

United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in How to Complete National Register Forms
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For NCRS use only

received

date entered

1. Name

historic Rhinehart Ranch

and/or common Spring Valley Ranch

2. Location

street & number

not for publication

city, town Eminence ☒ vicinity of congressional district 8th—Hon. Richard H. Icord

state Missouri code 029 county Shannon code 203

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: Vacant

4. Owner of Property

name F.N.F., Inc.

street & number

city, town Eminence vicinity of state Missouri 65466

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Office of Recorder of Deeds

street & number Shannon County Court House

city, town Eminence state Missouri 65466

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Missouri State Historic Survey has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☒ no

date 1980 ☐ federal ☒ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records Department of Natural Resources
Historic Preservation Program, P.O. Box 176

city, town Jefferson City state Missouri 65102

7. Description

Condition

☐ excellent
☐ good
☐ fair

☒ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

☐ unaltered
☒ altered

Check one

☒ original site

☐ moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Rhinehart Ranch is a traditional "I-house" with single story wing, common among successful agrarians of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It is now but one of a handful of such buildings that remain in Shannon County, Missouri.

A double veranda on the front is complemented by a single story porch on the wing, all of which were formerly screened-in for sleeping quarters and domestic work. The roof is covered throughout with sheet metal. The limestone chimney, with its intact dripstone, has been stabilized. Weatherboard siding is on the exterior except for a masonite-covered west end. Plastered walls are throughout the interior, with pine and hemlock panelling over the lower story interior. The original staircase remains intact.

The present owners considered demolition of this local landmark, but have decided to try to make a home out of it, and are beginning to invest in maintenance.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1907

Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Rhinehart Ranch is significant for having exemplified, during the first three decades of the twentieth century, modern, rural, progressive farming. The ranch has been one of the most prized properties in Shannon County. During Rhinehart's ownership, the Ranch became locally famous for its hospitality, conviviality, ranching, and as a setting for a rural marketplace.

The fine ranch house sits high on its own little ridge, surrounded by the big horseshoe bend of Spring Valley, tributary of the Upper Current River, Shannon County of the Courtois Hills (corrupted in the vernacular to "Curt-away" or "Coot-away"), Missouri Ozarks. The location is important. The natural and cultural landscapes represented by the Rhinehart Ranch exemplify lifestyles and histories little known to the National Register of Historic Places. Spring Valley and the Upper Current country typify "hidden" bottoms of the rugged interior Ozarks where rural socio-economies of a kind unknown to most Americans have been carried on for more than a hundred and fifty years. "Farming" or "ranching" are words in the American vocabulary suggesting a commercial agriculture somewhat different from that of most Ozarkers, who were not committed to a money economy.

DeForest Rhinehart, however, was of German descent, and a turn-of-the-century immigrant to Shannon County from Phelps County, a "railroad county" - both connections which were reflected in the operations of his place. He represented the culture of innovative modernity in a very traditional setting. But he was not incongruous with those traditions: he was primarily a stockman; he cared for and was attached to the land and the place; and he had a distinct affinity for the great climax forest, which he protected and perpetuated. For thirty years the Rhinehart Place was a center of society, of trade, of communication, and of influence. It was cut off by the Depression, which drove Rhinehart back north and out of the Ozarks. His ranch slumbered for forty years.

DeForest and Susan Rhinehart's family moved to the Spring Valley Ranch in 1900 from their Phelps County farm. Brother Frank Rhinehart, a Dent County farmer, was a financial partner with DeForest for about five years, but sold out his interest to his brother. DeForest was a good German farmer whose family had left Germany "because of the Catholics." In Missouri, Rhinehart was a Protestant and a Republican. Their new ranch had previously been owned by notable Shannon County men. W.H. Powell, tie and timber contractor, might have built the two-story house the Rhineharts moved into. Jack (?) McCaskill was a member of the McCaskill family who sold their farm on Pike Creek for the new town of Winona-Fishertown. The McCaskills operated Alley Spring Mill during the early 1800's, and built some twenty area mills (mostly for small family use) including the present Summersville Mill. They were mercantile store owners in Winona, Eminence, Summersville and towns outside Shannon County. McCaskill operated a single-story, red, boom-town front store just south of the old house on the point of the Rhinehart ridge. When Rhinehart bought the ranch, he used the store building as a

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warehouse. The Rhineharts lived in the "Old House" for some seven years before building their new one in 1907. The old house had been two-stories, with single-story porches and room for three hired hands to room and board.

The Rhinehart house was one of the first buildings in Shannon County to have a concrete foundation. The nine rooms were complemented by all four porches being screened-in for work and sleeping arrangements. The fireplace was built by a local mason, Sam Smith, great-grandfather of State Representative Danny Staples. DeForest Rhinehart hired Jess Cottrel to do the inside finishing work, and Mr. Keeling and others performed the rest of the carpentry. A room below the first level of the house was used to store a tank for the modern carbide lights which utilized pipes run through the ceilings to connect with chandeliers in the lower-story rooms. A switch at the base of each chandelier made it possible to light only the ones desired for use. Recollections of the carbide gas smell are still fresh in the minds of some senior citizens of Shannon County. The lighting system was used for several years until Rhinehart's insurance company balked at any further coverage. The pipes were then drained and the Rhinehart house turned to kerosene lanterns. The sheet metal roof is a replacement for former wooden shingles. Cloth wallpaper covered the interior walls, with some of the 1934 paper still intact upstairs. During the mid-1950's, knotty pine panelling was installed throughout the lower story.

Although Mr. Rhinehart took a St. Louis newspaper for market news and later listened to the radio reports, small town life for the Rhineharts took place at Ink, where Rhinehart had charge accounts that in one year rose over the phenomenal figure of \$100 for groceries. Occasionally they would journey to Summersville or the county seat, Eminence, but that was a two-and-a-half hour trip one way. Later, one of the first "jobe" schools in Missouri was established at Ink.

Cattle was Rhinehart's main source of income. Buying cattle meant a journey by the long-established south-central Ozark tradition of trips to Arkansas for what some termed "Mississippi Yellow-hammers" - a lean, rangy steer that was driven north into Missouri and fattened on the home ranch. Rhineharts, Stringers, Coxes, Summers, Deatherages and others made buying trips to spy out as much as 450 head of cattle at Hardy, Calico Rock and Melbourne, Arkansas. After a few trips Rhinehart stayed in Spring Valley, bought a set of scales, and selected Arkansas cattle from his neighbors as they drove them in. Rhinehart in turn drove his fattened stock, which had fished in the summer on the bluegrass wood's pasture, and wintered in the bottomland horseshoe valley, branded with a "D", to the rail heads at Angeline, Winona-Fishertown, and Salem, where a stock car had been ordered. Rhinehart built a pipe system across a bottom field to a hillside spring southwest of the house. Water came through the pipe to a watering trough for his cattle. Feeding pens were built at the base of the ridge.

The Rhinehart cattle drives normally involved DeForest and/or his son Cordell, a hired cowboy, and the slick-haired shepherd dog, Jack. Buck Deatherage was often hired to help on the drives. He remembered going to Mammoth Springs and Rector, Arkansas in the 1920's. Rhinehart had previously been there on a buying trip and rented temporary pasture where the cattle were collected until the week-long drive to Spring Valley began. One hundred-fifty to two hundred head would be driven in spring and fall, sometimes meeting Cordell on the road back. Once home, it took a day to day-and-a-half for branding on the right

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hip of the cattle, and many Shannon County farmers bought Rhinehart's cattle for five dollars a head or more. One Shannon Countian remembered when Rhinehart left after the Depression: "He was missed in a big way. Mr Rhinehart would always buy stock from the local farmers for some price, anytime of the year."

Hogs were a secondary income. Hog drives went to Salem, which took three-to-four days. The stock ultimately wound up in the St. Louis stockyards. Another stock venture was trade in mule colts. Mules were needed on farms in the timber work, and in the national market. The colts were also driven to Angeline or Salem. Occasionally, a north Missouri buyer would come to Rhinehart's and drive from a span to one-half dozen mules overland to the northern buyer's ranch. Scott Marshall from Marshall Junction also came south to buy Rhinehart cattle in the early 1920's. A few sheep and chickens were raised for needs at the home ranch.

W.C. Deckard, whose father ran Store #10 for MS&M recalled one stock venture which had an anticlimactic ending. Mr Rhinehart, after acquiring some cut-over timber land, bought a herd of goats to clean up the slash. After the goats had worked for a couple of seasons, Rhinehart drove them to Winona for shipment to St. Louis. The post-World War I market prices had fallen badly, and Mr. Rhinehart instead of receiving a check for his goats, received a freight bill balance of \$70. Horace Chilton remembered many good meals of goat meat at the Rhinehart place, where a German hired hand who was an expert goat butcher, processed much of the ranch's meat.

The annual flooding of Spring Valley area was a source of perpetual fertility for the owners and the cause of ranch maintenance and hardship. The steep relief of Spring Valley upstream, loss of the virgin forest, and the natural horseshoe catch basin of the ranch, allowed the seasonal deposit of silt to cover the valley floor. Rhinehart grew feed for his stock, realizing from ten to twelve bushels yield in his cornstalks! The Rhinehart Ranch was the first in Spring Valley to practice the "new" crop rotation methods in growing corn and hay. But the floods tore out fencing which had to be repaired and penned cattle had to be rounded up. In one fateful flooding, Walter Summers tried to drive a span of mules pulling a wagon across the creek below the Rhinehart house. The span of mules was drowned. The wagon was unhitched, and another span harnessed. This time only one of the mules drowned.

Depending on the time of year, the Rhinehart family had one to five hired hands. Crops of corn and hay normally grew on some 240 acres in the horseshoe bottom and nearby hollows. Some ten acres of mixed clover and timothy grass was also harvested. Rhinehart was among the first farmers to build a wooden silo, some twenty to twenty-five feet high, which demanded three weeks time in the summer to fill with corn fodder. This especially rigorous work period was also a busy time at the house for four meals a day were prepared for the hands. The women took one meal to the field during the late afternoon. During hay harvest, some nineteen to twenty hired men slept in the barn.

Meat was doled out to tenant farmers on the ranch as a pay supplement. February was the time of butchering - usually thirteen hogs were processed. Tenants also received cows to milk and the use of teams for plowing their own gardens. Tenants farmed the smaller hollows off the main valley. Mrs. Rhinehart canned beef for a meat during the busy summer working weeks. The hired hands took advantage of the last flocks of passenger

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pigeons who roosted in the Valley. At night, they would search them out and club to death baskets of them, and return with them to the house for processing. The hired men had their own outside entrance to an upstairs sleeping room. At the northeast end of the horseshoe valley there had been a timber camp of some 15 to 20 families in 1911. Occasionally Ruby Rhinehart or other children would stay the night with friends there.

Life at the house was as busy as it was in the fields. The Rhineharts had twelve children with nine living to maturity - five were born at the ranch. Rhinehart youngsters drove to Ink with a yoke of oxen, while younger children drove around in a goat cart. The ranch lay on the border of three school districts - Forest Glen, Flatwoods, and Ink. Teachers from all three schools boarded with the Rhineharts, one at a time, depending on the school which Rhinehart children were attending.

About 1912, a telephone switch was installed in the house. It was used to connect calls between Eminence, Akers, Salem and the surrounding area. No charge was assessed by the Rhineharts for the service.

Occasionally travelers and neighbors who were entertained grew in such number that the barn had to double as sleeping quarters. This was especially true when a dance was given, or people stayed after a play-party in the parlor room. The ranch was well-known for its work as well as a setting for young people's recreation.

DeForest Rhinehart respected and loved the land. Throughout his life there, he protected the climax timber he owned. Missouri and Mining Company was refused permission to build a tram railroad across Rhinehart land, and was also refused rights to the timber. The tram lines and lumber camps near Rhinehart, such as Spur 3 at the Ink "Y" and Koller's Sawmill in Steven's Höller, fed timber into Angeline and on to West Eminence.

The 1929 stock market crash was a blow to the nation and to DeForest Rhinehart. Heavy cattle investments led to a compromise with the Shannon County Bank at Eminence. Franklin Hyde even lost his "penny-a-day account" which his grandfather DeForest had started for him several years earlier. Franklin eventually received a settlement after the banks reopened of 16¢. Shannon County's largest stock dealer sold out and moved near Sedalia, where he started over again and built successful ranches in Pettis and Johnson Counties. Mr. Rhinehart died in June, 1955, at age 87, in a pickup truck accident at Houstonia, while on his way home from work. Sam Culler of the Bunker-Culler Lumber Company, founders of Bunker Missouri, bought the ranch for its mature white oak stands. A mill was established in Alec Hollow and it has been said enough timber was cut from the ranch to pay for it.

The present owners are young people from southeast Nebraska. Ambitious and college-educated, they have brought Sand Hills ranching experience and a desire for rural lifestyles to their venture in modern rural ranching in Spring Valley. The old Rhinehart Ranch has come alive once more as the Frescolns and Nelsons have pooled resources to purchase the 2,000 acre ranch in the Courtois Hills of Shannon County. The Rhinehart house, after sitting empty for a decade, has been revitalized by the new owners. Livestock ranching and the operation of portable saw mills are the fulltime occupations of these new Ozarks ranchers.

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The choice of Spring Valley as a new home came by reviewing ads in the Wall Street Journal. After inspection of Missouri Ozark farms, the Frescolns and Nelsons chose Spring Valley. They have experimented using different technologies in many phases of the timber industry: pine logs; posts; staves; palat lumber; ties; and timber stand improvement. Gradually they built a reputation for quality work which attracted the attention of timber magnate, Leo Drey. Most of their recent work has been timber stand improvement on Drey lands. While making a living in the timber and struggling to break even on livestock, the new ranchers, F.N.F. Incorporated, will still look for new and better ways to harvest resources from the Courtois Hills.

Information for this essay came from interviews with: Mrs. Ruby Rhinehart Hyde and her son, Franklin; Elmer Stringer; W.C. Deckard; Horace Chilton; Buck Deatherage; Lonnie Stringer; and the Frescoln and Nelson families.

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3. Deckard, W.C. Interview with Lynn Morrow, March 1980.
4. Frescoln Family. Interview with Lynn Morrow, March 1980.
5. Hyde, Mrs. Ruby Rhinehart. Interview with Lynn Morrow, March 1980.
6. Hyde, Franklin. Interview with Lynn Morrow, March 1980.
7. Morrow, Lynn. "Best Place I Ever Saw." The Ozarker, June 1980, p. 10 and 15.
8. Nelson Family. Interview with Lynn Morrow, March 1980.
9. Stringer, Elmer. Interview with Lynn Morrow, March 1980.
10. Stringer, Lonnie. Interview with Lynn Morrow, March 1980.
- 11.

9. Major Bibliographical References

1. Chilton, Horace. Interview with Lynn Morrow, March 1980.
2. Deatherage, Buck. Interview with Lynn Morrow, March 1980.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property less than 1 acre

Quadrangle name "Round Spring, Mo."

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A

115	637820	4123620
Zone	Easting	Northing

B

Zone	Easting	Northing

C

--	--	--

D

--	--	--

E

--	--	--

F

--	--	--

G

--	--	--

H

--	--	--

Verbal boundary description and justification

The nominated property is bounded by an area 300 feet square, whose central point is the above referenced UTM coordinate.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title 1. Lynn Morrow

Southwest Missouri State University

organization Center for Ozark Studies

date March 1980

street & number

telephone 417/836-5755

city or town Springfield

state Missouri 65802

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

☐ national ☒ state ☐ local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title Director, Department of Natural Resources
and State Historic Preservation Officer

date

For HCERS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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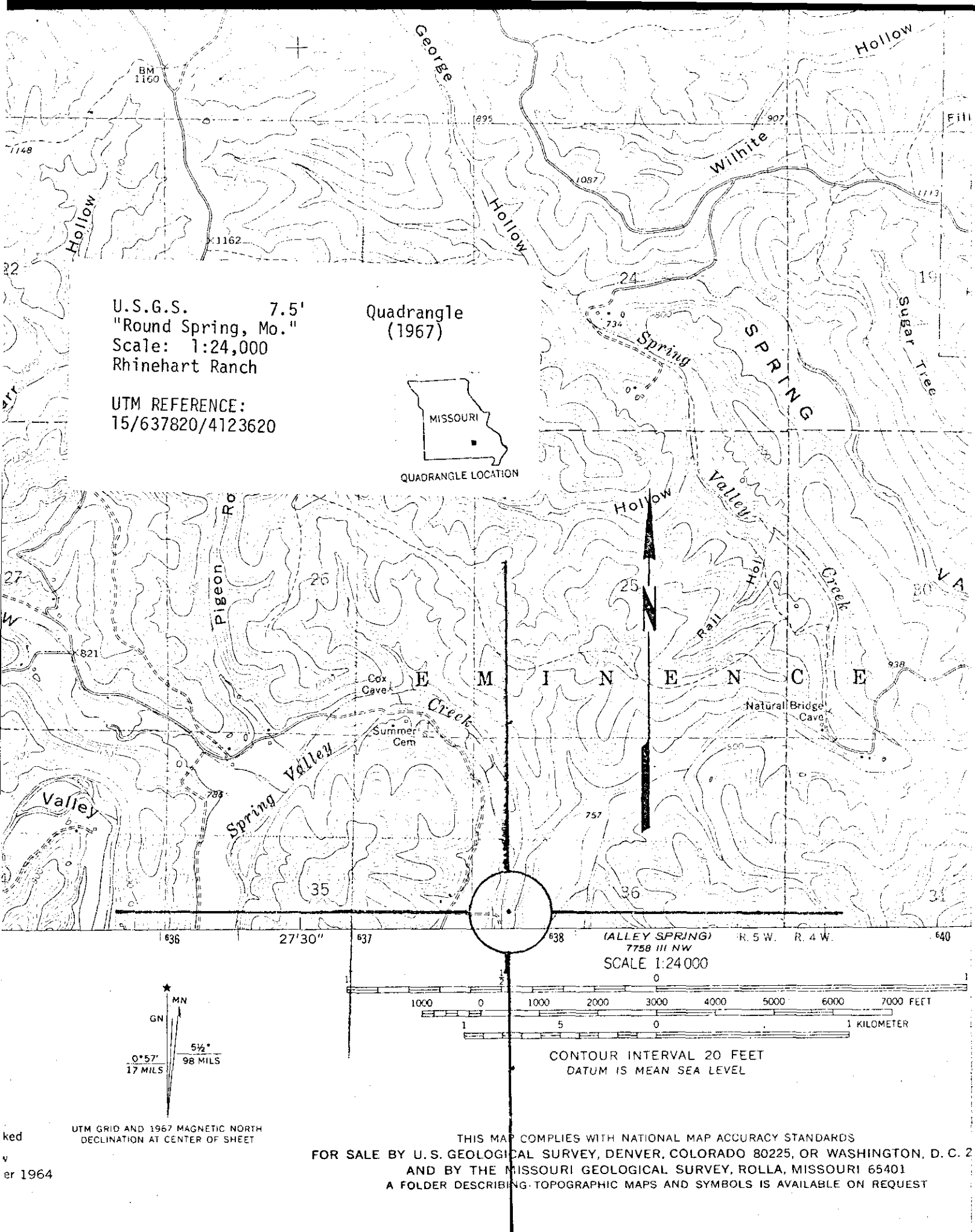
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2. James M. Denny, Section Chief, Nominations-Survey
and State Contact Person
Department of Natural Resources
Historic Preservation Program
P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City

July 10, 1980

314/751-4096

Missouri 65102



Lynn Morrow

RHINEHART RANCH
Eminence, Missouri

#1 of 3

Photographer: Lynn Morrow
March 1980

Neg. Loc.: Center for Ozark Studies
Southwest Missouri State
University, Springfield, Mo.

Primary elevation from the southeast.

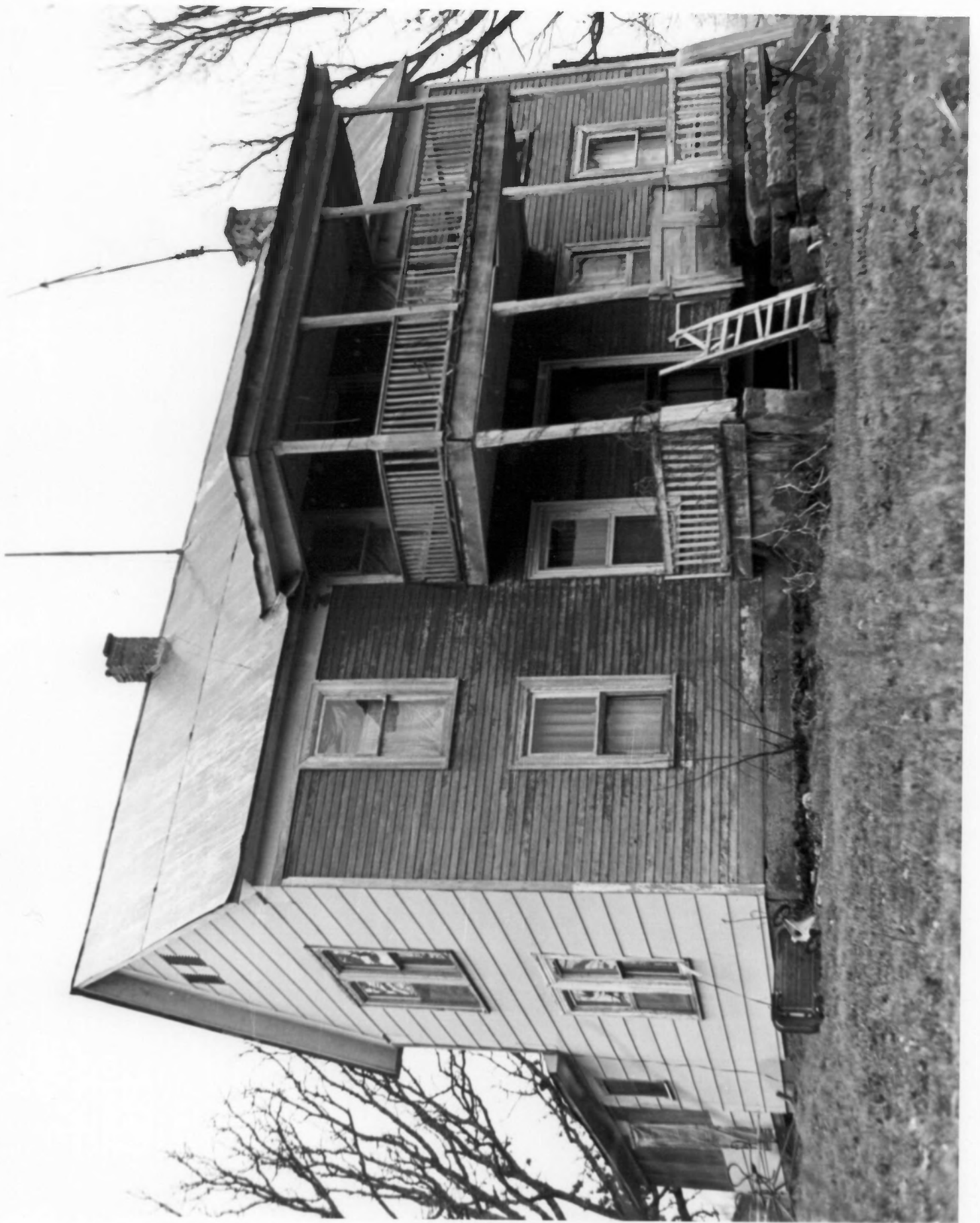


RHINEHART RANCH #2 of 3

Eminence, Missouri

Photographer: Lynn Morrow
March 1980

Neg. Loc.: Center for Ozark Studies
Southwest Missouri State
University, Springfield, Mo.
General view from the southwest.



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RHINEHART RANCH

Eminence, Missouri

Photographer: Lynn Morrow

March 1980

Neg. Loc.: Center for Ozark Studies
Southwest Missouri State
University, Springfield, Mo.

General view from the east.





