

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name STAR FILLING STATION

other names/site number STAR SERVICE STATION / 5WL8193

2. Location

street & number 301 CENTRE AVENUE

N/A not for publication

city or town NEW RAYMER

N/A vicinity

state COLORADO code CO county WELD code 123 zip code 80742

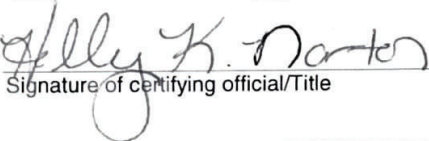
3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide local


Signature of certifying official/Title

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

9/30/19
Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official _____ Date _____

Title _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register determined eligible for the National Register

determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register

other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE / specialty store

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

VACANT / not in use

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

OTHER: HOUSE WITH CANOPY GAS STATION

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: CONCRETE

walls: STUCCO

roof: SHINGLE

other: WOOD

BRICK

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NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

Summary Paragraph: Constructed in 1925, this small gasoline station is located in the high plains town of New Raymer in northeastern Weld County, Colorado. It is situated at the historic commercial intersection of Centre Avenue and Brock Street, one block north of Colorado State Highway 14. The building is surrounded by public streets, commercial buildings, residences and vacant lots. The station is notable for its early-twentieth-century design as a gasoline station consisting of an enclosed office with a projecting open canopy that provides shelter for a drive-through fueling lane. Also of note is its false front, a characteristic of other commercial buildings of similar age constructed in New Raymer. Although it has deteriorated somewhat following several decades of lack of use and maintenance, the building retains a high level of architectural integrity and conveys much to the present-day observer about its early-twentieth-century design and construction.

SETTING: This historic gasoline station is located in the small town of New Raymer, which is found on the semi-arid open high plains of northeastern Weld County. New Raymer sits along the north side of Colorado Highway 14, a two-lane road that connects Sterling on the east with Fort Collins on the west. The highway passes through the Pawnee National Grassland, and the town is located on the southern edge of this federally designated area.

The gas station stands at the center of New Raymer's historic downtown commercial district, on the southeast corner at the intersection of Centre Avenue and Brock Street. Due to years of economic decline and attrition, much of the downtown district consists of vacant lots and empty buildings. Oriented toward the northwest, the station faces the street intersection and is set back from the lot's northwest corner. This positioning allowed automobiles to easily leave the adjacent streets and enter the property for fueling and light service. Vacant unpaved areas covered with short grass currently surround the building. These were previously dirt and used for driving and parking. The ground level is now about 2" higher than it was when the station was in active use. A concrete sidewalk that likely dates from the early 1900s runs along the west edge of the property, set back from and parallel to Centre Avenue. Whether one also ran along the Brock Street frontage is unknown, and no sidewalk is visible there today. Instead, the north property line is marked by a line of small trees. The rear property line to the east runs along an alleyway that is no longer in use.

Centre Avenue and Brock Street are both unpaved and Centre Avenue has served as the town's primary north-south commercial thoroughfare for over a century. Across Centre Avenue to the west of the gas station is the 1909 Truxaw & Kruger Grocery / Seldin's Cash Grocery (5WL.8197), a resource that was added to the Colorado State Register of Historic Properties in 2018. A small number of additional historic commercial buildings are present along Centre Avenue to the north and south of the gas station.¹ To the east are a small number of residences, both historic and non-historic. The townsite is also occupied by numerous vacant lots where buildings once stood.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION: This small gasoline station is the only historic contributing resource within the nomination boundary. Facing toward the northwest, the one-story, wood-frame building rests upon a concrete foundation and has a rectangular plan with a footprint of 18' x 34'. It was erected with standard wood framing and the exterior walls are finished with stucco. Capping the

¹ The State Bank of Raymer (5WL.8194), built in 1915 to the northwest across the intersection, is also under consideration for the Colorado State Register of Historic Properties at the present time.

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building is a front-gabled roof with wood shingles and boxed eaves. From the northwest, this roof is hidden behind a false front described below.

The station consists of two connected parts that share a common roof. The southeast part is enclosed and measures 18' x 20'. It holds a single room that served as a station management office along with storage space for supplies such as oils and lubricants. No vehicle service bay or related space of any kind is present in the building, indicating that it was not used for service or repairs other than fueling and providing light automotive services such as topping off fluids and washing windows.

The northwest part of the building measures 14' x 18' and consists of an open canopy that shelters a drive-through lane for the fuel pumps. The canopy and drive-through are constructed with a dirt floor and beadboard ceiling, with open walls to the northeast, southwest and northwest. In the middle of the ceiling is a small fixture for a single light bulb. Supporting the canopy on the southeast is the enclosed office. Along the canopy's northwest edge, it is supported by two wood-framed posts that are stuccoed. Diagonal wood braces rise from the upper halves of the posts inward toward the middle of the canopy roof. The main pump island, described in greater detail below, was located along this northwest edge of the canopy.

Northwest Facade – The façade is essentially a partial false front designed to make the building look more substantial than it is while providing prominent space for advertising. While the lower area on the front is open as intended and consists of just two wood posts supporting the canopy roof, the squared wood-frame wall above is finished with stucco. A circular ghost mark on the stucco is the result of a Texaco sign that was located there for several decades. Likely an enameled metal sign, it was removed at an unknown date. The upper wall was originally capped by a simple wood cornice, however this has deteriorated and fallen off, leaving behind remnants of its structure. Additional historic features on the front of the canopy include exposed electrical wiring, conduit and insulators for lighting and the pumps, along with vertical vent pipes for the buried fuel tanks that may still be in the ground. The concrete pump island at the base of the canopy is described below as one of the additional historic features on the property.

Beyond the canopy façade and drive-through lane, the northwest wall of the enclosed office holds the centered main entrance, although the door that was once there is missing. This was a wood panel door with a light in its upper half. Flanking the entry are two large six-over-one double-hung windows with wood sashes and trim. Due to deterioration, the glass and parts of the wood frames are gone.

Northeast (Side) Wall – This side of the building holds no entries and few architectural details. All that is present in the stuccoed wall is a single one-over-one double-hung window with wood sashes and trim.

Southeast (Rear) Wall – This wall holds no entries or windows. A square brick exterior chimney covered in stucco (worn off toward the top) rises up the rear wall, extending about 2' feet above the ridgeline. Blocking a wood attic access panel in the upper wall, the chimney is clearly historic but appears to have been installed after the building was constructed. It was used to vent an interior room heater. At about its midpoint in height, the chimney is pierced by a segment of diagonal metal downspout that once drained the south-facing roof slope. This originally wrapped around the northeast corner of the building, where it joined with the downspout from that side. A historic photograph shows that the downspout terminated on the ground along the northeast wall adjacent to

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a water pump and buried cistern. Whether it fed the cistern is unknown. The metal gutters and remaining downspouts are gone.

Southwest (Side) Wall – This side of the building holds a secondary entrance that contains a weathered wood four-panel door set in a wood frame. Flanking this are two one-over-one double-hung sash windows with wood frames and surrounds. These are missing their glass and parts of the sashes are also gone.

Interior Description – The interior of the building consists of a single room that served all of the gasoline station's operating needs as a small business. The space has a wood floor that is currently buried beneath debris, some of which has fallen from the ceiling. Beadboards and wood planks are found along the walls and ceiling, with some of these areas covered with painted fiberboard. The lower walls are painted green and the upper walls and ceiling white. Wired for electricity, the room holds a small number of early outlets, switches and fuses. Switches mounted by the front door appear to have controlled power to exterior lights and the gas pumps. A circular hole in the back wall once held the flue from a room heater that vented into the chimney. This heating unit, which may have burned oil (possibly even used motor oil), appears to have been moved to the south wall. Other interior features include historic built-in wood counters, cabinets and shelves, all mounted along the perimeter. Metal piping mounted in a T-frame in the northeast corner may have been a hanging rack.

Additional Historic Site Features – A few small-scale historic features dating from the period of significance are found on the site in close proximity to the building. These are remnants of the gasoline station's operations. Given their small size, they are not included in the resource count.

The first of these is the primary gasoline pump island, which is located at the northwest base of the canopy. The two posts that support the canopy rest upon this island. Now flush with the surrounding ground, historic photographs show that the flat concrete island once had an exposed lip of several inches. Three Wayne gasoline pumps dating from the 1920s and 1930s once stood there, however these highly collectible items are now gone. Their original locations remain evident from three circular holes in the concrete that contain stubbed fuel line pipes and remnants of electrical conduit and wiring.

A second historic pump island was present on the southwest side of the building near its southwest corner. Historic photographs show that this held a 1920s Gilbarco fuel pump along with a second pump of undetermined manufacture. At this location today is a concrete pad, mostly buried under vegetation and wood debris, along with stubbed fuel line pipes projecting from a circular hole.

On the northeast side of the building adjacent to the foundation is a broken historic concrete pad that once supported a water pump. A circular hole in the concrete reveals the upper part of a buried brick-lined cistern that may have been fed, at least in part, by runoff from the roof by way of gutters and downspouts. Growing out of the ground next to the foundation and adjacent to the concrete pad is a non-historic volunteer tree. Historic wood and metal debris surrounding the pad may be related to the water pump and its operation.²

Finally, a historic raised planter constructed of board-formed concrete with open dirt in the middle is found in the northwest corner of the lot in front of the gasoline station. This was placed there to

² Only real property, not water rights (per 36 CFR 60.6), is the subject of this nomination.

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enhance the station's visual appeal from the street intersection. For some time, a Texaco sign rose from the planter, and later a tree was located there. These were surrounded by small plantings. The tree was removed sometime in the past several decades after it caused the concrete planter to break apart.

Alterations – Despite some deterioration, the historic gasoline station building and its character-defining features are largely intact from the property's period of significance over fifty years ago. While the building exhibits no signs of alterations, it has changed through weathering and lack of maintenance. In addition, the station's signage, gasoline pumps and water pump were removed sometime after the business closed in the mid-1960s.

INTEGRITY

The historic Star Filling Station in New Raymer retains the vast majority of its historic features and integrity dating from its period of significance between 1925 and 1965. The building has experienced deterioration caused by weathering, abandonment and lack of maintenance. The fuel pumps and water pump have been removed, yet their locations remain physically evident and historic photographs provide information about what types of equipment stood at those locations over the years the station was in operation. Today the building exhibits a high level of integrity and continues to convey its age, use and architectural type to the observer.

The following provides brief analysis of the property in light of the seven aspects of integrity:

Location – The building sits in its original location dating from its period of significance and consequently exhibits a high level of the aspect of location.

Design – The building has not experienced any non-historic alterations to its interior or exterior design, and continues to retain the vast majority of its physical form, plan, structure, spatial features, and stylistic details. Consequently, it exhibits a high level of the aspect of design dating from its period of significance.

Materials – Despite the deterioration that has occurred, the building retains the vast majority of the historic materials that were used to construct it and that date from its period of significance. Consequently, it exhibits a high level of the aspect of materials.

Workmanship – The building retains extensive physical evidence of the construction techniques that were used in its erection during its period of significance. Consequently, it exhibits a high level of the aspect of workmanship.

Feeling – The building continues to evoke a particular aesthetic and historic sense of architectural design and construction materials and techniques that date from its period of significance. Consequently, it exhibits a high level of the aspect of feeling.

Association – The building continues to evoke its strong connection with its use as a historic gasoline station along with its architectural type as a canopy gas station, both important

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characteristics that date the property's origins to the first half of the twentieth century. Consequently, this property exhibits a high level of the aspect of association.

Setting – Located at the heart of New Raymer's downtown commercial district, the setting for this building has changed to some extent from when it was constructed. At that time, the properties fronting onto Centre Avenue were occupied by numerous commercial buildings, with residences lining the surrounding streets. Since the town went into decline over the past fifty years, a number of the commercial buildings have been removed and most of the remaining ones are vacant and awaiting new uses. Despite these changes, Centre Avenue still reads as a primary small-town commercial thoroughfare, but with less density than it had historically. Consequently, the aspect of setting is only somewhat diminished.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

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

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

COMMERCE

Period of Significance

1925-65

Significant Dates

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

Period of Significance (justification): The period of significance for this property in the area of Architecture is 1925, the year the building's construction was completed. In the area of Commerce, its period of significance runs from 1925 to 1965, marking the year its use as a gasoline station came to an end. The building has been vacant since that time.

Criteria Considerations: Not Applicable

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Summary Paragraph

The Star Filling Station in New Raymer is significant at the local level under Criterion A in the area of Commerce for its association with the development of commercial automotive services as that mode of transportation became prevalent during the period between the 1920s and 1960s. It served the local and regional community, as well as passing traffic along the main two-lane highway that ran through the high plains of northern Weld County, Colorado. The station provided farmers, town residents, businesses and travelers with automotive fuel, lubricants and minor services. Located on a prominent corner at New Raymer's primary commercial intersection one block north of the highway, the station played an important role in the local economy and history of automotive transportation and development.

Constructed in 1925, the Star Filling Station is also significant at the local level under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as an excellent example of an increasingly rare building type identified as a "house with canopy" gas station. This form of architecture developed during the 1920s and spread across the nation, meeting the needs of filling station owners and providing their customers with reliable service and automotive products. The stations reflected the era when fueling moved away from the curbside and onto properties dedicated to that purpose. While some of the large oil companies standardized designs for their corporate-owned stations, most filling stations were locally owned and operated. These reflected the budgets and aesthetic tastes of their owners.

The house with canopy station appeared throughout Colorado during the 1920s and consisted of an enclosed office with a connected projecting canopy that sheltered a drive-through lane at the gas pumps. At the Star Filling Station in New Raymer, the canopy featured a wood false front that reflected its setting in a small agricultural town where many of the surrounding commercial buildings also had false fronts. Although this architectural type appeared in Colorado's larger cities, it was particularly prevalent in small towns, where their use often continued into the post-World War II era.

Since the 1960s, many of these modest buildings have been demolished to make way for larger, modern gasoline stations and service shops. Some were converted for a time to new uses such as residences or small retail shops, and those driven out of business by traffic changes or competition from newer stations were simply closed up and left to the elements. A search of the Colorado State Historic Preservation Office's historic properties database revealed that at least eight house with canopy stations have been documented across the state. It is unknown how many more might be unrecorded, and the total number of extant buildings of this type has not been determined. In any case, they are known to be an increasingly rare resource, with few surviving from the type's primary period of construction in the 1920s.

The Star Filling Station exhibits an excellent level of integrity from its year of construction in 1925 and its period of operation between 1925 and 1965. Consequently, it continues to clearly convey its historic design, use and history today.

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Narrative Statement of Significance³

The Star Filling Station is significant at the local level under **Criterion A** in the area of **Commerce** for its association with the development of commercial automotive services as that mode of transportation became prevalent during the period between the 1920s and 1960s. By 1925, when the station was constructed, America's enthusiasm for the automobile was becoming well established. Nationwide advertising campaigns combined with technological advances and the creativity of automobile designers to bring increasing reliability and comfort to each new model manufactured. Buying on credit and making installment payments also came into vogue, bringing the cost of a car within reach for many families in the emerging middle class. As each year passed, Americans living in cities large and small, as well as on farms and ranches, abandoned their horse-drawn vehicles in favor of the latest models produced by companies such as Buick, Ford, Dodge, Chevrolet, Oldsmobile and Chrysler. However, just as horses needed to be fed and maintained, autos required fuel, lubricants, tires, batteries and occasional repairs.

The technology and practice of fueling automobiles evolved during the first decades of the twentieth century. In the early years, drivers simply pulled up to bulk stations and bought their fuel from drums. The gasoline pump was invented in the early 1910s and curbside pumps were installed in almost every conceivable location. It seemed that every grocery and hardware store, feed store and grain elevator, blacksmith shop, and auto sales and service shop in the country had least one pump out front, taking advantage of the opportunity to boost revenue through the sale of gasoline. However, the dispensing of gasoline was a fire hazard and in urban locations the curbside pumps also impeded traffic flow. Before long, community leaders, social reformers and property owners were complaining that the curbside pumps were a nuisance. Something needed to change.

The first step forward in technology and practice occurred around 1905-07 as bulk fuel distributors began to realize that the tricky business of pouring gasoline into an automobile could be improved through the introduction of gravity flow from a storage tank via a simple hose. The process advanced with the invention and manufacture of the first gasoline pumps in the early 1910s. As complaints about curbside pumps increased, the tanks were buried, improved pumps were installed, and fueling was moved off the curbs and onto properties that would serve the purpose of fueling and servicing vehicles. The owners of early filling stations did exactly what the term implied – fill fuel tanks and provide lubricants. For repairs, owners took their vehicles to service garages.

Throughout the course of its business life, the owners of the Star Filling Station in New Raymer sold Texaco products, including gasoline and lubricants. Over time, some of these small facilities began to offer automotive repairs as well as the sale of batteries and tires. However, full service required the construction of an indoor bay or two. While batteries were never advertised for sale at the Star Filling Station, tires were sold there. Filling stations that focus upon the sale of gasoline are so commonplace today, although often with convenience stores attached, that an early facility such as the one in New Raymer reminds us that there was a time when the filling station had to be invented.

³ Two excellent sources on the history and design of the American gasoline station, both of which were consulted for context, are Michael Karl Witzel's 1992 book, *The American Gas Station*, and John Margolies' 1993 book, *Pump and Circumstance: Glory Days of the Gas Station*. Another source consulted for this section was the Colorado Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation's 2008 *Field Guide to Colorado's Historic Architecture & Engineering*, which contains a section on the house with canopy gas station.

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This station is associated with the commercial development of New Raymer as a railroad and market town for the surrounding dryland farming and ranching district. During the four decades from the 1920s to the 1960s, community members visited the downtown commercial strip along Centre Avenue to shop, obtain various services, do their banking, find meals and overnight accommodations, and pick up their mail. They also stopped by the Star Filling Station to purchase gasoline, lubricants and tires (it was the longest in operation of the two or three stations in town during the first half of the twentieth century). With its central location, the facility provided an important service to this rural community on the northeastern Colorado plains.

The property's period of significance under Criterion A runs from 1925, when the building was constructed, through 1965, when the filling station closed and it ceased to be used for any commercial purpose.

The Star Filling Station is also significant at the local level under **Criterion C** in the area of **Architecture** for embodying the distinctive characteristics of a type, period and method of construction. The building is representative of a particular form of gasoline station architecture that dates from the 1920s. Identified as a house with canopy station, the general type became ubiquitous throughout the country during that decade. These were utilitarian facilities, providing office and storage space for the owners and attendants, along with a covered drive-through lane at the pumps. While the stations exhibited some common similarities, they were also constructed with a variety of materials and design details that made each one distinctive. The individual station owner decided what met their budget and sense of aesthetics.

With the Star Filling Station, the original owner chose to construct a wood-frame building with a false front that reflected the predominant character of the surrounding commercial buildings. Customers tended to steer away from stations of shoddy design and construction and head toward those that were more visually appealing. The public expected that the more attractive facility provided higher-quality service and automotive products, and this factor often drove design. At the Star Filling Station, the rather modest building was improved with Texaco signage along with a concrete planter out front that essentially dressed up the property.

According to History Colorado's guidance materials on the house with canopy gas station, the Star Filling Station exhibits all of the defining characteristics of the type. These include the small enclosed office with an open projecting canopy that extends over an automobile lane adjacent to the fuel pumps. The canopy is supported on its outer edge by two square posts. The building is of wood frame construction with a gabled roof. On the façade, the false-front sign panel above the pumps supported a round Texaco sign throughout the station's years of operation. Because it is located on a corner lot, the building was oriented on a diagonal facing the intersection. These features combine to make this building an excellent example of the house with canopy type.

The property's period of significance under Criterion C is limited to 1925, the year it was constructed.

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HISTORIC CONTEXT

Early History of the Region (1860s-80s): Throughout the middle decades of the nineteenth century, nomadic Native American tribes traversed the landscape of present-day northeastern Colorado as they had for generations, and the first waves of Euro-American explorers, fur trappers, frontiersmen and pioneers migrated up the South Platte River Valley and into the Colorado frontier. The site that would eventually be occupied by the town of Raymer, later known as New Raymer, sat vacant and unnoticed. Situated on the high semi-arid plains at an elevation of about 4,780' above sea level and far from major watercourses and migrant trails, the land was an unbroken expanse of short-grass prairie that supported varieties of life adapted to that particular biome.

In the 1860s, the area began to experience changes that would soon alter the course of its history and character. When the Colorado Territory was established in 1861, Weld County became one of its original political and administrative divisions. Originally occupying a vast swath of the territory's northeast corner, the county shrank in size over the following decades as it was subdivided into seven smaller counties. By the time these changes were complete, the future Raymer townsite ended up in Weld County's northeast corner.

Native peoples were accustomed to living off the land in this dry, largely treeless environment. Most Euro-Americans understood that the region was part of what had been declared the Great American Desert, a landscape reportedly unfit for agriculture and settlement. This perception was reinforced by the observations of pioneers and frontier travelers who passed through primarily during the summer months, when the landscape above the South Platte River Valley turned dry and brown.⁴

Euro-Americans believed that traditional agriculture, in particular the raising of crops, could not thrive in much of northeastern Colorado due to the lack of adequate precipitation and the inability to bring irrigation to lands high above the South Platte River. However, as they continued to migrate through this landscape in the 1860s and 1870s, they also noticed that the expanse of grass supported their livestock. Attitudes and practices evolved as the pioneers came to understand that the best uses of the shortgrass prairie would include stock raising and the planting of dryland crops.

Between 1867 and 1878, cattle king John W. Iliff established a massive ranching operation in northern Weld County that initially supplied beef to the crews building the Union Pacific railroad across western Nebraska and southern Wyoming. Iliff came to control extensive rangelands, in large part by having his ranch hands file homestead claims around water sources. These were fenced with barbed wire beginning in the mid-1870s and then integrated into the ranch as Iliff purchased the land from his employees. He imported cattle from southern Colorado, northern New Mexico and western Texas. Fattened on the rich prairie grass, the animals were shipped east to the Chicago slaughterhouses. Iliff's ranch thrived for a decade until his death in 1878.⁵

During the summer of 1870, the federal government contracted with J. H. Martz to assemble and deploy a survey team to measure and map the township boundaries in northern Weld County. With federal homestead legislation enacted several years earlier, this launched the process that would make

⁴ Alvin T. Steinel, *History of Agriculture in Colorado, 1858-1926*, pp. 245-254.

⁵ Alvin T. Steinel, *History of Agriculture in Colorado, 1858-1926*, p. 135 & 255-256; *A History of the Pawnee National Grassland*, Published by the Pawnee National Grassland, Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forest, No Date.

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the land available for legal settlement. No developed features were found in the future Raymer area by the surveying crew. Martz simply recorded measurements, prepared the map and field notes, and noted the region's varieties of prairie grass. He also described the land as "third-rate," by which he meant it would probably be good for little other than grazing. Throughout the 1870s, the area remained largely undeveloped and of little utility to the many pioneers who sought richer farmlands closer to water and developing towns.⁶

In the fall of 1880, another survey team led by F. L. Biddlecom returned to the area to prepare more detailed measurements and mapping of the individual townships. Included in this survey was the acreage in Section 3 of Township 7 North, Range 58 West that would before long attract attention and develop into the town of Raymer. This time the surveyors came across an unnamed wagon road that extended on a diagonal through the northeast quadrant of the township. Aligned on a northwest-southeast axis, the road passed through the otherwise empty southwest quarter of Section 3 and may have connected the South Platte River road with Cheyenne.⁷

As the years passed and many areas of Colorado experienced substantial growth and development, the land in the northeast quarter of Section 3 continued to sit vacant, a characteristic that would soon come to an end. During the 1880s, the rate of settlement on Colorado's eastern plains increased. This was largely due to promotion by railroads, combined with the early work of agricultural scientists at the State Experiment Station in Cheyenne Wells. Investigations into dryland farming stressed the difficulties encountered in the semi-arid environment but encouraged settlers to stake their future on a region that was previously viewed as good for nothing but cattle grazing. What many of the pioneers experienced after a few years of planting crops and then watching them wilt without water under the searing sun was that farming proved exceedingly challenging. A good number either left the region defeated, shifted to stock raising, or went into other lines of work.⁸

One of the most important developments that initiated change in northeastern Colorado was the construction by the Chicago Burlington & Quincy Railroad (CB&Q) of an east-west line from Holdrege, Nebraska (southwest of Kearney) to Cheyenne, Wyoming. With its route stretching across northeastern Colorado, the railroad's managers planned to compete with the parallel Union Pacific line to the north for passenger and freight traffic. In June 1887, the CB&Q (operating as the Colorado & Wyoming) began laying track at the Colorado-Nebraska state line northeast of Holyoke and by September it had reached Sterling. From there, the line continued west across the prairie, passing the present-day location of New Raymer. The route then curved to the northwest to cross the Colorado-Wyoming state line, completing its 144-mile trek across northeastern Colorado. It then turned to the west and entered Cheyenne by the end of the year.⁹

⁶ Survey Plat and Field Notes, Townships 6-8 North and Ranges 57-64 West, Surveyor General's Office, Denver, Colorado Territory, 15 August to 10 September 1870.

⁷ Survey Plat, Township 7 North, Range 58 West, Surveyor General's Office, Denver, Colorado, September to December 1880.

⁸ Steinel, *History of Agriculture in Colorado, 1858-1926*, p. 255; LeRoy R. Hafen, *Colorado and its People, Volume I*, 1948, pp. 433-434; Steven F. Mehls, *The New Empire of the Rockies: A History of Northeast Colorado*, p. 72-73.

⁹ Robert Ormes, *Tracking Ghost Railroads in Colorado*, 1975, pp. 9 & 15; Tivis E. Wilkins, *Colorado Railroads: Chronological Development*, 1974, pp. 58 & 70; Franklin M. Jones, *History of New Raymer, Colorado*, 1943, p. 4; Carol Rein Shwayder, *Weld County – Old and New, Volume I: Chronology of Weld County, Colorado, 1836-1983*, p. A71 & A74; Shwayder, *Weld County – Old and New, Volume XIII: Gazetteer [sic] of Railroads*, p. 32.

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Although the CB&Q failed to draw substantial business from the Union Pacific, a number of freight and passenger trains traveled the route on a daily basis. With the railroad under construction, hundreds of homestead claims were filed and parcels of land purchased, and it was estimated that during the mid-1880s the population of northeastern Weld County grew by approximately 5,000 residents. While most settled in the countryside, others staked their claims in the small agricultural market towns that arose on the plains, many of them alongside the newly laid tracks of the CB&Q. As described by Colorado historian LeRoy Hafen in his 1948 work *Colorado and its People*, "The influx of homesteaders created a need for trade centers, as the new settlers were anxious for community life. Town site companies responded, platting towns at suitable intervals along the railroad lines. Water tank stations grew into villages; hopeful towns sprang from the prairie."¹⁰

The Rise and Fall of Raymer (1888-94): The northeast quarter of Section 3 in Township 7 North, Range 58 West, was first owned by a young woman by the name of Emma Courtright. Born in Iowa around 1868, Emogene "Emma" Jane Courtright had moved west to Logan County, Colorado by the late 1880s and was employed there as a dressmaker. Despite her youthful age and line of work, she actively acquired several parcels of land in northeastern Weld County between 1888 and 1891. Her brother Elroy was also in the area, working as an agent for the Crete Nurseries of Crete, Nebraska and promoting the sale of town properties and homesteads.¹¹ Rather than file a homestead claim with the General Land Office, in February 1888 Emma purchased the 157.67 acres that made up the entire northeast quarter of Section 3 for a fee of \$187.¹²

The land was situated along the newly-built CB&Q line, at a point on the map where the railroad planned to build a depot and encourage development of a new town. In March 1888, the railroad assigned workers to dig a well close to the tracks that would supply water for its engines. Reaching a depth of 65' by mid-month, the men had still not struck water although they were pulling up ancient animal bones, samples of petrified wood, and an abundance of mica. Over the following decades, the lack of a reliable public water source proved to be a persistent problem for the town. Despite this seemingly temporary obstacle, several business owners expressed interest in establishing themselves in the new town and during the summer of 1888 a number of commercial buildings emerged.¹³

On 6 October 1888, Emma Courtright made a sizable profit when she sold the property for \$1,000 to the Lincoln Land Company. Founded in 1880 and based in Lincoln, Nebraska, the firm was a subsidiary of the CB&Q. As it had already done across Nebraska over the previous years, the railroad sought to locate stations and towns at ten-mile intervals along its route through northeastern Colorado. The railroad's managers knew that this distance was within one day of travel for area farmers to reach

¹⁰ Steinel, *History of Agriculture in Colorado, 1858-1926*, p. 254; LeRoy R. Hafen, *Colorado and its People, Volume I*, 1948, p. 434.

¹¹ Elroy Courtright may have been selling trees to homesteaders so they could claim an additional 160-acres from the General Land Office under the Timber Culture Act. He may also have been associated with the Lincoln Land Company, which was beautifying barren townsites with greenery to make them attractive to potential buyers. This likely placed him in the position of knowing where new towns would be established. Because of his work, it is possible that Elroy pointed Emma to the future Raymer townsite and assisted her with acquisition of the land.

¹² Jones, *History of New Raymer, Colorado*, p. 6; US Federal Census Records, Emma J. Courtright, 1870 (Oxford Mills, IA) and 1900 (Elk River, Routt County, CO); Land Patent Issued to Emma J. Courtright, NE¼ of Township 7 North, Range 58 West, General Land Office, 6 June 1889 (Note: Emma purchased the property in February 1888 and sold it later that year, prior to receiving the patent).

¹³ Bud Wells, *Homesteading the Dryland: A History of Northeast Weld County, Colorado*, pp. 292-293.

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the nearest depot and market town.¹⁴ The mission of the Lincoln Land Company was to establish towns, have them platted, and arrange for the installation of necessities such as streets and water wells. The company then promoted settlement and the sale of lots, ensuring that the population along the route would increase and provide business to the railroad.¹⁵

During the late 1880s and early 1890s, the Lincoln Land Company was busy establishing a series of towns, whistlestops and sidings along the rail route. From the Nebraska state line to the Wyoming state line these included Amherst, Holyoke, Paoli, Haxtun, Dailey, Fleming, Galien, Logan, Willard, Stoneham, Raymer, Buckingham, Keota, Sligo, Grover and Hereford. Many were named by the company to honor its executives and managers. While a few of these locales thrived and grew into towns, others never took hold or simply died off over the following years due to a combination of environmental and market factors that made their chance of survival tenuous from the beginning.¹⁶

With the Lincoln Land Company as its new owner, the acreage in the northeast quarter of Section 3 was platted with a townsite named for George Andrew Raymer (1857-1907), assistant chief engineer of the CB&Q railroad. The firm surveyed and laid out a small area of blocks centered on Shirley Avenue, one block east of present-day Centre Avenue. Shirley Avenue was named for Samuel J. Shirley, local real estate agent, insurance agent and editor of the *Raymer Herald*. He used his newspaper to promote Raymer as an ideal opportunity for farmers in the heart of northeastern Colorado's so-called "rain belt," a moniker that proved to be little more than a marketing ploy. Despite efforts to attract large numbers of settlers, the Town of Raymer experienced a limited boom as properties were sold and a bank, post office and newspaper emerged in 1888 and 1889. Other pioneer enterprises established during the late 1880s included a livery stable, grocery store, hardware store and saloon.¹⁷

The winter of 1886-87 brought bitter temperatures that killed thousands of cattle in northeastern Colorado. Despite this loss, beef prices dropped in the Chicago market. In 1889-90, drought settled upon the region. The Panic of 1893 caused further damage when it thrust the nation into an economic depression and damaged commodity prices. Conditions proved so difficult that many of the pioneers who sought to establish themselves along the CB&Q route gave up and moved away. The same proved true for those who settled in and around Raymer. Businesses closed, the *Raymer Herald* folded, and by 1894 the town had died off. Every one of the settlers moved on in search of greener pastures. Rather than standing as a ghost town, the buildings were either moved or dismantled by area ranchers the following year and the townsite was almost completely emptied. Despite the belief that "rain would follow the plow" and success was bound to come to those who worked hard and persevered, the hopeful pioneer town of Raymer had lasted a mere six years and simply disappeared.¹⁸

¹⁴ Present-day maps of northeastern Colorado still show the regular spacing of towns at ten mile intervals along the rail route that resulted from the CB&Q's development through the area in 1887.

¹⁵ Jim McKee, "The Lincoln Land Co. Developed Much of Nebraska and Created Many of its Towns," *Journal Star*, 23 December 2012; Warranty Deed, NE¼ of Sec. 3, T7N-R58W, Emma J. Courtright to the Lincoln Land Company, 6 October 1888; Kenneth Jessen, *Ghost Towns, Eastern Colorado*, 2009, p. 216.

¹⁶ Jessen, *Ghost Towns, Eastern Colorado*, numerous pages; William Bright, *Colorado Place Names*, numerous pages; LeRoy R. Hafen, *Colorado and its People, Volume I*, 1948, pp. 434-437.

¹⁷ Jones, *History of New Raymer, Colorado*, pp. 6-7; Shwayder, *Weld County – Old and New, Volume I: Chronology of Weld County, Colorado, 1836-1983*, p. A75 & A78; Wells, *Homesteading the Dryland: A History of Northeast Weld County, Colorado*, pp. 292-294; Steffen, Vangraefscheppe & Wells, *A History of New Raymer, Colorado on its Centennial, 1888-1988*, p. 8.

¹⁸ *A History of the Pawnee National Grassland*, Brochure Published by the Pawnee National Grassland, Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forest, Greeley, Colorado, c1986; Jones, *History of New Raymer, Colorado*, pp. 6-7; Jessen, *Ghost Towns, Eastern Colorado*, 2009, pp. 216-217; Shwayder, *Weld County – Old and New, Volume I: Chronology of Weld County*,

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In the early fall of 1902, the *Greeley Tribune* sent a reporter into the countryside to inspect the region's school districts. The resulting article described the abandoned townsite in the following terms: "Raymer is another monument to rain-belt disappointments. Once eighty children of school age dwelt in the district. Stone houses and stores, prosperous livery stables and hotels and all the improvements of a prairie village, including a fine two story school house were there, and every quarter section was taken up. Only the school house and barren siding on a one horse-railroad remain. The nearest post office is thirty miles away."¹⁹ Raymer had entered the new century almost completely vacant, awaiting its next phase of development.

New Raymer Emerges (1909-29): The Lincoln Land Company held onto the vacant townsite into the early twentieth century. In July 1909, the firm sold much but not all of the property along with several adjacent parcels to W. W. Baldwin and W. E. Whittier for \$3,375. This transfer marked the beginning of Raymer's revitalization, primarily by a second wave of pioneers from Nebraska who had learned how to farm and ranch on the semi-arid plains. Above-average rainfall and rising grain prices combined with the 1909 passage of the Enlarged Homestead Act, which allowed for 320-acre claims, to encourage renewed settlement of the area. Around 1900, William Baldwin was a Logan County sheep rancher and his junior partner, William Whittier, was living on his family's farm in Smith County, Kansas. The real estate firm of Baldwin & Whittier was established in 1907 in Sterling and the partners maintained a branch office in New Raymer from 1909 to 1912.²⁰

In the *Raymer Enterprise*, Baldwin & Whittier advertised its sale of irrigated and "upland" (non-irrigated) farms, along with ranches and town properties. Lands available in the countryside included both deeded acreage and homestead relinquishments. The firm also promoted the New Raymer townsite and in December 1910 offered any doctor or the owners of any butcher shop, drug store or bank willing to erect a two-story brick or cement block building a free lot to build upon. By the end of 1912, Baldwin and Whittier parted ways to operate separate Sterling-based real estate companies. Much of their early success was tied to the rebirth of New Raymer as an active market town for the reemerging farming and ranching district.²¹

On 23 July 1910, the plat of the Baldwin & Whittier Addition to the town of Raymer was filed with the Weld County clerk and recorder. However, the site had been surveyed a year earlier when the men acquired much of the land. Situated north of the CB&Q line, the expanded townsite was laid out to encompass and enlarge the earlier town of Raymer. In its entirety, the new townsite measured just three blocks in any direction and much of that was formed by the Baldwin & Whittier Addition. The main commercial thoroughfare, designated Centre Avenue, was aligned to run on a north-south axis through the middle of the town. East and west of the planned commercial street were numerous residential properties that faced onto Shirley Avenue and Bronson Avenue.²²

Colorado, 1836-1983, p. A80; Wells, *Homesteading the Dryland: A History of Northeast Weld County, Colorado*, pp. 294; Mehls, *The New Empire of the Rockies: A History of Northeast Colorado*, p. 74.

¹⁹ "Visiting Some Schools," *Greeley Tribune*, 16 October 1902, p. 5.

²⁰ Hafen, *Colorado and its People, Volume I*, 1948, pp. 434-437; Warranty Deed, Lincoln Land Company to W. W. Baldwin and W. E. Whittier, 12 July 1909; US Federal Census Records for William W. Baldwin, 1900 (Leroy, Logan County, CO) and 1910-1920 (Sterling, CO); US Federal Census Records for William E. Whittier, 1900 (Smith County, KS) and 1910-1940 (Sterling, CO); Jones, *History of New Raymer, Colorado*, p. 40.

²¹ "Baldwin & Whittier," *Raymer Enterprise*, 1 September 1910, p. 4; "Baldwin & Whittier," *Raymer Enterprise*, 22 December 1910, p. 10; State Business Directory, New Raymer Listings, 1911.

²² Plat of Baldwin & Whittier Addition to the Town of Raymer, Recorded 23 July 1910.

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Development began in 1909, months before the plat was filed. The town received a post office that year, and to distinguish the new community from the old (and reportedly to distinguish it from the town of Ramah in El Paso County, which apparently had a similar pronunciation) the US Postal Service insisted that it be known as New Raymer. This led to confusion about the town's true name that persists through the present day. The following year saw the founding of the *Raymer Enterprise* newspaper. By the time the plat for the Baldwin & Whittier Addition was filed in mid-1910, Centre Avenue was already occupied by several commercial buildings. Among the early businesses established there were a blacksmith shop, restaurant, grocery, hotel, livery stable, general store, lumberyard, and hardware store.²³

In July 1912, all of the remaining unsold lots in the townsite were acquired from Baldwin & Whittier by C. F. Peckham of Gothenburg, Nebraska, in a trade that involved a threshing machine and \$8,100 in cash. Eager to sell properties, Peckham advertised that "This town is in the heart of a fast developing farming country, showing splendid crops. Land is cheap and settlers are coming. It is absolutely the best undeveloped field that we know of and offers a splendid opening for a Bank, Doctor, Drug Store, and other enterprises." Claiming that profits could be made simply by hiring out the work of farming, Peckham neglected to mention the area's semi-arid climate and lack of irrigation that in reality made agriculture a difficult and risky business.²⁴

During the 1910s, Center Avenue filled with commercial enterprises and additional houses were constructed on the nearby residential lots. Two small banks were established, the State Bank of Raymer (1915) and the Farmers & Merchants State Bank (1918), although neither of these survived beyond the mid-1920s. World War I increased demand for farm products, including meat and dryland crops such as wheat and corn. The 1916 Stock Raising Homestead Act allowed for claims of up to 640 acres in arid locales, making ranching more viable on the grasslands of northeastern Weld County. These and other developments spurred renewed settlement on the plains of northeastern Colorado, boosting economic development and the population of the region's small towns.²⁵

New Raymer was incorporated in 1919 and the following year the federal census recorded 267 persons living there with another 574 in the surrounding countryside. These numbers remained steady through the 1920s. A small number of businesses and homes installed individual electric lighting systems in 1916 and in 1921 the town purchased a generator that powered several street lights. Around 1930, full-time electric service was secured for the community. It would be many years before a municipal water system was installed. Despite its small size and the lack of some modern conveniences, New Raymer appeared to have a reasonably bright future.²⁶

The Star Filling Station's Early Years (1925-31): In July 1909, the Lincoln Land Company sold the property on the southeast corner of Centre Avenue and Brock Street for \$125 to Spalding,

²³ Jones, *History of New Raymer, Colorado*, pp. 6-7; State Business Directories, New Raymer Listings, 1911; Shwayder, *Weld County – Old and New, Volume I: Chronology of Weld County, Colorado, 1836-1983*, p. A101-103.

²⁴ Jones, *History of New Raymer, Colorado*, p. 40; "Business Opportunities in Raymer...", *Raymer Enterprise*, 22 January 1914, p. 4.

²⁵ Jones, *History of New Raymer, Colorado*, pp. 6-7; State Business Directories, New Raymer Listings, 1911-1920; Mehls, *The New Empire of the Rockies: A History of Northeast Colorado*, p. 144.

²⁶ *Fourteenth Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1920, Volume I: Population, 1921*; Shwayder, *Weld County – Old and New, Volume I: Chronology of Weld County, Colorado, 1836-1983*, p. A115 & A137; Steffen, Vangraefschep & Wells, *A History of New Raymer, Colorado on its Centennial, 1888-1988*, p. 17 & 23.

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Nebraska lumber dealer John Hamilton Brownlee, who had recently partnered with Louis Allen to open the Raymer Lumber Company. The firm constructed a small building at the front of the lot that served as its office, and a large lumber shed was either behind the office or on the adjacent lot to the south. In March 1923, John and his wife Mae sold the property to Louis' son, Maurice M. Allen, who had been working in the lumberyard. Several weeks later in early June, Maurice sold the building to the State Bank of Raymer, which held onto the property for the next two years. During the bank's ownership, the office building was placed out of use and sat vacant.²⁷

On 19 October 1925, the property on the prominent corner in downtown New Raymer changed hands again and entered the next phase of its history. This transfer led to redevelopment of the site, completely altering its use and appearance for the next century. The new owner, Odes Leroy Addington, purchased the property from the State Bank of Raymer with the intention of opening a gasoline station. Born in Galveston, Indiana in 1888, Odes grew up on his family's farm in Monona County, Iowa. In 1908, he married Mira Kile, a sixteen-year-old native of Nebraska. The couple settled in Niobrara, Nebraska, where Odes operated a soda factory. In 1916, they moved to the vicinity of New Raymer and went into farming. However, the farm failed and Odes and Mira moved their family into town. Odes operated a freight business for some time before acquiring the Texaco bulk fuel plant that likely stood near the railroad tracks and main east-west road (now Colorado State Highway 14).²⁸

During the early 1920s, several local businesses in New Raymer were selling Texaco-brand gasoline and motor oils. One filling station selling Conoco gas and Mobil Oil and Polarine products had also been in operation there since 1920. Odes Addington's bulk facility offered Texaco products wholesale to local retail merchants, who then distributed them to the public. These included the Kelley Motor Company, F. L. Knapp Store, Graham Grocery, and the E. D. Seldin Grocery. Odes was still managing his bulk fuel plant in October 1925 when he purchased the lumberyard office on the corner of Centre and Brock. That same day, he secured a \$1,200 loan from the State Bank of Raymer using the property as collateral. These funds appear to have been used to construct and outfit a new building on the site.²⁹

Three days after he bought the property, the *Raymer Enterprise* reported on 22 October 1925 that Odes planned to remove the lumberyard office and replace it with a Texaco filling station. Colorado was experiencing an oil boom at the time and hopes ran high for the discovery of rich wells near New Raymer. In this atmosphere of heightened expectations, the editor wrote that "Raymer was destined to be the center of the oil industry."³⁰ While that overly optimistic claim did not come to pass, redevelopment of the property moved forward quickly as the lumberyard office was removed within

²⁷ Warranty Deed, Lincoln Land Company to John H. Brownlee, 14 July 1909; United States Federal Census Records, John H. Brownlee, 1910 & 1920, Spalding, NE; United States Federal Census Records, Louis Allen, 1910 & 1920, New Raymer, CO; Warranty Deed, John H. Brownlee and L. Mae Brownlee to M. M. Allen, 27 March 1923; United States Federal Census Records, Maurice Mason Allen, 1910 & 1920, New Raymer, CO; Warranty Deed, M. M. Allen to the State Bank of Raymer, 7 June 1923; "Local Happenings," *Raymer Enterprise*, 26 November 1925, p. 6.

²⁸ Iowa State Census, Odes Addington, Monona County, 1895; United States Federal Census Records, Odes Addington, 1900 (Monona County, IA); 1910 (Niobrara, NE); 1920 (New Raymer, CO); Marriage Record, Odes Addington and Mira Kile, Knox County, NE, 5 March 1908; Draft Registration Record, Odes Leroy Addington, New Raymer, CO, 5 June 1917 (possibly 1918); Steffen, Vangraefschepe & Wells, *A History of New Raymer, Colorado on its Centennial, 1888-1988*, p. 40.

²⁹ "Texas Company New Volatile Gas," *Raymer Enterprise*, 3 May 1923, p. 1; Steffen, Vangraefschepe & Wells, *A History of New Raymer, Colorado on its Centennial, 1888-1988*, p. 25; Full-Page Texaco Advertisement, *Raymer Enterprise*, 10 May 1923, p. 5; Deed of Trust, O. L. Addington to State Bank of Raymer, 19 October 1925.

³⁰ "Local Happenings," *Raymer Enterprise*, 22 October 1925, p. 5.

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days and construction began. The new fuel tanks arrived during the middle of November and were installed in the ground. Local farmer and soon to be town marshal Clarence E. Hobbs was engaged by Odes to install a water cistern on the north side of the building. Construction took just one month to complete, and on November 26 Odes placed an advertisement in the *Raymer Enterprise* notifying the community that his Star Filling Station was open for business.³¹

Over the next few years, Odes operated the Star Filling Station, marketing Texaco products along with tires, tubes, and tire chains. On 1 March 1928, he transferred ownership of the property to Mira through a quit claim deed and they moved to Greeley, where Odes took a sales position with the Messer & Messer automotive garage. It appears that he sold the business, but not the building or land, that same year. The Addingtons transferred the property to a new owner in late 1929 and never lived in New Raymer again. During the 1930s, they resided in Greeley and then Atwood, Kansas. In 1937, they moved to Rawlins, Wyoming, where Odes opened a pool hall and they remained there until 1952. He died in Denver in 1968 and is buried next to Mira in Fairmount Cemetery.³²

On 1 November 1929, Mira sold the filling station property to John T. Macklin, who by that time had been operating the business for a full year. He also made a slight change in its name, and from that time on it was known as the Star Service Station, probably to reflect the few services offered there and not just the filling of gas tanks. Seeking to quiet the title, Macklin filed a case in district court, which in March 1930 decreed in his favor against the heirs of John H. Brownlee. Odes Addington also provided him with a quit claim deed at that time. Why there was a question about the property's legal ownership is no longer clear. John Macklin arrived in New Raymer in 1919 with his wife and children, and throughout the 1920s he managed the Pawnee Farmers Elevator & Supply Company. After acquiring the Texaco business and property from the Addingtons, he devoted his time to operating the bulk facility and filling station. However, John developed cancer and had to stop working until he regained his health. He then managed a grain elevator in Roggen, Colorado until his death in 1939. John is buried in Riverside Cemetery in Fort Morgan.³³

In May 1931, John Macklin transferred the Texaco Service Station to his daughter, Helen O. Piper, possibly due to his declining health. Although she continued to own the property for six years, Helen did not operate the station. Instead, in 1932 she arranged for new management by a young man

³¹ "Local Happenings," *Raymer Enterprise*, 29 October 1925, p. 6; "Local Happenings," *Raymer Enterprise*, 12 November 1925, p. 5; "Local Happenings," *Raymer Enterprise*, 19 November 1925, p. 5; New Raymer Listings, *Colorado State Business Directories*, 1922-1928; "Local Happenings," *Raymer Enterprise*, 26 November 1925, p. 6; "The Star Filling Station," *Raymer Enterprise*, 26 November 1925, p. 8.

³² "Cash Sale – The Star Filling Station," *Raymer Enterprise*, 9 December 1926, p. 4; Quit Claim Deed, O. L. Addington to Myra L. Addington, 1 March 1928; Greeley City Directory, Listings for O. L. Addington and Messer & Messer, 1928; "Star Service Station," *Raymer Enterprise*, 8 November 1928, p. 4; Steffen, Vangraefschep & Wells, *A History of New Raymer, Colorado on its Centennial, 1888-1988*, p. 40; United States Federal Census Records, Odes Addington, 1930 (Greeley, CO); 1940 (Rawlins, WY); Draft Registration Records, Odes Leroy Addington, Rawlins, WY, 25 April 1942; "Odes Addington, Former Resident, Died in Colorado," *Rawlins Daily Times*, 28 February 1968; Burial Record for Odes Leroy Addington, Fairmount Cemetery, Denver, CO, Date of Death: 24 February 1968.

³³ Warranty Deed, Myra L. Addington to John T. Macklin, 1 November 1929; Court Decree (Lots 18-21), John T. Macklin v. Heirs of John H. Brownlee, 4 March 1930; Quit Claim Deed (Lots 20-21), O. L. Addington to John T. Macklin, 4 March 1930; Steffen, Vangraefschep & Wells, *A History of New Raymer, Colorado on its Centennial, 1888-1988*, p. 117; New Raymer Listings, *Colorado State Business Directories*, 1922-1930; United States Federal Census Records, John T. Macklin, 1920 & 1930 (New Raymer, CO); Burial Record, John T. Macklin, Riverside Cemetery, Fort Morgan, CO. Date of Death: 1939.

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who would eventually purchase the business and property. This change in operation and ownership marked the end of the filling station's early historic period of development and use.³⁴

Mid-Century Developments in New Raymer (1930s-60s): During the 1930s, New Raymer saw its population decrease by 33 percent due to a combination of factors. These included the economic downturn of the Great Depression, a nationwide decline in grain prices, and Dust Bowl conditions brought about by extended drought and damaging plowing practices. All of these heavily impacted northeastern Colorado. Tax sales and bankruptcies became commonplace, and many of the area's farmers and town residents moved to the cities in search of work. The *Raymer Enterprise* folded in 1939, reflecting the depopulation of the town and surrounding agricultural district. This trend continued into the post-World War II era and by 1950 only 130 residents remained in New Raymer. Ten years later that number had dropped to just 91 as the town continued to experience its second major decline in fewer than seventy years. However, rather than disappear completely as it had done in the 1890s, this time the town barely hung on.³⁵

In 1937, during the depths of the Depression and Dust Bowl, the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) determined that the expanse of prairie that made up much of northern Weld County was in dire need of attention. The Farm Securities Administration began purchasing land with the goal of removing all of the farms that were too small to effectively implement crop rotation practices and many of the farmers moved away. Those who remained received government assistance with the consolidation of parcels into larger cattle ranches that could be more effectively managed given the region's environmental conditions. The USDA's Soil Conservation Service started to administer the area in 1938 and by the early 1940s almost 200,000 acres had been placed under federal ownership and management. Soil rehabilitation projects took place between the late 1930s and mid-1950s, with the goal of returning the land to natural prairie grass. Administration was placed with the US Forest Service in 1954 and the Pawnee National Grassland was established in 1960. New Raymer is on the southern edge of this federally-designated area, which attracts birdwatchers and outdoor recreation enthusiasts.³⁶

As the population of New Raymer continued to decline during the post-WWII years, the downtown district along Centre Avenue quieted and was eventually emptied of its previously thriving businesses. In 1960, all of the remaining homes received telephone service for the first time. Three years later, the main east-west road that ran through the south end of town was improved and designated Colorado Highway 14, connecting Sterling to Fort Collins. This made travel to the region's larger towns for shopping and entertainment more efficient and attractive. New Raymer's water supply had always been a problem, and in 1969 a deep well was drilled in the town park that finally supplied running water to all of the residences. Despite these improvements, people continued to move away for military service, higher education, marriage, life in the big city, and in search of job opportunities. One by one

³⁴ Steffen, Vangraefschepe & Wells, *A History of New Raymer, Colorado on its Centennial, 1888-1988*, p. 117; Warranty Deed, John T. Macklin to Helen O. Piper, 1 May 1931.

³⁵ Map of New Raymer, Colorado State Highway Department, Planning and Research Division, 1950; State Business Directories, New Raymer Listings, 1950; Census of Population, 1960-2010, US Census Bureau (www.census.gov), Retrieved 22 February 2018; Shwayder, *Weld County – Old and New, Volume V: People & Places*, p. 309.

³⁶ "Pawnee National Grassland: Inventory and Results of Evaluation," Administering the National Forests of Colorado, An Assessment of the Architectural and Cultural Significance of Historical Administrative Properties (www.nps.gov), Retrieved 26 January 2018; *A History of the Pawnee National Grassland*, Brochure Published by the Pawnee National Grassland, Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forest, Greeley, Colorado, c1986.

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the local businesses on Centre Avenue closed, the commercial buildings were abandoned and boarded up, and by 1970 the population reached a nadir of just 68 people.³⁷

The Ben Walker Era (1932-65): The young man who assumed operation of the Star Service Station and Texaco bulk facility in 1932 was Ben Walker. Born in St. Edwards, Nebraska in 1911 with the last name Whited, Ben's mother died days after giving birth to him and he was adopted by an aunt and uncle, Myrtle and George Walker. He moved with them to New Raymer as a teenager. Ben started selling John Deere tractors there around the age of twenty and in 1934 married Vera Silvis. However, with the Great Depression undermining farmers' purchasing power, the job in tractor sales soon came to an end. Eager to make a living on his own and already operating the station, possibly through a lease arrangement with Helen Piper, on 5 March 1937 Ben used his personal savings to purchase the property from her for \$1,500. He would operate the station for the next twenty-eight years.³⁸

Between the 1930s and 1960s, Ben experienced the population decline in town and the surrounding countryside, along with the abandonment of New Raymer's commercial core. The Star Service Station was being orphaned by economic and demographic changes beyond his control. In 1965, Ben closed the facility and built a modern, full-service Texaco service station complete with an office and repair bay in a more visible location one block south along Colorado Highway 14. There he was able to capture expanded business, including auto repairs, from the passing traffic. Operating under the corporate name Walker Oil, Ben constructed another building nearby to provide customers with farm equipment service. He continued to sell Texaco products and offer repairs at this location into the early 1990s. Over the years, Ben also became the owner of the Walker Elevator in New Raymer and established a farming and ranching operation that grew to 20,000 acres in size. He died in Sterling in 2001 and was buried in the New Raymer Cemetery.³⁹

New Raymer and the Star Filling Station in the Modern Era (1965-2019): Since the 1970s, the population of New Raymer has slowly rebounded and today numbers about 110 residents. Freight trains operated by the CB&Q passed through with decreasing frequency in the post-WWII era and in 1980 the tracks through New Raymer were removed. The only non-residential building to appear on Centre Avenue was the post office completed in 1974 and the last grocery store in town closed around 1980. By the late 1980s and early 1990s, New Raymer held a modest number of houses on scattered lots, along with a handful of businesses that were limited to Ben Walker's gas station and repair shop along Colorado Highway 14, along with a well contractor, beauty shop, liquor store, elevator and feed store, and a restaurant. Most of these were situated along the highway. As the town's historic commercial district on Centre Avenue was abandoned, many of the buildings there

³⁷ Census of Population, 1960-2010, US Census Bureau (www.census.gov), Retrieved 22 February 2018; Nancy Lynch, *Weld County Towns: The First 150 Years*, San Antonio, TX: Historical Publishing Network, 2011, p. 54; "New Life for New Raymer: Whistle Stop Town Seeks to Revive Business District," CBS Denver, 14 April 2017; Shwayder, *Weld County – Old and New, Volume I: Chronology of Weld County, Colorado, 1836-1983*, p. A205.

³⁸ Warranty Deed, Helen O. Piper to Ben L. Walker, 5 March 1937; Steffen, Vangraefschepe & Wells, *A History of New Raymer, Colorado on its Centennial, 1888-1988*, p. 165; United States Federal Census Records, Benjamin L. Walker, 1930 & 1940 (New Raymer, CO); Draft Registration Record, Ben Leroy Walker, New Raymer, CO, 1940; Burial Record and Obituary, Benjamin Leroy Whited Walker, New Raymer Cemetery, New Raymer, CO.

³⁹ New Raymer Listings, *Colorado State Business Directories, 1935-1956*; Steffen, Vangraefschepe & Wells, *A History of New Raymer, Colorado on its Centennial, 1888-1988*, p. 165; United States Federal Census Records, Benjamin L. Walker, 1930 & 1940 (New Raymer, CO); Burial Record and Obituary, Benjamin Leroy Whited Walker, New Raymer Cemetery, New Raymer, CO.

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were removed, leaving a small number of vacant and deteriorating buildings standing through the present time.⁴⁰

After Ben Walker closed the station in 1965, it never reopened for business of any kind. The building has sat vacant and deteriorating since that time. Vera Silvis Walker ended up with the property following her husband's death in 2001. In August 2006, she transferred it to her daughter, Dorene Branning, who continues to own the building today. In recent years, a group of preservation-minded residents and former residents of New Raymer has coalesced around saving several of the remaining historic commercial buildings. Operating as the Friends of Raymer, the group succeeded in having Centre Avenue designated to Colorado Preservation Inc.'s Most Endangered Places list in 2017. The group is now determined to stabilize and rehabilitate the Star Filling Station as one of its priority projects.⁴¹

⁴⁰ Census of Population, 1960-2010, US Census Bureau (www.census.gov), Retrieved 22 February 2018; Ray Shaffer, *A Guide to Places on the Colorado Prairie, 1540-1975*, Boulder, CO: Pruett Publishing Company, 1978, p. 345; "More than Just Mail," *Greeley Tribune*, 18 June 2011; "The Story of New Raymer," *The Fence Post*, 23 August 1993, p. 28; Shwayder, *Weld County – Old and New, Volume V: People & Places*, p. 364; Wells, *Homesteading the Dryland: A History of Northeast Weld County, Colorado*, p. 294; Steffen, Vangraefschep & Wells, *A History of New Raymer, Colorado on its Centennial, 1888-1988*, p. 17.

⁴¹ Personal Representative's Deed, Estate of Ben Walker to Vera Walker, 7 August 2001; Quit Claim Deed, Vera K. Walker to Dorene Branning, 30 August 2006; Friends of Raymer Website, Located at www.friendsofraymer.com on 15 May 2019; Colorado Endangered Places List, Centre Avenue, New Raymer, CO, www.coloradopreservation.org; "New Life for New Raymer: Whistle Stop Town Seeks to Revive Business District," CBS Denver, 14 April 2017.

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 - Warranty Deed, Lincoln Land Company to W. W. Baldwin and W. E. Whittier, 12 July 1909 (Rec. #145449)
 - Plat of Baldwin & Whittier Addition, Recorded 23 July 1910
 - Warranty Deed (Lots 20-21), Lincoln Land Company to John H. Brownlee, 14 July 1909 (Rec. #27876)
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 - Warranty Deed (Lots 16-21), M. M. Allen to the State Bank of Raymer, 7 June 1923 (Rec. #409558)
 - Warranty Deed (Lots 20-21), State Bank of Raymer to O. L. Addington, 19 October 1925 (Rec. #482504)
 - Deed of Trust (Lots 20-21 as Collateral), O. L. Addington to State Bank of Raymer, 19 October 1925 (Rec. #482505)
 - Quit Claim Deed (Lots 20-21), O. L. Addington to Myra L. Addington, 1 March 1928 (Rec. #532015)
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 - Quit Claim Deed (Lots 20-21), O. L. Addington to John T. Macklin, 4 March 1930 (Reception #585787)
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Warranty Deed (Lots 20-21), Helen O. Piper to Ben L. Walker, 5 March 1937 (Rec. #760185)
Personal Representative's Deed, Estate of Ben Walker to Vera Walker, 7 August 2001 (Rec.
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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository: Stephen H. Hart Research Center, History CO

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): 5WL.8193

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property Less than 1

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References (NAD 83)

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 13 597712 44958781
Zone Easting Northing

2 _____
Zone Easting Northing

3 _____
Zone Easting Northing

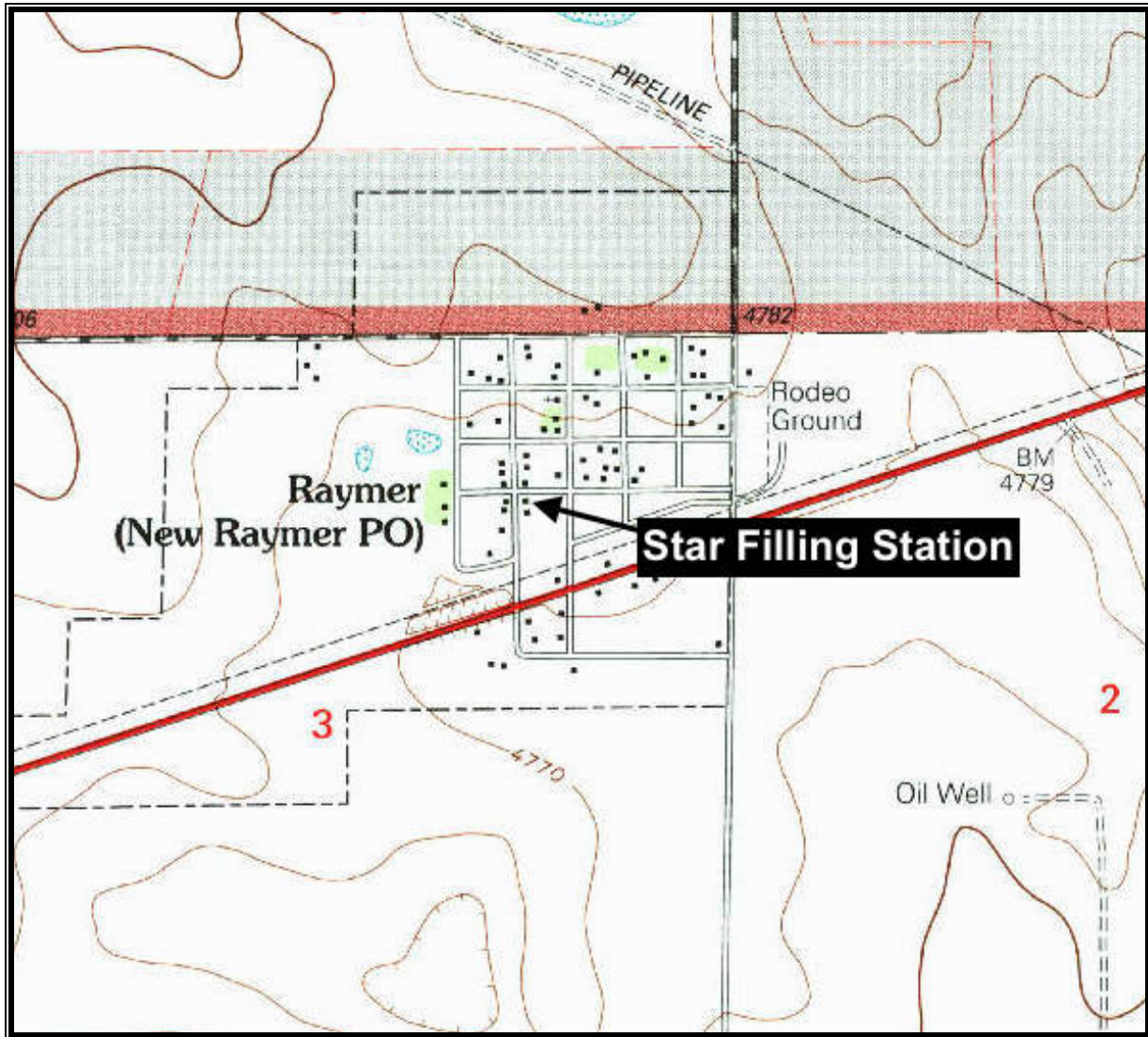
4 _____
Zone Easting Northing

The UTM reference point was derived from heads up digitization on Digital Raster Graphic (DRG) maps provided to OAHF by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management.

Verbal Boundary Description: The boundaries of the nominated property encompass an area of less than one acre defined by the legal description of Lots 20 and 21, Block 10, Baldwin & Whittier's Addition to New Raymer, Weld County, Colorado (parcel #0723-03-1-25-001).

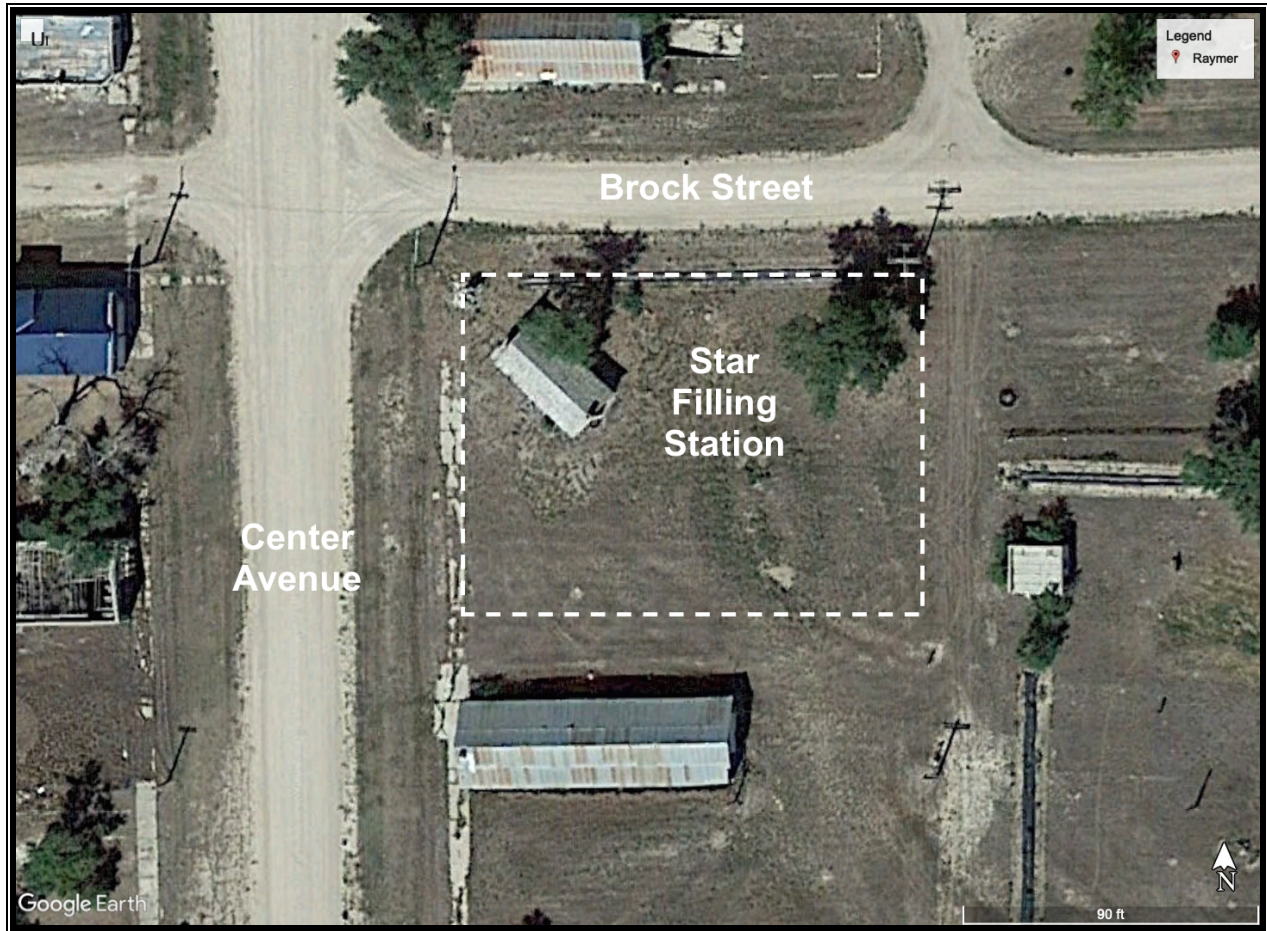
Boundary Justification: The nominated boundaries for this resource are intended to designate the building within its original rectangular property. The filling station was constructed in the northwest quadrant of the property, facing northwest toward the primary street intersection. This not only made it visible to the public, but allowed drivers to pull off the streets and up to the pumps. On the north, the boundary parallels the south side of Brock Street. The western boundary runs along the east side of Centre Avenue. The eastern boundary abuts the alley, which is no longer clearly visible.

Topographic Map



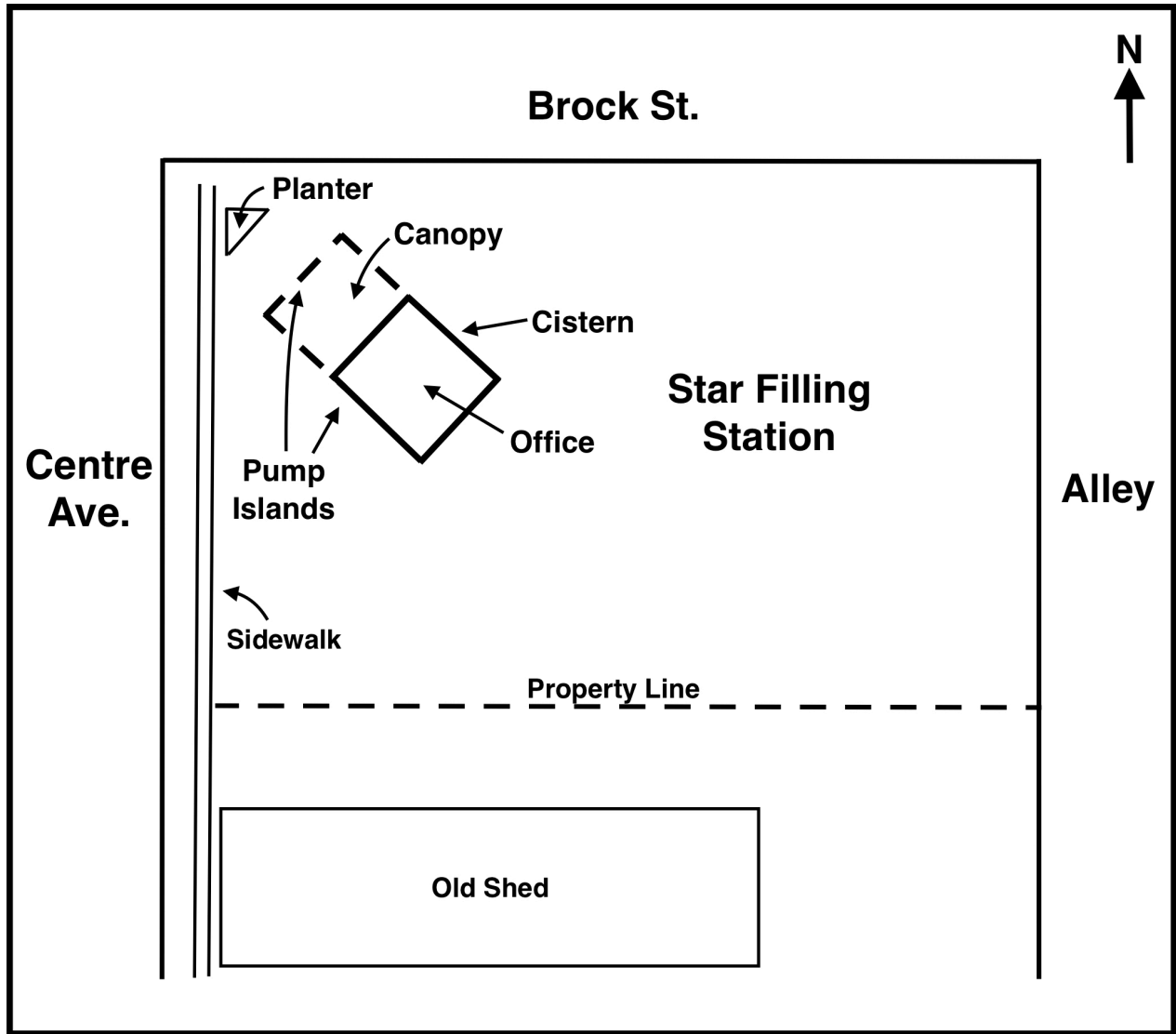
Raymer 7.5' Topographic Map
1997

Aerial Diagram



Source: Google Earth, 2018

Site Sketch



STAR FILLING STATION

Name of Property

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11. Form Prepared By

name/title RON SLADEK, PRESIDENT (for property owner)

organization TATANKA HISTORICAL ASSOCIATES INC.

date 20 JULY 2019

street & number P.O. BOX 1909

telephone 970/689-4855

city or town FORT COLLINS

state CO

zip code 80522

e-mail tatanka@verinet.com

Property Owner:

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

name DORENE BRANNING

street & number P.O. BOX 28

telephone 662/289-7314

city or town KOSCIUSKO

state MS

zip code 39090

STAR FILLING STATION
Name of Property

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Current Photographs

The following information applies to all of the black and white photographs submitted with this form:

Name of property: Star Filling Station
City, county and state: New Raymer, Weld County, Colorado
Photographer: Talia Siens
Date photographed: 28 March 2019
Location of originals: Tatanka Historical Associates Inc.
P.O. Box 1909
Fort Collins, CO 80522
TIFF images on file with National Register, Washington, D.C.

1 of 8: View of the Star Filling Station. View to the east.
2 of 8: View of the Star Filling Station. View to the north.
3 of 8: View of the Star Filling Station. View to the southeast.
4 of 8: View of the Star Filling Station. View to the west.
5 of 8: View of the Concrete Planter in Front of the Building. View to the east.
6 of 8: View of the Drive-Through Lane and Front of the Office. View to the southwest.
7 of 8: View of the interior of the building. View to the southeast.
8 of 8: View of the interior of the building. View to the northwest.

Historic Figures

Historic Figure 1: First Advertisement for the Star Filling Station, *Raymer Enterprise*, 26 November 1925, p. 8
Historic Figure 2: Star Filling Station Advertisement, 1948

Historic Photographs

Historic Photo 1: Early Image of the Star Filling Station, ca. 1935
Historic Photo 2: Early Image of the Star Filling Station, ca. 1935
Historic Photo 3: Star Filling Station, South Side, 1939 (Courtesy of Ellis Knoll)
Historic Photo 4: Star Filling Station, South Side, 1939
Historic Photo 5: Ben Walker in Front of the Star Filling Station, ca. 1934
Historic Photo 6: The Star Filling Station, ca. 1940

Historic Figures

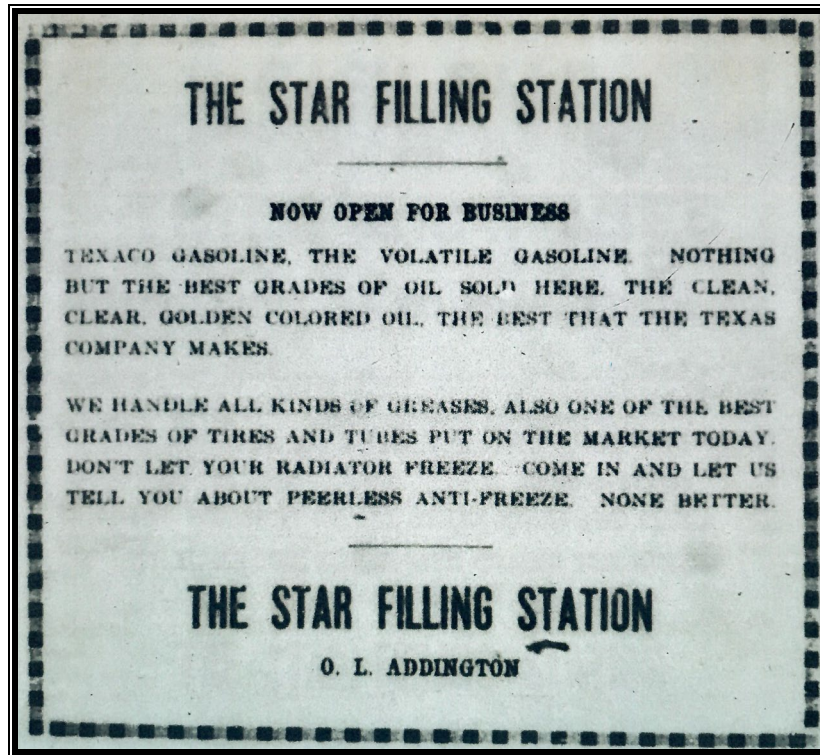


Figure 1: First Advertisement for the Star Filling Station
Raymer Enterprise, 26 November 1925, p. 8

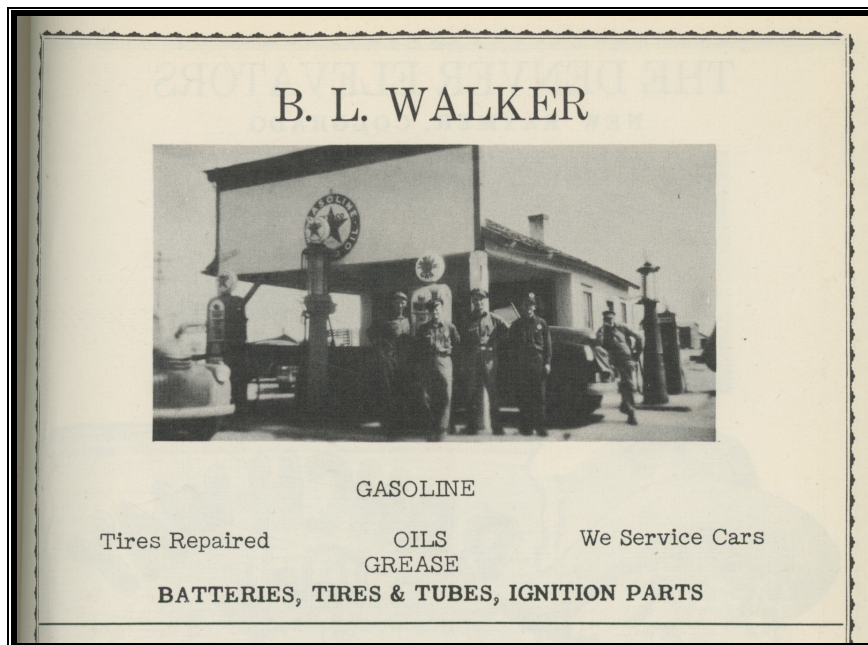


Figure 2: Star Filling Station Advertisement, 1948

Historic Photographs

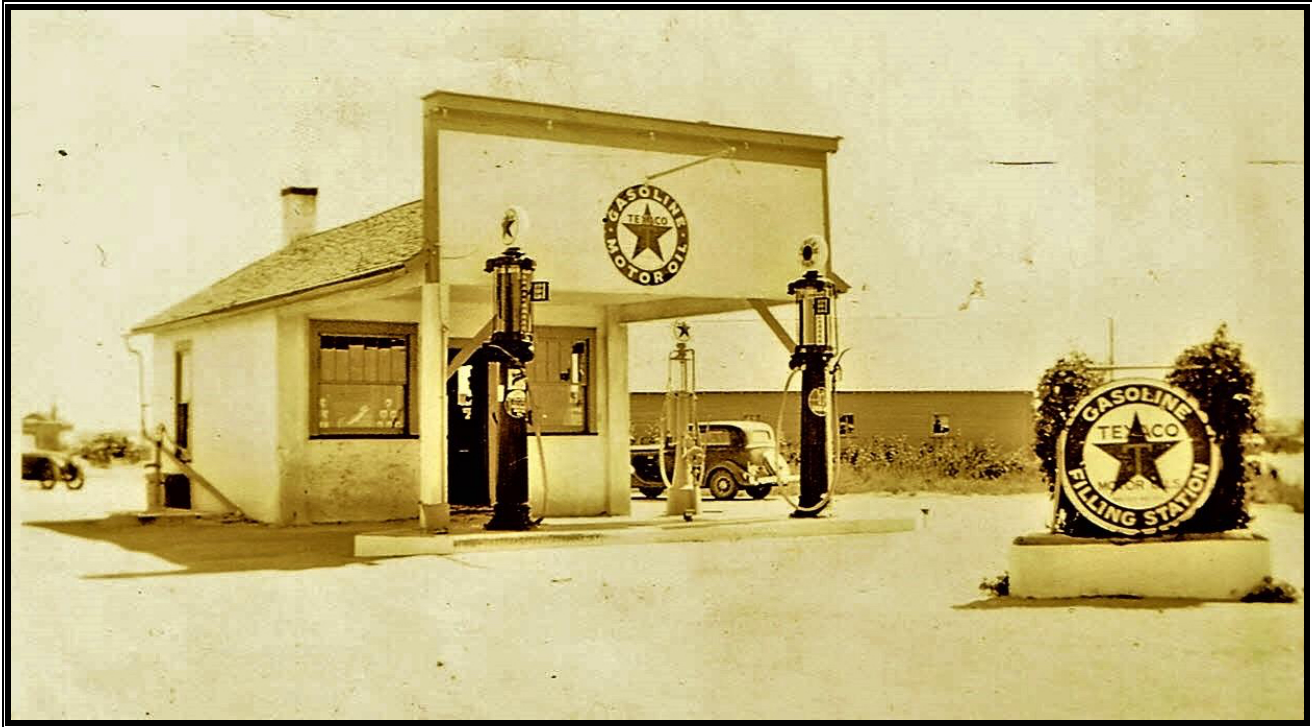


Photo 1: Early Image of the Star Filling Station, ca. 1935



Photo 2: Early Image of the Star Filling Station, ca. 1935

Historic Photographs



Photo 3: Star Filling Station, South Side, 1939
(Courtesy of Ellis Knoll)



Photo 4: Star Filling Station, South Side, 1939
(Courtesy of Ellis Knoll)

Historic Photographs



**Photo 5: Ben Walker in Front of the Star Filling Station, ca. 1934
(Raymer Days Calendar, 2013)**



Photo 6: The Star Filling Station, ca. 1940