings now marking the ranch headquarters was built by the Scotch owners in 1918.

T-Anchor Ranch House, Texas

The second ranch in the Texas Panhandle, the T-Anchor was founded in 1877 by Leigh Dyer, brother-in-law of Charles Goodnight who, the year before, had established his ranch in Palo Duro Canyon. Logs cut in the canyon were hauled to the site selected for ranch headquarters, just north of present Canyon, Texas, and the first log cabin of any
Headquarters, Matador Ranch, 1918.

Original Stone Bunkhouse, Matador Ranch.
T-Anchor Ranch House, today.

T-Anchor Ranch House, about 1900.
T-Anchor Ranch House.
size to be erected in the Panhandle was constructed. The following year, 1878, the firm of Gunter, Munson, and Summerfield bought Dyer's claim and took over operation of the ranch. The property passed to an English firm, the Cedar Valley Lands and Cattle Co., in 1883. At this time the T-Anchor consisted of 225 sections of land stocking 24,000 head of cattle. In 1902 the ranch was discontinued and the land broken up and sold to smaller farmers and ranchers.

The principal significance of the T-Anchor lies in the fact that it left the only representative example of the early High Plains ranch dwelling still standing that has not been altered by more recent construction. An unpretentious one-story log structure, it together with 80 acres of the T-Anchor land is owned and operated by the West Texas State Teachers College as an experimental farm. The building is preserved and maintained under the supervision of the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum at Canyon.

XIT Sites (Channing, Escarbada), Texas

Largest of the pioneer ranches in the Texas Panhandle, the XIT was the product of a unique financial arrangement. The Chicago firm of Taylor, Babcock, and Co. (The Capitol Syndicate) received over three million acres in the Panhandle from the State of Texas in return for constructing the state capitol building in Austin. The ranch, with headquarters at Channing, was established in 1885 and, backed by English capital, stocked its ranges with 110,721 head of cattle valued at $1,322,587. In 1887 a branch operation was organized in Montana, and 10,000 head of cattle each year were sent to the Montana ranges for finishing. Herd improvement and pasture fencing were also inaugurated during the late 1880's. First under John V. Farwell, then under B. H. Campbell, the XIT prospered. In 1901, however, in order to meet financial obligations, the company put its lands up for sale, and by 1912 had disposed of its assets to smaller operators and to the wheat ranchers who had begun migrating to the Panhandle.

The original ranch occupied parts of nine counties fronting the western border of the Texas Panhandle. It was broken into seven divisions—Buffalo Springs, Middle Water, Ojo Bravo, Rito Blanco, Escarbada, Spring Lake, and the Yellow Houses. Each had its own headquarters ranch. General headquarters were centrally located at Channing.

The central headquarters at Channing still stands. Now a private residence, it has been altered beyond recognition. Across the street is the brick paymaster's office; dating from the 1890's, this building retains a great deal of integrity and has been marked by the Texas Historical Survey Commission. The payroll vault can still be seen inside. The town's brick courthouse was built in 1906, and, along with numerous other older buildings, helps to recall the ranching era.
Most interesting and mood-provoking of the extant XIT sites is the Escarbada division headquarters. Escarbada is due west of Hereford, Texas, on the New Mexico-Texas line. Now deserted and miles from the nearest road, it is located in striking terrain formed by the breaks of Tierra Blanca Creek, an affluent of Prairie Dog Fork that carved the Palo Duro Canyon. Long before Texan ranchers came to the Llano Estacado, Comanchero traders from New Mexico stopped at Las Escarbadas, "The Scrapings", where they scrounged water from the sands of the Tierra Blanca.

Each division of the XIT operated as a separate ranch with its own foreman, and each division was a specialized operation. Escarbada was strictly a breeding range. The foreman and his hands lived in the two-story plastered stone building that still stands at the site.

Gaunted now by time and weather, its vacant windows staring across Tierra Blanca Creek to the jagged breaks on the south horizon, Escarbada was once a lively place. Elderly Miss Bell Burns, now living in Channing, remembers it in the 1890's when the jangle of cowboy spur and the bellow of branded calf displaced the moaning wind that now monopolizes sound in Escarbada's haunted isolation.

Escarbada is on the Reinauer Brothers Ranch and can be reached via a ranch road that turns south from County Road 1058 about 5.2 miles east of the New Mexico-Texas line. Ask directions at the ranch house 4 miles south of the turnoff.
XIT General Headquarters, Channing.

XIT Paymaster's Office, Channing.
Breaks of Tierra Blanca from Escarbada.
ALSO NOTED SITES
Bell Ranch, New Mexico.

One of the largest cattle outfits in northeast New Mexico, the Bell Ranch Company controlled close to a million acres of range and grazed more than 25,000 head during its heyday in the 1880's and 1890's. The ranch headquarters site near the junction of La Cinta Creek and the Canadian River has been obliterated by irrigation projects using water from nearby Conchas Dam, which was built on the old Bell range.

Cross-L Ranch, New Mexico.

From headquarters 30 miles northeast of Capulin Crater, the Texan-founded Cross-L ran cattle south from the Colorado line to the Canadian River. Since its sale to an Edinburgh firm in 1881 the Cross-L has been broken up into smaller outfits and no known sites remain to commemorate the original ranch.

John Chisum Ranch, New Mexico.

John S. Chisum, a Texas cattleman, moved his operation to the Bosque Grande on the Pecos River, New Mexico, in 1873. By 1875 he was known as the Cattle King of New Mexico. From ranch headquarters at South Spring, about 4 miles southeast of present Roswell, his range extended 150 miles along the Pecos and grazed 30,000-plus head of cattle. Chisum died in 1884 and the ranch passed to other hands.

Comparison of the present South Spring Dairy Ranch with historical maps and photos in possession of Mr. E. S. Raymond of Roswell, past president of the local historical society, indicates that all traces of the original ranch buildings are gone.

101 Ranch, Oklahoma.

In the late 1870's pioneer Texas cattlemen founded the 101 Ranch in the Oklahoma Panhandle. Its 40,000 cattle grazed almost the entire western part of the panhandle. An English concern, the Western Land and Cattle Company, bought the 101 in 1881. It was sold again in 1889, then divided up when farmers came into the area. The original ranch headquarters near Kenton have long since disappeared. The 101 was important to the cattle industry, for here was started the seasonal movement of range cattle to summer fattening grounds in the Flint Hills of Kansas. This yearly migration is big business even today, though the trailing herds have been replaced by fleets of trucks and boxcars.

Government Springs, Oklahoma.

This old drinking hole was perhaps the most noted campsite on the Chisholm
Trail. Here trail drivers camped while their herds grazed 2 miles east on Skeleton Creek. One of the last timbered stops before the trail entered the treeless plains, it was customary to gather a supply of cooking fuel here. The name Government Springs came into use after cattle drive days when government surveyors camped here. The walled-in springs now water a tree-lined lake in Enid's Government Springs Municipal Park.

J. C. Loving Ranch House, Texas.

J. C. Loving, son of famed cattle driver Oliver Loving, was a prime mover in the launching of the Texas Cattle Raisers' Association (now the Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers' Association), largest and oldest organization of its kind in the United States. Loving was secretary from the association's founding in 1877 until his death in 1902. His ranch house, 1-1/2 miles west of Jermyn in Jack County, was the home of the association until offices were established in Fort Worth in 1893. Unfortunately, the Loving home has been completely remodelled and except for the original foundations and chimney has little integrity.
Loving Ranch House, today.

Loving Ranch House, about 1920.
EXPLANATORY NOTE

As stated in the Preface, this report was originally designed to cover certain sites in the Southwest Region. But upon review by the Survey Staff in the Washington Office, it was decided that the Midwest and Western Regions should also have an opportunity to contribute additional sites for consideration. Further, it was agreed that a visit must be made to Horsehead Crossing to determine the integrity of that site; and it was decided that the Three Rivers Ranch in New Mexico should be included in this survey.

Accordingly this Appendix has been added to the report. This method was chosen, rather than redoing the original report, because of time limitations. The Appendix contains:

1. Descriptions and photos of three sites in Midwest Region that are now recommended for exceptional value classification. (No additional sites were recommended by Western Region.)

2. A verbatim account, with maps and photos, of a visit to Horsehead Crossing by Fort Davis Historian Erwin N. Thompson.

3. A site description of the Three Rivers Ranch in New Mexico. This site is recommended for the "Other Sites Considered" category.
SITES OF EXCEPTIONAL VALUE

MIDWEST REGION
Appendix page 4

W-BAR (PIERRE WIBAUX) RANCH, MONTANA

Location. 15 miles northeast of Wibaux, Montana, Wibaux County.

Ownership. Private.

Significance. The W Bar Ranch, owned and operated by Pierre Wibaux, was—at the peak of its operations in the 1890's—the largest ranch in Montana and one of the largest in the United States. The owner of this famous ranch was Pierre Wibaux (1858-1913), a native Frenchman of well-to-do parents.

Wibaux came to the United States and went to Montana in the early 1880's where he entered the cattle ranching business on a modest scale. He first established a partnership with another well-to-do Frenchman, named Gus Grisy. In 1884, Wibaux built his residence, known as the "White House," near his ranch headquarters which a contemporary newspaper described as the "finest in Dawson [now a part of Wibaux] County." Wibaux and his partner established the town site of Mingusville (now known as the town of Wibaux) on the Northern Pacific Railroad.

Early in 1886, Wibaux purchased Grisy's interest in his ranch. Wibaux's operations during the early years were rather modest ones. During the severe winter of 1886-1887, which was disastrous to the cattlemen of the Northern Plains, Wibaux went to France where he obtained additional funds to go into ranching on a large scale.

Following the severe winter, Wibaux purchased a number of remnants of cattle herds from those who had been forced to go out of business as a
result of the severe winter. By 1890, Wibaux had accumulated about 40,000 head of cattle and, in the spring of 1890, he branded about 10,000 calves. During the 1890's, Wibaux is said to have been the largest individual operator in the United States. Estimates on the number of cattle he owned at one time varied from 40,000 to 200,000.

Wibaux purchased some 36,000 acres of land from the Northern Pacific Railroad. His ranch extended from the Little Missouri to the Yellowstone Rivers, north of the Northern Pacific right-of-way. In Mingusville, which had been renamed Wibaux on April 1, 1895, he made great improvements. He induced the Northern Pacific to build stockyards and shipping conveniences. However, as the end of the century approached, the homesteaders began to enter the region.

Wibaux, in 1902, sold his stock cattle and moved his steers to the Red Water between Yellowstone and the Big Missouri. In 1906, he sold his ranch, about 1/3 of which was in Montana and the remainder in North Dakota, to the Calvin Investment Company. Wibaux turned his attention then to his banking interests in Miles City and the Cloverleaf Mining Company of Deadwood, South Dakota.

Wibaux died in 1913 at Chicago. According to the terms of his will, his body was cremated. His ashes remained in an urn until a statue of him was erected on a hill, a short distance west of the town which now bears his name. His ashes were then placed underneath the statue, in which he appears in cowboy attire looking over the country which he so "dearly loved" and where he spent the best years of his life.
Present Status. The site is an operating cattle ranch. All that remains of the Wibaux Ranch period is the stone barn erected in the 1880's. Mr. Peter H. Scheiffer of Wibaux owns the site.

Stone Barn at site of W-Bar (Wibaux) Ranch. NPS photo.
MEDORA, NORTH DAKOTA

Location. Medora, North Dakota.

Ownership. Public and private.

Significance. Established in 1883, by the wealthy French nobleman, Marquis de Mores, as the center of his meat packing operations, Medora is one of the best examples of a typical cowtown found by the recorder. Although Medora never achieved the fame of Cheyenne and Miles City, it was the center of extensive cattle raising operations along the Little Missouri River.

It was De Mores' objective in establishing his abattoir at Medora to eliminate the shrinkage in beef and mutton as the result of the shipping of cattle and sheep to such distant places as Chicago; the meat would arrive in a much better condition to the consumers; and the system would allow the western shippers to compete with their rivals in the grain belt. By 1885, he had completed at Medora a large slaughter house, capable of packing 150 beeves per day, and a large refrigerating plant. Cold storage houses were built at a number of towns along the Northern Pacific Railroad. At its peak, in about 1885 or 1886, Medora had a population of three or four hundred people.

Present Status. Medora retains much of the atmosphere of a small cowtown. The outlines of the packing plant of De Mores are still in evidence, the smokestack of which has survived. The residence of the Marquis De Mores, as well as the site of the packing plant is administered by the State
Historical Society of North Dakota. A portion of Medora is a part of
Theodore Roosevelt National Memorial Park. The other historical buildings
in Medora, such as the Ferris Store, the Rough Riders Hotel, and others,
are being partially restored by Mr. Harold Schaefer, Gold Seal Wax Company,
Bismarck. Other surviving structures in the town are the Catholic Church
and the Von Hoffman House, now operated as a museum.

The State Historical Society of North Dakota, Paul Ewald, President of
the Board of Directors, is the principal owner and administrator of
Medora. The secondary owner is Mr. Harold Schafer. It is suggested that
in case this site is classified for exceptional value and eventually
given Landmark status, the plaque and certificate be presented to the
State Historical Society of North Dakota and a certificate only be
presented to Mr. Schafer.

References. Arnold O. Goplen, "The Career of the Marquis De Mores in the
Badlands of North Dakota," North Dakota History, (January-April, 1945),
Vol. 13, pp. 5-70.
Panoramic view of Medora, N.D., from the north. NPS photo.
Panoramic view of Medora, N.D. from the north. NPS photo.
Location. East side of Chugwater in Platte County.

Ownership. Private.

Significance. The Swan Land and Cattle Company was one of the several well-known foreign stock companies, which operated in the United States. It was one of the largest cattle companies in the United States and operated for over 70 years.

Organized in Scotland in 1883, with a capital of $3,000,000, the Swan Land and Cattle Company had over 113,000 head on the books when the severe winter of 1886-1887 struck, reducing the company's herd to about 57,000 in 1887. The company's cattle ranged from Fort Fred Steele, Wyoming, on the west, to Ogallala, Nebraska on the east, and from the Union Pacific Railroad to the Platte River. Its principal range was the Chug and Sybille Creeks, and over the mountains to the Laramie Plains. The company held over 1,000,000 acres of land. Going into bankruptcy after the hard winter of 1886-1887, the company reduced its inventory and was placed under the capable management of John Clay, well-known stockman on the Northern Plains. Under Clay, the company was put on a much sounder basis. The company subsequently reduced its capital, and the cattle herd was cut down to 40,000 in 1895. In 1896, Clay quit. The company continued to run about 40,000 head until 1904 when it went into the sheep business. At the peak of the company's sheep business in 1911, the company ran about 112,000 head. The company continued its operations until 1945, when it began liquidating. The home office and a small parcel of land of old headquarters at Chugwater is still in operation.
Present Status. The surviving remains of the headquarters ranch are:

(1) the ranch house, in excellent condition, which was built in 1876 and which served as a hotel and stage station prior to the coming of the railroad to Chugwater in 1887; (2) the barn, built also about 1876; (3) the store, built in 1913 to serve as commissary; (4) the brick Hiram Kelley House, built in 1877, located about 1/2 miles below the headquarters.

Manager of the present ranch is Mr. Russell Stoats, Chugwater.

Residence, built in 1876, at the headquarters of the Swan Land & Cattle Company, a stopping place on the Cheyenne-Black Hills stage route. NPS photo.
RECORD OF HISTORIAN ERWIN N. THOMPSON'S
VISIT TO HORSEHEAD CROSSING, AUGUST 5, 1963
HORSEHEAD CROSSING

Between Crane and McCamey, on highway 385, there is a marker put up by the State of Texas to Horsehead Crossing. At this point one can see Castle Gap to the east through which the early trains came. The road maps today call this King Mountain. To the west one cannot pick out the Pecos River; the land is flat and monotonous.

In Crane, I visited the Abstract Office and learned that the north bank of the Pecos where Horsehead Crossing is located is owned by

Nellie W. and John C. Harris et al
c/o Republic National Bank Bldg.
Dallas, Texas

(The address was obtained from the tax records at Crane County Courthouse.)

Learning that Mr. Jerry Cowden, lawyer and insurance agent, of Crane owns land in the vicinity of Horsehead Crossing, I called on him. He kindly and thoroughly gave me explicit instructions on how to reach the point.

Drove south on highway 385 until I came to a slight bend in the road where King Mountain approaches the highway. Turned west at this point onto a dirt country road. There is a crude, faint sign here that says Fussell Ranch, 7 miles.

Drove west, circled the Cowden homestead, then north, then west again, then south, and finally arrived at the long sought for (by me) Horsehead Crossing. I was so intent on navigating through the dust and mesquite I forgot to take the mileage either way on this road (?)--but did manage to scratch the paint on the pickup. A map accompanies these notes.
Horsehead Crossing is not a spectacular point but is of interest especially if you let your imagination run a little. The crossing is at a sharp bend in the river and you can drive out onto the "peninsula."

The small dot (see map) represents a stone boundary marker. The banks of the river in this area are from 10 to 15 feet in height. They are less abrupt at this point where they incline more gently. There are a number of wash-outs or small ravines in the clay leading down to the water. While it is tempting to think of these being caused by wagon ruts, there has been a number of floods in this area, including one in 1941 that widened the Pecos to four miles at this point.

Below the bluffs there is a narrow beach. This is white from mineral deposits. The sand in the river itself is a pleasant reddish-sandy color but when stepped on, slides away to disclose a black, slippery mud.

On the far side of the river (south) one can see a large granite state marker. On the advice of Mr. Cowden, I did not cross the river. In wading out I found it to be true that for every six inches of water a person sinks 18 inches into the mud. Had I a bucket or board to float the cameras, I could have floated myself across.

There were no horses' skulls in the area but the land is liberally sprinkled with the bones of deer, cattle, rams, and other animals.

Anxious to see the marker close-up, I returned to the highway, drove to McCamey, took highway 67 which leads to Fort Stockton, then turned off on road 11. I followed this a considerable distance and took the one turn-off
that looked promising. Eventually I reached the south bank of the Pecos and drove along two rough ruts until dark, but did not locate the marker. Would suggest that if this route is taken by anyone in the future, a 4-wheel drive vehicle or a tank be used to penetrate the area.

Arrived at Fort Stockton after 8 p.m., so was not able to visit the court house to find out who owns the land on the south bank.
LOCATION MAP, HORSEHEAD CROSSING

HORSEHEAD CROSSING SITE

Cowden House

fence

cattle guards

to Crane

to McCamey

PECOS

River

RIVER

beach

small ravines

10-15 foot bluffs

not investigated

PECOS bluffs

State of Texas marker

Boundary marker

not investigated

DETAIL OF HORSEHEAD CROSSING SITE
Horsehead Crossing of the Pecos River.
NPS photo.
Boundary marker at the Horsehead Crossing. NPS photo.
OTHER SITE CONSIDERED
Three Rivers Ranch, New Mexico

Twenty miles north of Tularosa lies the valley of Tres Ritos—Three Rivers. It is named for the mountain streams draining the west flank of the Sierra Blanca.

First of the cattle barons to invade this beautiful tree-lined valley was Patrick Coghlan—an Irish immigrant who came to the United States in the 1840s and to Tularosa in 1874. Rapidly Coghlan acquired water rights at Three Rivers. Pushing aside or surrounding the Spanish homesteaders and Anglo ranchers who had preceded him into the valley, Coghlan consolidated his holdings and soon had a small kingdom at his disposal. As beef contractor for Fort Stanton, Coghlan had a good market for his cattle.

Unfortunately for the history of Three Rivers, the noted cowboy detective, Charlie Siringo, caught Coghlan selling stolen cattle to Fort Stanton. In 1882 he was tried and convicted in Mesilla and made to pay damages to the aggrieved Panhandle cattle owners. The hard times of the late 1880s hit Coghlan hard and he and his ranch began to slide downhill into a welter of loans and mortgages.

On January 26, 1906, Coghlan signed a warranty deed to Albert Bacon Fall, thus ending the first chapter of Three Rivers history and beginning the second. Fall had first seen Three Rivers in 1889. At that time, captivated by its magnificent mountain and desert setting, he prophesied that one day the ranch would be his. Now, his ambition come true, he set about ordering the land to his own ends. Combining ruthlessness with negotiation he consolidated his vast holdings, acquiring water rights over the entire domain. The headquarters, always an oasis, became a desert
paradise as Mrs. Fall planted the area. By now Fall was the biggest man in southern New Mexico. Headquarters for his far-flung law business was El Paso, but Three Rivers, with its massive adobe ranch house, always remained home. And here Fall invested his great earnings. Fall's rise in Territorial, State, and National politics pulled him away from Three Rivers. But still he expanded until the ranch totalled more than a million acres.

Then in 1923 a combination of bad health and bad finances forced Fall to retire from Washington politics. He returned to Three Rivers where he attempted to recoup both health and money. He was making progress on restoring the ranch to a paying enterprise when he was recalled to Washington in connection with the Teapot Dome scandal. This experience broke and discredited Fall. His connection with the Doherty oil interests was seized upon, and Fall went to prison, a sick and tragic figure. In time the ranch was sold out from under him. Then it passed through a succession of owners until its purchase in 1941 by Thomas Fortune Ryan, III. Ryan, who still owns the ranch, tore down the old ranch buildings, which had fallen into disrepair, and built a new headquarters complex that still stands—as of old, an oasis in the desert.

Even today, as in the days of Coghlan and Fall, Three Rivers is a vital force in nearby Tularosa. The famous annual Kid's Rodeo held on the ranch at the A. B. Fall memorial stadium is the big event of the year for the community. Ryan is wealthy in his own right; the ranch is his home rather than a vital business enterprise.

Three Rivers is famous because of the colorful men who owned it, not because it was particularly significant in the history of the Cattlemen's Empire. For this reason it is not recommended for exceptional value.