

The History and Status of the Wild Horses
of Theodore Roosevelt National Park

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Preface

This report examines the history and status of the feral horses in Theodore Roosevelt National Park. The research upon which this report is based was funded in part by a grant awarded by the Theodore Roosevelt Nature and History Association in 1987. The study was designed to aid in the interpretation and management of the horses by THRO staff.

The objectives of the study were to compile a chronological account of horse management at THRO; to investigate the origins and history of feral horses in the Little Missouri Badlands since first reported in the nineteenth century; and to record the genealogy of the extant herd. Since the feral horses originated at least partially from local ranch stock, information regarding types of saddle horses used in western North Dakota during the period 1880-1947 has been included. Additionally, a short section briefly outlines federal wild equine management. A number of appendices supplement various components of the report.

A variety of research methodologies were employed to gather information regarding the horses. Oral history interviews were conducted with local ranchers regarding both wild and domestic horses in southwestern North Dakota. A survey questionnaire was

administered to former THRO employees in order to collect data on management actions and descriptive accounts of park horses. Archival, documentary, and photographic research was conducted in THRO files, at the State Historical Society of North Dakota, the Coffrin Gallery, the Yokum Museum, and in private collections. It became apparent early on that some fieldwork would be necessary in order to gain familiarity with the extant feral horses at THRO. Photographs of the horses greatly aided in identifying individual animals and soliciting genealogical information from Research Advisor Tom Tescher. Although not included in the research proposal, the investigator decided that a photographic inventory of the herd would be a necessary accompaniment to the genealogical and census data. Approximately twenty field trips were accomplished in order to observe and photograph the horses. A photographic record of the park herd from 1965 to 1987, and historic photographs of nineteenth-century Medora area horses, accompanies this report. Photographs taken by the author are designated by "Photo No."; reproductions of historic photographs are designated by "Plate No." Both types of photograph are incorporated into a separate photo album that is to be housed in the THRO library.

Acknowledgements

This study would have been virtually impossible without the assistance and support of Research Assistants Tom Tescher and Leo L. Kuntz, Jr. Tom Tescher has spent forty years chasing, observing, and recording the park herd. He has assisted the park with virtually every horse removal effort since 1954. Without his interest and efforts, there would be no genealogical records, and fewer lineages of horses would have been preserved. Tom generously introduced me to the extant horses, taught me their history, their territories, and behavior, and endured countless hours of questioning. Leo Kuntz, Jr., and his brother Frank have spent over a decade researching the origins of the park horses and preserving this strain on their father's ranch near Linton, "home" to nearly 100 head of horses removed from the park since 1978. Credit for much of the material included in this report belongs to Tom Tescher and the Kuntz brothers, and I gratefully acknowledge their involvement in the project.

Thanks are also due to Micki Hellickson, former Chief of Interpretation at THRO, and to Resource Management Specialist Jeff Bradybaugh, both of whom helped in the development of this study and served as NPS liaisons to the Theodore Roosevelt Nature and History Association, which funded this study in 1987. Marilyn Sahlstrom was also very helpful in her administration of the TRNHA research funds.

BLM Range Conservationist and Wild Horse Management Specialist Bill Phillips of Susanville, California, provided a considerable amount of resource material and information regarding wild horses.

Photography Curator Todd Strand, Research Librarian Forrest Daniels, and other staff members of the State Historical Society of North Dakota assisted in locating and identifying historic documents for this study.

Dr. Emily Wright kindly and capably typed and edited this manuscript, donating much of her time to the project.

The individuals listed on the following pages provided information by granting me oral history interviews or by responding in writing to a THRO survey questionnaire administered in the summer of 1987. Their assistance is greatly appreciated.

NPS Survey Respondants

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position While at THRO</u>	<u>Years</u>
Benton, Robert	Chief, I&RM	1969-1972
Brooks, Chester	Park Historian	1951-1957
Brooks, Myrl	Chief Ranger	1966-1968
Cornell, Ted	Maintenance	1956
Fitch, Monte	Chief Ranger	1955-1957
Gratton, Weldon	CCC Landscape Architect	1934-1946
Hecker, Phil	Maintenance, Park Technician	1964-1968
Huntzinger, Dave	Park Naturalist	1966-1967
Johnson, Einar	District Ranger	1936-1965
Lancaster, John	Superintendent	1972-1979
McCaw, Wallace	Superintendent	1961-1963
Maeder, Richard	District Naturalist/ Historian	1960-1963
Morey, Robert	Park Ranger	1953-1957
Murphy, Robert	Chief Ranger	1960-1962
Nickels, Jack	Seasonal Ranger	1960-1962
Neuens, Walt	Area Rancher	pre-1947
Ott, Marty	District Ranger	1975-1978
Palmer, John	Park Naturalist	1961-1963
Reid, Neil	Park Ranger	1951-1953
Reynolds, Mrs. Harvey	Wife, Chief Ranger	1950-1954
Robinson, Elbert	Chief Ranger	1962-1964
Rouse, Jim	Chief, I&RM	1964-1966

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position While at THRO</u>	<u>Years</u>
Rutherford, Charles	Administrative Officer	1959-1961
Schoch, Hank	District Ranger	1971-1974
Sullivan, Arthur	Superintendent	1966-1969
Thompson, James B.	Superintendent	1969-1972
Wellman, Bill	Interpretive Specialist	1973-1974

Homer Rouse, Associate Regional Director of the NPS Rocky Mountain Region, spoke with me on the telephone during the Spring of 1987.

Oral History Interviews

The following individuals, all lifelong ranchers in western North Dakota, were interviewed concerning ranch and wild horses in the area between 1900 and 1947, when THRO was established. All of them are second or third generation ranchers, many the children of ranchers and cowboys prominent during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These people had fascinating recollections of famous men and horses, and I regret that the purview of this study prevents me from including the scope and flavor of their remarks. Readers familiar with western North Dakota history will recognize many names.

It was a privilege to meet and talk with these people about ranching, horses, and cowboys of an earlier time. I have tried to represent their comments accurately, and very much appreciate their contributions to this study.

<u>Interviewee</u>	<u>Background</u>	<u>Date of Interview</u>
Barnhart, Gerald	Dickinson (son of L.M. Barnhardt), b. circa 1930	30 Oct. 1987
Carson, Raymond	Grassy Butte, b. circa 1925	22 Oct. 1987
Connell, Sid	Medora, b. 1908	Sept. 1987
Connolly, Jim	Dunn Center (son of Wm. Connolly), 1912-1989	Aug. and Sept. 1987* 13 July 1989
Fredericks, Catherine	Twin Buttes, b. circa 1915	19 Sept. 1987
Goldsberry, Harris	Trotter's Community, b. 1915 (son of James Goldsberry)	6 July 1989
Griggs, John	Medora and South Heart, b. 1919	June and Aug. 1987
Lang, Oliver	Grassy Butte, b. circa 1925	22 Oct. 1987
Lindbo, Lola	Fryburg, b. 1911	11 April 1987
Murphy, Jack	Killdeer (son of Red Murphy), 1912	10 Nov. 1987
Lone Fight, Ed	New Town, b. circa 1940	10 Sept. 1987

<u>Interviewee</u>	<u>Background</u>	<u>Date of Interview</u>
Newcomb, Ed	Grassy Butte, b. 1910	22 Oct. 1987
Northrup, Bruce	Medora, b. circa 1938	Aug. and Oct. 1987
Pusenchenko, John	Grassy Butte, b. 1922	21 Aug. 1987
Roberts, Harry	Dickinson (son of T.F. Roberts), b. circa 1905	3 Aug. 1987
Schwint, George	Medora, b. 1920	15 Aug. 1987*
Tescher, Alvin	Beach, b. circa 1925	21 Sept. 1987
Wilson, Sam	Sentinel Butte, b. 1909	19 Sept. 1987

*Telephone interviews

Chapter 1: Historic Horse Types of Western North Dakota, 1750-1947

This section examines types of horses found throughout the Northern Plains in the nineteenth century, particularly horses of Montana and western North Dakota. Based on the accounts of historians and contemporary observers, a general description of Indian horses, wild horses, and ranch horses of the Northern Plains region is provided, with an emphasis on horses found in the Little Missouri Badlands of southwestern North Dakota.

[1] Indian Horses and Wild Horses

The earliest modern horses to occupy the Northern Plains and the grasslands of western North Dakota during the historic period were Indian ponies. The Spanish reintroduced the horse to North America in the middle of the seventeenth century.¹ Feral animals, called mestenos, soon populated the Southwest and had expanded as far north as Saskatchewan within one hundred years (Dobie, 1952:40). Never as plentiful in the northern areas, by 1850 there were an estimated one million wild horses on the Texas plains alone, another million scattered across the western range (Dobie, 1952: 108). The primary agent in the expansion and dispersal of these animals was their acquisition, trade, and use by Native

¹ The horse evolved on the North American continent but was one of many mammalian species that became extinct during the Pleistocene, ten thousand years ago.

American groups, many of which became mounted equestrians prior to direct contact with Anglo-Europeans (Ewers, 1955).

The acquisition of the horse by the Indians, its tremendous economic and cultural impact, and the process of this diffusion, constitutes a classic theme in American anthropology (eg. Ewers, 1955; Haines, 1938; Hanson, 1986; Roe, 1955; Wissler, 1914).

Horses, and the knowledge of their care and use, spread among the tribes primarily by trade. In this network the Missouri and Knife River villages of the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara played a critical role. These village communities were key distribution centers in an indigenous trade network prior to and throughout the entire post-contact era of 1730-1850 (Ewers, 1955; Wood and Thiessen, 1985). Early European traders took advantage of this established trade system; by trading directly with the village groups, they secured indirect trade relations with more nomadic hunter-gatherers throughout the Upper Missouri and intermontane West. Horses and guns were the chief commodities in this economy.

Horses were reported in the Mandan villages by 1741 (La Verendrye, 1927; in Ewers, 1955), marking the beginning of the so-called "Horse Culture Period" in the Northern Plains. Throughout the next hundred years, the riverine villages served as a primary source of horses for trading companies and explorers as well as for other Native American groups (Ewers, 1955; Wood and Thiessen, 1985). It was here that the spread of guns southward met the northward expansion of horses, the latter diffusing from the Spanish Southwest and radiating out of the villages to tribes north, east, and west.

Ewers (1955:7-10) has postulated two routes for the diffusion of horses to the Northern Plains at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The older route led north from the Spanish territories of New Mexico and Texas to the village groups via the Black Hills and Kiowa, Kiowa-Apache, Arapaho, Cheyenne, and Comanche middlemen. A second route led from the Upper Yellowstone east to the Hidatsa and Mandan villages on the Missouri. In this trade the Crow, relatives of the Hidatsa and principal trading partners of the villagers, served as intermediaries between Indians of the Northwest and Plateau (Nez Perce, Flathead, Shoshoni, etc.) and those on the Upper Missouri (see map, figure 1).

Large-scale brokers and expert horse thieves, the Crow became the most horse-rich of all northern groups, amassing at least 10,000 head by 1820, a ratio of 15 animals to each lodge group (Ewers, 1955:24). A contemporary observer said of the Crow:

It is not uncommon for a single family to be the owner of 100 of these animals. Most middle-aged men have from 30-60. An individual is said to be poor when he does not possess at least 20 (Denig, 1961:145).

Another nineteenth-century Plains traveler declared, "The horses of the Crows are principally of the maroon race of the prairies."² (De Smet; in Roe, 1955: 23).

As elsewhere, the horse among the village Indians served as a beast of burden, a means of transportation, a status symbol and measure of wealth, a recreational device, and an animal of considerable symbolic import. However, these horticulturalists and traders had little incentive to amass the large numbers of horses

² According to the 1988 edition of Webster's Dictionary and Thesaurus, "maroon" was at one time used as a synonym for "wild" or "abandoned," as in "marooned" on an island.

commonly held by their more nomadic neighbors (cf. Hanson, 1986). One source credits the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara as having for personal use a total of only 1,000 horses in the first half of the nineteenth century (Ewers, 1955:24). While this figure may be low, grazing requirements would place a strong constraint on the number of horses such sedentary horticulturalists could maintain; Boller observed the Mandans habitually grazing their stock 5-6 miles from camp (1972: 53). The chief function of the horse here seems to have been that of an economic commodity. Thus, the Arikara were said to be "not well provided with horses" (Denig, 1961: 48); likewise it was said of the Mandan, "Even for the sole purpose of hunting, their horses are too few" (Thompson, 1916; in Ewers, 1955:25). At the same time, a trader among the Arikara in 1803-1804 noted of the European exchange of guns for horses in their villages:

The horse is the most important article of their trade with the Ricaras. Most frequently it is given as a present: but, according to their manner, that is to say, it is recalled when the tender in exchange does not please. This is an understood restriction. This present is paid ordinarily with a gun, a hundred charges of powder and balls, a knife and other trifles (Tabeau, 1939; in Ewers, 1955:9).

Plains Indians relied primarily on raiding and trade for their supply of horses; the Mandan and Hidatsa also practiced relatively careful husbandry, including castration. Wolf Chief, a Hidatsa, recalled this advice from his father:

These horses are gods, or mystery beings. They have supernatural power. If one cares for them properly and seeks good grazing and water for them, they will increase rapidly (Wilson, 1924:145).

In discussing Hidatsa horse breeding practices, Wolf Chief implied that his people credited stallions with having a dominant influence on their offspring:

The best stallion was kept for breeding. Stallions were not all alike; some gave more attention to mares than others. This we thought a sign of vigor. . . . Stallions that grew to be two years old and were slow and lazy, were castrated; also those from which no colts were born. . . .

My grandfather, Big Cloud, had a fine stallion name Amanu Kac, or Digs-out-dirt, because he always pawed up the dirt with his hooves when he came to a herd. He was often threatening to the boy herders, putting his ears far back on his head and looking savage, but he never really bit or harmed them. He was a good stallion, forcing his attentions, in spite of avoidance and kicks. He raised blue colts (Wilson, 1924:149).

There is evidence for the presence and utilization of wild herds in central North Dakota during the early nineteenth century.

Writing of the Mandan villages in 1832-1833, Catlin says:

The horses which the Indians ride in this country are invariably the wild horses, which are found in great numbers on the prairies; and have, unquestionably, strayed from the Mexican borders, into which they were introduced by the Spanish invaders of that country; and now range and subsist themselves, in winter and summer, over the vast plains of prairie that stretch from the Mexican frontiers to Lake Winnipeg on the north, a distance of 3,000 miles. These horses are all of a small stature, of the pony order; but a very hardy and tough animal, being able to perform for the Indians a continual and essential service. . . .

. . . Scarcely a man in these regions is to be found, who is not the owner of one or more of these horses; and in many instances of 8, 10, or even 20, which he values as his personal property. . . . Horse racing here, as in all more enlightened communities, is one of the most exciting amusements, and one of the most extravagant modes of gambling (Catlin, 1973:142-43).

Washington Irving observed Arikara horses in the 1840s:

The horses owned by the Arikaras are, for the most part, of the wild stock of the prairies; some, however, have been obtained from the Poncas, Pawnees, and other tribes to the southwest, who had stolen them from the

Spaniards. . . . These were known by being branded, a Spanish mode of marking horses not practiced by Indians (in Wyman, 1963:283).

During his stay among the Mandan and Hidatsa at Fort Akinson in the 1860s, Boller described their use of Spanish riding gear and perhaps Appaloosa horses, bred primarily by the Nez Perce in the Columbia plateau:

Young bucks parade about on their fancy horses, some of which are spotted in a remarkable manner. . . . Those who are so fortunate as to possess one, use the heavy Spanish bit with its long iron fringes, jingling with the slightest movement of the horse (Boller, 1972: 67-68).

All of the wild horses of the Americas³ were originally feral animals that had escaped or been stolen from their Spanish masters. As Catlin notes, the feral herds of the Southwest gradually extended their range, but this movement was largely a product of their expanding use and subsequent loss. Indians often drove herds numbering in the thousands to trade or as the product of a raiding expedition; it was inevitable that many were lost (Dobie, 1952; Ewers, 1955). It was a common practice among both Indians and whites to turn worn-out horses loose, and many Plains travelers unwittingly lost stock to passing wild herds or to other travelers (e.g., Parkman, 1883).

By the early nineteenth century, wild horses were a common feature of the western landscape, from Texas to California and throughout the Rocky Mountains north into the Canadian plains (Dobie, 1952; Wyman, 1963). Wild horses were so populous in the Southwest, and their capture and sale so economically significant,

³ There were many more wild horses in South America than in the northern colonies; see Denhardt, 1947; Dobie, 1952.

that it has been suggested that this business was analogous to the fur trade of the Upper Missouri (Flores, 1987). The chasing and capture of wild horses was an integral aspect of cowboy culture that has been perpetuated by ranchers and professional "mustangers" into the present century (Dobie, 1952; Wyman, 1963). Lastly, wild horses achieved a prodigious symbolic import within western thought and culture. Historian Frank Dobie stated, "The aesthetic value of the mustang topped all other values. The sight of wild horses streaming across the prairies made even the most hardened of professional mustangers regret putting an end to their liberty" (1952: 111).

It is possible that the grassland expanse between the Missouri and Yellowstone Rivers supported a population of wild horses throughout the nineteenth century, owing both to the excellent range and to the utilization of the area by Indians, traders, and travelers. The Crow alone drove large numbers of horses to and from the Missouri River villages, and the area was a hunting ground for the Sioux and Blackfoot (Denig, 1961). Dobie (1952:79) states that the smallpox epidemics that devastated the Missouri River tribes of central North Dakota in the 1830s "released thousands of horses to run wild."

Types of Indian Horses

The Indian horse of the American West was originally of predominantly Spanish descent (Bandy and Bandy, 1982; Denhardt, 1947; Dobie, 1952; Wyman, 1963). Two principal strains were

imported to the New World: the Moorish Barb and the Spanish Andalusian, both of which were developed as war horses and possessed hardiness and endurance (ibid.; see Appendix A). Once feral, they were called mustangs, from the Spanish mesteno,⁴ or "roving" (Dobie, 1952). Later the term "mustang" acquired a more generic meaning, being used to refer to any wild horse. Wild horses were also called "broomtail," "bronco," and "cayuse"--all terms which had been appropriated from an originally specific meaning.

The diffusion of the true Spanish mustang may be suggested by the fact that Lewis and Clark found Spanish-branded mules and horses among the Indians of the Columbia River basin in 1805. They described the horses as "of an excellent race, lofty, elegantly formed, active and durable. Many of them look like fine English coarsers and would make a figure in any country"; hardly a horse "could be deemed poor, and many were fat as seals" (in Dobie, 1952:54).

Descriptions from contemporary observers of the Indian pony vary markedly: they have been described as "mostly beautiful, spirited animals," and as "the best proportioned, the swiftest and the most beautiful" but also as "descendents of strays and castaways . . . medium in size, wiry, hardy beasts, with a very decided tendency toward horse ugliness" (Dobie, 1952:57, 72; Wyman, 1963: 277). Over time the latter assessment became predominant, then stereotypical (see Figure 2). Most scholars attribute the degeneration of appearance among Indian horses to

⁴ There is some dispute about the origin of the term "mustang," but this is the predominant interpretation.

indiscriminate breeding both in captivity and on the range (cf. Dobie, 1952; Wyman, 1963). It was for their "bottom," or endurance that the mustang/Indian pony won praise. J. Frank Dobie, foremost scholar of early western horses, summed it up thus:

Performance counts, and Indian horses often deceived their looks. Among those he saw on the Upper Missouri, a European cavalryman found "only now and then noble animals of European form," but added, "It is almost unbelievable how much the Indians can accomplish with their horses, what burdens they are able to carry, and what great distances they can cover in a short time. . . ." Never stabled, washed, curried, shod, doctored or fed, he starved through the winter, but when grass came he filled out and, with ears up and eyes lighted, was ready for any ride. Adversity brought out his values. "Praise the tall but saddle the small," a Mexican saying went (Dobie, 1952: 59).

Artist Frederic Remington observed Indian horses first-hand and chronicled them in paint and on paper (see Figure 3). He said of the Indian horse:

He may be all that the wildest enthusiast may claim in point of hardihood and power, as indeed he is, but he is not beautiful. His head and neck join like the two parts of a hammer, his legs are as fine as a deer's, though not with the flat kneecap and broad cannonbone of the English ideal. His barrel is a veritable turn, made so by the bushels of grass which he consumes in order to satisfy nature. His quarters are apt to run suddenly back from the hips, and the rear view is decidedly mulish about the hocks (Remington, 1960: 106).

Roe (1955: 92) has said that "by 1773 the Indian horse was already a recognizable and named type of its own," which he described as having "the weedy, decadent appearance which has come to be associated with the very term 'Indian pony,' and so strongly, moreover, that they could transmit its points in recognizable form to a further cross-bred type" (ibid: 69). Ewers (1955:33-34) states,

The Indian pony was close to being a type. . . . The adult male Indian pony averaged a little under 14 hands in height, weighed about 700 pounds, possessed a large head in proportion to its body, good eyes, "neck and head joined like the two parts of a hammer," large, round barrel, relatively heavy shoulders and hips; small fine, strong limbs and small feet. Indian ponies exhibited a wide range of solid and mixed colors. . . .

The Indian pony was no beautiful animal, but it was a tough, sturdy, long-winded beast that possessed great powers of endurance.

Other authorities have drawn attention to regional variation among Indian horses and the development of distinct sub-types (Bandy and Bandy, 1982; Remington, 1960; Wyman, 1963). Remington (1960: 99) noted that "the lapse of nearly four centuries and the great variety of conditions have so changed the American 'bronco' from his Spanish ancestor that he now enjoys a distinctive individuality. This individuality is also subdivided; and as all types come from a common ancestry, the reasons for this varied development are sought with interest. . . ." In general, the horse of the Northern Plains was thought to be larger and perhaps of "better" quality owing to the superior range and the practice of some tribes to breed selectively (Dobie, 1952: 52). Everywhere Indians preferred horses of color: buckskins, roans, Appaloosas and paints, preferably with glass (blue) eyes and striped hooves.

Of course, Indians also acquired Euro-American horse types by a variety of means, including their capture as war trophies during skirmishes with the U.S. Army. In contrast to the Indian type, the so-called "American Horse" of the nineteenth century was a mixture of European breeds and was large, powerful, heavy, and solid-colored (Albert, 1941:12,38; Dobie, 1952:61). L. A. Huffman photographed two Cheyenne warriors with their horses in 1879,

reproduced here as Plate 1. The horse on the left is typical of the "Indian type" on the Northern Plains: a medium-sized, bald-faced roan paint. In contrast, the dark horse on the right is taller and heavier and appears to carry a U.S.-made saddle; it is possible that this was a captured "American horse."

By the middle of the nineteenth century, most horses of the Plains Indians were no longer of straight Spanish blood, although this heritage remained strong in the Southwest (Dobie, 1952; Wyman, 1963). Francis Parkman observed Indian horses near Fort Laramie in 1845:

These were of every shape, size, and color. Some came from California, some from the States, some from among the mountains, and some from the wild bands of the prairie. They were of every hue, white, black, red and grey, or mottled and clouded with a strange variety of colors. They all had a wild and startled look, very different from the sober aspect of a well-bred city steed. Those most noted for swiftness and spirit were decorated with eagle feathers dangling from their manes and tails (Parkman, 1883:288).

The symbolic import of the horse within Native American cultures has far outlasted their economic significance. Government stock reduction programs circa 1880-1930 aimed at reducing herds on reservations and replacing the Indian pony with more useful draft stock met with strenuous resistance (cf. Ewers, 1955; Wyman, 1963). Fort Berthold Tribal Chairman Ed Lone Fight told the writer that when the construction of Garrison Dam flooded parts of the reservation during the 1950s, residents were informed that their horses should be removed or destroyed. One man repeatedly refused to submit his animals, finally imprinting "1,000 TIMES NO" on the crown of his hat. When told that his herd must be removed

or confiscated within 48 hours, he trailed 80 head of horses to the Yellowstone country and remained there in hiding for three years. This feeling persists. I attended a meeting in Twin Buttes in September 1987 during which the chief order of business was discussion of a "wild horse resolution" being developed by the tribe and the BIA to control feral horses in the western half of Fort Berthold Reservation. When I asked a tribal councilman his opinion of the proposal, which called for the arbitrary removal of unclaimed animals, he responded: "A horse means more than just a horse."

[2] Northern Plains Ranch Horses, 1850-1900

The foundation stock of the western cow pony and saddle horse was likewise the Spanish Mustang (Denhardt, 1947; Dobie, 1952; Remington, 1960; Wyman, 1963). This was especially true in the Southwest and California, where the Spanish had practiced large-scale horse breeding for generations and where wild herds reached their maximum density. For example, the founder of the famous King Ranch (Texas) purchased all of his foundation stock, bovine and equine, from Mexican breeders in 1853, and California-bred mustang mares were imported by ranchers throughout the West to establish saddle stock (Wyman, 1963: 99).

The mustang possessed qualities that made it ideal for range cattle work: stamina, thriftiness, and agility. However, ranchmen found them lacking in size and appearance, one man recalling them as "small, wiry little beasts capable of strenuous work day after day, but they were hard creatures to look at" (Wyman, 1963: 99).

The idea of "breeding up" the mustang to the desired size and proportion while retaining its stamina had been considered as early as 1835, when an Arkansas writer proclaimed, "There are some horses on the prairies equal to any on earth, particularly for the purpose of crossing" (Wyman, 1963: 119). This "program" was well underway on the Northern Plains by the 1870s, resulting in a variety of regional saddle horse types based on the Indian pony (Remington, 1960; Wyman, 1963).

The Cayuse Indians of the Northwest developed a distinctive type of horse that provided the foundation stock for the nineteenth-century ranchmen on the Northern Plains (Remington, 1960; Wyman, 1963). Lewis and Clark and other early travelers described them as solid-colored with white markings, or as roan, and equal in performance to any horse in the country. By the late nineteenth century, the "Cayuse" was distributed throughout the Northern Plains and was in demand for saddle horse breeding (Wyman, 1963). Frederick Remington described them in 1888:

The cayuse is generally roan in color, with always a tendency this way, no matter how slight. He is strongly built, heavily muscled, and the only bronco which possesses square quarters. In height he is about 14 hands; and while not possessed of the activity of the Texas horse, he has much more power. This native stock was a splendid foundation for the horse breeders of Montana and the Northwest to work on, and the Montana horse of commerce rates very high. This condition is not at all to the credit of the cayuse, but to a strain of horses early imported into Montana from the West and known as the Oregon horse, which breed had its foundation in the mustang (Remington, 1960: 108).

In an interview with Lewis Crawford in 1918, R. N. Sutherland of Great Falls, Montana, discussed the widespread use of the Cayuse-based "Montana horse" in the period 1870-1900. He told the story

of "Spokane, a Montana horse" raised by saloon keepers in Helena and then sent to Kentucky, where he defeated Thoroughbreds on the track, and mentioned that "James Malden on the Beaver Head brought out two Percheron studs in 1875 and started to cross them on Cayuses" (SHSND, Record Group 179).

The crossing of the Cayuse and other Indian strains with draft breeds (primarily Percheron) produced a distinctive type of horse known as the "Puddin Foot" throughout Montana and the Dakotas and, in the Northwest, the "Oregon Lummo" (Wyman, 1963: 104). This type of cross produced a utilitarian, all-purpose horse strong enough for the harness but light enough for a saddle mount. With the coming of large-scale, wealthy ranchers to the north in the period 1870-1900, the Indian horse was crossed with "hot bloods" from the East to produce a tough but more refined animal for range work and the eastern saddle horse market.⁵ For example, a Wyoming newspaper reported in 1881 that a T. A. Kent was crossing California mustang mares with imported stallions to produce for the market what he called "American broncos" (Wyman, 1945: 100).⁶

Remington, whose first-hand descriptions and drawings of nineteenth-century horses constitute an important source of

⁵ "Hot blooded" horses are descended from the refined Andalusian, Arabian, and Thoroughbred breeds, "cold blooded" horses from the draft and pony stock of Northern Europe. Horses of common or unknown breeding are regarded as cold bloods.

⁶ During the nineteenth century, eastern horses such as U.S. Army Thoroughbreds were called "American horses" to differentiate them from Indian ponies. Thus the name "American bronco" designated an animal that was half of each.

information on their type, described the prevalence of cross-breeding the mustang/Indian pony, which he termed "bronco":

In summing up for the bronco, I will say that he is destined to become a distinguished element in the future horse of the continent, if for no other reason except that of his numbers. All over the west he is bred into the stock of the country, and of course always from the side of the dam. . . (1960: 108).

Remington's drawing entitled Northern Plains Cowboy,⁷ reproduced here as Figure 4, depicts a horse typical of the era: big-headed, peak hipped, and rangy--completely different from the heavily muscled and compact modern Quarter Horse (compare with Figure 7). Two of Remington's other drawings, Bronco Busters Saddling (Figure 5) and Thanksgiving Dinner (Figure 6), also illustrate the nineteenth-century ranch horse of the Northern Plains.

Texas cow ponies were introduced into the North by cattlemen in the late nineteenth century and gradually became the ideal. In the Southwest, the nineteenth-century cow pony was of three basic and interrelated types: the true Spanish Mustang, the cross-bred mustang/Indian pony, and the embryonic Quarter Horse (Denhardt, 1947, 1967; Dobie, 1952). In the nineteenth century, the Quarter Horse was a type only; it was not recognized as a true breed until 1941 (Denhardt, 1967). Developed initially as a sprint racer in the Northeast and South, early Quarter Horses traced to Thoroughbred sires. During the breed's modern evolution in the Southwest, the Quarter Horse received an influx of Spanish Mustang blood. Throughout the period 1850-1930, horses of this type were referred to by the name of prominent stallions, which founded

⁷ Northern Plains Cowboy is the title of this drawing as it appears in Frederic Remington's Own West. In Roosevelt's Ranch Life in the Far West it is called Line Riding in Winter.

lineage groups: "Cold Decks," "Steel Dusts," "Copper Bottoms," etc. (Denhardt, 1967; Wyman, 1963). These early Quarter Horses were brought into North Dakota and Montana by agents of the northward expanding cattle industry after 1870. Plate 2, an L. A. Huffman print of a chuck wagon on the Montana range, shows a small, refined, bald-faced horse that appears to be a Texas pony--a cross between the mustang and the early Quarter Horse.⁸ Figure 7 shows the prototypical Quarter Horse of the 1950s.

The memoirs of a nineteenth-century North Dakota rancher document both the use of the true Spanish Mustang in the area and the admiration of ranchers for the early Texas Quarter Horse. In 1955 Wallis Huidekoper, brother and former partner of A. C. Huidekoper in the Little Missouri Horse Company, recalled an occasion on which their foreman, George Woodman, took him on a horse-buying expedition to the Hash Knife Ranch in 1891. The Hash Knife, also known as the Continental Livestock Company, was a Texas-based organization headquartered just south of the North Dakota line near Hettinger. The owners, Hughes and Simpson, ran 60,000 head of cattle on ranges throughout the Dakotas, Montana, and Wyoming in addition to their Texas interests (Crawford, 1931: 488). Huidekoper and Woodman inspected 350 head of their horses with the idea of reselling them to eastern polo players, which proved to be a successful venture. Huidekoper remembered that the Hash Knife cow ponies:

. . . turned out to be as much of the far south as were the men and were an outstanding lot of small, Spanish-

⁸ Mustang traits exhibited by this horse include its size, bald face, and black-lined ears (Spanish Mustang Registry and Stud book; see Appendix A).

type animals, seeming to have inherited and maintained the qualities of their Arab and Barb blood. We could not learn from the ranch hands whether this high quality was due to careful early selection from the Spanish mustang herds or whether a quarter horse cross had been given by such studs as Steel Dust, Shiloh and Monmouth.

* * *
 . . . They were small, well-rounded animals of good colors and in excellent condition; had broad foreheads with nicely set, intelligent eyes, well pointed alert ears, wide nostrils, flat boned straight legs on short bodies with good fronts and quarters. Altogether a most pleasing lot of cow horses, approaching quarter-horse quality. Your author has often wondered if his fraternal ranch brothers realized the importance and necessary part horses of this type played in the development of the cattle west, for no other horse could have served the cowmen so well. Truly the Spaniards built better than they knew when they brought these horses to our shores (Huidekoper, 1955: 65).

In summary, the nineteenth-century ranch horse was the mustang or Indian pony (nearly equivalent terms), sometimes crossed with Thoroughbreds or other breeds. Cross-breeding the Indian horse was a practice introduced by wealthy, large-scale ranchers, and became more common over time. The average nineteenth-century cowboy, caring more for utility than appearance, relied on the so-called "common horse" of no particular breeding other than an inevitable origin in the local stock, such as the "Cayuse" or "Montana horse." Such horses were hardier than their well-bred relations and able to withstand hard riding and the rigors of the winter range with little care. The importation of eastern breeds and the dispersal of the Texas Quarter Horse-type accompanied the rise and diffusion of large-scale cattle ranching in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The outcome of crossing these horses with the Indian pony/mustang produced the typical western ranch horse of the late nineteenth

and early twentieth centuries: "medium-sized, wiry, western-bred horses, a usual cross between a fairly well-bred horse and a bronco" (Wyman, 1963: 100). Horses of this type appear in L. A. Huffman's photograph entitled "The Line Camp" (Plate 3). These horses are larger and longer-bodied than the average Indian horse, yet they have the long head, sloping hip, coarse legs, and overall unrefined appearance of the "common," cross-bred type having its origins in the Indian horse and being the quintessential ranch animal of the late nineteenth century.

Medora Area Ranch Horses, 1880-1900

Written and photographic documentation of nineteenth-century Medora area horses suggests that the standard ranch horse of the era was the Indian horse or "bronco," probably sometimes being the Cayuse-based "Montana horse" common throughout the region. The Indian horse not only constituted a ready supply of animals, but, being accustomed to the country and able to withstand the rigors of range use, was the mount of choice for early-day cattlemen. In western North Dakota the same pattern that developed throughout the northern area is evident: the use of local, mustang-type horses and their gradual crossing or "breeding up" with Texas and eastern animals, to produce the common ranch type of 1880-1900.

The first ranch established in the Medora area was the Custer Trail Ranch, headquartered five miles south of town. (See map [Figure 8] for locations of nineteenth-century ranches in southwestern North Dakota.) The Custer Trail was started in 1880 as a joint venture between the four Eaton brothers and A. C.

Huidekoper, all formerly of Pennsylvania. At that time the Eatons had lived in the area for a number of years, subsisting as frontiersmen and hunting guides. Huidekoper quit the partnership after two years; under the Eatons the Custer Trail became the first dude ranch in the United States and the longest continually operated cattle ranch in North Dakota (Crawford, 1931: 508).

The noted St. Paul photographer T. W. Ingersoll photographed two of the Eaton brothers with their horses in 1883, the year Medora was founded. In Plate 4, Howard, the best known of the brothers, is shown astride a rangy, large-headed grey horse. This horse is clearly of mixed heritage, being much more long-boned and long-bodied than the average Indian horse and showing the effects of an eastern type such as Standardbred (trotters), but lacks true refinement and is "common." In contrast, Plate 5 shows Charlie Eaton beside a small, wiry, multi-colored horse typifying in every aspect the Plains mustang (note also the Spanish saddle with long tapaderos). The photographs of the two brothers document the presence of both the mustang horse and a more cross-bred variety in nineteenth-century western North Dakota; these were typical Northern Plains ranch horses.

Feral sources for some of these horses were indicated by Theodore Roosevelt. In his essay "In the Cattle Country," originally published in 1888, he wrote of the Medora area:

In a great many--indeed, in most--localities there are wild horses to be found, which, although invariably of domestic descent, being either themselves runaways from some ranch or Indian outfit, or else claiming such for their sires and dams, yet are quite as wild as the antelope on whose domain they have intruded. Ranchmen run in these horses whenever possible, and they are but

little more difficult to break than the so-called "tame animals." But the wild stallions are, whenever possible, shot; both because of their propensity for driving off the ranch mares, and because their incurable viciousness makes them always unsafe companions for other horses still more than for men. . . (Roosevelt, 1981: 23).

In describing local ranch horses, Roosevelt had this to say:

Our outfit may be taken as a sample of everyone else's. . . All our four-horse teams are strong, willing animals, though of no great size, being originally just "broncos," or unbroken native horses, like the others (Roosevelt, 1981: 33; emphasis added).

Saddle horses of Roosevelt's Maltese Cross Ranch are shown in Figure 9. The horses are small, with the long mane and tail typical of the mustang/Indian horse type. They appear to be largely solid-colored, although one seems to have a bald face and several have white socks.⁹

The Marquis de Mores, founder of Medora and a consummate horseman, appears to have favored the Indian horse as a mount during his years as a frontier cattleman. A newspaper clipping from the de Mores family album dated 18 August 1883 recounts the visit of an Associated Press party to Medora that summer, during which the Marquis gave them a tour of the developing town. The writer noted that area residents rode "small Indian horses" and that the Marquis provided them with the same for their tour. Members of the party were afraid to mount these animals until a Major Bickham "selected a cream-colored Cayuse called Buckskin" and trotted him up and down the street, "whereupon the timid took courage from his example." The group then proceeded:

"Let me show you my abattoir, refrigerator house, cattle pens, stores and offices," said de Mores, lead-

⁹ The writing on this figure identifying the horses as mustangs was done by Bill Phillips of the BLM.

ing the way to where three ponies--"Indian cayuses"--were hitched. His own riding pony was stout and meddlesome and of a deep cream color.

The writer also remarked that the Marquis was equipped with a Mexican saddle, Spanish bit, horsehair reins, and Navajo blankets (SHSND; Record Group 206; Box 2: de Mores).

It is possible that the aforementioned "cream-colored cayuse" is the horse shown under De Mores (foreground) in Plate 6, a photograph taken by the famous frontier photographer L. A. Huffman. The other horses shown in the photograph are of the same general type: large-headed, peak-hipped "scrub horses" by today's standards, they were the standard western mount of 100 years ago. The bald-faced horse in the right background appears similar to descriptions of the Indian-based Cayuse or "Montana" type; the mount of the heeler shows pony characteristics.

Another photograph of the De Mores outfit taken by L. A. Huffman (Plate 7) shows a variety of types in use, the bald-faced roan on the left being the typical wiry, peak-hipped "bronco," or Indian type, the two others showing the effects of more "hot-blooded" breeding. (Note also that the "bronco" stands heavily laden and ground-tied, while the Thoroughbred-type is tied to the roan's saddle.)

A third Huffman photograph (Plate 8) depicting the De Mores mess wagon shows some of the company's coarse, large harness horses near the wagons, several "common" saddle horses on the bronco order to the right and in the remuda and, partially obscured by his rider, a close-coupled, heavy muscled horse foreshadowing the later Quarter Horse model (to left).

De Mores seems to have had none of the prejudice against the Indian horse that was common of easterners and that might be expected of a European accustomed to riding Thoroughbreds. Evidently he recognized the suitability of the type for the rugged badlands environment, where range riding was an arduous affair requiring a sure-footed and long-winded horse. The Marquis spent a good deal of his time in the saddle and liked to be well-mounted. In addition, it is probable that the old west flavor associated with the "bronco" appealed to the rugged, transplanted Frenchman.

In 1883 de Mores purchased 250 Sioux horses that had been confiscated from Sitting Bull and his sub-chiefs when they surrendered at Fort Buford in 1881 from the post traders, Leighton, Jordan, and Hedderick (Crawford, 1931: 492; Dobie, 1952: 90; Gopen, 1979: 21; Huidekoper, 1955: 64). This purchase included all of the mares; the remaining 120 head owned by the firm were sold to Charles Baldwin along with the trader's ranch on Nessen Flats (Crawford, 1931: 492). Apparently the Marquis intended to begin breeding horses on a large scale, with these Sioux mares as foundation stock (Gopen, 1979: 21). From all accounts De Mores was an excellent rider and judge of horseflesh, one commentator noting that despite his questionable business acumen, it would have been difficult for anyone to have bested him in a horse trade (Dresden, 1946: 155).

A biographer of De Mores makes the claim that he followed the general practice of breeding horses on the range, mare bands being turned loose under the protection of a stallion (Droulers,

1932: 32). Another mentions that at one time De Mores ran large numbers of horses for breeding purposes in addition to 150 head of Montana "broncos" he purchased for his ill-fated stage line, and that large numbers of riders were required to gather them (Dresden, 1946: 173). His foreman, John Goodall, told historian Lewis Crawford on 8 February 1918 that during round-ups,

We worked the mouth of the Little Beaver, up to the head, across from the head of the Little Beaver to the Missouri River, up the Little Missouri to Medora and had a side line running from Wibeaux off to the Yellowstone and down the Yellowstone away (SHSND; Record Group 179).

On 14 February 1884 the Badlands Cowboy printed a lengthy commentary on the merits of the Indian pony, which was possibly authored by either De Mores or A. C. Huidekoper:

"The possibilities of the Sioux pony have never been dreamed of," said a cow-gentleman (one of the aristocracy of the genus cowboy) to a Pioneer Press reporter recently. "You know the old plains saying, 'Let a white man ride an Indian pony until he can't make him move a step further, and, dismounting, give place to a Sioux--the latter will ride the brute thirty miles further that day.' I tell you they're wonderful animals on their native health. They don't seem to take kindly to civilization, I know, but that's because they never had a fair chance. Why, I can call to mind hundreds of feats performed, to remember makes me tired in seven sorts of ways when I read the rot about Arab steeds and desert barbs that the school books are full of."

"Unpromising looking? Well, they are not pretty as a rule, though I've seen some dandies. . . ."

"I'd like to see some attention paid to raising good Sioux ponies. You can't imagine how quickly they show the effects of half-way decent care and plentiful food. Tricky? Well, not so terrible. You see they regard their masters as natural enemies, and treat them accordingly. They are apt to shy badly, but that's because they've stepped into prairie-dog or fox holes occasionally, and every tuft of long grass or mound of gravel creates suspicion. Ilges can tell you how his five companies of infantry got through the terrible

campaign of 1880-81.¹⁰ The dough-boys had Indian ponies for months and the little devils would paw away the snow to get grass--mercury frozen in the tube, mind you--and when they reached Keogh, after the campaign, were actually fat and full of kick"--Pioneer Press.

Although there is little evidence for a tribally-specific horse type among the Sioux, it appears that like other Northern Plains groups they preferred relatively large, loud-colored animals. In a conversation with Charles Deland, Sitting Bull was asked, "Are you a chief by inheritance and if not, what deeds of bravery gave you the title?" "My father's name was 'The Jumping Bull,'" he replied. "My father was a very rich man and owned many ponies in four colors: roans, white, and grey."¹¹

Two of Sitting Bull's confederates, Long Dog and Rain in the Face, are shown horseback in Figures 10 and 11. The horses evince the coarse, rangy build, steeply sloping hips, and large heads synonymous with the term "Indian pony." The dark grey or blue roan horse of Long Dog (Figure 10) represents the heavy end of the spectrum, while the "favorite pony" of Rain in the Face (Figure 11), a bald-faced paint, is smaller and lighter. Compare these horses with THRO park horses shown in Photos No. 114-117.

In two photographs from the De Mores collection, the Marquise is shown with what is presumed to have been her personal

¹⁰ The speaker here is referring to Major Guido Ilges, commander of the Fifth Infantry in a winter campaign against "hostile" Minneconjou and Yanktonais Sioux during 1880-1881. Among other actions, Major Ilges attacked Chief Gall's camp along the Missouri River in Montana on 2 January 1881. The winter was an especially severe one. Horses captured from the Indians were distributed among the scouts and enlisted men. See De Mallie, 1986.

¹¹ North Dakota History, vol. 29, 1962: 219-220 (SHSND). Sitting Bull meant that his father had both blue and red roans in addition to white and grey horses.

saddle horse (Plates 9 and 10). The horse is a coarse, stout little roan, the prototypical bronco or Indian pony. The horse's vigilant attitude reveals a lack of confidence in its station, and it is likely that this horse was of Indian stock, perhaps one of the Sioux ponies purchased in 1883 (most of which would have been broken to ride). It is well known that Medora was proud of her frontier-valued skills as a markswoman and horsewoman; she would have taken pride in commanding such a horse. The square set, large head, roan coloration, and bald face of this animal is strikingly similar to the THRO park type.


The Marquis evidently abandoned the notion of breeding horses on a large scale, perhaps because he was having difficulty keeping track of them. Some of his horses were stolen in February of 1884, prompting him to initiate a long-term vendetta against horse thieves, for which he enlisted the aid of the Pinkerton Detective Agency (Dresden, 1946: 181). In the spring of 1884 his Northern Pacific Refrigerator Car Company advertised horses for sale:

The company advertises for sale its entire lot of horses consisting of 60 mares, about 15 two and three-year olds, 20 yearling colts, 40 American Mares and 3 stallions, one of which is a thoroughbred Clydesdale, one Norman and one Kentucky Messenger. Also 3 pairs of mules. Enquire at the stables of the company, Medora Dak. (Badlands Cowboy, 1 May 1884).

Sylvane Ferris, a cowboy who worked for the OX and Maltese Cross ranches, and who was in the Medora area from 1881 to 1910 (see Figure 9), told Lewis Crawford on 2 April 1918 that De Mores was one of several area ranchers who purchased horses heavily after the bad winter of 1886-87, thinking their raising more profitable

than cattle, as horses more easily withstood severe winters. Evidently the Marquis did not immediately liquidate all of his livestock when he returned to Europe in 1885. De Mores' foreman, John Goodall, mentioned to Crawford that after the Marquis' departure, he "cleaned up all their horses and cattle, in 1897" (SHSND; Record Group 179).

In the summer of 1884, 60 of De Mores' Sioux mares (presumably those advertised for sale) were purchased by A. C. Huidekoper, scion of a wealthy Pennsylvania Dutch family and the earliest large-scale rancher in North Dakota (see Plate 11). Huidekoper first visited the Medora area on a buffalo hunting expedition in 1880 and founded the Custer Trail Ranch in partnership with the Eaton brothers the following year. After dissolving that association in 1882, Huidekoper purchased 23,000 acres of railroad lands in Township 136, Range 102. Through subsequent deals he came to own or control some 70,000 acres, on which he initially ran both cattle and horses. The headquarters of the ranch were located on Deep Creek, 10 miles west of Amidon, the range bounded by the Little Missouri River from Medora to Camp Cook, South Dakota, and from Medora to Gladstone on the Northern Pacific Railroad line (Crawford, 1931: 502; Huidekoper, 1947: 23-24).

This ranch was known as the HT (brand ) , corporate name the Little Missouri Horse Company. The HT was not only the largest horse breeding operation ever run in North Dakota but also one of the largest in the country. "There was no ranch of equal

size and importance east or west."¹² Like several other ranchers, Huidekoper switched entirely to raising horses after the winter of 1886-87; by the time he sold out to Fred Pabst (of brewery fame) in 1906, he was running 4,000 head on unfenced range, "and of course we sold many horses each year" (Huidekoper, 1947: 34).

Huidekoper founded his horse breeding program on Percherons, importing world-class draft stock from France and from eastern breeders. The basis of his saddle stock were 800 "western horses--some Texas and some Indian."¹³ In 1881 he purchased a grey Thoroughbred stallion from Kentucky, grandson of the famous sire Lexington (Huidekoper, 1947; Sellnow, 1985). This horse, named "Bound" but called "Grey Wolf" on the range, was a grey stallion 15.3 hh and proved to be an excellent sire (Huidekoper, 1947: 23).

With De Mores' Sioux mares for sale, Huidekoper decided they would be the ideal cross for the Thoroughbred to produce long-winded, fast saddle horses of a superior type. As Wallis Huidekoper explained:

The horses I handled were of a different type from the general run of cow outfits in that they were picked geldings from mustang mares, bred to a Kentucky thoroughbred race horse, grandson of the great Lexington. The reason for this extreme cross was to obtain a rugged and fast horse capable of long and hard riding and one that could outrun and range-gather scattered manadas and wandering horses. These mounts were just right for this purpose, but too hot-blooded for general cow work.

The mustang mares had an interesting history in that they formerly belonged to Sitting Bull. When that wily Sioux Medicine Man surrendered at Fort Buford the sum-

¹² Fargo Forum 19 (December, n.y.).

¹³ Lewis Crawford interview with HT foreman Frank Roberts, 10 June 1921 (SHSND; Record Group 179).

mer of 1881, after his four years exile in Canada, his ponies were confiscated and sold at public auction. Some 350 of these Indian horses were bought by the post traders, Leighton, Jordan and Hedderick who, a year and a half later, sold 250 head including all mares, to that much talked of adventurer and visionary stockman and founder of the town of Medora, the Marquis de Mores. As these mares were the type wanted by my outfit, the Little Missouri Horse Company, a deal was made with the Marquis whereby some 60 mares were bought, our choice. They were well suited as equine matrons to go with a thoroughbred stud: solid colors, strong and active, uniform in type, good rustlers, and easy keepers. Many were war ponies and had been in the battle of the Little Big Horn, for they carried scars from the rifles of Custer's troopers (Huidekoper, 1955: 64).

The production of Sioux-Thoroughbred crosses, which Huidekoper called "American horses," soon became a major focus of the ranch operation. Many were shipped east to be sold as polo ponies, one selling for \$1,500 and another for \$2,500 (Huidekoper, 1924: 35).

HT horses were also sold locally. Lincoln Lang, a rancher contemporary with Huidekoper and Roosevelt, described a saddle horse he had that often tried to run away with him: "Of a sullen temperament, this animal was a cross between Kentucky racing stock and a mustang mare, showing every indication of speed" (Lang, 1926:288). Lang also recounted that in general,

The western range horses of the early days usually comprised an intermixture of breeds. . . . As a rule, the aboriginal strain was present to a greater or lesser extent. Sooner or later, it was likely to crop out, usually to your disadvantage (Lang, 1926:285).

A horse that appears to be of such mixed breeding appears with Charlie Burdick in Plate 17, a photograph taken in nineteenth-century Medora. The horse is long-legged, lightly muscled, and narrow in the chest, characteristics associated with the

Thoroughbred breed. The horse is taller than a Texas or mustang-based cow pony, yet retains the unrefined head and overall appearance of a "common" horse of indeterminate breeding.

A contemporary observer described the visit of photographer T. W. Ingersoll to the HT:

Since the horses were the main attraction on the ranch, Ingersoll took pictures of the horses. At one time a hundred or more were being driven over rocky ridges of the Badlands by cowboys heading for the HT barns. One could see the beauty and activeness of those Sioux mares and their offspring. Mr. Huidekoper had purchased these fine mares from the Indians and bred them with racing thoroughbreds and Percheron stallions from Kentucky. The colts, a strong, active lot he called "American Horses," made fine range riding horses and back east they sold well for athletic purposes. They were of many colors including greys, buckskins, sorrels, pintos, strawberry roans, and roans. Many had white faces. . . (Noyce, 1959:34).

Several of the Ingersoll photographs are reproduced here. In Plate 12, a group of about 40 mares, presumably the above-mentioned Sioux mares, are being driven over a rise. Plate 13 shows a group of range mares with a Percheron stallion named "Napoleon." The mares appear to be of various types; some may be "Oregon" mares (also of Indian origin) that Huidekoper purchased to cross with his stallions (Huidekoper, 1947: 34).

Plate 14 is the only documented photograph of a Sioux-Thoroughbred cross bred by the HT. The rider is ranch foreman George Woodman. In size and overall conformation, this horse seems to favor the Thoroughbred sire although the hip, neck, and somewhat "common" appearance of the horse is suggestive of an Indian type. Note also that the horse may have a glass (blue) eye. Wallis Huidekoper inscribed on the back of the photograph

that this horse was "typical" of the Sioux-Thoroughbred crosses; if so, the Sioux mares must have been better proportioned than the average Indian pony. The horse is well built for the era.

Two additional photographs that are probably from the same series are reproduced here as Plates 15 and 16. In Plate 15, several HT riders are posed with their horses in front of a ranch barn. Another possible Sioux-Thoroughbred cross appears third from left. This horse has the roan coloration and bald face of an Indian horse (characteristics that have been eliminated in most recognized breeds), yet the size, length, and shoulder of a Thoroughbred. The bald-faced roan third from the right could have a similar background (note hip). The small black horse second from the right appears to be on the order of a mustang-based Texas pony, while the more heavily muscled dappled grey approaches the early Quarter Horse type.

Plate 16 depicts a group of HT employees and wives standing outside of a sod-covered ranch house. The horse in this photograph is the archetypal large-headed, small roan "bronco" or Indian type. Note the similarity between this horse and the one descending the hill in Plate 11; also compare this horse to the one shown with the Marquise in Plates 9 and 10.

It is possible that some of De Mores' and Huidekoper's horses became feral, joining up with the wild stock extant in the area. During the open range era such losses were not uncommon, Roosevelt commenting that "every outfit always has certain of its horses at large; and if they remain out long enough they become as wild and wary as deer and have to be regularly run down and sur-

rounded" (Roosevelt, 1981: 20). Most ranch stock was range-bred, and it was the instinct of the wild stallions to gather free-roaming mares. In describing his production of "American horses" (the Sioux crosses), A. C. Huidekoper said:

The breeding of this herd was a most interesting problem. With the exception of some full-blooded stallions, the rest of the herd ran at large. . . .

The ranch work commenced with the spring round-up. The country was ridden for 100 miles square, or more. We had out-lying camps known as the "Spear" and the "Buffalo Spring" ranches. The colts were branded and tallied. Then some 50 mares were selected and a stallion selected that we thought would improve the confirmation [sic] of the breeding. This stallion and his harem were put in charge of a cowboy, and for a week were herded by day and corralled at night. At the end of a week, the stallion would know his mares. . . . He would take them to some location favored by him, and there you would find him with his herd during breeding season; after the breeding season they might separate into smaller bunches. . . . After the different stallions were located with their herds, it was almost as easy to find a herd as to find a man in the directory. You might have to ride fifty miles, but you would find him at the selected spot (Huidekoper, 1947: 35).

Pennsylvania artist Thomas Eakins spent three months in the Little Missouri Badlands, from 26 July to 20 October 1887. Eakins repaired to the BT Ranch along Magpie Creek (west of Grassy Butte) to recuperate from a professional set-back and to prepare photographs and paintings of cowboy life. Eight of Eakins' letters from his Dakota sojourn were recently published, along with accompanying photographs (Leibold, 1988). In several of his letters, Eakins expressed enthusiasm for the ranch horses; he evidently purchased two of them and had them shipped east on a cattle car. On 28 August 1887, Eakins wrote to his wife:

I am going to bring my own horse back with me for a model. He is a broncho, a very beautiful and good type of cow boy horse, also a mustang, a small Indian pony,

the ugliest you ever saw but a fine cow horse. This Indian pony is exceedingly tough, funny, and good natured and is for Fanny and the children to ride. I bought him from little George Wood after he was done with him. The broncho is a grey & looks something like the Susie horse I once took down to the farm. . . (Leibold, 1988:5).

On 7 September 1887 Eakins wrote his wife that "I rode my little pony all day with rifle & cartridges & he came in on the full run, in spite of my weight." His letters contain frequent mention of searching for stray ranch horses, including the remark on 7 September: "Day before yesterday I rode close to the Killdeer Mountains hunting the same horses. We went again 60 miles. It seems to me we always go that far when we go for those horses" (ibid.).

Crawford (1931) states that most of the ranch horses brought into western North Dakota in the late nineteenth century came from Texas, Colorado, Idaho, and Montana. W. B. Galligan, who worked for the Hash Knife, told Crawford that in 1900 the HT bought 630 horses at \$20 each from the Spearhead Ranch, which had imported them from Idaho (SHSND, Record Group 179). John Goodall, De Mores' foreman and later a rider for the HT, also mentioned foundation stock being brought in from Idaho (SHSND, Record Group 179).

A considerable number of horses were brought into western North Dakota from Texas during the period 1870-1900. Virtually all of the Texas cattle operations that expanded north brought their own saddle stock; later horses were also brought for sale. For example, the Reynolds Brothers (Long X Ranch), who drove three herds to Grassy Butte per year in the 1880s and 1890s, trailed up

1800 head of Texas horses in 1892 (Crawford, 1931: 495). The standard procedure was for northern ranches to purchase trail horses along with delivered cattle. H. H. Peays, who arrived in Medora on 21 August 1884 with a herd of Texas cattle for the OX Ranch told Crawford on 26 December 1923:

After we turned the cattle over to the OX we also turned over 87 head of horses used on the trail. The OX had bought these horses in the Panhandle at the same time they had engaged the cattle, at so much a head on delivery (SHSND; Record Group 179).

Dobie (1934: 314) estimates that as many as a million Texas horses left that state on nineteenth-century cattle drives and makes the claim that "nearly all were of the mustang breed." Wyman explains that the ranchers "not only took good horses with them, but they also purchased heavily from the Spanish" (1963: 98).

We have already seen that at least one area ranch, the Hash Knife, did bring the Texas mustang to North Dakota for use as cow ponies. As the nineteenth century advanced, Texas horses probably carried increasing amounts of early Quarter Horse blood.

William "Badlands Bill" McCarty, perhaps the most well-known twentieth-century Medora cowboy, arrived in North Dakota from Texas around the turn of the century (see Plates No. 18 and 19). He made his living as a horse trader and rancher, eventually purchasing the Custer Trail Ranch. For many years McCarty captured wild horses in the badlands, and is well remembered for his frontier skills and unusual personality.

McCarty was a bona fide old-time mustanger (wild horse catcher) and horse dealer in the southwestern tradition. In 1901

he trailed 1,000 head of solid-colored Texas horses up the Chisholm Trail and into North Dakota, selling the entire lot within two weeks. His own horse, "Alamagordo," may be taken as an example of Texas horses at that time. According to McCarty, Alamagordo was a dark brown animal captured wild in Mexico at age 5; his dam was a mustang mare, his sire a Steel Dust and Copper-bottom bred stallion (early Quarter Horse sires). McCarthy purchased him for \$40 and used him to chase wild horses and cattle. In advanced old age the horse won a roping contest in Dickinson (Crawford interview with McCarty, 24 May 1921; SHSND, Record Group 179, #33).

[3] Western North Dakota Horses, 1900-1947

Several national and international events affected horse types in western North Dakota during the early twentieth century: the influx of European homesteaders who practiced farming, the development of mechanization, World War I and other conflicts, and the Depression. Thus work horses came into vogue alongside the rancher's cow pony, the market for both fluctuated in concert with national economic trends, and many horses were abandoned during the drought- and depression-riddled decade of the 1930s. Based largely on information provided by ranchers and horsemen who lived through the early twentieth century in western North Dakota, this section examines horses of that era, both wild and domestic. A list of informants who provided information is provided in the Acknowledgements that precede the text of this study. For further information about twentieth-century ranchers in the study area, see Johnston, Harry V., 1942; Johnston, Andrew, 1956; Noyce, 1959; and Shafer, 1963.

Domestic Horses

With the influx of German, Russian, Bohemian, and other European farmers around the turn of the century, the draft horse came into prominence in western North Dakota. Many ranchers and horsemen began breeding horses for the work-horse market. Raymond Carson (Grassy Butte) states:

A lot of studs were shipped in--everyone tried to upgrade their stock to sell to farmers. Percheron, Belgian, and some Shire studs were brought in. Percherons were the favorite horse in this country--they

had enough action to use as a saddle horse, especially when crossed.

According to informants, Red Murphy raised Percherons on the open range and sold them halter broke; Sam Wilson's family at Sentinel Butte raised Percheron and Morgan teams, as did William Connolly. Pete Northrup raised cross-bred Belgians; George Porter near Crosby Creek and M. C. Tescher near Sentinel Butte raised Percherons.

Harry Roberts (son of HT foreman Frank Roberts) said that circa 1910-1920, "A fellow came down once or twice a year from Canada and bought horses and ponies all the time for the Canadian wheat farms." Matched teams sold for a premium, but even cross-bred draft types and some captured feral animals sold well as work and saddlestock to early homesteaders. Somewhat later, the Hendersons and Fettigs near Killdeer ran large numbers of draft and cross-bred draft horses on Ft. Berthold Reservation prior to the building of the Garrison dam. These horses were sold to draying operations and fire departments; crossed with Indian and "common" stock, they also became the nucleus of rodeo bucking strings throughout western North Dakota and eastern Montana. Hambletonian trotters were a popular light team type during the early twentieth century. Mules were also fairly widespread.

During the 1920s and 1930s many ranchers in southwestern North Dakota participated in the Cavalry Remount Service. This was a U.S. Army program created in the aftermath of a huge demand for horses during World War I (Wyman, 1945: 125). Under this system the government issued stallions, usually Thoroughbreds or

Morgans, to remount stations and individuals to breed on their mares. The government then retained the right to purchase the offspring. However, army standards regarding size, color, and conformation were rather rigorous, and comparatively few horses were selected; participants viewed the program as a way to improve their saddle stock. According to informants, remount stallions were often crossed on Indian or "common" mares to produce saddle horses. Men who had remount stallions in the area included Connolly, Murphy, Tutley, Neuens, Lillibridge, and Mosser.

Ranch and saddle horses of the early twentieth century seem to have remained very similar to their nineteenth-century predecessors: Indian or "common" horses of indeterminate breeding, sometimes cross-bred to "better" stallions. This type of horse was raised (sometimes caught) and used not because people admired their looks, but because they were tough enough to withstand hard riding and minimal care in a rugged environment. Most informants expressed a strong preference for the modern Quarter Horse, but all admired the fortitude of the early stock.

In his memoirs, Medora-area rancher Harry Johnston recalled:

At seven I owned my first colt and at nine I traded the colt to my Dad for a two year old Indian pony which I called Daisy. Daisy was the first real horse I owned that I could ride, and I'll never forget the little sure-footed strawberry roan mare (Johnston, 1942:73).

Johnston also recalled that early in the twentieth century his family raised saddle horses by acquiring a band of Indian mares from the Crow reservation in Montana and crossing them with an 1800-pound black Percheron stallion (Johnston, 1942:306).

Christ Lee arrived in North Dakota in 1892 and ranched near Killdeer throughout the early twentieth century. His mount was "a good roan saddle horse I got from an Indian" (Shafer, 1963: 21).

Rancher and veterinarian John Robinson came to the badlands in 1883 and initially raised range (common) horses for the saddle horse market. When the demand for draft stock peaked in the 1890s, Robinson switched his breeding program accordingly but lamented,

It was not long following this change that we realized the contrast between the range type and the barn-yard raised horse. With the range herd we were free from lameness, or any form of unsoundness, while the draft horse seemed to be subject to sidebones, spavins, stifle trouble (gonitis), some of which may have been due to naval illness, developed at time of foaling around the barnyard or corral. Then foaling presented a problem that never gave us much concern with the range mare. . . (Shafer, 1963:82).

In Plate 19, Bill McCarty is shown at a horse sale in Dickinson around the turn of the century. McCarty's mount is a small, fine-boned animal with a large head along the mustang order. The saddle horses being sold in the arena are mature, solid-colored animals with large heads and are somewhat small in stature. The sorrel horse in the foreground, while having a large, "common" head, displays the conformation of an early Quarter Horse type. The origin of the horses is unknown; it is possible that they were horses McCarty brought up from Texas, as he frequently drove southwestern horses into North Dakota to sell as a young man.

Plate No. 34 is a photograph of horses at a Dickinson sales facility circa 1907. No draft animals appear in the photograph. The horses are again light-weight, solid-colored saddle horse

types, many somewhat small, but most are well-bred in appearance.

The photographer and the event are unknown.

In The Mustangs, Dobie states that the ranchers of western North Dakota used horses descended from the Sioux-Thoroughbred crosses bred by DeMores and Huidekoper:

When, after four years of exile in Canada, Sitting Bull of the Sioux finally, in 1881, surrendered at Fort Buford, North Dakota, his war ponies were sold at auction and bought for a song by post traders. The mares went to that fantastic character, the Marquis de Mores of Medora. Then the Little Missouri Horse Company topped these mares and bred them to a Kentucky Thoroughbred stallion. Among them were grullos and buckskins with black stripe down the back. Some showed scars from the bullets of Custer's troopers. In the terrible winter of '86-87, which killed a great majority of cattle on all northern ranges, these little Sioux mares survived. Their clean-boned, strong, fast, long-winded offspring are still a tradition among Dakota ranch people (Dobie, 1952 [orig. pub. 1934]: 90).

Harry Roberts described the HT ranch horses, and those used in the first half of the present century:

The HT had Percherons, especially grey, 1,800 pounds and up, with lots of hair on their feet. They had one Thoroughbred stallion, one Arabian type, some Quarter Horse type, some with Indian blood, and good common horses. My father had a thoroughbred pacer. Those that could bought their saddle horses from the ranch.

It was very common to breed Indian mares to Thoroughbred studs in the early days; they got good results, tough horses. The HT had a Thoroughbred stud which was bred to common mares--two of the colts had plumb white heads. There were a lot of bald-faced horses in the old days; they reminded people of Herefords, they didn't like that.

Those common horses, Indian horses, were good travelers and a good, sensible horse. I had an Indian horse--I didn't catch him, I got him from another rancher. He could go 5 miles without letting up; he wasn't the fastest horse, but he would out-do the rest.

The HT horses ranged all over; south and west. We used to ride 30-50 miles a day; probably an average of 20 miles in a work day. I had a horse that trotted 50 miles in 5 hours and a team of blacks--they were small,

but good--who went 50 miles in 7 hours. We used to go to Dickinson and back in 3 days from near Amidon.

Mr. Roberts stated that he felt that the THRO horses are representative of the early Indian-based ranch horse. When shown photographs of THRO horses, he said, "Oh yes, those are the old-time horses. They sure do look different from other horses." When asked if he thought that the park horses could still have some of the early Indian horse blood, perhaps even be partially descended from the Sioux mares his father managed at the HT, he answered, "I'm sure of that." No other informants mentioned the HT horses.

John Pusenchenko, whose parents homesteaded near Grassy Butte in 1912, is a former saddle bronc rider now living essentially as a recluse in the same area. A lifelong horseman, Mr. Pusenchenko was known for his herds of paint horses, which grew so large that they were forceably removed from his property 15 years ago. Pusenchenko trapped beaver at age 14 to raise enough money to buy his first horse, a multi-colored paint colt "out of a white Indian mare." He bought "Old Paint" from Charley Armstrong, one of the first settlers of Grassy Butte and an old man in the 1930s. Armstrong claimed to have been raised by Indians and told Pusenchenko that he got his horses "in South Dakota when the government took away the Sioux ponies." (Informants remembered Armstrong as having had "Indian-type" horses, but not many. He was evidently a small-time trader who mainly kept horses for his own use.) Pusenchenko was asked to comment on local saddle stock in the period 1920-1940:

The first horses around here were bound to have Indian blood. There were wild horses in the badlands and Killdeer mountains. There were a lot of paints and Indian horses early on. There were quite a few roans, especially strawberry roans--Indian horses. The blooded horses didn't come until later. I had a roan horse, "Skid"; he was just a horse. There were some bald-faced roans; they were considered "throwbacks." They also had a few Morgan horses in this country, but most were common horses. A "Montana horse" is a common horse. The common horses were it early on. They made the best damn saddle horses--they're a special kind of horse--Indian horses--they're tough. They were better than the bred-up Quarter Horses--rugged--you couldn't kill them. . . . They had some good saddle horses around here: Quarter Horses, American Saddlebreds, but most were the common horse. The Thoroughbred is a good horse when crossed with common mares. But the studs mainly came from somewhere else.

Bruce Northrup's family settled in Grassy Butte in 1910; his father crossed Belgians with "common" horses and used "grade mares" for saddle horses. At one time they bred these mares to a paint stallion owned by Walt Ray, which looked "like a Quarter Horse; he was chunky." They sold some paint horses to a mid-western buyer in the 1940s. Their neighbors had remount stallions (Thoroughbreds) that were bred to Morgan mares; the colts were sold to the Army. Northrup described the type of horse ranchers rode when he was young as "Big headed and rangy. Maybe a bald face and one or two socks."

Sid Connell, who ranches south of Medora, remembered horses being abandoned in the 1920s and 1930s "because they were switching to machinery. Before that draft horses were worth a lot of money, also saddle stock. One man had Morgans. . . . The Tutleys and the Neuens had Morgan-type remount studs. Most of the early horses were rangy, many were baldfaced, and roans."

Jim Connolly's (Dunn Center) father William rode with Theodore Roosevelt. Connolly stated that many people crossed Thoroughbred stallions (especially the government horses) on Indian mares and that the average ranch horse was a "common horse":

They were tough, and good saddle horses. Common horses couldn't stand prosperity. They didn't need oats, hay, or to live in a barn. No horse today could take that much abuse.

Jack Murphy (Killdeer, son of Red Murphy) stated that his father raised Percherons and bought his saddle-stock, Thoroughbreds, and Thoroughbred crosses from Fort Keogh, Montana. He also participated in the Remount Program. The Murphys branded as many as 450 colts every year. Jack Murphy much prefers a modern Quarter Horse-Thoroughbred cross but also liked

the old common saddle horses. The older type was tough. They weren't fast, but they could go all day and the next, they were good horses. Now horses can't go like that. . . . Fifty years ago a guy had a flea-bitten grey gelding, his tail dragged the ground. He beat everyone roping--a common horse.

Murphy believes the THRO horses to be a remnant group of early ranch-type horses, "the same horses everyone rode."

Rancher Raymond Carson (Grassy Butte) also prefers a modern Quarter Horse to the old Indian-type or "common" horse but said,

The best horse I ever had was an absolute Indian pony. We called him Pluto; my Dad got him from Chaloner when he [the horse] was 20 years old. He was the ugliest, and also the best, horse I ever threw a leg over. He was the fastest walking horse I ever seen; also the most nondescript. He was only about 900 pounds--a linebacked buckskin, slim, with a roman nose and a "tom cat" rear end. He could run, cut cattle, do anything, he was so smart. He had an ugly head and was always thin--all he ever had was abuse. I'd give any amount

of money for a horse like that, I've never seen a horse like him.

On early horses in general Carson said:

Well, a lot of them might have been Indian horses because native Indian mares may have been just running around. . . . At one time they were a lot more valuable.

One old guy about a mile north of Grassy Butte raised polo ponies; he trained them and shipped them back east. It was the last nineteenth-century ranch, owned by a New York outfit, I think. The mares were just unknown and he imported studs.

The old stock were hardy horses--they could go without much grass. The wild ones were the ruination of cattlemen, they ate out everything and could go so far from water.

There used to be a lot of linebacked buckskins. The park horses are just old-time ranch horses; you couldn't get anything for them now.

Ed Newcomb (Grassy Butte) believes the park horses are the last of the turn-of-the-century ranch and wild horses (the types being the same early on; see "Wild Horses"). He said of the early type:

People bragged about the badlands horses--called them "broncos," they were so tough. You knew they were mustangs. A lot went down south--they were shipped there, especially the bigger work horses.

Newcomb and others described the horses of early Grassy Butte ranchers:

Bill Chaloner had a ranch near the present North Unit, and ran a ferry across the Little Missouri River during the period 1924-1928. He homesteaded on Dry Creek. In the 1930s his son was killed after being trapped beneath a fallen horse at the bottom of a wash; this story was published several years ago using fictional names. Newcomb called him "quite a horseman" and said he had "Indian type ponies; paints. He also had some Morgan saddlestock.

Horse thieves were his main concern--he was always watching for them even after there weren't any anymore." Pusenchenko remembers him as having had a paint stallion called "Old Baldy" with a white head and white feet, a white streak on one side, and two glass (blue) eyes, and also a black and white stallion. Pusenchenko called them the "Indian type."

L. M. Barnhart had "mustang Indian pony types; not a lot. He got most of his horses by catching wild ones" (Newcomb). Northrup said the Barnhart horses were "the Indian pony type; pintos and baldfaced horses."

Lillibridge. Dry Creek country. Had Quarter Horses, also common horses. "He bred common mares--the Indian blood always showed. Sam Rhodes ran horses out there too; the Quarter Horse type. Rhodes used to buy Lillibridge horses to buck" (Newcomb).

Sackett. Bennett-Creek/Sheep Creek divide; Stone Hills to the park. In 1927, while gathering horses, Newcomb ran into the Sacketts driving a large bunch of horses to the Dickinson railroad. They had "common horses; mustangs." When they moved out, the horses were left to run free; Newcomb helped gather them for Jack Steel, a relative of the Sacketts. "Someone finally canned them, I suppose."

Stevensons. Had lots of horses in the 1920s, "common horses, mustangs--there was some Welsh in some of them." They ran the range near Red Wing Creek and Bollen Creek. "There was a beautiful one now and then." They were "sold out and canned" (Newcomb).

Phil Christensen. Most informants from the Grassy Butte-Killdeer area commented on the number of horses Christensen had and his

cruel treatment of them. Newcomb called him "the meanest man that ever walked, to a horse." Northrup, Carson, Pusenchenko, and Murphy made similar remarks. Newcomb said he "built a horse trap in the hills and branded slicks. He had a trap around a bend on a horse trail--a wide, flat draw with a fence on both sides."

Pusenchenko thought he had about 300 head; Newcomb said he had "more than the land could carry." His horses were "the old type, plain mustangs." Pusenchenko remembered them as "mainly greys and browns." Informants state that Christensen cut the eyelids on mares that he couldn't catch to make them blind and chained their feet until "they swelled up and died." When Christensen died, the U.S. Forest Service gathered and sold them in one big bunch--"they also just shot them."

John Pusenchenko. Newcomb says that Pusenchenko's horses were "not the real old-type horses. Casey Tibbs always said his goal was to have a Cadillac; Pusenchenko wanted a herd of paints, and both got them." Pusenchenko said he cross-bred his paints to American Saddlebreds, Morgan, and Thoroughbred stallions. He "just liked to look out and see my horses--between 100 and 200 head."

Sam Rhodes. Mr. Rhodes came to North Dakota on a cattle drive from Texas with 3500 steers for the Long X ranch in the late nineteenth century. For a time he had a ranch near Grassy Butte; later he ranched in the Killdeer Mountains and served as the local sheriff. He built the rodeo arena in Killdeer and produced the first rodeos in that area. Rhodes Township and Rhodes School are named after him; he was one of the most respected ranchers and

horsemen in western North Dakota. Informants were asked to comment on the horse that appears with Rhodes in Plate 20 and that bears a strong resemblance to Leo Kuntz's park horse "Bad Toe":

Newcomb:

He [Rhodes] rode common horses, the same type that everyone else had here. Those horses were caught, canned, and shot; now they are very seldom seen. He also had some Quarter Horse types. The horse in the photo was called "Baldy" (there were about 10 million "Baldys" in this country). I seen him ride that horse many times; it was his favorite. He died underneath him of a heart attack. Rhodes was good to horses, he didn't overwork them. I think Baldy came out of Littlebridge's string. There might have been a little Percheron in there, way back. . . .

Carson:

He must have been a heck of a horse. What old Sam rode, everyone rode. Usually his horses had a short tendon bone and big feet--his last horse was a big bay built like that. He was always considered the best mounted man in the country--others wanted to hide when he rode up.

Pusenchenko:

The horse was "Baldy," an old-time horse. The picture was taken northeast of the rodeo grounds.

Connolly (didn't see photo):

Rhodes had hammerheads--great buckers. Once they stopped bucking, everyone wanted them for saddle horses. He also had some Quarter Horses.

Alvin Tescher remembered that Louis Pelissier, a respected Medora cowboy in the early twentieth century (see Plates No. 21 and 22), had "a lot of bald faced horses; maybe 50 out of 200." Tom Tescher stated that "except for draft horses, the common horse was pretty much what everyone had early on."

Since the 1940s the Quarter Horse has been the horse of choice for North Dakota ranchers, as elsewhere (see Figure 7).

Because they are bred and built for short bursts of speed, Quarter Horses excel at arena events such as roping (e.g. Denhardt, 1967). To the modern cowboy, the appearance of a horse is an important attribute. While virtually all informants mentioned that the modern ranch horse lacks the stamina and hardiness of the old "common" or Indian type, these qualities are unnecessary for contemporary ranch work. Horses of the earlier type are occasionally used today on large, isolated ranches in rugged country or as rodeo bucking stock. None of the ranchers interviewed for this study use them; they are considered relics of an earlier era.

Wild Horses

Wild horses occurred throughout the Northern Plains well into the twentieth century. Such horses were often estrays from ranch stock. As in the Southwest, the rounding up and handling of these animals became an integral aspect of ranching culture. Robert Eigell worked for the CBC Ranch of eastern Montana, which specialized in both raising and capturing horses for the slaughter market during the 1930s. In his first-hand account of Montana ranch life, Eigell says of the northern herds:

While there may be direct descendants of the original Spanish mustangs in the southwestern U.S., the wild horses found on the northern ranges were the descendants of range horses that went feral in areas and under conditions conducive to such reversion to the wild state. In many cases, the range stock from which these wild horses descended was common knowledge. This does not in any way detract from, or greatly change, the ancestry of the northern wild horse from that of the southwestern wild horse. The range horses brought north were also direct descendants from the early Spanish horses first introduced into North America (Eigell, 1987:161).

Wyman (1965:286-89) states that estrays from northern ranches mingled with extant wild herds to produce a "superior" strain of feral horses that clearly showed their dual heritage.

The wild horses found in the Little Missouri Badlands when THRO was created in 1947 were evidently an enclave population--the last of several feral groups that once occurred throughout the western half of the state. The horses were descended from ranch stock that had become feral throughout the period 1900-1947, possibly mixed with wild horses already extant during the Roosevelt era. By 1947 their range had become constricted to the inaccessible badlands surrounding Medora.

A former rancher described the range of feral horses in southwestern North Dakota in this way:

There were some in Beisigel Creek and Magpie Creek that were troublesome for a few years. Then there were some on the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation that ran in the river breaks from Bear Den Creek to the breaks east of Boggy Creek and it took quite a few years in getting those cleaned up.

The largest band of them was on the bank of the west side of the Little Missouri River in the Beaver Creek and Dry Creek Country. I think those were strung up and down the river breaks for twenty miles or more. They were great sport for the person interested that liked to run wild horses for a large number of years (Johnston, 1965:484).

Most people interviewed for this study believed that wild horses have been present in the badlands continuously since the nineteenth century, although few were old enough to have observed them prior to circa 1920. Brothers Jim, Alvin, and Tom Tescher (see Figure 12) have been more intimately associated with area wild horses than anyone and learned about chasing and handling these animals from men such as Hugh Armstrong, Louis Pelissier,

and "Badlands Bill" McCarty. Alvin Tescher began observing and chasing horses in the late 1930s and says, "I know they were there way before my time, because I heard the older men talk about them when I was young." A Bismarck Tribune article chronicling the 1954 THRO horse round-up dated 4 May 1954 notes that older participants in that event reminisced about a wild horse round-up they had staged circa 1915. Tom Tescher told the Brainard Daily Dispatch (2 November 1981) that he had become interested in wild horses because of an experience he had as a first-grader:

We drove by car over to the Petrified Forest (area that is now within the boundaries of the national park) and as we came over the hill there was this wild stallion with his band of mares looking right at us. . . . It just did something to me.

Wyman (1936: 144) states, "The whole history of the wild horse is tied up with the range and the price of horses." Medora area ranchers and cowboys have always interacted with wild horses because they captured them for sale and, to a lesser extent, for use. The Boer War, the Spanish invasion of the Phillipines in 1898, and World War I created enormous demand for horses; millions were exported from the U.S., and a significant number of those were captured wild (Dobie, 1952; Ryden, 1970; Wyman, 1963). Harry Roberts, son of HT foreman Frank Roberts, remembers Medora-area horses being purchased for the wars: "During the Boer War they took a lot of saddle horses. They bought a truckload at a time from the HT, unbroke."

Prior to World War I the domestic saddle horse market was strong, and many horses were shipped from western ranges to the east and south (Wyman, 1963); many informants remembered North

Dakota exporting both saddle and work stock. However, the horse market collapsed during the post-war years. Crawford (1931: 509) noted that

Since 1917, when America entered the World War, there has been no demand for horses at any price. Mixed bands of good horses had been previous to this time worth \$75 to \$85 a round. After the close of the war a similar band would not sell for \$10. Many cars of horses, five and six years old, halter broke, have been shipped to central and eastern states within recent years, where they did not bring enough to pay the freight. Many horses have been killed and fed to hogs or used for fox food, just to get them off the range. This is one of the best horse countries in the world, but the auto, the truck and the tractor have deprived the horse grower of an outlet for his product.

Saddle horses dropped to as low as \$2.50 a head during the economically depressed decade of the 1930s; the mechanization of farming destroyed the work horse market (Wyman, 1963; Ryden, 1970). In 1934 42% of the people in Billings County were on relief, and the "the drought reduced the grazing potential of the land to the point where the ranchers were almost out of business."¹⁴ Many farmers and ranchers abandoned their property in western North Dakota, including livestock. In 1931 Crawford wrote:

The taxes and interest on the investment in lands have been too high to make ranching profitable. The range counties are bare of cattle and county commissions are acquiring much land by tax title. In the meantime, grass is going to waste or is eaten by straggling bands of horses that no one is anxious to claim (Crawford, 1931: 513).

It was the pet food industry (first chicken feed, then cat and dog food) that provided a market for unwanted horses beginning in the 1920s. This market created an incentive for clearing the

¹⁴ Echoing Trails: Billings County History. Medora: Billings County Historical Society, 1979. P. 37.

western ranges of free-roaming horses, a process that succeeded so well that by 1970 such animals were nearly gone (Wyman, 1963; Ryden, 1970). This industry continues to serve the necessary function of absorbing unwanted equines, both domestic and wild. In southwestern North Dakota, people have been capturing feral horses for slaughter sale since the 1930s.

Lola Lindbo's parents homesteaded north of the South Unit of THRO in 1908; she was born there in 1911. She stated that when her family settled in the badlands there were "lots" of wild horses; when they arrived there were two cowboys living within a mile of the Lindbo ranch who had built wild horse traps inside the present park boundary and made their living capturing and selling them:

They had hired men to work for them--single men--to round-up and break the horses to sell at the railroad. They worked in crews of 8, and shipped them from Belfield for eastern markets.

Mrs. Lindbo (and other informants) also remembers Fred Gorham (who arrived in the area circa 1898) as having made money catching and selling wild horses: "He built 8 big cottonwood corrals in a long valley and would halter break them and lead them to Belfield." Henry Fritz was another wild horse catcher she remembers.

According to Mrs. Lindbo, in the early days homesteaders would keep two of their horses near the house to haul water, wood, mail, etc., and turn the mares into the badlands to winter and breed with the wild studs, recatching them in March or April. "Ranchers wanted this, they could sell the colts for \$25.00." For example, a B.J. Ditterman had a diversified (dry goods) store, and he would take horses in trade.

The first wild horses Mrs. Lindbo remembers her parents discussing were "line-backed buckskins; the rest were browns; the greys came later." In a short book titled Origin of the Park Horses (1988), Lindbo provides her personal opinion of that matter and of management issues regarding the horses. She claims that wild horses have been in the badlands since before her family arrived in the area and provides a brief account of the Gorham and Fritz operations. She suggests that grey park horses descended from a draft stallion that her family released in the area circa 1930. Lindbo is critical of THRO round-ups and of the park's policy of introducing outside stallions. She is particularly critical of the introduction of Tiger Tu, a purebred Arabian, claiming that the horse cannot compete with the other stallions and seeks the companionship of humans and domestic horses.

Sid Connell, who ranches south of Medora, said that in the 1910s and 1920s "people did not let their horses go; they were too valuable," but "there were always a few wild horses, especially to the west." During that time a man from Montana who lived 10 miles south of Connell's bought wild and Indian horses, broke them, and shipped them off for sale. Ed Titus and Bill McCarty also caught and sold feral horses; both were horse traders. Early on these horses were broke for saddle or work stock. In the 1930s some homesteaders left, abandoning their horses, and the horse market collapsed. Then free-roaming horses were sold for slaughter: "It wasn't worth the time to break them."

Sam Wilson, lifelong rancher at Sentinel Butte (000 Ranch) remembers wild horses from his childhood. He saw wild horses in

the badlands and in the 1920s found a wild blue roan mare 10 miles east of Sentinel Butte that had died foaling. Mr. Wilson recalled a group of 30-35 wild line-backed buckskins near Terry, Montana, north of Miles City, that no one could catch (other informants also mentioned these horses). He stated that there were "lots" of wild horses throughout the badlands in the 1920s and "even more" in the 1930s, when farm and ranch stock were abandoned. He remembers several men who chased and sold wild horses during that time: "Everyone did to some extent." Bill McCarty had "buckskins and mustangs"; he once sold 40 head of broke horses for \$100. Charlie Bahm chased wild horses and once caught a "black mustang stud whose mane and tail drag the ground" near Mandan. John "Nigger" Tyler (from Texas) caught and sold horses; his own was a linebacked chestnut (red dun) with a black mane and tail. Bill Follis (also from Texas; aka "Bill Jones") rounded up feral horses in both North and South Dakota (some branded) during the Depression era and sold the colts. During the 1930s, Mr. Wilson saw feral horses branded "FSB"--property of the First State Bank!

Lifelong area rancher and horseman John Griggs (Medora) said, "There were always wild horses in the badlands; they are the most important thing in the park." He rode through the park for the first time in 1935 and remembers seeing roans and greys: "Any number of them looked like Bad Toe" (see Photo No. 124). They were "not draft types." "People caught them with shod saddle horses towards spring, when it was icy." In the winter of 1935 he worked for Bohemian farmers in South Heart who had two horses that had been captured near Medora. One was a "high headed grey about

16 hands high; a high-withered horse, sort of a Thoroughbred type." The other was a blue roan, 15 hands high: "Not a real long or a real short bodied horse . . . not as tall, but just about as heavy as the grey."

Another area rancher, George Schwint (Medora), avowed that there have been wild horses throughout the area since his childhood, "from south of Medora to up north; all through the hills; I used to see them when I rode horseback." He estimated there were 150-200 head in this area and remembers people chasing them frequently. They were "all different colors: grey, white, some roans; red roans--many bald-faced, and a few paints, not many . . . some were spotted." But he remembers most vividly "mouse colored horses with a black stripe an inch or an inch and a half wide all the way down their backs--a greyish-blue." He believes the THRO horses are "the same type as the early days, but there are more blue roans from confinement. It is the same stock, the blood goes back to at least around 1900."

Virtually all informants stated that until the 1940s there were wild horses in the badlands and river breaks south of Medora, northeast to Grassy Butte and the Killdeer Mountains, and throughout the western half of Fort Berthold Reservation. Most of these were feral animals, i.e., recently escaped. Jim Connolly (Dunn Center) stated that "the whole damn country was full of wild horses, especially after the drought and depression. In the 1930s horses brought \$2.25 a head at Killdeer. In 1938 900 horses were taken off the reservation and canned." Mr. Connolly remembered

"linebacked buckskins and stout blues" running wild in eastern Montana.

As a boy during 1922, Connolly helped drive a band of roan mares from the Figure 4 Ranch just west of the Fort Berthold Reservation boundary to the Eatons' Custer Trail Ranch south of Medora. At that time the Eatons had cross-bred roan stallions that Connolly described as "drafty, but they could really move." Connolly noticed feral horses in the Little Missouri Badlands, and he later asked Don Short, a rancher west of the South Unit, where the horses had originated. Mr. Short told Connolly that the animals had probably escaped from horse thieves who had been intermittently active in the area circa 1890-1910 and had driven horses back and forth across the Canadian and Wyoming borders: "They [the horses] got away at night and naturally fell into that wild country." Connolly explained that it was commonly believed that HT range horses constituted the chief source for the thieves, but "nothing was ever proven."

Harry Roberts remembered wild horses in the Medora area during the early twentieth century. He said that the early ranchers caught some wild horses that were "mighty good--they had more go'ins than any other horse. A man named Laraby caught horses for other people." He added: "One thing about the old wild horses--once ranch stock runs with them they're hard to separate--it's hard to get those ranch mares out."

Prior to construction of the Garrison Dam, Indian horses belonging to members of the Three Affiliated Tribes and wild, unclaimed animals ran in the thousands in the rugged western half

of Fort Berthold Reservation. Throughout the years during which the Indian people lived along the fertile Missouri River bottoms, the grassy uplands and rugged breaks in the western part of the reservation were called "Wild Horse Country." Bands of wild, unclaimed horses grazed there and were periodically chased by teams of relay riders. Some of the horses were descended from stock owned for generations, but, as in Medora, people avow that there were two distinct categories of feral horse--"wild" and owned (or recently owned). Over time the latter group became predominant. Some of the horses belonged to white ranchers such as Angus Kennedy, the Hendersons, and the Fettigs, who leased reservation land. The last of the large-scale wild horse round-ups at Ft. Berthold occurred circa 1948. The Fort Berthold horses are mentioned here because they were the largest group of free-roaming horses in the area and because of the importance of the round-ups there to the cultural history of western North Dakota. Many ranchers and cowboys from the Grassy Butte and Killdeer areas participated in the gatherings, and horses from the reservation were a significant source of bucking stock throughout southwestern North Dakota and eastern Montana. Tom Tescher never participated in the round-ups, but he observed captured animals in the Henderson Horse Camp corrals and recalled, "That was the most horses I've ever seen in one place."

Horse round-ups on the reservation were large-scale, important social events. Tribal member Catherine Fredericks (Twin Buttes) said that in the days before the dam,

The round-ups lasted for five days. They built big corrals; people pitched tents and built arbors, and the

women cooked. They would be bringing horses in and working the horses for days.

Mrs. Fredericks and her husband John always had large numbers of horses. In the early days she said she had

little Indian ponies. I had a little grey freckled mare, a blue and white pinto, and a mouse-colored one, but the government took them away. Later some of the horses got inbred and deformed. My husband had stallions that everyone used. He had one Clydesdale.

Bruce Northrup (THRO) worked on reservation round-ups in the 1950s when, he said, it was "a big country, no roads between the Lost Bridge and Watford City." Fall cattle round-ups lasted 25 days and took 40 riders; horse round-ups would bring in as many as 700-800 horses. Northrup stated that "we would cut (geld) 150 studs in 2 days." The horses were worked in big, solid ash and oak corrals at the Henderson Horse Camp just north of the Spotted Horn Store north of the Lost Bridge. Most were sold for slaughter, but some were used for bucking stock. Ray and Nick Fettig of Killdeer were stock contractors and horse traders who leased reservation land and ran large numbers of horses. During the round-ups horses were tested for their bucking ability:

We used a bareback rigging with weights. If they bucked hard enough that the straps made an "X" over their back they were kept; if not, they were canned.

Northrup remembered the reservation horses as "some good and some poor horses. A lot were the Indian type, some looked like the parkies. Some were heavier, more the draft type, big and coarse. They kept the breedier type separate, like the Henderson's Thoroughbreds." Tom Tescher remembered them as "heavy, solid-colored horses, lots of bays."

Fort Berthold Tribal Chairman Ed Lone Fight (New Town)

remembered that

They ran them in relays into brush blinds, several times a year; there would be 40-50 riders. They were mostly roans and greys, blue roans. They used them or canned them. Fettig caught one big bay or sorrel they called "Figure Four" that was the bucking horse of the year.

Lone Fight remembered that in his childhood, people would catch unclaimed horses and break them for saddle and work horses; he remembered several captured greys that were used for farming.

There were also wild horses in the Grassy Butte area and in the badlands of what is now the North Unit of THRO. Bruce

Northrup remembered that

Most wild horses around Grassy Butte were solid colored in the early days, but there were a lot of red roans. Nothing very breedy--there were a lot of slicks. Everyone there ran them, like on Forest Service land until they got stricter. The Forest Service rounded them up and sold them; they flew over and shot the last ones in the 1940s.

Vernon and Harris Goldsberry, whose family has ranched north of the Elkhorn Ranch site since 1911, were well-known "wild horse chasers" in the Little Missouri Badlands during the 1930s and 1940s. Harris Goldsberry stated that feral horses ran throughout the badlands: "They was all through this country about the same, probably, it was full of 'em. . . . As far back as I can remember, there were wild horses." Goldsberry expressed the belief that feral horses originated after World War I, when "people quit branding them; they weren't worth nothing, they just kind of multiplied." Goldsberry was familiar with feral herds in the vicinity of Magpie Creek, Cinnamon Creek, and Buckhorn Creek east of

the Little Missouri River and west of Grassy Butte (but did not chase horses in the Medora area). He stated that the origin of most feral bands was known (i.e., different groups were strays from particular ranches) and that the bands differed in appearance and type. Many feral horse bands remained wild for several generations. Once wild, the horses were known as "broomtails."

During the drought and depression of the 1930s, the Goldsberrys earned their income by catching wild horses for sale as saddle, bucking, or slaughter stock. Broke riding horses sold for around \$20.00 and slaughter animals for 2-2 1/2 cents per pound at a time "when you couldn't get a job; if you did you'd be lucky to get \$1.00 a day--we used to catch them and do better than if we'd been working--we tried to rope two or three a week."

When capturing horses for use or for the saddle horse market, the Goldsberry brothers would target young stallions rather than mares, colts, or aged animals. Harris Goldsberry described four methods of capture used in the area during the 1930s and 1940s: relaying a herd with several riders and then roping the animals individually; driving a herd into a concealed trap; snaring individual animals around the neck or one foot by means of a concealed rope; and "creasing" the base of a horse's neck with a rifle shot to momentarily immobilize the animal. Although some people organized large groups of riders to chase wild horses, the Goldsberrys preferred to work in small groups of two to four men. They seldom caught more than two horses at one time. With the creation of USFS grazing districts after World War

II, Goldsberry said that the last of the feral horses were shot from aircraft to remove them from the range.

Raymond Carson (Grassy Butte) estimates that at one time there were 300 head of feral horses north of Grassy Butte, "mostly branded and/or locally owned." Ed Newcomb (Grassy Butte; raised in Killdeer) says that

It was unbelievable in the old days--there were no fences, it was just open country until they moved the Indians out and built it up. When horses were cheap we didn't bother to catch them. There were horses everywhere when I was a kid. We trailed 200-300 at a time to Killdeer; Nick Fettig trailed 175 head to Sanish and sold them for \$5 a piece. At one time he had world class bucking horses. It's completely changed now since they moved the Indians out of Elbowoods and flooded the country--it ruined the Indians and country both; it was tough on the stock and the people.

Newcomb and others feel that the wild horses near Grassy Butte were probably from ranch stock that escaped early in the century but that there was little if any difference between wild and domestic horses at that time: "They were just plain old mustangs, just like everyone else had here" (see preceding section). When shown photographs of the THRO horses, Newcomb said:

I haven't seen horses like that for years--used to see quite a few of them like that, they're typical of the horses everybody used to ride. I used to catch and break that type once in a while when I was young.

They are typical mustangs--just the same kind we used to have out here. There used to be acres of those kind--I've rode hundreds of them--you couldn't kill them, they were tough. In the '30s, by God, who knows what they made it on, but they made it--there was no grass, no water. . . . Sam Rhodes seen 17 dead ones when he was out riding.

These are just plain old mustangs, we used to run our saddle horses to death trying to catch them. They are sure-footed no matter how they're built--they'll run all day and miss the holes. No breed could take that much punishment now.

Once in awhile one of those wild ones came out just beautiful, the Bad Toe or Baldy type [see Photo #124

and Plate 20]. Bill Chanoler had a lot of them--little Indian paints. They threwed back, too. There was a bunch of them running out where the North Unit is. There was a black mare with a white strip, she came in for 22 years, year after year with no color in her colts. Then one year she had a colt spotted like that horse [Bad Toe]--splotchy with a spot on her side. And they never had a pinto stud out there! [at that time]

Also, Russell Stevens had a white crooked necked mare that had ran in the Stone Hills--a typical mustang mare. One year she had the prettiest paint colt ever--she had colts for years and years and all of a sudden there's this paint colt. . . .

No, I haven't seen horses like that for years. The only bunch of that kind left is in the park--no one has them now--I haven't seen them in 50 years. Someone should put them in the North Unit. . . . People still come back that used to live here a long time ago and ask if there are any wild horses left.

Rancher Jack Murphy (Killdeer) said that

In the 1930s the horse market was down. There were feral horses all over; many unbranded--they looked like the park horses. It took 7 days and 6-7 saddle horses to gather ours on Crosby Creek. . . . They sold for \$5 a head. They were called "ridgerunners" and the stallions were shot. A lot they never did get in--that's where the park horses came from. A group made a living catching and selling wild horses, but sometimes they weren't worth stealing.

The park horses are just real old-type ranch horses. They used to be all over. The horses in the park are better looking than most wild horses, but some look like Meyers [BLM horses]. Some horses on the reservation look like the park horses, but the quality varies. The horses in the park are wild like other wild horses. They look like the same horses everyone rode.

Jack Murphy claims to be the only man left who personally knew all of the famous old-time cowboys pictured on the wall of the Buckskin Bar in Killdeer. He tells stories of these men, who were old when Murphy was young--people like Sam Rhodes, who came up from Texas in the late nineteenth century and ranched in western North Dakota (see Plate 20). Rhodes lived in Grassy Butte and was later sheriff of Killdeer. He "always carried a gun."

Rhodes was a famous horseman (see preceding section) and produced the earliest rodeos in the Killdeer area. "The Lillibridges supplied the stock--200 head of big, powerful animals. The first rodeo was very dangerous--it was in a downhill arena. Twenty-seven men were seriously hurt or killed, but it was also fun." Murphy knew Bill Follis (a.k.a. "Bill Jones"), foreman of the 777, John Goodall, "Badlands Bill" McCarty, and the rest of the men who forged early history in southwestern North Dakota; their stories justify a separate history (e.g., see Shafer, 1963). Murphy named the following famous bucking horses owned by the Fettigs, some of which were caught wild: Figure Four, Cotton, Kangaroo, High Dollar, Brown Bomber, Tangerine, and Spur Dodger ("a real Indian-type horse").

Oliver Lang (Grassy Butte) stated that the wild horses near Grassy Butte were "just horses" and "broomtails" but said he had enjoyed chasing them and added,

People still come back here all the time and ask if there's any wild horses left. People would rather see a wild horse than a buffalo or any other animal--there's something different about a horse.

Gerald Barnhart (Dickinson) moved with his family from Grassy Butte to Medora in 1942. His father was a rodeo stock contractor, and at one time he kept a Belgian stallion to produce bucking stock. Barnhart said his family had "Indian horses" in the 1930s: "small, stout, and colored. . . . An Indian horse is a common horse." For a time his father bought and broke horses for the Army, but, Gerald claims, "My father never owned a well-bred horse." Barnhart commented:

There were a lot of horses in this country on the open range until the early 1950s, when they were pressured into the park; it was the only place left to go. The majority were branded horses and ranch escapees. Everyone lost horses into the park. We ran bucking stock in the park and rounded up in the spring. . . .

Barnhart recalled that as late as the early 1950s there were free-roaming horses "all the way to Williston" and that he used to chase them west of Grassy Butte. Ranchers chased the horses in the park and kept the colts that were caught:

The park round-ups took out the owned horses. Bay was the ideal; people didn't try to catch the Indian type or colored horses. But the park never got them all--no one, I mean the cowboys, wanted to. The park wanted them out, but the locals didn't. They were fantastic to watch, as smart as they were. The mares were easier to catch than the studs. There was a heavy blue roan stud in the late 1940s and early 1950s that was a hell of a horse--no one could catch him. One time near Peaceful Valley he jumped an 8-foot corral and went straight up the side of a cliff.

Barnhart remembered the horses from the 1940s and 1950s as "blues, greys and red roans." He recalled a white stallion that people called "paint" because he had "light ginger or sorrel splotches" and was "small" and "not the best built," as well as a "white mare that always threw blue colts." He believes there were blue roans in the park prior to the 1954 round-up (see "Genealogy") and mentioned that his family lost a part-Arabian blue roan stallion into the park during the 1940s. He believes that much of the paint and roan coloration remaining in the park herd can be credited to the red roan and black and white mares of his father, which the Teschers removed in 1965 (see "Notable Lineages"). He is critical of the park's introduction of outside stock, saying, "They aren't wild and tough like the blues."

Bruce Northrup (Medora) has worked at the South Unit of THRO as a utilities systems operator since 1960 and first participated in horse round-ups there in 1962:

Other guys used to run them a lot. Walt Cooper had a lot of horses in there. He had a Quarter Horse stud he leased from Texas that ran in the park, "Dick Thomas," and a lot of mares. All the Dick Thomas horses (offspring) were mean and had a lot of buck and kick. That's the ones people were really after most of the time.

Whizz Bang came out of the park. He bucked me off 3 times, also Tom Tescher and Casey Tibbs. Tibbs bought him from Barnhart at the Home on the Range (he bought all of Barnhart's bucking string). He was not a big horse; pretty tall but not real heavy. They got him in the 1954 round-up.

When the park was trying to clean them out, no one (local ranchers) wanted to see them all go.

Two of the wilder studs stick in my mind from early on: a black and a grey. They were the main studs and about 18 years old then. One (the black?) jumped in Mossers and was caught. The grey ran real stiff at first, then he limbered up; he would outsmart you. We had to ride from Peaceful Valley; the only thing you got was if one played out. We built one trap and never got anything in it. Once we jumped a bunch at Halliday Wells--the grey stud was with them. We got them almost up to the trap and he turned off--the guys weren't there for the gate. I remember them telling that before they had that trap they built one along the park fence with a bank for the fence on one side. They got the grey in there and he got out; they never got him again.

There aren't as many roans as there used to be. There were always blacks with spots and lots of greys; there used to be more. Blacks and greys predominated, but they had a spot on their side and bald faces. Some blue roans from around Pleasant Flats were sure good looking. There was a bald-faced roan horse down there for years; they got him roped round-up before last. There were good colts out of him. I think Doug Tescher bought a 3-year-old and a 2-year-old by him and out of a brown mare.¹⁵

At one time (in the 1960s), there were a lot of colts with crooked legs, but I don't think they ever survived. I can remember one or two hump-backed ones;

¹⁵ The horses purchased by Doug Tescher were sold to Leo Kuntz and are now known as "Bad Toe" and "Pollicky" (see Photo No. 123).

one could hardly travel. They were pretty pronounced inbred. You don't see that anymore.

The Tescher brothers--Tom, Alvin, and, to a lesser extent, Jim--have been observing and chasing horses in the badlands for 40 years (see Figure 12). When they were young, they chased the horses to make money selling them, because they "liked to watch them," and because they enjoyed the challenge. During the 1950s and 1960s, THRO relied on the Teschers to help eliminate horses from the park; subsequently, Tom Tescher has assisted in the planning and execution of each round-up. Simply put, the Teschers have more knowledge of and have had more impact on the THRO horses than anyone. Tom in particular knows the horses' genealogy, the behavior and territory of each band and their individual members, and how to chase, catch, and handle the animals. Tom has kept written records on the horses' genealogy since the 1960s, and when questioned about a particular animal, remembers its "family history" several generations back (see Photo No. 30). He has helped to select horses for both removal and introduction and has donated several horses to the park. With contributions from approximately 15 area ranchers, Tescher selected and donated the so-called "Brookman stud" (A-1) in 1981 and has also donated three Quarter Horses (one extant).

Both Tom and Alvin Tescher acknowledge that horses have been running free in the badlands since before their youth. They knew cowboys of the previous generation who chased them (e.g. "Badlands Bill" McCarty, Louis Pelissier, etc.) and have seen people catch badlands horses since their childhood.

Alvin notes that most local ranchers grazed their livestock in the area of the present park between 1935-1954 and that at one time feral horses there numbered "400-500 head; 350 east of the river." While the majority of the horses during that time belonged to ranchers, there were also some that were considered wild: "You could always tell the type apart, but some of the branded or owned horses were pretty wild also." Alvin estimates that of the 125 horses caught in the 1954 round-up, only five or six were "wild horses." The "wild" horses were predominantly grey and were very difficult to catch: "A lot of the old studs were never caught before they had the new traps; we didn't even try for them." Alvin remembers in particular a "sharp headed, sharp looking, pink-nosed grey stud" from the late 1940s that was "the wildest I ever seen." This horse would always get his own mares back after a round-up had separated the groups (see "Notable Lineages"), and when a rancher shot this horse outside the park, Alvin "hated to see him go."

Alvin Tescher believes the blood of the park horses "could well go back to the early days; it goes back to at least around 1900, there were lots of horses early on, they took over the range. They were there long before my time, because I remember the old guys talking about them." He described the park horses as "more mustangy than wild horses elsewhere" and said, "We probably harmed them by taking the mustang out" (by catching them and introducing new types). But he thinks that the culling they did was good, shooting those that were inbred or crippled; some horses had crooked legs in front or back "after the herd had been thinned

down" in the 1960s. Alvin prefers the blue roans and attributes them to the influence of the blue Binon mare, which he says was turned into the park after the 1954 round-up to upgrade the herd (see "Notable Lineages").

Aside from his family and L.M. Barnhart, Alvin remembered the following ranchers as having caught and sold horses from the park: Gorham, Neuens, and Osterhout. He stated that most people preferred to catch "solid colored" and "better built" horses rather than the "mustang type." In the early days he and his brothers did take out some of the "better" horses; they also took out "mustangy" animals to "improve" the herd, and "we always tried to leave in some good mares." He remembered a few linebacked buckskins from the 1940s but says the last of that color were removed in the 1954 round-up (see Plate 24).

Tom Tescher does not like to speculate about the ultimate origin of the horses and will say only that they "could be old blood." He remembers the wilder greys from the mid-1940s and believes that some of the remaining horses trace to that breeding via the grey stallions that were in the park during the 1950s and 1960s (see "Notable Lineages"). He remembers the grey stallion described by Alvin as having had "very long foretops" and ranging near Frank's Creek and Government Creek, as well as a red roan stallion. When Tom first began observing horses in the badlands, "There were lots of grey studs; not 'drafty' and not branded. Also some branded mares: greys, blacks, and bays."

The first band of horses Tom corralled at Peaceful Valley included an old freckled grey mare and her family--also a grey

mare with no brand and a grey yearling. When the freckled grey mare shed her winter hair, Tom noticed that she carried a blotched brand; her ownership was never determined. Tom once caught an old chestnut mare branded "F"; her owner, Frank Kessel, had been gone from the area for twenty years. Tom recalled many branded horses in the park during the 1940s and 1950s, many belonging to Walt Ray (see list of early branded horses observed by Tescher in "Notable Lineages"). At one time Mr. Ray had a Thoroughbred remount stallion, and Tom trapped two Thoroughbred-type mares at Jules Creek. Also, Cliff Rue moved and left two mares in the park, a black and a bay. Tom says that throughout the 1950s, "Most of the good saddle horses were taken in and out." Of the horses caught in the 1954 round-up he says, "99% were branded."

Tom was away on the rodeo circuit between 1956 and 1962 and did not observe or interact with the horses during that time. During his absence, L. M. Barnhart used a horse trap Tom had built on the north fork of Jules Creek and continued to chase them, sometimes using aircraft. This aggravated the Teschers. Tom says that Mr. Barnhart "thought he got them all" but that he had missed a grey stallion, a black stallion, and some of the mares, including two of Barnhart's own, a black paint and a red roan. The black stallion was caught and sold for slaughter by a Mr. Kreuger. The grey stallion (b. circa 1948) ran with the Barnhart mares and repeatedly eluded capture until Tom caught the mares and stallion at Mossers in 1965 (see "Notable Lineages").

When Tom rode through the park in 1962, he observed the following horses: two grey stallions, a small blue roan stallion, two

young black-and-white paint stallions, two or three "wild" grey mares, a blue mare (which later became the "Old Blue Mare") with a young filly, and a young blue bald-faced stallion. (There were also others.) Tom assumed that the blue mare was the daughter of the blue "Nunn" mare (purchased from Binon) and that the blue roan stallions were also her offspring (see "Notable Lineages"). The small blue roan stallion was later roped at Lindbos; the bald-faced blue roan stallion was extant for many years. Since that day Tom has kept careful and extensive genealogical records on the park horses.

Following the death of L. M. Barnhart in 1961, Tom purchased the two Barnhart mares from his widow. When the park moved to legalize the herd in the early 1970s, Tom signed an affidavit donating their unbranded increase to THRO; at times the park gave him horses he caught "to pay off my interest."

Tom's favorite horse was a bald-faced blue roan stallion (b. 1960; later grey; see "Notable Lineages" and above); he admired him because "you couldn't catch him--we didn't even really try," and because he had "good conformation." He also favors red roan stallions, paint fillies, and "the Painted Canyon bunch--the black bald-faced mare and her family."

Both Alvin and Tom Tescher expressed the desire that the "older type" of park horses remain in the park; these horses are viewed as a link with the past and are admired for their wildness and strength. At the same time, the Teschers have supported the park policy of introducing some new stallions, although they dis-

agree with the strategy of removing a specified number of horses, rather than the removal of selected individuals.¹⁶

Frank and Leo Kuntz, Jr., horse breeders from Linton, North Dakota, have purchased approximately 100 horses removed from the park since 1978. Leo Kuntz, Jr., explains that he became interested in the horses because he "couldn't figure out the breeding of the parkies--they looked different from other horses." Leo purchased a reddish-blue, bald-faced park gelding from Doug Tescher in 1978 (Tescher had purchased the horse at auction). Kuntz had the horse in Medora, where his family operates a buggy ride concession during the summers. One day some men saw the horse ("Bad Toe") and asked Kuntz, "Where did you get the Montana?" They then said that a "Montana" was an old-time horse type and that they hadn't seen such a horse for a long time. The Kuntz brothers began researching historic horse types in the area and felt that written descriptions of the Sitting Bull horses purchased by De Mores matched the appearance of the park horses. Leo believes that Sitting Bull's horses are "the key" to the origins of the park horses. De Mores purchased 250 head; Huidekoper bought 60 mares from De Mores the following year. The Kuntzes reason that because both breeders ran their horses on the open range and because some of the De Mores horses are unaccounted for, some of this stock could have escaped into the badlands and remained feral.

The Kuntz brothers have used some of their captured park horses to successfully compete in the Great American Horse Race

¹⁶ The Teschers also question the introduction of the Arabian stallion, Tiger Tu.

circuit, a series of cross-country races run throughout the Upper Midwest each year. Their chief goal, however, has been preservation of the park strain, which they call "Nokota horses." The Kuntzes believe that whatever their origin, the park horses are a unique and historic type. In their view, the horses have "earned the right" to exist by surviving extreme pressures in the badlands, both natural and human. The Kuntz family and other concerned horsemen from central North Dakota have established the "Nokota Horse Association" (formerly called the "American Horse Association"), which promotes the preservation and use of the park horses.

The Kuntz family has attempted to develop a systematic breeding program for the park horses on their Linton ranch. Lacking genealogical information, they have been cautious about breeding park horses to one another. Park stallions have been crossed on Thoroughbred, Quarter Horse, pony, and grade mares. An interesting result of this breeding has been the tendency for offspring to display overo paint coloration patterns typical of the park horses: side spots, bald faces, blue eyes, etc., even when the domestic dams have no such traits in their background (see Photo No. 134). An outstanding example of this tendency is seen in the offspring of the grey park stallion "Jumping Mouse," purchased by Kuntz in 1981. According to Tom Tescher, this stallion has no known paint horses in his genealogical history. However, when bred to Kuntz mares, which are the result of forty years of breeding and which also lack such genetic traits, Jumping Mouse has produced several colored offspring. A 1987 colt by Jumping Mouse

and out of a black Kuntz mare is a blue-eyed sorrel and white paint (see Photos No. 116 and 117).¹⁷

When bred to park-born stallions, park-born mares at the Kuntz ranch have experienced relatively low fertility. There have been several stillborn births; generally these foals lack pigmentation. Dr. Phillip Spoonberg, D.V.M., has identified "lethal" genes in some roan, white, and overo paint horses that induce precisely this type of reproductive failure (article included as Appendix B). Dr. Spoonberg states: "Roan is a dominant genetic trait that will be expressed if just one parent contributes the gene; every foal born to a homozygous, or double-roan-gened horse would have to be roan no matter whether his other parent were roan or nonroan" (Appendix D, p. 40). He also states that the overo coat pattern is

generally occurring in Paints or Spanish mustangs; overo-patterned horses can range from the minimum markings of a bald face and a small, frequently butterfly-shaped spot on one side of an otherwise colored body to almost total white with spots of color on the topline, particularly the ears, or peripherally on the feet. Most overos fall somewhere between the two patterning extremes, exhibiting jagged-edged spots or splashes of white most anywhere on the body, but particularly on the middle of the sides and neck (ibid., p. 4).

Since the park horses are predominately either roan or overo, it would appear that the mating of two horses dominant for either color trait (ie., two roans or two overos) might result in either embryonic or stillborn deaths, as described by Spoonberg (see Appendix B, p. 39). A possible example of this occurred in

¹⁷ Horses displaying such overo paint characteristics occasionally result from breeding solid-colored American Quarter Horses. Such "crop-outs" are not allowed and must be registered with the American Paint Horse Association.

the park in 1987. A grey "Griggs" mare (A-7) produced a white stillborn foal. She and the dead foal are shown in Photo No. 58.

Bill Phillips, wild horse expert and Range Conservationist with the BLM, states that because the breeding of two horses dominant for the blue roan gene is likely to produce a "lethal" embryo, it would be important to keep black (the base color for blue roan) horses in the THRO herd. According to Phillips' research on the genetic factors of horse coloration, a blue roan is a black horse that carries a genetic factor for roan (Rr). As Spoonberg states above, the roan factor is always dominant. The mating of two blue roan horses four times will produce two blue roans (Rr), one black (rr), and one "lethal" foal (RR), as described by Dr. Spoonberg. The mating of a black (rr) and a blue roan (Rr) will produce two roan (Rr) and two black (rr) foals; no lethal (RR) combination is possible. (Personal correspondence; Appendix C).

Bill Valentine, co-founder of the Spanish Mustang Registry and former inspector for the breed, visited the Kuntz Ranch in the fall of 1987 to examine the park horses for evidence of mustang characteristics. Valentine searched for both phenotypic and genetic traits associated with the Spanish Mustang by examining extant park horses and the skeletal remains of deceased animals (see Photos No. 127-129). Valentine directed Kuntz to measure a black park stallion named "Houdini" to see whether the horse fell within the range stipulated by the Spanish Mustang Registry for a number of indices, including width of cannon bone, length of back, distance between the poll and withers, and height. (For a summary

of mustang characteristics, see Appendix A.) The horse did fall within the Spanish Mustang range. Upon examining the remains of a dead park horse, Mr. Valentine discovered a possible fusion of the fifth and sixth lumbar vertebrae, an Andalusian mustang characteristic (e.g., Ryden, 1970). Mr. Valentine's opinion was that the park horses did display some mustang characteristics, but that admixture with other breeds was evident. For instance, most of the park horses are much larger than the Spanish Mustang, which rarely exceeds 14.2 hh (cf. Denhardt, 1947; Dobie, 1952).

Photographs of park horses (Photos No. 100-106 and 122) were sent to Bill Phillips of the BLM. Mr. Phillips believes that these horses exhibit some mustang characteristics (especially the mare and foal in Photo No. 122, owned by Leo Kuntz). He referred to the bald-faced park type as "Russell Specials," an allusion to the horses painted by Charles Russell in nineteenth-century Montana.

The Kuntzes' continuous efforts to preserve the park horses have attracted some publicity in the form of newspaper articles, television news features, and a possible cinema production.

Ranchers and cowboys interviewed for this study expressed diverse opinions regarding the origin and merit of wild horses in the Little Missouri Badlands. However, they all communicated an appreciation for the wild nature of the horses, and many spoke nostalgically of their own experiences attempting to capture and subdue the animals in the years before federal jurisdiction over the badlands and surrounding grasslands. Floyd Oyhus, a Medora area rancher who was not interviewed for this study, addressed the

relationship between local cowboys and wild horses in a recently published poem:

Chasin Broomtails

We jumped the bunch on Ash Coulee,
And they headed for Mike's Creek Divide.
We couldn't catch them on top,
So they dropped down the other side.

The going was rough and rugged,
They were getting real hard to follow:
But we bent them down by the river,
And they headed for Cedar Hollow.

We chased them thru cedars and canyons,
To cross Ash Coulee, our goal;
Where we turned them up a side wash,
Towards Dawson's Water Hole.

We got them along a fence line,
And past a couple of wells;
And penned the whole bunch of broomies,
At the ranch headquarters corrals.

This was just another day in our ranch work,
A routine roundup, and yet,;
A thrill that lasts a lifetime,
And one you will never forget!

For there's something about chasing broomies,
That always gets in your blood;
That keeps you ridin' and sweatin',
Through the rain, the snow and the mud!

You can ride till you are bone weary,
And hungry and dying of thirst;
But the chase goes on unabated,
For success of the roundup comes first.

And when you finally get old,
And no longer take part in the chase;
Your thoughts drift back to your boyhood,
And the days you were part of the race.

For it's really a part of our history,
A part that we lived in the past;
A part that is gone forever,
But in our memory will always last!¹⁸

(Oyhus, 1989: 52-53)

¹⁸ The creeks mentioned in this poem are located north of the park environs; Oyhus ranched near Frank's Creek.

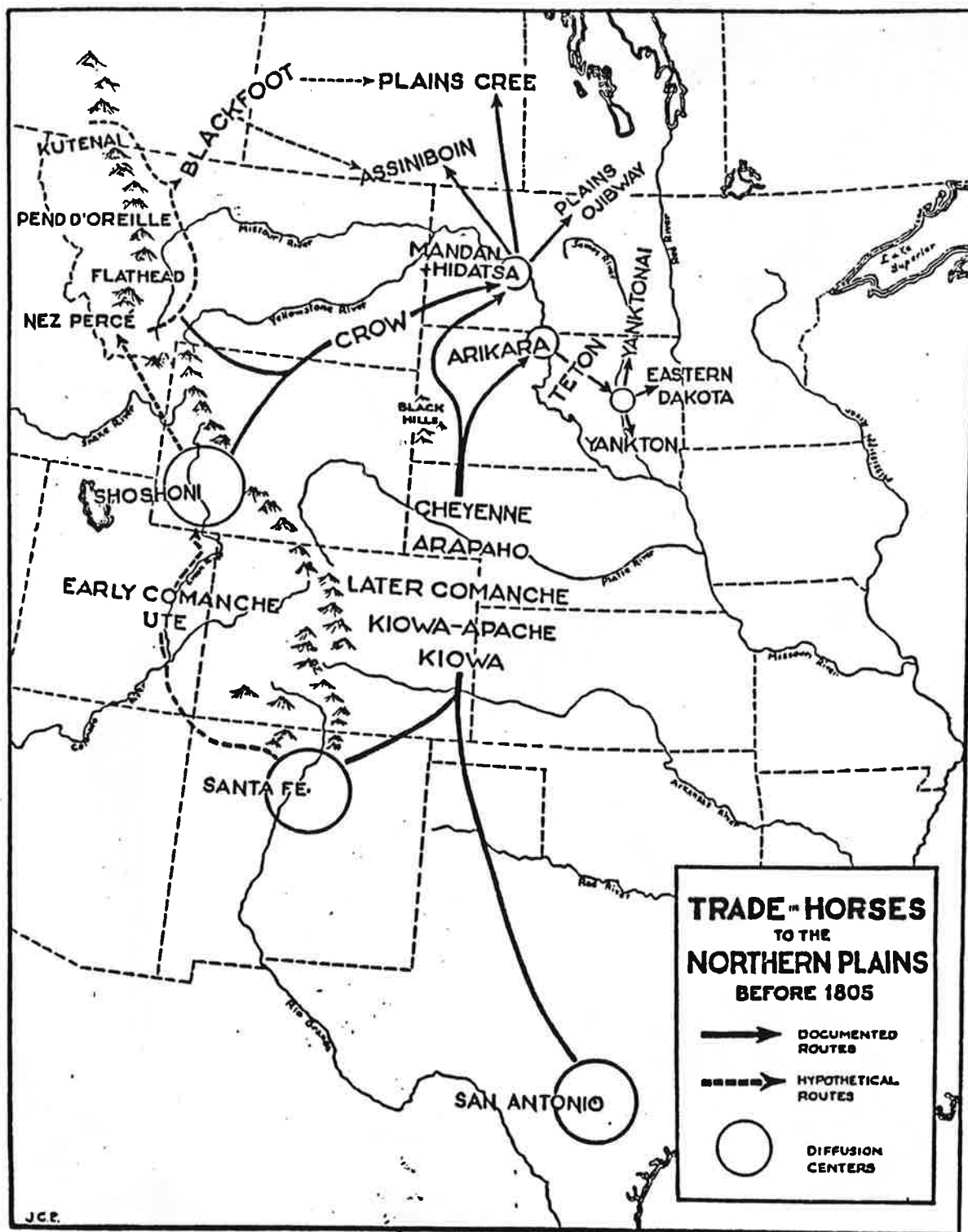


Figure 1. Trade in Horses to the Northern Plains before 1805
 Source: Ewers, 1955



An Indian Pony of the Southern Plains
 (Courtesy Oklahoma Historical Society). "... a typical product of the indiscriminate coupling and winter hardships of the prairie horse—small, tough, deer-legged, big-barreled, with slanting quarters, mulish hocks, a hide fantastically flared and blotched with white, and one wicked glass eye that showed the latent devil in his heart."—Stanley Vestal, *Happy Hunting Grounds*.

Figure 2. An Indian Pony of the Southern Plains
 Source: Roe, 1955



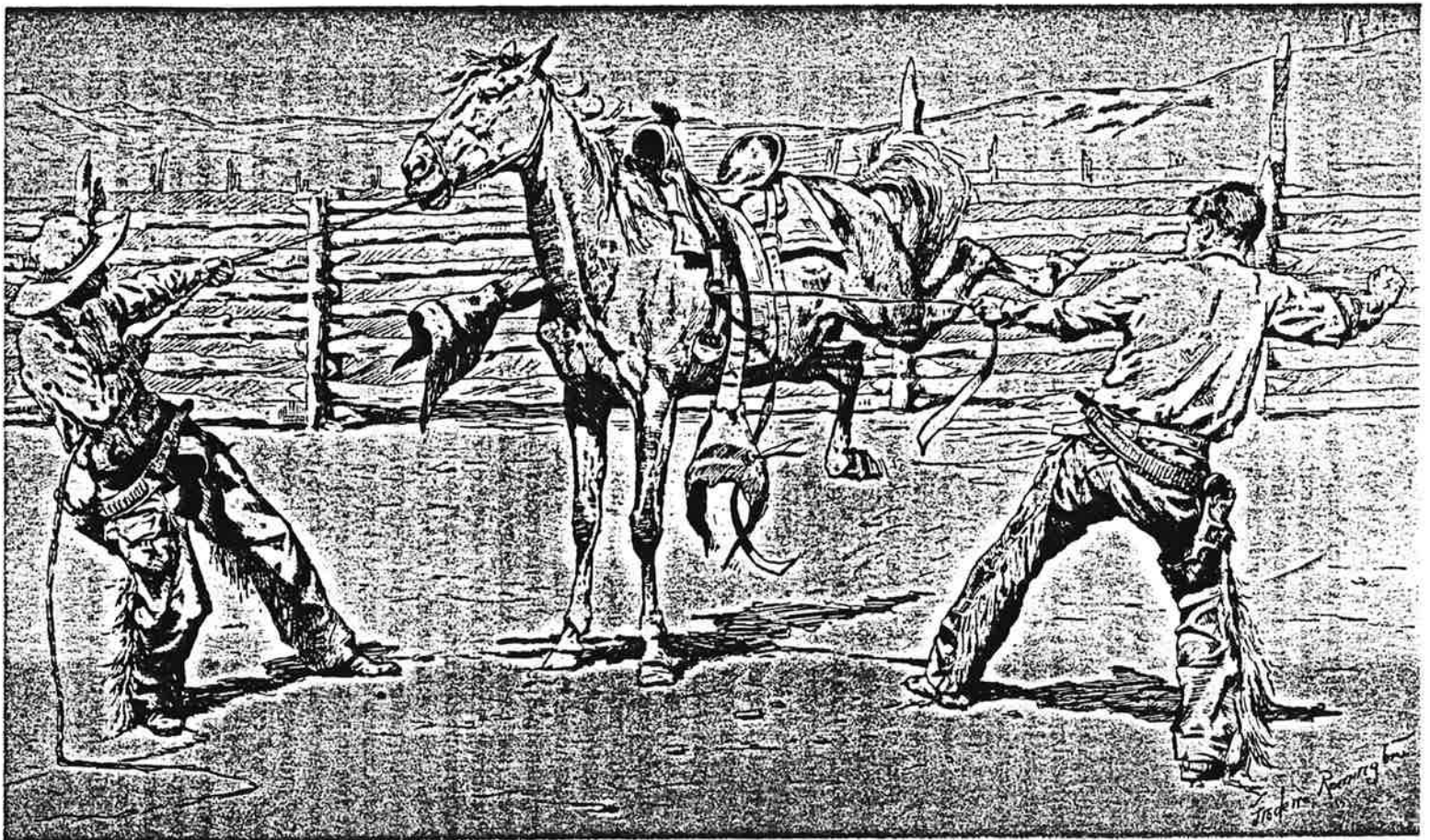
INDIAN SCOUT AT FORT RENO

Figure 3. Indian Scout at Fort Reno, by Frederic Remington
Source: Remington, 1960



LINE RIDING IN WINTER.

Figure 4. Line Riding in Winter, by Frederic Remington
Source: Remington, 1960



BRONCO BUSTERS SADDLING

Figure 5. Bronco Busters Saddling, by Frederic Remington
Source: Remington, 1960



THANKSGIVING DINNER

Figure 6. Thanksgiving Dinner, by Frederic Remington
Source: Remington, 1960



LEO, BY JOE REED II

Figure 7. Leo, Prototypical American Quarter Horse circa 1955
Source: Denhardt, 1967

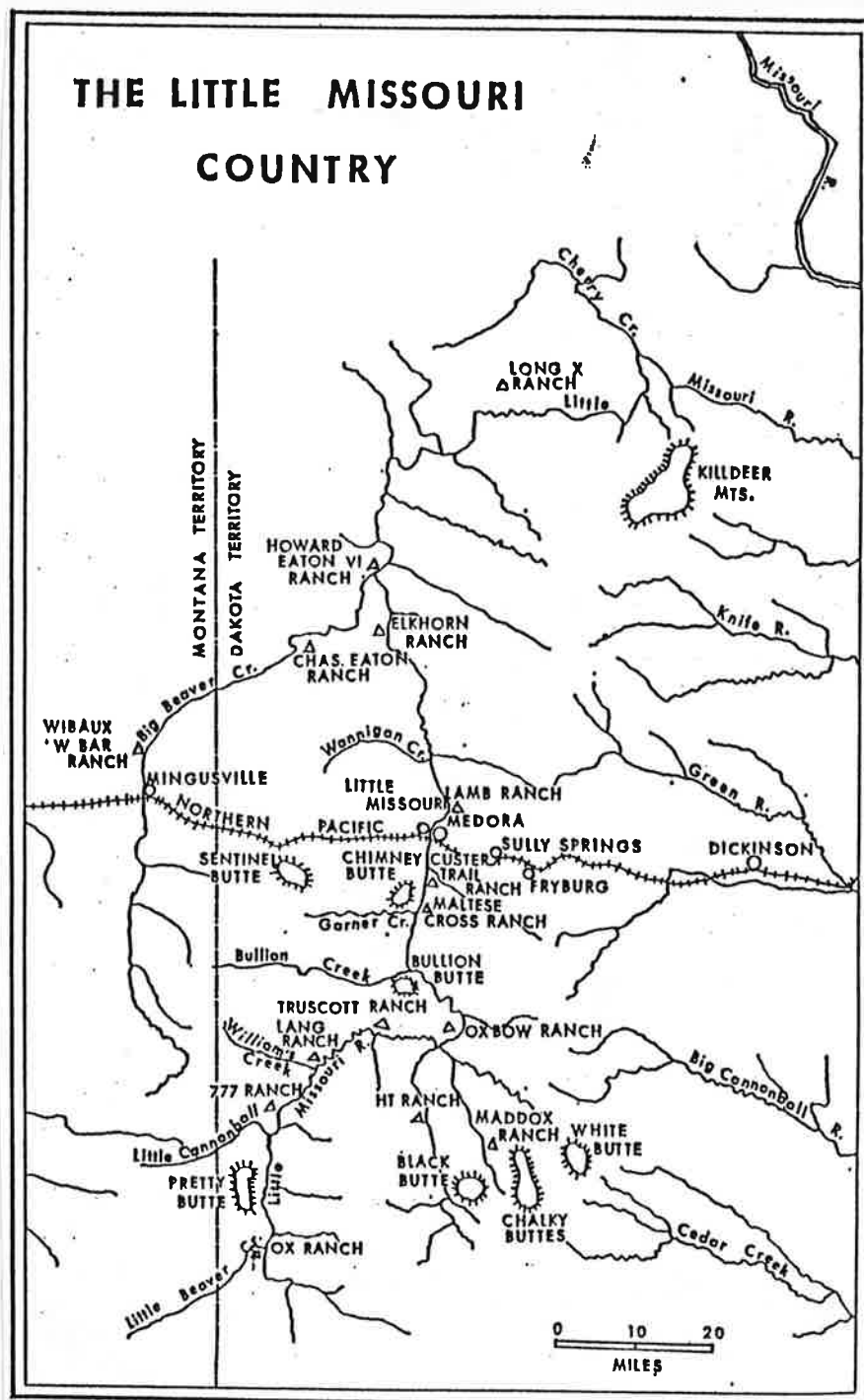


Figure 8. The Little Missouri Country, circa 1885
Source: Dresden, 1946

*These are not
big horses.*

only a few white feet

*These were probably
out of Spanish and
mustang stock*

Sylvane Ferris, a manager of the Maltese Cross Ranch, and two cow hands make ready to saddle up at a temporary corral. Each cowboy needed as many as 12 mounts for roundup, changing horses often during a working day that could last 16 hours.

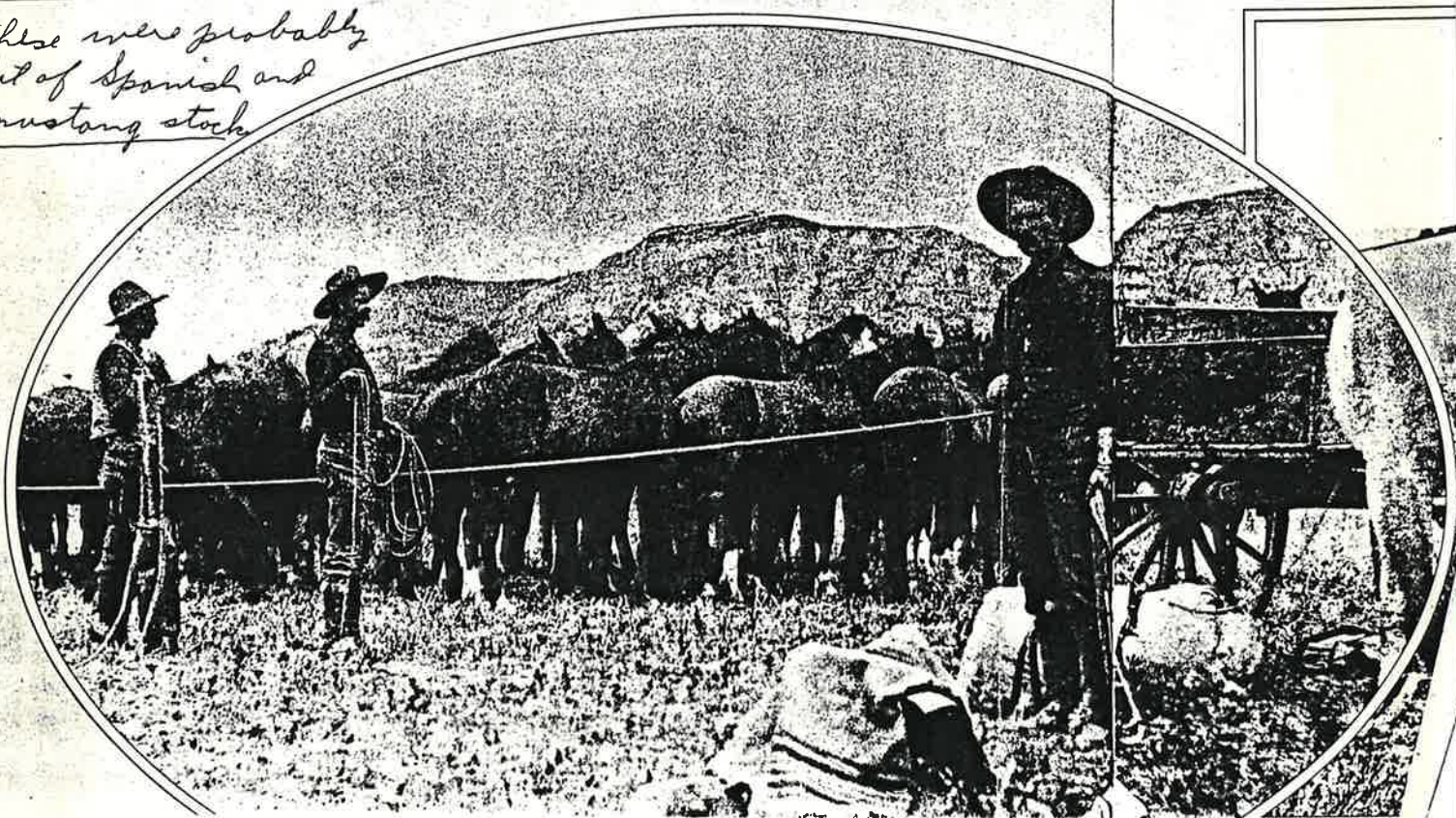


Figure 9. Maltese Cross Ranch Horses
Source: Clark, 1974

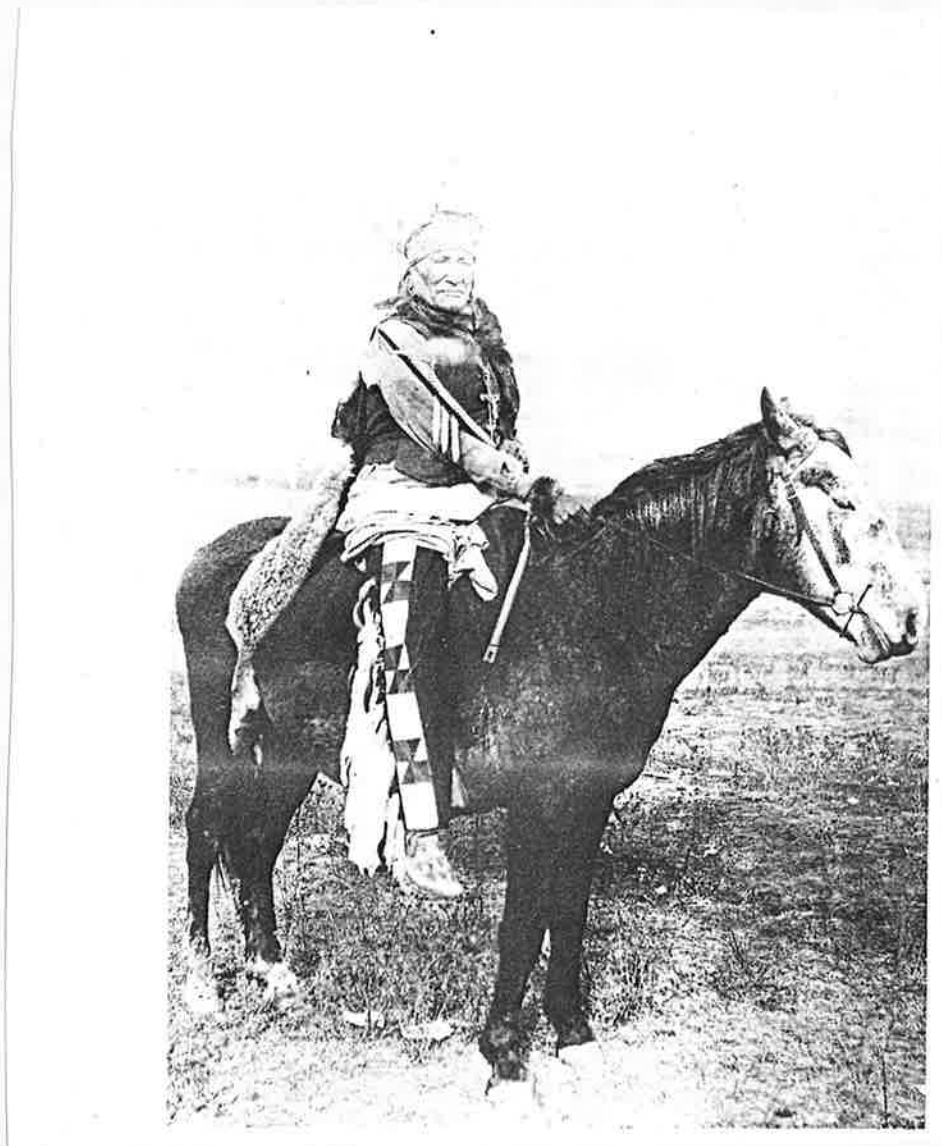


Figure 10. Sioux "Long Dog" wearing a crucifix
Source: Hanson, 1975

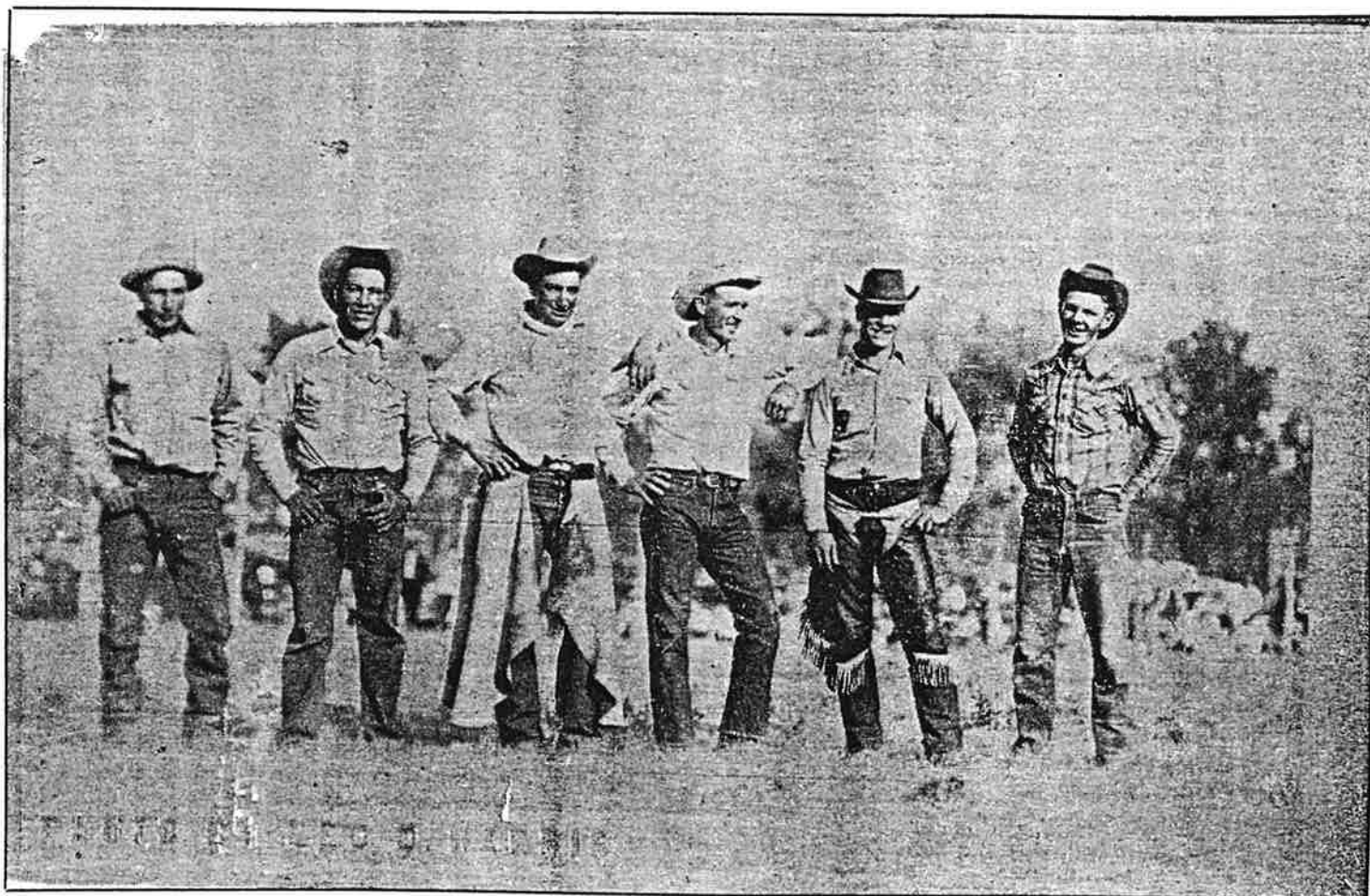


RAIN-IN-THE-FACE AT FT. YATES on his favorite pony. Rain-in-the-Face asked Barry if he would get him an audience with Governor John Miller of North Dakota. He wanted his friend Barry to intercede to the Governor and make him a policeman at the State Capital. Governor Miller agreed, but then asked if Rain-in-the-

Face could speak English. When Barry told him no, his application was rejected. He later learned a few English words and became an Indian policeman as the Indians settled down to the yoke of reservation life. Courtesy of the Douglas County Historical Museum.

Figure 11. Sioux "Rain in the Face" on his favorite pony
Source: Heski, 1978

1949 SANISH RODEO



1949 Sanish Rodeo. Six finalists: Harry Beaks, Duane Charging, Emanuel Chase, Alvin Tescher, Jim Tescher and Tom Tescher.

Figure 12. The Tescher brothers at the 1949 Sanish Rodeo
Source: Ahead of the Herd, 1986 (Tom Tescher photo)

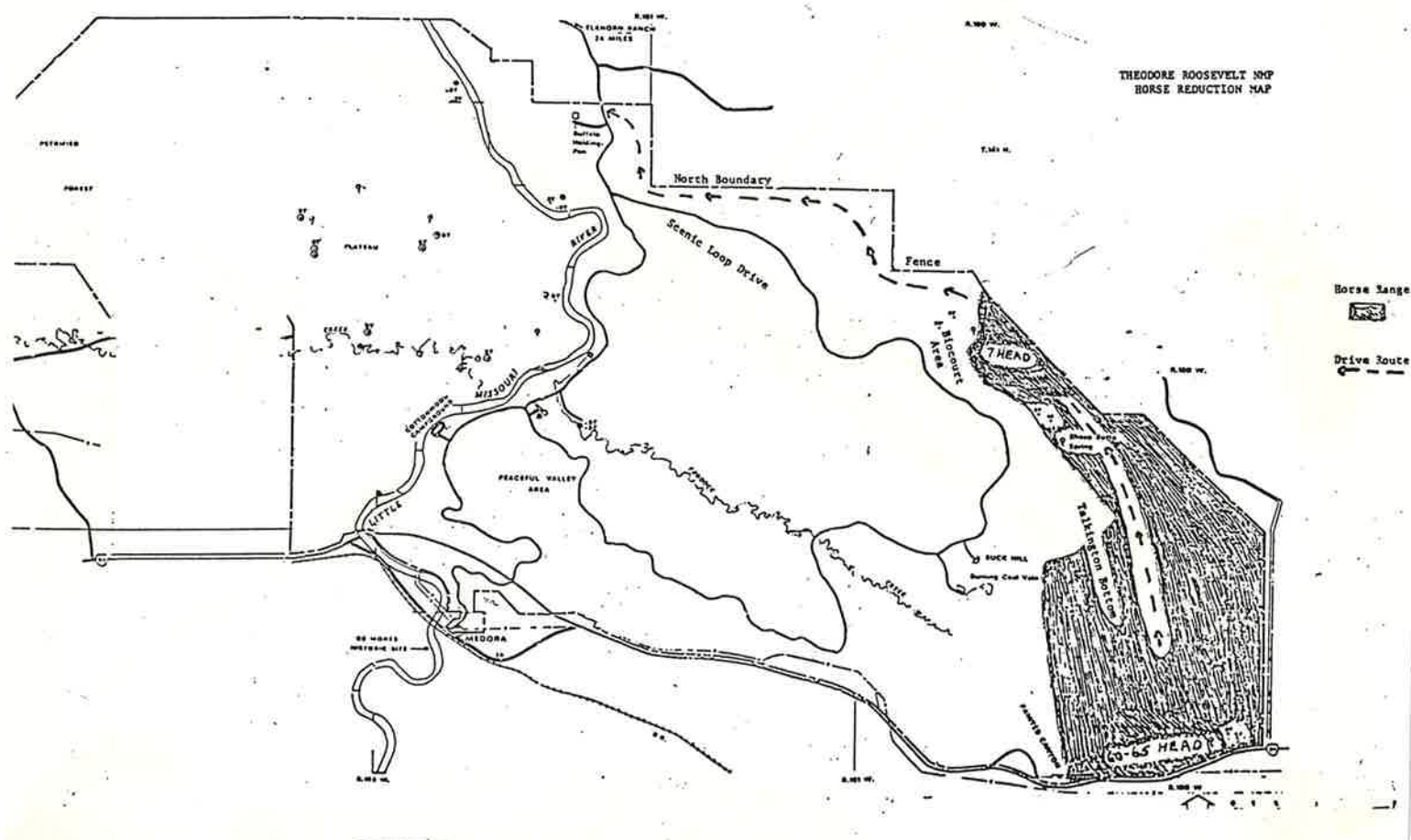


Figure 13. Schematic Plan of the 1978 THRO Wild Horse Round-up
Source: THRO

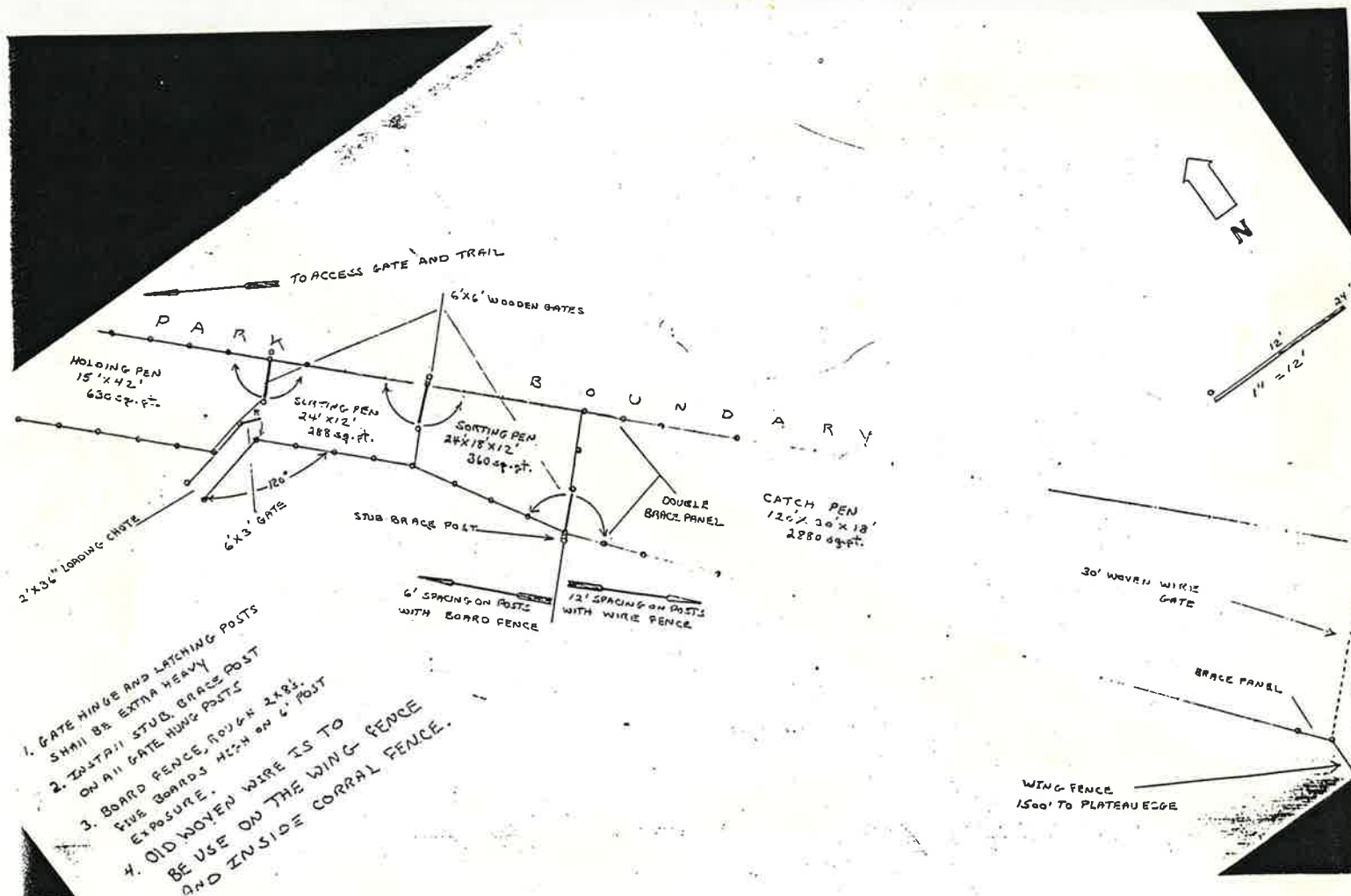


Figure 14. Proposed Design of new THRO Wild Horse Trap (1987)
Source: THRO

Chapter 2: THRO Feral Horse Management, 1947-1989

Introduction

The following is a chronological account of changing THRO policies concerning the feral horse herd, and of the formal and informal actions taken by various administrations to enact them. Strictly speaking, the term "management" cannot be applied to NPS manipulations of the horses until 1970, when THRO policy was ammended to allow for the protection of a small number of horses "in the interests of historical accuracy" (1970 Wild Horse Management Plan). Prior to that time, the horses were regarded as trespass livestock. Between 1947 and 1970, the goal of the NPS was to remove the horses, although efforts towards that end waxed and waned according to the philosophy of succeeding superintendents.

The horses at THRO do not come under the aegis of the 1971 Wild and Free Roaming Horse and Burro Act and are protected only by virtue of the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 36. No biological, ecological, or historical research on the horses has been undertaken, with the exception of the present historically

based study.¹ Their management (numbers, type selected for, etc.) has been determined almost solely by park staff.

Information for this summary of THRO management efforts has been drawn from the park files, series 1427, newspaper accounts, a survey administered and completed by former THRO employees in 1987, and from Tom Tescher and other area ranchers who have been involved with the feral horse herd. THRO survey respondents are indicated by the designation "SR" followed by the year or years of their tenure at THRO. A brief summary of the survey results is provided, and the completed questionnaires are included as Appendix E. All park memoranda, letters, and other NPS sources of information are from file series 1427, located in the administration building of Theodore Roosevelt National Park, Medora, North Dakota.

The reader will note that many of the horses removed from the park since 1954 have been captured by Tom Tescher, often with the assistance of his family and friends. These removals have been sanctioned by the park, either by a contractual agreement, a flat fee, or an informal request for Tescher's help.

¹ In 1988 THRO obtained funding to undertake a two-three year ecological study of the park horses. The research, contracted to Montana State University, was begun in the summer of 1989.

[1] NPS Policy and Management, 1947-1987

1947-1954

Policy

Like many areas in the West, the badlands were utilized as open rangeland by area ranchers prior to federal land-use legislation such as the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934. When Theodore Roosevelt National Memorial Park (initially a Recreation Demonstration Area) was created in 1947, several hundred head of cattle and an equal number of horses were grazing in the designated area. As the concept for the park evolved into a scheme to recreate the natural environs as they had appeared during the Roosevelt era, including plans to re-introduce bison and other indigenous species, livestock removal became a priority. NPS efforts to remove feral horses from their jurisdiction escalated throughout THRO's first decade, culminating in a large-scale round-up in 1954 that received national media coverage.

The practice of grazing stock in the park area was one of long standing and one that local ranchers were reluctant to abandon, especially in light of their initial opposition to NPS land annexations. Although relations between the ranching community and early administrations were generally good, conflict over trespass stock (particularly horses) was a major theme throughout THRO's first decade. Isolated reports of this practice

continued through the 1980s; in the 1940s and 1950s it was a key issue. In fact, trespass grazing was of such proportions that some local parties were essentially breeding horses in the park. During this time well-bred horses such as the Nunn mare, Walt Cooper's Quarter Horse Stallion Dick Thomas, Talkington's mixed herd, L. M. Barnhart's bucking string, Walt Ray's mare band, and others (see "Notable Lineages" section) were being grazed in the newly-established park. Saddle horses, bucking stock, and their offspring were continually being moved in and out; others were released to winter there. Brandings and round-ups in the area continued to be practiced by local ranchers as they had been for generations.

Weldon Gratton (SR; THRO 1934-1946), a landscape architect and foreman of a CCC unit, helped prepare the boundary study that was submitted to Congress preliminary to the creation of the park. During the initial RDA designation, he was one of three employees who managed the North and South units of THRO on an annual appropriation of just over \$5,000. His perspective on the grazing situation typifies that of many early employees:

My lasting impression of this mixed livestock, including a buffalo which belonged to Walt Ray (former state's attorney of Billings County), is one of resentment over the fact that there was so little I could do about the trespass other than to keep the ranchers informed that they were in violation of federal law. This would sometimes result in some of the livestock being driven from the RDA, at least away from Peaceful Valley where we lived and had our NPS office, but never for very long.

Local parties were frequently notified to remove their stock; according to Park Historian Chestor Brooks (SR; THRO 1951-

1957), these cases occasionally went to court. He states that then-superintendent Alyn Hanks was raised on a ranch and loved horses, but "found the trespass situation a violation of the principles of both good ranch and good park management." Chief Park Ranger Monte Fitch (SR; THRO 1955-1957) states that for several years prior to the completion of the fence in 1956,

. . . monthly patrols were made to count livestock by brand. Later, summons were delivered to the owners, and eventually the case went to court. I had prepared color coded maps of the park, identifying locations where branded livestock had been found. Unfortunately, when the case went to court I was unable to testify, and the District Ranger went in my place. It turned out that both he and the defense attorney were color blind, and neither could interpret the map.

Nevertheless, early THRO administrations seem to have exercised considerable tolerance in the matter, probably due in part to the fact that many THRO employees (including early superintendents) were themselves from ranching backgrounds, enjoyed good personal relations with area ranchers, and recognized that the loss of the land had generated bitter feelings. Both former employees and area cowboys recount amusing anecdotes about their efforts to outwit each other in those days, and it was not unusual for cowboys to socialize at the Peaceful Valley NPS headquarters after a day of horse chasing in the park. Many employees seem to have shared Gratton's attitude that "the trespass situation was just something we had to put up with, until, hopefully, the government could do more about it. . . ."

It is generally acknowledged that the majority of horses in the park during this time were of domestic stock and that these animals were supervised by their owners. Many if not most of the

surrounding ranchers ran horses in the park throughout the first half of the century. The practice was so widespread that early park employees, park memoranda, and even some local ranchers (eg, Walt Neuens, SR) have expressed the belief that the horse herd at THRO was comprised solely of trespass stock. However, local ranchers and cowboys who frequently observed and chased horses in the park (the Tescher brothers, John Griggs, and others) assert that free-roaming horses had existed in the badlands since at least the turn of the century, and that local horsemen were conscious of a distinction between a "wild" group and the domestic animals. According to Tom Tescher, "the good [ranch] horses were always taken in and out," while the wilder animals were only occasionally chased and were caught even less frequently. (see "Notable Lineages" for a discussion of the "wild" faction.) Local cowboys considered the part of the present park north of Jones Creek to be "wild horse country," and still refer to the area as such.

Former Ranger Robert Morey (SR; THRO 1953-1957) states:

I was told by the Chief Ranger, Harvey Reynolds (1950) that there were two bunches of wild horses--about 20 head in each bunch. They ranged in and out of the South Unit on Grazing District lands along government creek and in the park around the head of Jones Creek, Buck Hill area. As they were building the north boundary fence some local ranchers attempted to eliminate the horses. They shot one of the herd stallions and a couple old lead mares and were able to corral the remainder of that band. The other band ranged in and out of the park during fencing and by chance were in the park when the north fence was closed between the road and east boundary. Probably about 1951 or 1952.

Regarding trespass ranch horses, Morey asserts,

I never heard of any case where this bunch of horses intermingled with the "wild bunch." Usually the

deliberate trespass horses were encouraged to range west of the Little Missouri, probably to avoid intermingling with the "wild bunch."

Morey also comments that "the feeling prevalent among the park staff during my tenure at THRO was that there had been feral horses in the badlands at least as far back as Theodore Roosevelt's time and that a few head were appropriate to the theme of the memorial park as it was then designated."

Action: 1954 Round-up

With the fencing of the South Unit nearing completion (1956), the laissez faire days of trespass grazing came to an end. Mrs. Harvey Reynolds, wife of the Chief Ranger (SR; THRO 1950-1954), remembers that "According to the Ranger's Monthly Report for January 1954 all trespass livestock had been removed from the North Unit. Arrangements had been made with most owners of remaining stock in the South Unit for removal."

The stock remaining in the South Unit in the spring of 1954 consisted of several hundred head of horses, most owned by various local parties. In a memorandum dated 5 May 1954, Park Historian Chestor Brooks (THRO file series 1427) described the situation:

In line with service policy of eliminating adverse use from the National Parks, the regulations against grazing of domestic livestock are being enforced in Theodore Roosevelt National Memorial Park. Prior to this year conditions were not completely satisfactory for enforcement. A considerable portion of the boundary has been fenced and local ranchers have had sufficient time to adjust their operations to the changed conditions which have been in effect since 1947 when

the park was established. All special use permits on grazing lapsed this year.

Local ranchers were informed that they would have to remove their cattle and horses from the park. Most of the local stockmen have cooperated. The trespass cattle problem has been greatly reduced. About 200 head of horses, branded and unbranded, roamed the park's South Unit. Local cowboys and ranchers decided to have an old-fashioned round-up to gather the horses.

This first and largest-ever horse round-up was staged 30 April-2 May 1954. It was a large-scale, cooperative event of the type common during the nineteenth century, and it received extensive news coverage throughout the United States, including a feature article on the front page of The New York Times (see THRO file series 1427 for copies of news articles). Over forty riders participated, including famous old-time cowboys such as Louis Pelisser and Hugh Armstrong. Despite cool weather, hundreds of people attended the three-day event (see Plates No. 23-33).

Mrs. Reynolds remembers the excitement of serving coffee to the riders at 2:00 A.M. on 30 April, although she says she "hated to see them [the horses] rounded up." Shortly after dawn, relay riders began scouting for horses to the north beyond Government Creek, past the present boundary, and worked scattered bands back towards Medora, a distance of sixteen miles. Captured animals were driven into Walt Cooper's corral at Peaceful Valley, which had been annexed by the NPS (see Plates No. 23 and 24). The procedure was repeated the following day, when the majority of the animals were caught. (For details, see the Brooks Memorandum of 5 May 1954 and the Bismarck Tribune article of 4 May 1954, both in THRO file series 1427.) The entire herd was then driven through

the streets to the Medora stockyards, where an impromptu rodeo was staged (see Plates No. 26-30). Jim Barnhart served a chuckwagon dinner to participants and media personnel on Friday and Saturday; on Saturday night there was a dance at the town hall (see Plate No. 33). On Sunday after a bucking and roping demonstration, two colts were auctioned off for the March of Dimes, netting \$380 (see Plate No. 31). (Plate No. 30 shows Jim Jeffries judging the rodeo; Bob Abernathy being bucked off.)

Numerous anecdotes are still recounted about the round-up, including the following two:

While chasing a group of horses, Alvin Tescher and his mount took a bad fall, rolling repeatedly down an embankment. Louis Pellisser, "dean" of the older generation of badlands cowboys, remarked drily to the Bismarck Tribune, "Well, we saw him fall, and if he was dead, we couldn't help him, so we just chased the horses until they lost us and then came back and picked him up."

Chester Brooks (SR; THRO 1951-1957) recalled the following famous incident:


During the 1954 wild horse round-up, a white mare with a colt almost identical came running into the corral area side by side. Walter Cooper asked Walt Ray, "What is my colt doing with your brand on it?" Ray replied, "That isn't your colt, it just happens to be running with your mare."

Pre round-up estimates of the horse population in the south unit ranged from 200-300 head; approximately 125 horses (and several mules) were captured (see Plate Nos. 23 and 24). Of these Tom Tescher says, "99% were branded." Most belonged to local ranchers such as L. M. Barnhart, Walt Ray, Walt Cooper, the Tes-

chers, the Neuens, and others (note docility of horses in Plate Nos. 23, 24, and 25). Perhaps the most famous horse caught during the 1954 round-up was a buckskin colt later known as "Whizz Bang." Whizz Bang became one of the best-known bucking horses of the era. The horse was sold by Mrs. L. M. Barnhart to World Champion saddle-bronc rider Casey Tibbs, who took the horse to Japan to stage bucking demonstrations. Whizz Bang was out of a branded buckskin mare and an unknown park stallion.

During the round-up, the men divided into several groups, each of which pursued horses in different areas of the park. The Teschers were part of a group that worked the northern part of the park, an area then still known as "wild horse country" (between Jules Creek and Jones Creek and along Government Creek near the Ralph Mosser ranch). Also in this group were Louis Pelliser, Warren Meyers, Dean Armstrong, Bob Nunn, and Earl Bird.

Photographs of the round-up illustrate a tamer faction of horses and men. Plates No. 23 and 24 show riders bringing in a group of owned ranch horses and mules. Horses of L. M. Barnhart's bucking string appear in these plates, including two paint geldings called "How John" and "Ben." The black Barnhart mare that impacted the park herd via two of her offspring (see "Genealogy") appears on the outside of the herd in Plate No. 24 but is obscured by other horses. Three horses of the "Indian type" appear in these two plates: two bald-faced mares (with colts) and a small lined-back buckskin. Tom Tescher does not recall these animals or their origins; the remaining animals were known ranch stock.

Plate No. 25 shows the same group of animals being driven through Medora. The horse whose hindquarters (only) appear at the front of the photograph bears the brand " , " then owned by L. M. Barnhart (now owned by Ted Tescher). A grey Quarter Horse stallion belonging to Tom Tescher appears in the rear.

Louis Pelliser is shown roping the same bunch of horses in Plate No. 26; note the bald-faced mare and colt on the right, typical of the type that remained in the park. Tom Tescher and Rex Cook are shown roping in Plate Nos. 27 and 28.

In regard to the captured horses, the Bismarck Tribune noted:

How many of the horses were wild depended on which argument you listened to. One hard core held that there were only four worthy of the name. Others said, "Any horse that's been running free in there for three to five years, I consider wild."
 . . . There was talk that most of the wild ones were still in the park. . . . John Jay, superintendent, felt that those left over would lend color for tourists visiting the park later in the season.

Former Park Ranger Bob Morey (SR; THRO 1953-1957) had this to say about the event:

In April of 1954 a so-called "wild horse round-up" was held and participated in by several local ranchers and cowboys. It was condoned by the park, and the corrals at Peaceful Valley were used. Considerable publicity and local TV coverage took place, but, as far as I know, not many (if any) of the "wild bunch" were corraled. As I remember, Jim Barnhart's rodeo string were most of the animals corraled.

Park Historian Chestor Brooks:

We organized the horse round-up to get as many feral horses out of the park as possible. Ranchers cooperated partly because they wanted to participate in an old style round-up and partly to protect their interests.

In sum, the 1954 round-up was successful on several counts. One, it removed most of the trespass ranch horses. Also, it was an event of some historical significance. The round-up brought together several generations of area cowboys and ranchers for an event which was essentially the last of its kind. Many of the participants were men who had chased wild horses virtually their entire lives and who died within a few years after the action, leaving few proteges. Also, the nature of the undertaking elicited cooperation between the NPS and area residents and afforded an opportunity for the two groups to both work together and socialize. In that respect it was undoubtedly one of the most successful NPS-related events ever staged in Medora.

Dickinson photographer Lawton Osborn recorded the round-up; unfortunately his collection has been dispersed. One of his photographs, which shows Whizz Bang leading a group of running horses during the round-up, appeared in the New York Times article that chronicled the event. A few of his photographs may be seen at the Yokum Museum in Dickinson; the State Historical Society also has a small number of his round-up prints. Bismarck Tribune photographer Leo La Londe covered the event for the newspaper. Many of his round-up photographs are in the State Historical Society of North Dakota; eleven are reproduced here.

1954-1961Action: Round-ups

Throughout the 1950s and 1960s the Teschers and others continued to chase and capture horses in the park, with NPS approval. About a year after the 1954 round-up Tom Tescher designed and built a horse trap, with NPS assistance, along the north boundary fence that Alvin Tescher remembers as having been the best one ever used in the South Unit. Park Ranger Morey recalled that:

Usually during late winter or early spring (March-April) some of the local cowboys (the Tescher brothers, Tommy Olson, and others) would make attempts to catch some of the "wild horses." They would usually try for a warm day when it was slippery underfoot as the frost melted at the surface. This would make less than sure footing for the quarry while the cowboys rode sharp shod horses. They would run relays on them and post riders where they thought the wild ones would run, then try and rope them as they went by. This worked a couple times that I know of. About 1955 this same group built a trap along the north boundary fence and even scouted the herd location by airplane before making a drive. They were not too successful in capturing many horses, possibly one or two. The "wild horses" seemed to have the trap all figured out before it was completed. Tommy Olson told me he thought they had the old grey stud headed right for the trap on one drive, when he suddenly stopped, took a look around, then ran right through the four-strand barbed wire north boundary fence. When the rest of the horses scattered and did not follow him, the old stud then jumped the fence back into the park and rejoined his bunch. That old stud was tough!

Tom Tescher allows that they "about broke even" chasing horses from the 1940s through the 1960s. They only caught horses every

three or four tries, but did it "for the fun of it" and because they "liked to watch them." Ted Cornell (SR; THRO 1956) recalled of the Tescher brothers: "They were wilder than the horses; they jumped wash-outs and down cliffs until they trapped the herd."

Tom was away on the rodeo circuit throughout most of the period 1957-1962. In his absence Jim Barnhart and others used aircraft to drive the horses into "Tescher's" trap, selling them for bucking stock and to slaughter. Chief Park Ranger Monte Fitch (SR; THRO 1955-1957) recalls a population of around twenty head (as does Morey), "although we never had a very accurate count"; Tom Tescher believes there were more, probably closer to fifty, prior to his departure. Chief Ranger Robert Murphy (SR; THRO 1958-1960) corroborates that figure, stating that seventeen of a total 42 head were removed during the winter of 1959, presumably on one of the aircraft drives. Ted Cornell (SR; THRO 1956) says, "The park had about forty head of horses; from Medora to the Red Hills south about sixty head."

During 1957-1958 one of the ranchers with land adjacent to the park (Oyhus) shot a band of horses, including the grey lead stallion. This incident was recalled by Survey Respondent Morey (see above) and by the Tescher brothers, all of whom considered this bunch to be original, unclaimed, and wilder than most. During this time there were still some domestic (trespass) horses grazing in the park at various times. Chief Park Ranger Fitch (SR; THRO 1955-1957) says that by the time bison were introduced in the fall of 1956, "Most of the cattle had been removed, but there were still a few horses." Park Ranger Morey remembers

Harold Talkington running "a bunch of well-bred mares and a well-bred stallion in the vicinity of his place, which was not fenced" for a year or two, but adds that they did not mingle with the "wild bunch."

1961-1963Policy

There are no records in the park files regarding the horses in the period 1960-1963. However, former Superintendent Wally McCaw (SR; THRO 1961-1963) states in his survey response that he strongly favored retaining the horses in the park and made an effort to do so:

I seem to recall that there was no formal "Wild Horse" management program there when I arrived. I think efforts had been made to remove all horses out of the Park. I agreed that all branded horses certainly should go; but I felt that wild horses were as much a part of the western scene in the time of President Theodore Roosevelt as were the bison--which were also re-introduced.

I wrote up such a management plan. It was approved by Region, then by WASO.² I was much pleased! I loved those WILD "wild horses."

McCaw remembers there having been a population of at least eighteen horses: a group of thirteen "led by a story-book stallion--a blaze-faced Palomino with long, flowing mane and tail"; and a group of five branded geldings.³ In answer to the

² I was unable to locate a copy of this document at THRO.

³ Tom Tescher does not recall the Palomino horse and suggests that Mr. McCaw may be referring to either a buckskin gelding owned by L. M. Barnhart ("Buck Hill Buck") or to the then-dominant white stallion. However, Mr. McCaw is quite specific in his description of the horse, and it is possible that the animal was only in the park temporarily. Alvin Tescher stated that there may have been an owned Palomino in the park for a short time. No other Palaminos have been reported in the feral herd.

survey question, "Were there any particular incidents involving feral horses which made a lasting impression on you?", Mr. McCaw provided the following amusing story:

This impression is as vivid as the morning it happened!

The two permanent Park Rangers who were there when I arrived told me of the existence of 'some wild horses.' I showed interest and wanted to see them. I was told that they had been there for over a year and hadn't seen them, and that I would be wasting my time in trying to find them.

That weekend I saddled up my young, half-broke, brown mare and started a search for the Wild Horses. About the second hill I approached looked promising, so I tied my mare to a tree and eased silently, crouching in deep grass to the brow of the hill. There, grazing quietly, was a small herd of horses! I was gawking, shivering with excitement, and studying the herd. Suddenly I heard a commotion down where the mare was tied!

I eased back down out of sight, then hurried to the mare. I broke into view about fifty yards from where she was tied. There, nipping at her and trying to 'collect' her into his herd, was the Palamino stallion! The stallion saw me as soon as I saw him. Did he run? Yes, he did! Right at me! He made two passes in my direction--I was much frightened and looking for a suitable tree to climb when he left!

Richard Maeder (SR; THRO 1960-1963) guessed the population to have been "in the twenties" during that time; he and several other respondents identify the lead stallion as having been white. When Tom Tescher made a horseback reconnaissance of the park in 1962, there were approximately 25 head remaining in several distinct social groups. These included one or two grey stallions, a black stallion, several grey mares, two Barnhart mares and their paint colts, the "Old Blue" mare, and a young bald-faced blue stallion (see "Notable Lineages").

Chief Ranger Elbert Robinson (SR; THRO 1962-1964) could recall no management actions taken during his tenure. Since Chief Park Naturalist John Palmer (SR; THRO 1961-1963) states that he was "not aware of any feral horses in the park or the badlands," it can be assumed that their management was not a prominent issue during McCaw's administration.

1964-1966Policy: Overview

Under the administration of Warren Hotchkiss, the park established the goal of totally eliminating horses from the South Unit. Former Chief Ranger James S. Rouse (SR; THRO 1964-1966) states that this goal was specified in the Master Plan and also in the 1964 and 1965 Wildlife Management Plans.

Between 1964 and 1966 the park sought to clarify their legal basis for removing the horses and attempted to do so on at least nine separate occasions. Although no single removal effort was very successful, the herd was reduced from approximately 25 animals to an all-time low of sixteen head. Tremendous local opposition and the advent of a new administration in 1966 reversed this policy.

1964: Policy

In June of 1964 Superintendent Hotchkiss contacted the Midwest Regional Office for legal advice concerning the removal of 23 horses, which were regarded strictly as "feral livestock." The Regional Chief of Resource Management and Visitor Protection referred the matter to Morris D. Cook, Field Solicitor, Omaha, who

recommended the use of North Dakota estray law. Mr. Jacobs asked Mr. Cook's opinion on two points:

1. Is it legally possible to enter into an agreement with an outside individual for the capture, removal to, and impoundment on private lands?

2. Will the procedure require the approval of the Director, National Park Service?

Field Solicitor Cook outlined the problem and his response in a memo to the Regional Director on 26 June 1964 (THRO file series 1427). Cook cited both the Code of Federal Regulations (section 36; 1.62) and North Dakota estray law in opining that the park could contract out for the capture and removal of the horses. In regard to question #2, Cook noted that the NPS Director retained the authority to approve the "destruction and disposition of wild animals" but felt that the capture of estrays could not be so considered. Therefore, Cook concluded that "this question is an internal management question to be determined by the proper personnel of the National Park Service" (emphasis added).

The Acting Assistant Regional Director included a copy of this determination along with a fairly detailed outline on NPS policy and suggested procedure in a memo to the THRO superintendent dated 30 July 1964 (THRO file series 1427):

We are encouraged to note Mr. Cook endorses the idea of contracting with an outsider to trap and hold the animals. . . . No matter how, placing the horses under physical control will be the most difficult part of the operation.

Several suggestions as to how the horses might be controlled are offered:

Bait an area frequently used, such as the Talkington ranch site or along Jules Creek. Once used to the bait (hay), impregnate it with Sparine (an oral depressant). It may be advisable to supplement the Sparine by immobilizing the lead stallion with a dose of succinylcholine chloride, then haltering and hobbling. . . . This technique has never been attempted--you'll be breaking new ground.

In explaining the position of the Regional Office the memo states in part:

We concur in your opinion that the feral horses should be removed from the park at the earliest possible date. . . . However, as you are undoubtedly aware, past attempts to accomplish this task have met with heated opposition from various parties wishing to perpetuate the mustang of the old west. We are sympathetic, but point out that it is not relative to the problem at hand, nor was feral stock tolerated in the badlands of the 1880s. Essentially the horses in the South Unit are trespass animals, feral through neglect. Their relation to mustangs is analogous to that between . . . sled dogs and wolves.

The memo cautions that:

Your recommendation for removal of the feral stock should outline the reasons in sufficient detail so that the program can be justified to and defended by the Director. We recommend that you give a brief history of the stray or trespass stock in the park, including the names of the owners if this can be determined, and the effect of the horse herd, if allowed to increase, on the wildlife and other natural resources of the park.

The Regional Office staff will be happy to assist you in this project if you so desire.

In a reply to the Regional Director on 24 August 1964 (THRO file series 1427), Superintendent Hotchkiss outlined the situation at the park. He summarized the history of the problem, noting that feral horses predated the park's establishment and that most had been removed in the 1954 round-up. He added that several

efforts had been made since 1956 to clean out the remainder, but "on each of these attempts, the 'badlands wise' horses eluded the riders."

Hotchkiss stated that the current horse population was 25: eight head with a "large grey-white" stallion and the remainder with a "small brown and white stallion" (actually black and white). He outlined two reasons why their removal was necessary:

If the feral horses are permitted to increase at the present ratio, they will undoubtedly compete with the bison herd for grass and water, particularly in the Paddock Creek drainage area. . . . The proposed Scenic Loop Road, which will connect the Burning Coal Vein with Wind Canyon, will pass through the area frequented by the feral horses. When the Park Visitor observes these feral horses running free in the Badlands, it will undoubtedly confuse him in regard to the interpretive history of the Area.

After noting that local opposition to the removal of the horses made it "highly unlikely" that any rancher would agree to a round-up contract, he outlined NPS plans for the operation:

We believe the best time to trap the feral horses would be in the spring of 1965. . . . The horses will be weak and thus easier to manage. . . . We propose to begin baiting the horses with alfalfa in February 1965 in the Paddock Creek drainage area. After the horses become familiar with the alfalfa, we propose to impregnate it with Sparine and, if possible, immobilize the two stallions with succinylcholine chloride. . . . After treating the horses with Sparine and/or succinylcholine chloride, they will be driven to the buffalo corral and held there for the sixty-day waiting period (referring to North Dakota estray law, which stipulates that estrays must be held for identification and claim).

1965

Action: Removal Efforts

In a memo the following February (9 February 1965; THRO file series 1427), Hotchkiss advised the Regional Director that this plan was no longer feasible, as the horses had changed their range and were now too far from Halliday Well, where the staff had planned to build a temporary corral. However, the staff was continuing to formulate plans for the removal of the horses "in accordance with the objectives set forth in the Master Plan."

Two alternative actions had been designed: "Plan A" and "Plan B." Plan "A" called for driving the horses from their wintering grounds near Buck Hill to the buffalo pens with the aid of a helicopter; Plan "B" entailed the use of fixed-wing aircraft. Trails leading to the corrals would be plowed through the snow, and both the trails and the corrals would be baited with alfalfa.

After referring this plan to Field Solicitor Cook, the Acting Regional Director requested in a memo of 19 February that THRO not use aircraft to drive and/or capture the horses. Public Law 86-234 (the so-called "Wild Horse Annie Act") of 1959 specifically forbade the use of aircraft to chase feral horses on federal lands (see Ryden, 1970). While this legislation did not apply to NPS areas, Field Solicitor Cook felt that the use of aircraft at THRO would be in violation of the intent of the law and had strongly advised against such a measure in a memo to the Regional

Director on 19 February 1964. In light of this, the Regional Director suggested that THRO erect a temporary corral in the vicinity of the Talkington Stock Tank.

Superintendent Hotchkiss replied to the Regional Director on 18 March that "the ranger staff and I have come up with another plan." A horseback reconnaissance of the park on 8 and 9 March had located 23 horses two miles northwest of the Burning Coal Vein, including one young colt and several pregnant mares. Skeletal remains of two horses were also observed. The new plan called for six mounted NPS employees to drive the horses toward the buffalo pens "every day until successful," an estimated four-six days' work. Saddle horses would be rented at the cost of \$6 per day.

On 19 April 1965, Hotchkiss wrote to the Regional Director that plans to remove the horses had been frustrated by "the changed range of the horses, the severe winter, legal conflict over the use of aircraft, lack of money for horse rental, and now, the coming of spring."

Following the suggestion of the Regional Office, THRO staff had attempted to bait the horses with drugged alfalfa. Thirty bales were scattered along the trail from the winter range to the buffalo corral, although "snow and mud made the operation very difficult." Then, the buffalo ate the hay. However, wrote Hotchkiss, "Tom Tescher has agreed to help. . . . We consider this the best chance of success . . . and a high priority in terms of work and expense."

In a memo to the Regional Office on 2 June 1965, the superintendent reported that Tom and Jim Tescher, John Griggs, and

other local cowboys and NPS staff had attempted to drive the horses to the buffalo corrals on 28 and 29 May. However, the horses had "eluded the riders by splitting into smaller groups and dispersing." They "hoped to try again soon."

Of larger import, Hotchkiss reported that an unknown source had tipped off a writer for the Dickinson Press about the round-up efforts, who had written "a very misinformed front page article" criticizing the removal policy that had appeared in the 29 May edition. Hotchkiss tried to counteract this negative publicity by issuing news releases and appearing on area TV and radio talk shows to defend NPS policy.

In a follow-up memo to the Director on 9 June, the superintendent reported that additional attempts to drive the horses had been made on 3 and 4 June. While this had been unsuccessful, four horses had been roped and claimed by Tom Tescher. Sites for a temporary corral were being scouted. The memo also noted that the latest census of 23 head included three 1965 colts.

Hotchkiss informed the Regional Office on 22 June 1965 that "the criticism and adverse publicity given by the Dickinson Press in the last month concerning the feral horses has subsided. Perhaps the public is accepting the fact that the feral horses are trespass stock and have no justification for being retained as wildlife in the park." An ideal site for a trap had been located between two clay buttes in the Paddock Creek-Jones Creek area, and plans were underway to construct a fifty-foot corral there with north- and south-facing wing fences.

In the meantime, the Regional Director received letters of concern about the removal effort from Senator Quentin Burdick, Congressman Milton Young, and Congressman Redlin (THRO files, series 1427). Young's letter read in part: "These horses have been of great interest to visitors. . . . I sincerely hope that it will be possible for you to keep these horses in the park. . . ."

In his reply to the three legislators on 21 June 1965, Assistant NPS Director Howard W. Baker stated:

Our long-range management program at this Park presently has the two-fold purpose of re-establishing the natural environments as well as the historical significance associated with the great conservationist, Theodore Roosevelt. The removal of feral horses from the Southern Unit reflects our goal to conserve natural values of this park. . . .

The horses that are present today are not, as many people apparently believe, wild horses. They are horses that have generally been turned out and have congregated in the rougher and more inaccessible areas of the park where, because of their small value or for other reasons, the owners will not put forth the effort to assist in corralling them and terminating the trespass. . . . You may be assured recognition of the historical significance of this area is not being overlooked, and it is conceivable a future introduction of true descendants of the early Spanish mustang may be realized if adequate historical justification is found.

In a letter to constituent Mrs. Thad Dolman of Medora dated 30 June 1965, Senator Young wrote:

I am terribly sorry, Mrs. Dolman, that this reply is not more encouraging. Over the years, I have had no end of trouble with the National Park Service in urging them to retain these wild horses. You may be sure I will continue to do everything I possibly can to get this decision reversed.

Superintendent Hotchkiss notified the Regional Director on 20 July 1965 that another round-up had been staged. A temporary

trap had been constructed on the divide between Paddock Creek and Jules Creek on 19 July. On 20 July Jim, Alvin, and Tom Tescher, along with some of their sons, two other local riders, and several NPS employees, had twice driven a bunch of six head to within several hundred yards of the trap. However, on both attempts the lead grey stallion had veered off to the side at the last minute. Two other horses were also driven towards the trap but escaped. The consensus was that there had been too few riders near the gate for the final push. The memo to Region also remarked:

In none of the above cases did the horses turn away because of seeing the trap, for it could not have been seen, and to the best of our knowledge, they did not get near the trap during Monday night.

Park Ranger Einar Johnson (SR; THRO 1958-1965) apparently referred to this round-up when he recalled:

In 1965 I was involved with the first subsequent wild horse round-up. A small, round horse corral was hurriedly constructed one day in the Paddock Creek area, and early the following morning the main herd was chased up Paddock toward the corral. Unfortunately, the white stallion bolted away from the wire wing fence leading to the corral at the last moment and spooked the rest of the herd. Thus, the main herd avoided capture that day, and only three or four yearlings were caught by lassoing. It was an enjoyable outing even if the objective was not achieved.

Finally, a memo from Chief Park Ranger Jim Rouse, dated 27 December 1965, recorded the removal of six horses from the South Unit. According to an undated report compiled by District Ranger Barney, the park first tried to bait the horses with oats near Halliday Well on Lower Paddock Creek, but met with no success. On 24 November, Tom Tescher snared a black stallion, but the horse escaped.

On 6 and 7 December, District Ranger Barney, Park Ranger Wintch, and Tom Tescher made several capture attempts. On 6 December, a band was chased by a vehicle until two colts fell behind, exhausted, whereupon Tom Tescher unloaded his saddle horse and roped them.

On 12 December several horses near Jones Creek were shot with a gun loaded with cap-chur, a tranquilizer, but the drug was frozen and produced no effect.

On 13 December, eleven head were driven approximately ten miles with a jeep. When the horses were sufficiently tired, Tom, Jim, and Alvin Tescher, two of their sons, and Oliver Lang chased them on saddle horses. Four horses escaped through the north boundary fence, "tearing down about 100 feet of wire as they went." The rest escaped up Jules Creek. One three-year-old stallion was roped.

On the following day two horses, the red roan Barnhart mare (see "Notable Lineages") and an old, crippled grey stallion were roped by the local cowboys in a pasture north of the park (now Mosser's). A third horse, the black Barnhart mare, was snared by Tom Tescher, sustained a broken leg, and was destroyed. The grey stallion roped by Tom is one of the few horses he recalls as having had a crooked leg; however, the horse had eluded capture for fifteen years and had once escaped an eight-foot corral.

On Friday, 17 December, the horses "were disposed of in accordance with North Dakota estray law" (given to locals to sell), leaving sixteen known horses in the park.

Ranger Rouse's memo (27 December 1965) concluded with the observation that:

Trapping the horses is not practical unless the trap is completely hidden and the horses do not know of its presence in advance. The horses abandoned the trail through the horse trap on the Paddock-Jones Creek divide and used a trail farther south.

The most practical methods of capture are roping and tranquilizing. For roping the horses must be in a favorable position to be run several miles with a vehicle to tire them before unloading the saddle horses for roping. If time and weather conditions permit, Mr. Tescher will attempt to rope some more horses this winter. Efforts to capture horses with the cap-chur gun will also be continued.

A total of at least eleven horses were removed from the South Unit during the period 1964-1965, including the 1965 colts and the Barnhart mares (see "Notable Lineages"). This reduced their number to an all-time low of sixteen known animals. However, Tom Tescher believes that other, unaccounted-for horses also remained.

In discussing the years during which the park attempted to eliminate the horses with the author, Jim Rouse explained that from the park's perspective, the horses were the property of local ranchers: "We were allowing owners and hands to come in and round up stock; we simply assisted."

1966-1970Policy

There are no memoranda or records concerning horses dated between 1966 and 1969 in THRO file series 1427. In March of 1966, Art Sullivan succeeded Warren Hotchkiss as superintendent of THRO and immediately halted efforts to remove the horses. In his survey response, Superintendent Sullivan (THRO 1966-1969) provides an account of the attitude prevalent at the park when he arrived and of his motives for initiating a policy change:

On my arrival at Theodore Roosevelt as superintendent, I soon learned that the park goal regarding those feral horses was total elimination. This was based on the rationale that the park was a natural area and feral horses were inappropriate. I disagreed with that goal. At that time, 1966, parks were administratively divided into three categories, i.e. natural, cultural, and recreational, with distinctive administrative policies for each category. Theodore Roosevelt NMP was designated a historical area, and NPS policies for historical areas provided for maintaining the historical scene. Feral horses were not new to the area, as Theodore Roosevelt himself mentioned these in writings about his adventures in the badlands. Based upon these considerations, I reversed the park goal from one of elimination to protection of the feral horses as part of the historic scene. This was met with a strenuous resistance from the park ranger staff and even from the Regional Office. However, I did prevail, as NPS policy supported this position. The park ranger staff had already embarked on a program of surreptitious elimination of the horses. In at least one instance related to me, rangers shot one horse and passed it off as "winter kill"; they were at least sensitive to the inevitable public outcry were it known that rangers were shooting the horses. This action stopped upon my arrival.

The Chief Ranger during Sullivan's tenure at THRO, Mr. Myrl Brooks (SR; THRO 1966-1968) stated that there were no feral horses in the park at that time. However, when asked to respond to the appropriateness of having horses in the park, Brooks stated, "Get rid of them by round-up and sale. If unsuccessful shoot them."

Jim Rouse told the author that Sullivan favored the horses because he was a "historian"; it seems to have been Sullivan who discovered that the writings of Theodore Roosevelt included references to wild horses in the area during the nineteenth century.

Demographically, the horses were under severe stress during these years. Information obtained from Tom Tescher for the subsequent 1970 Wild Horse Management Plan indicates a very low reproductive rate:

1965:	2 foals
1966:	2 foals
1967:	1 foal
1968:	2 foals
1969:	3 foals

Action: Removals

Five of these foals were found dead in the park (1970 WHMP), and the two born in 1965 were captured and sold for slaughter. Several horses were removed from the park by locals in addition to those listed in park records, including a red roan colt in 1968 and a bald-faced blue colt in 1969. In the 1960s and early 1970s

horses were occasionally removed from the park for sale to the Gold Seal Zoo as food for exotic felines.

1970Policy

James B. Thompson succeeded Art Sullivan as Superintendent in 1969. In 1970, as a supplement to the Resource Management Plan, he approved a Wild Horse Management Plan prepared by Robert Benton, Chief of Interpretation and Resource Management. This was the first formal THRO document to establish the protection of the horses as a goal and to address management of the herd.

The Wild Horse Management Plan of 1970 was evidently a direct result of former superintendent Sullivan's emphasis on area history and its relationship to park management. The document focused on the historical significance of wild horses in the badlands as the justification for their presence in the park:

Wild horses have long been present in the badlands. Theodore Roosevelt wrote in "Ranch Life and the Hunting Trail": "In a great many--indeed, in most--localities there are wild horses to be found, which, although invariably of domestic descent, being either themselves runaways from some ranch or Indian outfit, or else claiming such for their sires and dams, yet are quite as wild as the antelope on whose domain they have intruded" [misquoted in WHMP; corrected here].

Ranchmen continued to capture wild horses nearly to the present time. Some were said to make their living trapping and selling wild horses. One of these was Mr. Gorham, who lived on Government Creek about a mile northeast of the park boundary. Several wild horse traps were located in the park. One was located near where the scenic loop road now crosses the Jones-Jules Creek divide (WHMP p. 1).

The plan also noted,

The majority of the local residents would like to see the wild horses remain in the park. The attempted removal of the remaining horses in 1964 and 1965 resulted in considerable unfavorable publicity, and public suspicion of NPS motive persists to the present (p. 2)

In addressing "Herd Status" the report describes a population of 26 horses in 1969 (including three Tescher geldings) distributed among two band groups and a number of bachelor units. A very high incidence of colt mortality (five out of five born in so many years) is described. The occurrence of crooked legs is noted. A table chronicling increases and losses in the horse herd from 1965 to 1970 is attached to the document. It is apparent that the THRO staff elicited the assistance of Tom Tescher in the compilation of this information; this is the only THRO document that speaks to such demographic and social factors in a specific way.

Management goals established include the acquisition of legal title to the horses, the increase of the population to forty head, the introduction of at least one new stallion and concomitant removal of old stallions, and the removal of Tescher's geldings (p. 3).

Long-range goals are also established:

For successful management, counts will be made and records kept of such things as annual increase, winter losses, herd compositions, and areas used (pp. 2-3).

The removal of surplus animals once the herd reached forty head is anticipated:

Removal of surplus animals will be necessary when forty head is reached. These should be removed live if possible in the following priority:

1. Call for bids for the removal of a specified number of animals. A contract will then be issued to the successful bidder, with necessary restrictions such as no use of airplanes, etc.
2. Removal by National Park Service personnel with the use of a tranquilizer gun. Past tranquilizers have not been very successful with horses, but new ones now being tested are reported to be much better. Horses caught will be disposed of in accordance with government regulations.
3. Removal by National Park Service personnel by baiting or trapping. One of the best possibilities of trapping would be at water holes such as Wild Horse Spring.
4. Shooting surplus animals will be used as a last resort.

Superintendent Thompson (SR; THRO 1969-1972) has stated that he feels the presence of the horses "is contrary to either the natural or historical context of the park. I'm not aware of any historical evidence of feral or wild horses in the badlands, which in my opinion would be the sole justification."⁴ During his tenure at THRO he believed that all the horses in the park were locally owned:

In the mid-1960s, big horse "round-ups" were held by the ranchers, to "recapture" some of their stock. My assumption was that they got free grazing in the park and then had the fun of the big round-up.

Regarding actions taken in 1970, Thompson reports, "We had eliminated the round-ups during and perhaps before my tenure. There were incidents, but I don't remember details."

⁴ Thompson's statement seems curious in light of the fact that management documents produced during his administration (e.g., see p. 26 and p. 31) stated that historic evidence of wild horses in the Medora area justified the park's maintaining a feral herd.

Action: Removals

1. The records of Tom Tescher indicate that in 1970 a black, bald-faced stallion was roped and sold to the Gold Seal Zoo.

2. A blue, bald-faced stallion and a bay stallion were removed and sold for slaughter.

Addendum

Also in 1970, State Assistant Travel Director (and former Medora resident) Gary Leppart published an article entitled "Wild Horses in the Badlands."⁵ Leppart stated that wild horses had existed in the badlands for many years and had been present in both the North and South units prior to NPS jurisdiction. He provided a brief overview of NPS management, including removal efforts, and described his own adventures in attempting to photograph the horses. In closing he stated:

Wild horses are a part of the Old West image, and as such, are tourist attractions. Federal policy now permits wild horses to roam on federal lands in some sections of the West. The Roosevelt Park horses and a small band of horses in the Pryor Mountains on the Montana-Wyoming border are the only wild horses known to exist in this region.

. . . What lies ahead for the North Dakota horses? Park officials now look upon them as part of the natural faunal makeup of the Park. Future planning calls for a herd of approximately forty wild horses in the South Unit. They will be allowed to roam the badlands

⁵ THRO retains a bound copy of this article in file series 1427; original publication source unknown.

wilderness with buffalo, deer, and other wildlife. I believe this is what most people in this state want to hear. . . . It is certainly to my liking!

The photographs accompanying this article attracted the attention of Spanish Mustang breeders Bill Valentine of Wales, North Dakota, Kim Kingsley of Bismarck, and Bob Brislawn of Wyoming. Throughout the ensuing years, they would visit the park to observe the horses and to initiate a move for the introduction of mustang horses.

1971Policy

1. In January of 1971 Spanish Mustang breeder (and inspector for the breed's registry) Bill Valentine of Wales, North Dakota, wrote a letter to the park. Valentine and Spanish Mustang Registry founder Bob Brislawn had seen Leppart's article and, said Valentine, "When looking at the pictures (of a grey stallion and a black colt) those horses looked like they carried a lot of Spanish blood. . . ." Valentine was interested in a getting a first-hand look at the horses; furthermore, he offered to donate several registered Spanish Mustang mares and a stallion to the park. Alternatively, he offered to donate stallions on a rotating basis, leaving one in the park for a period of years and then changing horses. Valentine explained, "We think the people should see the real old time Indian and Spanish horse as well as the buffalo and Longhorn" (THRO file series 1427).

This initial inquiry touched off a flurry of correspondence on the "mustang issue," which continued throughout the summer and early fall. After receiving no reply from the park, Valentine wrote to Congressional NPS liason Quentin Burdick, asking him to re-submit his offer to the park, and to North Dakota Director of Public Affairs Jim Connolly. Both Connolly and Senator Burdick wrote to the park; Burdick also drafted a letter of inquiry to NPS

Director Hartzog. On behalf of a constituent from Minot, House Representative Art Link wrote to Secretary of Interior Rogers Morton encouraging the NPS to consider the introduction of mustangs.

On 26 July 1971 Superintendent Thompson mailed a letter to the various interested parties outlining the park's perspective on the matter. The park could not allow the introduction of mustangs, he explained:

We do not believe it is appropriate to the purpose for which the park was established to introduce an historically inaccurate pure Spanish Mustang herd into the park. . . .

Thompson explained that wild horses had been in the badlands since Theodore Roosevelt's era but that

The horses were not "Spanish mustangs" but rather animals that escaped from ranchers in the area, mixed with Indian ponies of varied ancestry, as well as cast-off animals. Due to the extremely rough terrain, they were allowed to roam the badlands with only periodic round-ups.

Mr. Valentine's suggestion, Thompson continued, "has met with opposition with many area residents who wish to see the existing herd increase but remain historically accurate" (emphasis added).⁶

The Superintendent explained that following the 1969 Master Plan the THRO staff together with a study team recommended an attempt be made to maintain a herd "as part of the historic scene" and that plans were to allow the present herd of 23 animals to

⁶ Emphasis is added here to underscore the changing philosophy of THRO administrations regarding the appropriateness of an "historically accurate" herd.

increase to forty; the major concerns of the park were obtaining ownership of the animals and "reducing the inbreeding problem":

. . . A serious problem . . . will be reducing inbreeding. To alleviate inbreeding, a new stallion will have to be obtained. . . . Bob [Benton] sees no alternatives to shooting the stallions now in the park because the effects of inbreeding are becoming apparent.

Thompson stated that the park had received offers to donate stallions from four sources but had not yet made a decision.

However, "It is our intention to acquire animals with a good amount of color to break up the preponderance of greys, blacks, and whites that exist within the present horse herd. . . ." To Valentine he added:

If the Spanish Mustang stallions would mix with the present herd, then we will be happy to consider one of your stallions for introduction into the herd. Since we do not wish a pure Spanish mustang strain, it would serve no purpose to add extra mares to the herd.

He cautioned, however, that once title to a horse had been granted to the NPS, recovery of the animal would be impossible; in addition, "It is also highly possible that other stallions would have to be introduced in future years and the then existing stallions destroyed."

The possibility of introducing mustangs into the herd was never again seriously considered, but this exchange marked the beginning of an on-going discussion about what type of horse would be appropriate to introduce.

2. On 26 July 1971 Superintendent Thompson queried the Regional Office as to how the park should proceed towards legalizing NPS ownership of the horses. He stated that Tom Tescher laid

claim to 25 head but would waive his title to all but two horses.
(See item #5 below.)

3. On 2 November 1971 Midwest Regional Director Leonard Volz informed the Montana Director of the BLM that THRO was willing to take two stallions from the Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Refuge should the BLM move any of their surplus stock to North Dakota.

4. On 15 December 1971 Congress unanimously passed the Wild Free Roaming Horse and Burro Act to require "the protection, management, and control of wild, free roaming horses and burros on public lands," reflecting a concern that these animals were "fast disappearing from the American scene" (see Ryden, 1970). The law does not apply to equines on lands administered by the NPS or the Department of Defense.

Action

In 1971 the Teschers caught five young park horses on or near Ralph Mosser's property and sold them for slaughter: two young bay stallions, a young blue roan stallion, a dark (bald-faced) stallion, and a blue roan colt. Then-Chief of Interpretation and Resource Management Robert Benton (SR; THRO 1969-1972) says that "in order to get 'title' to the horses we had to allow a local rancher to take out the better animals for stock . . . 71 or

72." According to Tom Tescher, however, that was not his impression of these five head nor his intent in removing them.

1972

In October of 1972 John O. Lancaster succeeded James B. Thompson as superintendent at THRO. I could locate no specific information on horse management during that year.

1973Policy

By 1973 the park's horse population had increased from sixteen to forty head, the designated maximum number. In preparation for effecting management goals to contain the population at this level, the administration took steps to legalize ownership of the horses. In a related development, the NPS resisted a proposal by the Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board to amend PL 92-195, the Wild Free Roaming Horse and Burro Act, to include animals under NPS jurisdiction. Thus, on both a national and a local level, the NPS moved toward a legal and philosophic definition of free-roaming equines. At THRO this involved a continuation of efforts to determine whether the horses should be regarded as wildlife or as feral stock, and whether the basis for their protection derived from the auspices of state or federal law. During the buffalo round-up that year, the Teschers removed ten more horses at the request of the park.

1. NPS Resists Inclusion under PL 92-195

On 16 August 1973 the Superintendent of Big Horn Canyon sent a memo to the Regional Director advising him of the proceedings of the Wild Horse and Advisory Board's meetings at the Pryor Mountains of the previous month. Two recommendations had been

advanced: to amend the act (PL 92-195) to permit the use of aircraft during round-ups; and to expand the act to include all Department of Interior agencies, including the NPS.

In a letter of 29 August 1973 to the Chairman of the Advisory Board protesting the latter notion, the Assistant Director of the NPS provided three reasons for the NPS' strong aversion to such a change. First, the NPS was created for the preservation and protection of lands in their natural state. Second, few feral equines were on NPS lands, and those that were "cause substantial damage to vegetation . . . and present a serious and costly management problem." Third, the NPS was dealing with the feral equine issue through the Master Plan system at individual NPS units.

The Acting Assitant Director of the NPS sent the following memo to all Regional Directors on 5 November 1973:

This law does not apply to the NPS. We follow our current policies with respect to these animals and define them as exotics that do not belong in the original park scene.

In a memo to the Department Director of WASO, the Acting Regional Director of WASO stated that

. . . except where such animals are managed as an integral part of the historic scene, horses, burros, and other feral animals detract from the aesthetic, scenic, and recreational value of the natural areas of the NPS.

2. The Dickinson Press carried a notice on 13 September 1973 that the BLM was providing a sixty-day period from 13 August to 15 November for parties to claim free-roaming equines on BLM lands. All unclaimed horses would then be considered "wild and

free-roaming" under PL 92-195 and would become the property of that federal agency.

3. THRO Legalization of the Herd

In a letter to State Travel Director Joseph Satrom on 31 August 1973, Superintendent Lancaster outlined THRO's horse policy. In providing a brief history of the herd, he noted that free-roaming horses had existed in the area during Theodore Roosevelt's time and that

Throughout the ensuing years, up to the present time, there have been horses, unclaimed, roaming free in the badlands.

The National Park Service recognized some years ago that the horse business would have to be resolved. Some former superintendents and Regional Directors were all for getting rid of them since they were not an indigenous wildlife species. This thinking changed as research for the development of the Master Plan proved the wild (feral) horses were part of the Badlands scene during Roosevelt's residence. As a result Theodore Roosevelt National Memorial Park now has a mandate to perpetuate and manage wild horses as a part of the total park theme.

Lancaster noted that the Resource Management Plan called for maintaining the herd at about forty animals, the current population, but that the herd could not be managed until the NPS gained clear title, adding, "Why this ownership business was not settled long ago is unknown to us."

Once THRO gained title, Lancaster continued, "One of our first considerations would be to eliminate some of the present stallions and replace them with appropriate stock to forestall inbreeding problems."

However, at this juncture the administration was taking a conservative approach toward the introduction of new animals:

There has been quite a bit of correspondence . . . regarding the introduction of mustangs into the herd. A Mr. Kingsley and a Mr. Valentine, both members of the Spanish Mustang Registry, have been pushing for the introduction of this variety. We would not want to corrupt the present herd with introductions of any special breed until or unless it can be firmly established by professional genealogists that the present herd does indeed contain Spanish mustangs.

Regarding the top priority of legalizing the herd, Lancaster noted that Tom Tescher's claim to three of the earlier horses and their progeny (obtained from Mrs. L. M. Barnhart after the death of her husband) could entitle him to as many as thirty horses. The Park Service did not want to push the issue, and Lancaster suggested: "Should the state want to pursue this at the Judicial or Executive level we would be most grateful. . . ."

On 14 September, Tom Tescher was granted a sixty-day authority to capture three old, branded geldings belonging to him, a two-year-old filly belonging to John Griggs, and three stallions "to be chosen by the superintendent." In December Mr. Tescher was notified by mail that despite the fact that he had been unable to capture all of them, his sixty-day period to repossess horses had expired, and he was requested to stop at the park and sign a relinquishment of claims.

In a subsequent memo to the Midwestern Regional Office, Lancaster outlined that once Tescher relinquished his claim, the park would follow North Dakota law and issue two notices to the effect that potential claimants would be allowed to come forward within a designated period of time. Then the park would seek assurance that the state held no claim on the horses. Lancaster suggested

that the governor might issue a proclamation classifying the horses a "protected wild animal."

In response to this proposal, on 21 December 1973, the Acting Regional Director agreed with the procedure of public notice; however, he felt it was unnecessary for the governor to classify the horses as protected wildlife. His determination, which remains in force, was that the horses are protected while in the park by pertinent sections of Title 36, the Code of Federal Regulations (36 CFR 2.32, 2.20, 2.25, and 2.11). This resolution shifted the legal jurisdiction over the horses from North Dakota Century Code Chapter 36-13, "Estrays," to federal statutes.

According to a memo to the Regional Director on 7 December, Mr. Tescher apparently signed a release claim to all horses in the park on or about that date (THRO file series 1427).

Action: Round-up

During the buffalo round-up the Teschers chased and caught several bands of horses at the request of the park. Jim Tescher roped, ear-marked, and re-released the "Hereford" colt; Gary Tescher roped a black, star-faced mare (born 1966) now owned by Leo L. Kuntz, Jr.; a grey (originally black and white) colt was driven into the corrals and ear-marked. The "Fat Grey" mare was also trapped. These four were released. Between ten and twelve horses were removed and sold for slaughter, including a stallion, a grey colt out of the "Orphan Brown" mare (later purchased by Kuntz), a

blue colt out of the "Old Blue" mare, a bay filly, and a chestnut colt (see "Notable Lineages").

1974Policy

1. In May of 1974 THRO issued a public notice in area newspapers announcing their plans to claim the approximately forty horses in the park "with the intent to manage this horse herd as an integral part of the wildlife inhabiting the park." Persons wishing to claim any of the horses were given fifteen days to notify the superintendent and produce a sworn affidavit of ownership (McKenzie County Farmer 16 May 1974). There is no record of any such response.

2. According to the 1976 Resource Management Plan, a 10-238 for the construction of six horse traps near watering holes in the park was submitted on 13 December 1974. Apparently this method of capture had been recommended by BLM officials. The request was never funded.

Action: Removals

With the assistance of an airplane, the Teschers removed three old geldings bearing their brands that had been in the park for a number of years. They also roped and removed a two-year-old bay stallion that escaped onto Talkington's property during the chase, a young blue roan stallion from Lindbo's property, and possibly several others.

1975-1976Policy

A Resource Management Plan developed in 1975-1976 (6 January 1976) addressed management issues for the newly legalized horse herd in some detail. This document formally recommended the introduction of outside breeding stock to change the genepool of the horses, an option that had been under consideration for several years.

The plan describes a population of 42-46 horses extant in the South Unit, "thought to be the descendants of two mares that escaped from the Barnhart ranch, and a white stud of unknown ancestry" (p. 1). The document states that the animals are protected by virtue of Title 36 of the Code of Federal Regulations; no mention is made of their recent legalization. "No other management plan is currently in effect for this herd. Interpretation is limited to infrequent coverage during evening programs" (pp. 1-2). The plan also states that the horses were not readily visible to tourists, and that "when they are observed, they are usually mistaken for domestic stock." In addressing the management option of removing the horses, the public outcry against such efforts in the 1960s is cited: "Because of this precedent, herd removal at this time is not recommended." The presence of the horses is justified by their historic habitation during Roosevelt's era: "Thus, the present herd adds authenticity to the historical interpretation of the park" (p. 3).

Two management issues are focused on in the Resource Management Plan: inbreeding and the need to determine methods of population control. With regard to the former, the plan recommended the introduction of outside breeding stock:

Problems with current management are those associated with the genetic trends of a small, enclosed population. Several colts have been observed as being unusually small and with crooked legs, which is probably a result of inbreeding. . . .

To prevent the herd from becoming inbred, it may be desirable to introduce one or more studs procured from an outside source. Local research is needed in this respect to determine how best new horses can be introduced, and the old studs can be dispatched. Too, investigation of the best method to remove excess horses should be initiated. Trapping, roundup, tranquilizer gun and direct reduction should be considered. Form 10-238 package no. 168 dated 12/13/74 calls for the construction of six horse traps near water holes in the eastern portion of the park. Apparently, this method has been proved effective by other agencies managing wild horses. The traps will be one half-one acre in size and constructed of seven-foot woven wire fence. The enclosures will also have two quick-closing trap gates (pp. 2-4).

The relocation and dispersal of the horses west of the Missouri River was considered in order to minimize their range use. However, the plan suggests that this idea remain dormant until an ecological study could be undertaken to assess the impact of the horses on the range and their relationship to and possible competition with other species.

The plan recommended "comprehensive management" of the horses; that is, maintenance of the herd at the specified population of 30-40 head, with periodic reductions. The introduction of new bloodlines was also recommended:

Since an inbred herd would not be aesthetically pleasing and would reflect poor management judgement, it is recommended that, after a determination is made how,

one or more studs be introduced to the existing herd. At this time, older studs or animals displaying noticeable physical deformities should be removed. Any new stock that is introduced should be of the same general domestic variety that is now present. . . . In addition, an attempt should be made to interpret these animals more effectively. Visitor Center exhibits or an exhibit at Painted Canyon would be helpful. A continued effort should be made to closely monitor the year to year success of the animal population. Any noticeable change in the herd number should be immediately investigated.

Action: Destructions

1. A four-year-old blue and white paint colt out of the "Orphan Brown" mare was destroyed on Lindbo's property. This incident generated controversy among THRO staff and the local community, and is recalled negatively by members of the latter group. According to Lola Lindbo and other informants, the horse wandered onto her property east of the park boundary. Mrs. Lindbo notified the park, and several rangers arrived to dispatch the horse. However, they shot him repeatedly before making the kill, during which time the horse ran and struggled considerably. A seasonal ranger resigned following this incident. Mrs. Lindbo says she "should have called the Teschers" instead of the park and has done so on subsequent occasions.
2. A four-year-old blue roan stallion (out of the "Old Blue" mare) was shot in June of 1976.
3. An orphaned grey 1976 colt whose dam (a two-year-old blue mare) was found dead near Boicourt Springs was destroyed when it became entangled in the I-94 fence in June of 1976.

1977

Action: BLM Assessment of the THRO Horse Herd

Bureau of Land Management Range Conservationist Milton Frei (in charge of the BLM wild horse program in Nevada) visited THRO from 12-14 April for the purpose of evaluating the feral horse population. Tom Tescher and Park Ranger Marty Ott accompanied Frei on his field examination of the park horses. Frei's inquiry and subsequent report focused on three areas of concern: the wild horse habitat, the wild horse population, and possible methods of population control (Frei, 1977; Wild Horse Herd Evaluation Report for Theodore Roosevelt National Memorial Park. Unpublished ms., THRO files series 1427).

With regard to habitat, Frei stated:

The habitat in Theodore Roosevelt National Park can best be described as excellent for wild horses. It should be obvious to even an untrained observer that the park could support a much larger population of wild horses without adverse impacts upon the soil or vegetative resources as well as other wildlife species. The only habitat problem that could be identified was associated with the use of trails by wild horses as they move to and from sources of water. . . . However, this trailing will be just as severe as long as any wild horses, buffalo or other grazing animals are allowed within the park boundary (p. 1).

Frei divided his discussion of the horse population into two main topics, inbreeding and population dynamics.

A. Inbreeding

In regards to the topic of inbreeding, the wild horse management plan for Theodore Roosevelt National Park identifies inbreeding as a problem based upon the presence of crooked legs, poor conformation, and a predominance of blue and grey horses.

While it is impossible to say for sure whether inbreeding is a problem, it is my opinion that inbreeding does not constitute a significant problem in wild horse populations. If the wild horses at Theodore Roosevelt National Park are compared with those on BLM administered lands, it is obvious that the TRNP National Park horses are much superior in terms of conformation and condition. In many areas, the horses on BLM lands are too numerous for inbreeding to be a problem, and, like TRNP, there exists an unusual number of animals with similar color patterns, e.g., roans, greys, pintos. . . .

Inbreeding itself is not harmful. What inbreeding does is to increase rapidly the homozygosity of the population and to bring to light any recessive genes which may have been carried in a heterozygous state.

Inbreeding does not create weakness or defects: it merely brings them to light. Crossbreeding, on the other hand, does not eliminate them; it merely covers them up while still carrying them along. . . .

An important indicator to be used in determining whether inbreeding is becoming a problem would be a decline in vigor, fertility, and/or viability in the wild horse population. . . .

According to the management plan for wild horses, reproduction has increased from 15% in 1970 to 26% in 1977. As a result, it is questionable whether inbreeding is having much effect on the wild horse population within the park at this time.

It is my recommendation that the Theodore Roosevelt National Park give careful consideration of any proposals to introduce new blood lines into the wild horse population for the purpose of preventing inbreeding. This type of activity could be quite costly and will tend to interfere with the process of natural selection, which rapidly produces animals capable of surviving under existing environmental conditions. Depending upon the type of management selected for wild horse (i.e. sustained yield or control) it may be more desirable to selectively remove those animals which exhibit undesirable characteristics (p. 2).

B. Population Dynamics

Frei discussed several aspects of population dynamics in his report: optimum numbers, rate of increase, and methods of population control. With regard to the first topic, Frei stated:

As previously mentioned, the habitat for wild horses could support many more wild horses than presently exist. As a result, the determination of "optimum num-

bers" of wild horses is, for the most part, an arbitrary and administrative decision which must be made by the National Park Service. However, in an unlimited habitat, there are some considerations which should be made when a minimum number of animals is all that is desired. These considerations revolve around the maintenance of a population of animals which is balanced from a biological standpoint, i.e., all age classes and sex ratios represented in proper proportions. . . .

Since the most productive period for wild horses is from three to nine years of age, it is probably biologically unsound not to have these age classes fully represented by animals. While it may be acceptable to maintain a minimum population of thirty animals, a total of forty or more animals would be much better from a biological standpoint. . . (p. 3).

Frei then discussed methods of calculating the horses' rate of increase, pointing out that THRO's figures were based simply on reproductive rates without taking mortality into account (pp. 3-4). This discussion concludes with a recommendation that THRO conduct annual surveys of the number and sex of the horses, "plus age-specific fecundity rates. This information will prove invaluable in the future management of wild horses regardless of the management direction chosen."

Finally, Frei summarized several possible methods of population control, both direct (water trapping, wing traps, dispersal, destruction, immobilization) and indirect (fertility control, population manipulation) (pp. 5-9).

In conclusion, the report states:

. . . it is my opinion that a basic management decision is still needed for the TRNP wild horses. This decision should be concerned with establishing the overall management objectives for the wild horse herd. In other words, exactly what is it that is wanted from the wild horse population. Only when these objectives have been established, can a management and control scheme be devised which is appropriate for the animals. . . (p. 10).

Action: Destructions

1. A two- or three-year-old bald-faced blue roan filly was shot in the Bismarck Saddle Club pasture adjacent to the park. This is possibly the incident referred to by District Ranger Marty Ott (SR; THRO 1975-1978) in the statement, "I personally destroyed a yearling filly that escaped onto nearby ranchlands. Attempts to chase her back into the park were unsuccessful."

2. A two-year-old grey star-faced filly was observed to have a broken leg and was destroyed near I-95 on 5 August.

3. An older black stallion was removed or destroyed in 1977 (possibly by Krueger).

1978Policy

In April 1978 the Regional Director approved a Proposed Feral Horse Reduction Plan devised by THRO and detailing the first large-scale removal effort since 1954. Drawing on options discussed in the Master Plan and the Resource Management Plan, the document addresses the implementation of "comprehensive management, which includes the maintenance of population numbers at a prescribed level." Since the prescribed number of horses had been established at approximately forty animals and the herd had grown to 70-75 head, the plan proposed the capture and removal of 30-35 horses.

The 1978 Feral Horse Reduction Plan focuses on comprehensive management of the horses, recognizing them as "a non-wildlife animal . . . the management of a display herd only."

Interpretation of the horses is described as negligible. Inbreeding and environmental destruction are cited as major concerns:

There are several problems with current management action that seem to be apparent. Generally, they are associated with genetic trends of a small, enclosed population, and the tendency of the herd to inhabit a very limited portion of the total available range. Several colts have been observed as being unusually small and with crooked legs, which may be a result of inbreeding. Other indicators which would support this idea, are horses with poor overall conformation, "jugheads," and a predominance of similar color patterns (blues, greys, and mixtures thereof). Of equal

concern is the tendency for the herd(s) to use only the eastern and southeastern section of the south district as range. As the herd size has increased over the past ten to twelve years, a corresponding increase in fence damage, over-grazing, deleterious impact around dish tanks, and erosion due to a wide-spread, heavily used trail system has been noted. . ." (p.1).

The introduction of outside horses is recommended to ameliorate inbreeding:

Historically, inbreeding in feral horse herds was not commonly found. Herd members changed frequently as some animals were captured and removed from the herd that is representative of what was found here in the late 1800's, it will be necessary to prevent the herd from becoming inbred [sic]. Accordingly, a strong effort should be made to locate mares or studs to introduce into the park herd. Introduced animals should be of mixed colors to provide contrast within the herd. Specimens within the herd that are or will be of reproductive age, that show obvious signs of inbreeding should be culled during round-ups or otherwise destroyed. Essentially, the horse herd should be managed similarly to the Longhorn herd in the North Unit of the Park. Simply stated, the Longhorns and feral horses are historic livestock displays that should be managed separately and apart from native wildlife species (pp. 3-4).

The accompanying Environmental Review states that the alternative of no action would be environmentally unsound:

If the herd size is allowed to grow unchecked at the 1976 rate of increase of 26%,⁷ horses would soon have very definite influences on other wildlife species through competition for range and available water. In addition, as horse numbers increase, the frequency of animals escaping through the park fence and trespassing onto neighboring ranchlands will correspondingly increase. Other factors to consider . . . are increased erosion due to heavily used trails, the possibility of stallions rounding up domestic "harems" from neighboring ranches, and over-grazing and ecological disruption in certain sections of the park (p.2).

⁷ See Frei, 1977, pp. 3-4, which challenges this figure.

The Environmental Review describes the reduction method to be used "at intervals of from every two to four years to maintain the display herd at from 35-60 head":

The actual reduction will be accomplished by a roundup that will normally be conducted in the fall, September or October, a time of year when the colts are able to keep up with the herd. The procedure planned for this, the first reduction, will consist of using a combination of riders and a helicopter to drive the animals from their home range on the eastern end of the park and the Boicourt area, to the buffalo corral pasture. Two to four riders will start the main herd from the southeast corner moving them across Talkington Bottom. More riders will join the drive at Talkington Bottom assisting in moving the herd north/northwest towards Boicourt. Here additional riders will join the drive, at the same time attempting to pick up the small herd ranging in that area. At this time and location, 12-15 riders will be pushing the animals west/northwest, keeping the animals between themselves and the north boundary fence. Approximately five more riders will be strung out west of Boicourt to keep the animals from turning south and to join the drive as it passes. When the drive reaches the pasture gate, if all goes well, some 15-18 riders should be behind them for the final push.

The plan for the helicopter is to utilize it, not so much to drive the horses, but as an aerial observation and communication post and to deter the horses from breaking back, or through the left flank. Once the horses are inside the corral pasture entry wing, the helicopter will move in for the final push through the pasture gate. . . . The total length of the drive, depending on which routes the horses choose to follow, will be from 10-12 miles. . . . Every effort will be made to haze them along slowly, yet keep the herd intact. . . (p. 1).

The reduction plan then called for the horses to be sorted and culled in the buffalo corrals "to maintain a 1:1 sex ratio with ages ranging from one year through sixteen years," and to then be sold at a public auction (p. 2).

On 18 July 1978 the Regional Office granted permission for the park to sell the horses at public auction as "display animals" (memo, THRO file series 1427).

Notices were sent to nine newspapers in North Dakota and Montana inviting bids for a contract (PX 1540 8 0305) to furnish 12-16 riders and 16-20 horses "to gather and drive 50-75 horses approximately twelve miles." Sealed bids were accepted until 2:00 P.M. on 25 August. Tom Tescher was awarded the contract.

Action: Round-up

The proposed horse reduction was staged on 5 and 6 September 1978. According to a subsequent memo by Chief Ranger Powell (13 September 1978), one helicopter and 22 riders, including six NPS employees, assisted in the operation. As planned, the horses were moved from the southeast corner of the park to the buffalo corrals, with relay riders falling in behind them at various points along the route. (See map, Figure 13, for schematic representation of plan.)

By all accounts the round-up was unsuccessful. On the first day, approximately seventy animals were driven six miles from the southeast corner to High Corner, where they began to spill over the ridges to the south in small groups and could not be recovered. Eighteen to twenty-one head were driven around Mosser Corner, where they were met by a band of domestic horses intended to lead them into the trap; the wild horses ignored them and plunged through the Mosser's fenceline. Four horses were roped and hobbled and two corraled.

The worst problem, however, was extreme heat (105 degrees) and the distance the horses were driven. Three of the horses that were captured on the first day died within a few hours, and a colt

that night. Superintendent John Lancaster (SR; THRO 1979) recalled the round-up as

a disaster. We literally ran several feral horses to death, had around eighteen head jump the fence and go into the neighboring ranches, and got less than five into the buffalo corrals.

On the 6th, nine horses that were within four miles of the buffalo corrals were captured. The helicopter then began moving a group of thirty-five animals from the southeast corner of the park; fourteen of these were driven to Mosser's corner, where they ran through Mosser's fence. A mare and a colt were driven into the corrals.

Seven horses of various ages and both sexes were killed during the round-up; others sustained injuries, primarily wire-cuts. Horses known to have died either during the chase or immediately after capture included:

1. Black stallion, white foot, three years old
2. Grey and white mare, bald face, nine years old
3. Blue and white stallion, five years old
4. Blue roan 1978 colt
5. Brown-grey mare, dark mane, fifteen years old
6. A young stallion found dead along the north fence
7. A young stallion found dead along the north fence

Four more horses that had escaped the park during the round-up were captured by the Teschers the following weekend.

Fourteen head were sold at Stockman's Livestock Sales Barn on 12 September 1978 for a total of \$2,651.00 to canneries, rodeo stock contractors, and private individuals:

1. Blue roan stallion
2. Blue roan stallion
3. Chestnut filly
4. Black paint colt
5. Blue roan filly
6. Blue roan filly
7. Blue roan filly
8. Black mare
9. Red roan stallion
10. Grey stallion (aged)
11. Paint stallion
12. Grey-blue two-year-old, crippled
13. Grey-blue two-year-old, crippled

One, a black piebald filly, was sold to the Gold Seal Zoo for cat food.

Leo Kuntz, Jr., began purchasing park horses second-hand from buyers after the sale. He purchased a blue roan mare ("Pollicky") and, the following year, a bald-faced blue-red gelding ("Bad Toe") from the Teschers (who purchased the horses at auction), both of which were later used in the Great American Horse Race circuit (see Photo No. 123).

The horses that broke through the fence remained at large throughout the fall despite an attempt by the Teschers to capture them on Mosser's property. During the ensuing harsh winter the Thompsons coaxed them into a corral by baiting with hay. The park apparently agreed to give them the horses as compensation for fence damage, and nearly all were sold to slaughter at a sale.

This group included the "Old Blue" mare, a red roan daughter of John Griggs' white mare, and her two blue roan fillies (see "Notable Lineages"). Horses known or assumed to have been captured and sold by Thompson after the round-up (identified by Tom Tescher and others) were:

1. Sorrel stallion, bald face, four years old
2. Red roan stallion, three years old
3. Bay stallion, five years old
4. Blue roan stallion, star and snip, two years old
5. "Old Blue" mare, more than eighteen years old
6. Griggs red roan mare, seven years old
7. Blue roan filly, star, one year old
8. Grey stallion, three years old
9. Grey mare, four years old
10. Blue roan filly (tentative)
11. Black mare, strip face and glass eye, four years old⁸

In addition, the Teschers captured and removed two horses from the Lindbo's property in July of 1979: a yearling bald-faced roan colt and a grey, bald-faced two-year-old colt.

The capture and sale of these horses brought the total number removed as a consequence of the 1978 round-up to 34 head. The actual round-up removed two "senior" stallions--a 12-year-old scarred blue roan (by the old bald-faced blue stallion and out of the "Old Blue" mare; see "Notable Lineages"), who had a band of 18

⁸ This mare was captured by the Thompsons at a later date and was sold to Leo Kuntz, Jr.

horses, and a dappled grey ten-year-old and his band. Approximately 45 head remained in the park.

1979Policy

Harvey Wickware replaced John O. Lancaster as superintendent of THRO. During Wickware's administration, an effort was made to change the genotype and phenotype of the park horses. To implement this goal, blue roan and grey stallions were destroyed and/or removed and sold, and domestic stallions representing modern breeds were introduced to replace them. The rationale for this action was to produce a variety of horse that would appeal to the modern horseman and command a higher sale price (Wickware, personal communication; also see below).

Action

In July 1979 the Teschers roped a bald-faced red-grey yearling colt and a grey, bald-faced three-year-old colt on Lindbo's property. They were removed and sold.

Natural Deaths

At least four horses died in the park during 1979: an old black and white ("loner") stallion out of the black Barnhart mare, a four-year-old black and white stallion, the brown Griggs mare, and an older, white "ruptured" mare (see "Notable Lineages").

1980Policy

The central issue concerning the THRO horses in the period 1978-1982 was determining what type of horses should be maintained by the park. Following the 1978 round-up, a number of outside parties began to lobby for the retention of the original park strain on the basis that they were historically accurate and biologically well-adapted to the badlands environment. At the same time, the park's long-standing concern about inbreeding and dissatisfaction with the phenotypic uniformity of the horses (predominance of greys and roans) found expression in the formulation and implementation of a policy to replace them with modern breeds.

This policy was expressed in a number of letters and park memoranda. In the fall of 1980, the park received a letter from Reverend Floyd Schweiger, who had been instrumental in the creation of the Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Refuge in Wyoming. Reverend Schweiger urged the park to consider preserving the type of horse associated with the Theodore Roosevelt era, that is, the Spanish mustang/Indian pony. Citing the purchase and use of Spanish Barbs as an interpretive display at Bent's Old Fort NHS as an example, Schweiger argued,

The point that I am trying to make is that it seems to me that rather than trying to just preserve wild horses we should be trying to preserve the very type of horses that roamed the West at the time of President Theodore Roosevelt. This would be a much more fitting memorial.

In a reply dated 16 October 1980, Superintendent Wickware stated:

There is no evidence to substantiate that the horses presently existing in Theodore Roosevelt National Park are descendants of animals that were here during Roosevelt's time. Existing documentation traces the ancestry of the park herd to two mares that escaped from a local ranch in the mid-1950s and a white stallion of unknown ancestry. . . .

Late in the 1960s, park management made the decision that the horses, even though not descendants of Roosevelt's stock, did fit in with the historic theme of the park and would remain to be managed as any other wildlife species. Our primary horse management interest is not so much maintaining an authentic herd as it is simply providing a small free-roaming horse herd for the public to view. Such bands of horses were referred to by Theodore Roosevelt and his contemporaries. At that time, as at present, the horses were thought to be escaped ranch stock and not the direct descendants of an ancient Spanish breed.

Wickware noted that inbreeding was affecting the character of the herd, as evidenced by "a preponderance of grey, black, and blue horses. . . . We hope to overcome this in the future by introducing mixed breed mares" (THRO file series 1427).

Action

On 30 September 1980, the Acting Director of the National Park Service issued a memo advising NPS personnel that a lawsuit challenging NPS exemption from the Wild and Free Roaming Horse and Burro Act had been settled in favor of the NPS (THRO file series 1427).

1981Policy

In 1981 THRO began to implement plans to remove feral park stallions and replace them with domestic animals. This option had been considered for a number of years and was recommended in the 1976 Resource Management Plan, based on a concern that the park herd was becoming inbred and would be more aesthetically pleasing if new colors were introduced. During the Wickware administration, it was decided that the introduction of well-bred stallions would upgrade the herd, thereby increasing their sales potential following the necessary periodic herd reductions.

In June 1981 Les Sellnow, a journalist and Arabian breeder from Minnesota, offered to donate a registered yearling colt to the park as a replacement stallion. In accepting Sellnow's offer by letter on 23 June 1981, Superintendent Wickware outlined in part his administration's horse policy:

We feel, as you are aware, that in the herd's best interest some new blood must be introduced. Not only is the herd's color steadily going to grey, but there may also be some physical deficiencies generated by inbreeding or being passed on from one of the present studs. . . .

There is but one way to increase the genepool, and that is by the introduction of new bloodlines. . . . The goal of increasing the genepool will succeed only if the stud is dominant enough to take mares from the present stud or if he is assisted to this end by having the competition removed.

It is our opinion that your generous offer of a young Arabian stud will accomplish its purpose only if he is assisted in establishing his place in the herd.

We plan on taking just such measures. If all goes well, both time-wise and financially, we will be rounding up and selling the horse herd this October. If our efforts at capture are successful, we will be removing all of the old studs to make room for the introduction of new young studs. At that time we feel animals such as yours could be turned loose in the herd with reasonable expectations of their successfully competing with the remaining young studs. . . .

In a letter to the Theodore Roosevelt Nature and History Association on 14 October 1981, Wickware requested \$50 to register the donated Arabian colt,

. . . so that the progeny of this stallion will enable this living history to become more self-sufficient in a fiscal sense. . . . This animal and others yet to come will serve to improve the interpretive aspects of the "wild" horse band in the South Unit.

Action

1. Round-up:

During the summer of 1981, a horse trap and corrals were built adjacent to the boundary fence in the northeast corner of the park to obviate the need to drive horses to the buffalo corrals for capture, a circumstance that had contributed to the high equine mortality rate during the 1978 round-up. The pens were designed to utilize the boundary fence as one arm of a V-shaped alley, with a southwestward running wing fence constituting the other. At the point of the "V" holding pens were built.

A horse round-up was held on 5 October for the purpose of removing stallions and reducing the overall population of approximately 63 animals. A helicopter was engaged, Tom Tescher was contracted to provide fifteen riders, and these were augmented by NPS and volunteer horsemen. The plan of the round-up was essentially

the same as in 1978: to drive the horses from the southeast section of the park into the traps, where they would be sorted and loaded for the sales barn in Dickinson.

On the first two attempts, the horses shied away from the milling fence after being driven north along the fenceline toward the trap. This obstruction was then removed. On the third try, 23 horses were driven into the pens, and three stallions were roped. Most of the animals were immediately loaded into a stock trailer and driven to Stockman's Livestock Exchange in Dickinson.

Because only eight mature stallions had been captured, a second effort (with riders) was made on Friday, 9 October, by which time the fence had been re-positioned. Five stallions were roped, two of which died of crushed trachea while fighting the ropes. A five-year-old blue roan stallion out of the "Fat Grey" mare, which had a swollen left hock, was shot.

A total of 32 animals, 14 of them stallions, were removed as a result of these actions (several captured mares were released). The population was reduced from approximately 71 to 39 head (including a 1981 paint colt that became separated from its mother during the round-up and disappeared).

Most of the dominant stallions were removed. An eight-year-old black, bald-faced stallion was sold to a rodeo stock contractor in Montana and gelded (see Photo No. 10). The dominant stallion (with sixteen head), a blue grandson of the "Old Blue" mare and by the scarred blue stallion removed in 1978, was also sold as bucking stock. Several grey stallions, including the "Hereford stud" (nine years old), a twelve-year-old grey (originally blue

and white), and an eighteen-year-old grey were removed and sold. (See "Notable Lineages" and Photos No. 6-21, which show several bands of the park horses prior to the 1981 round-up and sale [Donated to THRO by Robert Benton, Chief of Interpretation and Resource Management 1969-1972].)

Several newspapers covered the round-up and published articles about the event and the park's plans to introduce new stock. Les Sellnow, editor of the Brainerd Daily Dispatch (MN), participated in the round-up and published two articles in the edition of 2 November 1981. One profiled Tom Tescher and his long-term involvement with the horses; the second chronicled the round-up and Sellnow's donation of the Arabian colt to the park. The back page of this edition was devoted to round-up photographs, including shots of several of the senior stallions that were removed and a photograph of Sellnow's colt, Tiger Tu. The Minot Daily News carried essentially the same feature on 10 November 1981 (THRO file series 1427).

Some area residents were dismayed by the round-up and by the park's plans to remove and replace stallions. Ruby Tisor, a Medora resident since 1937, told the Dickinson Press (11 October 1981) that she felt the treatment of the horses during the round-up was "inhumane" and that "there ought to be room enough" for the horses in the park. Medora attorney Jay Brovold protested in a letter to the park on 6 October 1981 that he was "not convinced" that the park's concern with inbreeding and subsequent removal of stallions was justified, but "even granting that,"

I am not alone in being extremely upset by the inhumane circus conducted in the name of a wild horse roundup. .

. . The entire treatment of these animals has been extremely barbaric, asinine, and idiotic. . . .

Tom Tescher, however, stated in a Billings County Pioneer article dated 8 October 1981 that the round-up had been "the best we've ever had" and spoke in favor of the stallion replacement program:

These horses have been here since before the park opened. A lot of constant inbreeding causes horses with defects and a different appearance. Some horses develop thick necks and large heads, but they usually have good feet. . . . I think a purebred Quarter Horse [stallion] would be the best, but everyone has their own ideas on the types of studs to introduce to the herd.

2. Sale:

Twenty-eight head of horses were sold at Stockman's Livestock Exchange in Dickinson on 13 October 1981: twelve stallions, six mares, five colts, and five fillies.⁹ The horses brought a total of \$10,165 for an average of \$363 a head, most of the stallions selling for slaughter or for bucking stock. Leo Kuntz, Jr., purchased a three-year-old grey colt for \$700 (now known as "Jumping Mouse"; see Photo No. 116) and also most of the mares. He also purchased two stallions from other buyers after the sale. For a complete list of the horses that were sold, see Appendix D, reproduced courtesy of Tom Tescher.

3. Destruction:

⁹ This breakdown of the horses follows the standard practice of designating a male equine four years or under a "colt" and a female equine of the same age a "filly." Park memoranda often refer to such animals as "studs" and "mares"; hence, the present account differs from park sales records.

Two known horses were shot in the fall of 1981: a crippled star-faced blue colt out of the "Orphan Brown" mare and a five-year-old blue stud with a dark head and a swollen hind leg (see p. 162). A THRO memo dated 10 March 1981, "Management Action Update," stated, "A total of 28 horses were removed live from the herd of 71. . . . Four studs were removed by direct reduction" (THRO file series 1427).

4. Introductions:

After the round-up on 19 October Les Sellnow's yearling Arabian colt, Tiger Tu, was confined in the buffalo corrals with two yearling fillies, a star-faced black and a star-faced blue roan. After ten days the trio was released, whereupon the two fillies abandoned the colt, who joined the "Orphan Brown" mare and her paint filly in the Lindbo Flats area. (The Arabian is now D-5.)

Shortly thereafter the park released a bay, part-Shire, part-paint yearling colt donated by Tom Tescher and other Medora-area ranchers on 10 December 1981. This colt was purchased from the bucking string of Marvin Brookman of Wolf Point, Montana, and has henceforth been known as "the Brookman stud" (now A-1).

1982Policy

During 1982, the feral horse policy at THRO was demonstrated primarily in management actions: at least four park stallions were removed or destroyed, and an equal number of outside stallions were released to replace them. The notion of introducing mares was again mentioned (see below) but never implemented.

Action: Introductions

1. In May 1982 Tom Tescher donated and released a five-year-old strip-faced sorrel Quarter Horse stallion. That summer, Superintendent Wickware notified Tescher that the horse had gotten mixed up with a park stallion and had "come out second best" (THRO file series 1427). The horse was removed in September and later died.

2. In December the park acquired three BLM stallions that had been shipped from Rock Springs, Wyoming, to Dickinson for a sale conducted under the auspices of the "Adopt a Horse" program. The three stallions had not been "adopted" at the sale and were transferred to THRO as "surplus property" between federal agencies (see THRO memos, 8 Feb. 1984 and 9 Jan. 1984). The three stallions, a yearling paint (BLM # 81807716), a two-year-old buckskin (BLM #80808271), and a four-year-old sorrel (BLM #78807084) were released into the park.

Action: Removals

1. Two stallions are believed to have been destroyed or removed in 1982: a small blue-grey five-year-old out of the "Lindbo" mare, and a blue roan four-year-old. A strip-faced bay four-year-old stallion was discovered to be crippled in the left front leg and was shot.

2. On October 13 and 14, the Teschers attempted to chase older park stallions into the northeast corner trap "in an effort to enable the introduction of studs to breed wild mares and introduce new blood into the herd (memo from Chief Ranger Powell, 22 October; THRO file series 1427). One eight-year-old grey stallion with a small head was roped and sold at Stockman's Livestock Exchange in Dickinson. In reporting the incident, Chief Ranger Powell commented that chasing the horses was futile without a helicopter, and the park might want to

consider the introduction of mares--this way we would have to remove animals only during times we were reducing total herd numbers. This would give us the assurance that the potential existed to capture enough animals to contract the services of a helicopter to assist.

Natural Deaths

1. On 27 May, a black twelve-year-old mare with a strip and star and a two-year-old blue, strip-faced filly were struck and killed by lightning.

2. An old blue roan bald-faced stallion (age 20+) who had been dominant long past the average tenure disappeared and is

presumed to have died of natural causes. This horse had sired many of the most reproductively successful horses in the park (see "Notable Lineages"). Tom Tescher later discovered the horse's remains south and east of Buck Hill.

1983

1. The Arabian, Tiger Tu, sustained leg injuries and was removed from the park for treatment and then re-released.
2. Les Sellnow published an article chronicling the release of his Arabian into the park, entitled "Tiger Tu: Trading Domestic Roots for Wild Ways," in the April edition of the horse publication Equus.

1984Policy

1. The 1984 Natural Resources Management Plan and Environmental Assessment addressed wild horse management as section THRO-N-0010 (pp. 46-48). The presence of the horses is justified as part of the historic scene of the Roosevelt era and as a response to strong local pressure against their removal. The horses are considered a "historical demonstration. . . . However, they require management as a natural resource, to control population size and to protect the grassland resource." The plan states the objective of maintaining the herd at between 40-50 animals, but notes that "no determination has been made for a specific method that should be used to keep the herd at the desired number, or the proper age and sex ratios." The plan also states that "the exact number of mares, fillies, colts, and stallions is not known, as these animals are wary and cannot be approached too closely for censusing" (1984 NRMP, p. 1).

The 1984 Resource Management Plan was the first THRO document to address the notion of a genotypically and phenotypically "historic" horse herd and its desirability or lack thereof. Several alternative management actions are considered. The recent introduction of outside stock is discussed and justified under the alternative of "No Action" (A):

This alternative would continue the present management which has not evaluated the impacts of horse use on the

badlands ecosystem nor determined the desirable population structure. Introductions of stallions have been made to influence color variation and possibly relieve suspected inbreeding problems. Inbreeding however was discounted in a recent study of the herd.

Under this alternative, impacts to the range would be undetermined, and proper population structure ignored, resulting in an unknown potential for increase. Periodic roundup for herd reduction would continue. Introduction and removal of animals have been justified historically, as ranchers captured and sometimes turned loose domestic horses throughout the badlands and in what is now the park.

Theodore Roosevelt referred to this "exchange" in his writings about ranching in the badlands. Actions such as Roosevelt mentioned most likely led to a variety both in color and conformation of the animals that made up the wild horse herds during his time in North Dakota (pp. 46-47).

"Population Management without Introduction" (Alternative B) continues this discussion:

This option would discontinue the introduction of animals from other sources to add new genetic material. The resulting herd would probably tend toward a very limited pelage color scheme. This is not a significant impact unless a firm decision is made to retain a herd with a variable pelage color pattern.

Biologically, evolution toward a single color pattern poses no problem, and the potential for inbreeding defects has been significantly reduced by the animals introduced in the recent past. Another point to consider is that of maintaining a historic badlands horse herd, with the animals being direct descendants of the horses which were found here when the park was founded. This consideration has been compromised somewhat already from the introduction of other stallions.

Thirdly, "Population Management with Introduction" (Alternative C) is considered:

This alternative would include the use of outside sources of animals to supplement the genetic pool currently in existence. This program would be most beneficial in maintaining a herd with a variable pelage color pattern. Additionally, it may be useful if genetic defects, attributable to inbreeding, become apparent.

The notion of a historic band of badlands horses would be lost, as animals from outside sources are introduced.

Finally, "Research of Ecological Impacts" (Alternative D) called for an evaluation of the role of horses in the badlands environment: their relationship to other floral and faunal species, range and plant use, etc. The need for ecological research on the herd had been recognized for some years, and this goal was established independent of population management sections (p. 48).

The 1984 plan recommended the following actions:

At this time a combination of the last two alternatives is recommended for management of the feral horse herd. This scheme would allow management for a desirable variety in pelage color and in the meantime, evaluation of environmental impacts from the presence of an exotic horse herd can be initiated. This ecological research as described in Alternative D, is dependent upon available funding of research proposals as they are submitted.

A. Resource Management Actions:

THRO-N-0010-01 Periodic introductions of animals may be made to influence pelage color variations.

THRO-N-0010-02 Periodic roundup to maintain desired herd size, sex ratios, and age classes.

B. Monitoring Actions:

THRO-N-0010-03 Yearly count of population to determine rate of expansion and changes in age and sex ratios.

C. Research Actions:

THRO-N-0010-04 Evaluation of the role and impacts of wild horses on the badlands ecosystem.

THRO-N-0010-05 Review of the literature to determine the breeds of horses typically found in the North Dakota badlands in the 1800s.

2. Professor Bruce Godfrey of Utah State University wrote to the park on 30 November asking for information on the park's acquisition of the three BLM horses to aid him in forming recommendations to improve the "Adopt a Horse" program. In a reply dated 17 December 1984, Superintendent Wickware clarified the

terms under which the horses had been acquired and commented on wild horse management in general and at THRO:

The acquisitionn of wild horses by THRO was not a typical adoption as authorized under the Wild Horse and Burro Act of 1971 [sic]. Horses from the BLM [were] transferred as surplus property, one Department of Interior Agency to another. We are therefore not required to meet the requirements and stipulations of the Act of 1971.

. . . The park has been managing horses here for twenty years; our management plan calls for the introduction of new stock to increase genetic diversity.

. . . We would like to add a comment specific to the control of populations of horses and burros on federal land. In our opinion it is not in the best interest of the public to expend as much money as at present managing these non-native animals. At this park our horses are confined within the 40,000-acre unit, are therefore not free roaming, and consequently are not regulated by the Act. Our surplus animals are sold at public auctions with the proceeds (being used for their)¹⁰ management.

Perhaps the management of horses and burros on public lands would not generate so much controversy if it was not costing taxpayers so much money.

Action: Introduction

In the spring of 1984 Tom Tescher donated and released two horses to replace the sorrel stud removed in 1982: an 18-month-old sorrel Quarter Horse colt and a bay Quarter Horse mare (deed of gift 30 May 1984; THRO file series 1427).

Action: Destruction

The "snip-nosed" black and white paint stallion produced by the black-and-white Barnhart mare (age 20+) was seen crippled near I-94 and was destroyed (year tentative). (See Photo No. 5.)

¹⁰ Part of this passage was abbreviated in my notes; I have reconstructed the parenthetical segment.

1985Action: Removals

1. In May of 1985 the sorrel BLM stud (#7880 7084) was injured in a fight and appeared near the Peaceful Valley Ranch concession with maggots in a wound near his tail. The horse was removed and sold.

2. In the spring of 1985, Tom Tescher was requested to remove four domestic horses that had appeared the previous summer near the Peaceful Valley Ranch. In February 1985 Mr. Tescher complied with a request to observe and attempt to identify the horses and their owner(s). This proved futile. The park determined that state estray law would provide the basis for their removal. On February 18 Mr. Tescher was advised by mail that if the trespass stock was not removed, the park would capture and sell the horses. Evidently the horses were removed by a third party.

Addendum

Les Sellnow published an article chronicling the possible descent of the park horses from A. C. Huidekoper's Thoroughbred stallion "Lexington," entitled "Blue Bloods of the Wild West," in the racing journal The Blood Horse on 9 February 1985.

1986Policy

Early in 1986 Leo L. Kuntz, Jr., of Linton wrote to the park proposing to bait and trap the feral horses in exchange for payment in horses of his selection. In a reply dated 20 February 1986, Superintendent Wickware informed Kuntz that the proposal had been discussed and rejected for a number of reasons, all of which combined to make the operation too time- and labor- intensive. He added that the park planned to round up the horses with the aid of two helicopters in the fall of that year.

Action: Round-up

Due to increases in herbivore populations and a concomitant range dessication due partly to several dry years, plans were made to reduce the bison population by 30% and the horse population by 60% by round-up in the fall of 1986. At that time the horse population was 97-100 animals. In order to increase the efficiency of the operation and to reduce potential accidents, the park planned to use two helicopters and fewer horseback riders than in previous years. Tom Tescher was again contracted to provide riders and assistance with the culling and penning operations.

The horse reduction began on 23 August following a successful bison round-up in the North Unit on 22 August (see Photos No. 22-24). Tom Tescher and South Unit District Ranger Jim Cutler

rode in separate helicopters while 25 riders (mostly volunteers) assisted on the ground. Over sixty horses were driven into the pens along the northeast boundary fence by the end of the day. The dominant park stallion, a 13-year-old blue roan, collapsed and died while being chased.

The Brookman stallion and his band were captured several times and re-released. By evening 47 head had been culled and transported to the Western Livestock Sales facility in Dickinson. Fourteen mares and colts, most belonging to the Brookman band, remained in a holding pen overnight. During the night the lead mare broke through the fence, enabling the group to escape. This mare bled to death from injuries sustained while escaping through the fence.¹¹

On the morning of 24 August the park attempted to capture more of the older stallions and recapture the horses that had escaped. On one attempt, a black stallion was driven to within fifty feet of the wing gate, whereupon he ducked back under the helicopter and escaped (now E-1). A young black mare running with him hit the gate and died with a broken neck. However, seven more horses were captured for removal.

Approximately eighty head were captured during the two-day operation. 54 head were sold at Western Livestock auction (most in lots) on 2 October 1986 (see Photo No. 25). The sale total was \$9,220, for an average of \$170.74 per head. Leo L. Kuntz, Jr., of

¹¹ Probably a 9-10-year-old grey (originally blue) mare with a black spot on her shoulder, out of the "Old Blue" mare.

Linton was the major buyer, with 51 head. The author purchased the dominant stallion in the sale (eight-year-old blue roan, out of the mare who had died breaking out) for the sale high of \$300 and later re-sold the horse to Kuntz (see Photo No. 113). The buckskin BLM stallion (ID #8080 8271) was sold to an unknown party.

The total equine mortality was six: three during the round-up and three at the sale barn. These were a 13-year-old blue roan stallion, a 9-10-year-old blue-grey mare, a two-year-old black mare, an eight-year-old grey mare, a bay 1986 filly, and a 20+-year-old grey mare. The eight-year-old grey mare and 1986 filly sustained severe pelvic injuries during transportation from the park to the sales facility or shortly thereafter. During their ten-day stay at the sales facility, they received no treatment, and the park was not notified of their condition. Following the sale, the horses were deposited with a front-end loader behind the sale barns, where they were discovered by park employees and humanely put down by a veterinarian. The 20+-year-old mare was in poor condition at the time of the round-up. However, she had a 1987 colt with her and showed remarkable endurance during the round-up operation. She was purchased for \$25 by Kuntz. The following day employees of the sale facility slammed a gate on her head.

Despite the low average price of the horses, the round-up was a fiscal success, costing less than the initial estimate (Chief Ranger's Narrative Report, 1986). Most phases of the

operation went smoothly and the desired scope of reduction was achieved.

Problems encountered during the 1986 round-up concerned the poor design and condition of the holding and sorting pens, which made handling the animals difficult and facilitated injuries to the horses and handlers. Also, the pens sustained considerable damage from the horses during the operation. Lastly, the number of people "assisting" at the corrals was excessive (see also Chief Ranger's Narrative Report, Buffalo and Wild Horse Reductions, 1986; THRO file series 1427).

1987Policy

1. In 1987 C. Mack Shaver succeeded Harvey Wickware as superintendent of THRO.
2. The Theodore Roosevelt Nature and History Association funded the present historically based research on the horses at THRO.
3. The Chief Ranger and staff decided to re-design and build an improved facility for capturing and holding horses at the same site. The design plan as of August 1987 is reproduced here as Figure 15.
4. The 1987 Theodore Roosevelt National Park General Management Plan cites a need for a wild horse management plan, "including a determination of the role and appropriateness of these animals in the park ecosystem" (p.11). It also states that:

The wild horses are considered a historical demonstration; however, population management is required to minimize their effects on other resources. Studies are needed to determine range use, carrying capacity, and the role these horses occupy in the natural environment of the park. Until this information becomes available, the wild horse population will be surveyed annually to determine expansion rates; also, there will be periodic round-ups and reduction in the population through public auctions (p. 27).

1988Policy

THRO acquired funding to conduct an ecological study on the feral horses.

Action

The only known action involving the herd was Tom Tescher's discovery and rescue of a newborn colt that had fallen into a wash-out. The colt was raised by the Tescher family.

North Dakota experienced a severe drought. Two horses were discovered dead near water springs in the park; their deaths may have resulted from a fight with bison over access to the water source.

1989Policy

Montana State University was contracted to conduct a two-three year ecological study of the THRO horses. The research was begun in June by Elena Hovland, an M.S. student in the Department of Animal and Range Sciences.

THRO decided to postpone further horse round-ups until the completion of Ms. Hovland's study and the construction of an improved horse trap.

Action

A five-year-old bay stallion escaped from the park onto the Lindbo Ranch east of the park boundary, where it remained as of October 1989.

A blue-and-white yearling colt out of B-3 (see 1989 census) was discovered to be injured (presumably by a mature stallion) and was removed from the park on 9 August. The colt was rehabilitated by Ms. Hovland and has become the property of Montana State University.

[2] NPS Survey Questionnaire

A survey questionnaire regarding the feral horses was mailed to former THRO staff in the summer of 1987. Of a total of 29 responses, 26 provided information regarding the population level and/or types of horses present in the park during the respondent's tenure at THRO, management actions, and/or opinions regarding the appropriateness of horses to the park theme. The respondents served in a variety of capacities at THRO in the period 1934-1979. Three former superintendents completed the questionnaire; for a complete list of respondents, see the "Acknowledgements" prefacing the text of this report. The survey responses are included as Appendix E.

The sample of responses was too small to calculate any statistically significant measure of opinions or data. Responses were not uniform, as respondents addressed different questions in varying detail. Most respondents claimed little knowledge of horses in general and little specific knowledge about the THRO herd. Respondents who worked at THRO simultaneously sometimes presented conflicting accounts of and differing attitudes about the horses. Therefore, only a characterization of the results can be provided here. The questionnaire did provide information about particular management actions, much of which was utilized in the "Management" section of this report.

There was no uniformity of opinion regarding the origins, appearance, or number of horses present at THRO at any given time. One respondent was unaware that there were horses in the park; others were closely involved with their management and recalled

individual animals. Five respondents expressed the belief that feral horses have been present in the badlands continuously since the nineteenth century; seven believed feral horses to be of more recent origin (including two who stated that the herd developed after the 1954 round-up); and the rest were ambiguous or uncertain. Seventeen respondents stated or implied that the horses were primarily ranch stock that had been feral for varying amounts of time (between 25 and 100 years), and seven stated or implied that the horses were a mixture of truly wild or "Indian" horses and domestic stock.

There was no correlation between respondents' views regarding the origins of the horses or their tenure in the badlands and opinions regarding the horses' appropriateness to the park theme. A majority of respondents (12) felt that the horses are appropriate, based on historic precedence. Several respondents added that they believe the horses are a tourist attraction and/or noted local support for their presence. Of the eight respondents who stated that horses are not appropriate, all but one cited possible environmental damage as the basis of their objection (one respondent cited no reason). One former superintendent stated that the horses would not be appropriate without historic justification. Four respondents offered no opinion regarding the horses' presence; two others stated that only horses of an original or historic type could be justified.

[3] Overview of Federal Wild Horse Management

The protection and mangement of feral equines in the United States is a relatively recent phenomenon, dating from the 1971 Wild and Free Roaming Horse and Burro Act (see Ryden, 1970). This Act protects animals living on lands administered by the Secretary of Interior through the Bureau of Land Management, and by the Secretary of Agriculture through the U.S. Forest Service. Although it does not apply to National Park Service lands, NPS administrators have tended to honor the intent of such federal legislation, and, in the few NPS areas that harbor feral equines, NPS personnel have relied on BLM management techniques and experience to guide their own practices.¹² This section provides a brief summary of federal wild horse management as practiced by the BLM, the agency responsible for most feral equines in the U.S.

The history of wild horses in the U.S. has been intimately linked to range economics and changing land-use patterns. In the middle of the nineteenth century, there were an estimated two million wild horses in the West, with large concentrations in California and Texas (Dobie, 1952; Ryden, 1970). The expansion and intensification of the western cattle industry generated the large-scale destruction of feral horses, a process that accelerated with the emergence of the pet food industry following World War I (Ryden, 1970; Wyman, 1963). Throughout the first half of the twentieth century, feral horses generally came under the

¹² The NPS successfully resisted inclusion under this act in 1973 (see Management section).

jurisdiction of state game laws; many western states initiated a bounty system and authorized the sale of unclaimed horses by stockmen through a county round-up system (Wyman, 1963). Between 1900 and 1935, the feral horse population was reduced from two million to approximately 75,000, with the animals being sold for use in foreign wars or to rendering plants (Ryden, 1970; Wyman, 1963).

The Taylor Grazing Act of 1934, which legislated federal public rangelands and created the Bureau of Land Management, established the removal of the remaining horses as a goal and issued round-up permits to stockmen's associations and professional horse capturers (mustangers). By the 1940s, federal and local agencies were cooperating in the use of fixed-wing aircraft to remove feral equines from public land; the animals were sold to rendering plants for human (European) and animal consumption (Ryden, 1970; Symanski, 1985; Wyman, 1963).

Public opinion emerged as an influence on wild horse management in the 1950s, when Nevada rancher Velma Johnson ("Wild Horse Annie") began to publicize the inhumane methods of capture and transportation employed by mustangers, which resulted in the death of three out of every four horses (Ryden, 1970; Symanski, 1985). Johnson's lobbying efforts resulted in the first federal legislation pertaining to feral horses, PL 86-234, the so-called "Wild Horse Annie Bill," in 1959. The act prohibited the use of aircraft or motor vehicles to hunt wild horses on public land (see Ryden, 1970).

When the Bureau of Land Management attempted to remove 200 wild horses from the Pryor Mountains throughout 1964-1968, the action was protested by a group of local ranchers. The case drew national attention and thrust the issue of feral equines under the purview of Congress and the American public. After reviewing the case, Secretary of Interior Stewart Udall designated the Pryor Mountain range a Wild Horse Refuge in September of 1969. Secretary Udall and BLM Director Boyd Rasmussen then designated a special advisory committee to address range impact, species interactions, and other managerial issues. The work of this committee marked the onset of federal equine management, albeit in site-specific fashion (Ryden, 1970; Symanski, 1985).

Hope Ryden, a New York journalist sent to cover the Pryor Mountain controversy for CBS News, spent 1968-1970 researching the history and status of wild horses. In 1970 she published America's Last Wild Horses, which detailed a steady decline in feral horse populations and argued for their historic and symbolic import. That publication, backed by an extensive speaking tour and appearances on national television, generated an enormous public interest in wild horses. For a time, Congressmen received more mail urging the protection of wild horses than on any other national issue (Ryden, 1970; Symanski, 1985).

On 15 December 1971, President Nixon signed into law PL 92-195, the Wild and Free Roaming Horse and Burro Act (WFRHB Act), designating the wild horse a "national heritage species" and an "aesthetic resource." The act reads in part:

Congress finds and declares that wild free-roaming horses and burros are living symbols of the historic and pioneer spirit of the west; that they contribute to the diversity of life forms within the Nation and enrich the lives of the American people; and that these horses and burros are fast disappearing from the American scene. It is the policy of Congress that wild free-roaming horses and burros shall be protected from capture, branding, harassment, or death; and to accomplish this they are to be considered in the area where presently found, as an integral part of the natural system of public lands.

For the purposes of the Act "wild horse or burro" was defined as "all unbranded and unclaimed horses and burros on public lands of the United States." At the time of the Act's passage, it was thought that these animals numbered approximately 17,000 throughout California, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, and Colorado, with heaviest concentrations in Nevada.¹³

The Act also directed the Secretaries of Interior and Agriculture to establish a nine-member Advisory Board and to undertake the scientific studies on horse behavior and ecology necessary to carry out the provisions of the Act.

An increase in feral equine populations since 1971 has resulted in several amendments of the Wild and Free Roaming Horse and Burro Act. In 1976, the Act was amended by Section 404 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, authorizing the use of helicopters and motor vehicles for the capture and transportation of wild equines. By 1978 wild horse and burro populations were estimated to be nearly 67,000, and Congress amended the WFRHB Act

¹³ This figure, calculated by the BLM, is now believed to have been too low.

in Section 14 of the Public Rangelands Improvement Act. The PRIA, which emphasized multiple use concerns, provided for the transfer of title to as many as four animals to an adopter who maintained them humanely for one year, established an order and priority for the removal and disposition of excess animals, and mandated a research program on feral equines to be conducted by the National Research Council.

In 1982, PL 92-195 was amended to accommodate management concerns not addressed by the Act, such as increased population levels and the disposal of excess animals. Among other changes, the clause in the 1971 Act stating "these horses and burros are fast disappearing from the American scene" was deleted.

A National Academy of Science committee on wild and free-roaming horses and burros was mandated by the PRIA and agreed to in a contract between the BLM and the NAS. The contract specified three stages of involvement for the committee: a review of existing knowledge and the development of a research program (Phase I); an evaluation of equine research contracted by the BLM (Phase II); and the submission of a final report, with recommendations for management (Phase III). Over the course of four years, this committee evaluated and/or addressed in comprehensive fashion a wide array of biological, ecological, and managerial issues pertaining to wild horses and burros. The committee program and recommendations are summarized in a final report published in 1982, which includes an extensive bibliography on wild horse research (1982 WFRHB).

In 1986 the Secretaries of Interior and Agriculture chartered the Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board. The nine-member board, representing a variety of interests (e.g., livestock, humane organizations, etc.), has focused on two interrelated issues: an excess of wild equines on public lands, and the accumulation of large numbers of unadopted horses in BLM corrals. The Board published an evaluation of these problems, with recommendations, in a 1986 report to the Secretaries of Agriculture and the Interior (1986 WHBAB).

BLM management of wild horses and burros has been problematic and controversial. Since passage of the WFRHB Act in 1971, various interest groups have brought at least 21 lawsuits against the BLM charging the agency with mismanagement of the wild horse program. The wild horse "issue" is often characterized as a debate between "protectionists" and the ranching industry; the BLM has been sued by both (Robbins, 1987). A 1985 book by cultural geographer Richard Symanski, Wild Horses and Sacred Cows, summarizes in objective fashion the first 14 years of federal wild equine management, with a focus on political interest groups and research. Except where otherwise noted, the following summary of the federal wild horse program derives from that book and the two government publications published in 1982 and 1986.

A major problem has been determining the population of wild horses on public lands and defining what constitutes "excess" animals. Research sponsored by the National Science Foundation revealed that aerial census techniques result in an underestimate of horse numbers, causing the BLM to project higher than actual

annual rates of increase. It is now believed that the BLM estimate of 17,000 wild horses in 1971 was too low by 10,000 animals. The agency has removed 90,000 horses from public lands since 1973, reducing the population from a 1980 high of 67,000 to 45,000 in 1987. The goal of the BLM is to maintain 30,000 wild horses on public lands; to approach this level the agency must round up approximately 10,000 horses each year. Congress appropriated \$65 million to remove 51,000 horses and burros during 1985-1988.

Evidence indicates that public rangelands have deteriorated since 1971. The overgrazing of livestock (which outnumber horses on public lands) is regarded as a significant factor. This decrease in the carrying capacity of rangelands and concomitant increase in horses is problematic. The BLM has been criticized for failing to evaluate range conditions, for not attending to temporal and spatial variability in public lands, and for tolerating excess livestock grazing. Management plans for all BLM areas that contain feral equines were due to be completed by the end of 1988.

One focus of government-sponsored research involves the development of population control techniques for wild horses. The sterilization and/or removal of dominant stallions has been considered and rejected for a number of reasons; current research focuses on the sterilization of female animals. This topic is discussed at length in the 1982 National Research Council publication.

In 1978 the BLM initiated the Adopt-A-Horse Program, which offers excess horses and burros to the public through an application and sale process. Horses removed from the public rangelands are taken to one of several BLM holding facilities (the largest of which are in California, Nevada, and Wyoming) or to facilities run by contractors for the BLM. Here horses are freezebranded for identification, tested for disease, aged, inoculated, and fed. Twelve-20 auctions are held per year. Adopters must demonstrate an ability to care for the horses, are limited to four animals each, and cannot sell or give away the animals for one year.¹⁴

An initial adoption fee of \$25 per animal was raised to \$200 in 1982. Following a dramatic drop in "adoptions," the fee was lowered to the present rate of \$125. Nearly 70,000 animals have been processed through this program, which costs about \$9 million per year, two-thirds of the Congressional appropriation for the entire wild horse program. The BLM estimates that about half the costs of operating this program are reimbursed under the fee schedule.¹⁵

The demand for wild horses has failed to keep pace with supply. Applicants to the program prefer to adopt female animals under four years of age. This has generated an overflow of older and/or less desirable horses, which remain in BLM pens at a cost of up to \$25,000 per day. In 1987 there were 10,000 excess

¹⁴ Prior to the PRIA of 1978, captured wild horses remained wards of the U.S. government for life.

¹⁵ Bismarck Tribune 31 Aug. 1987; and Robbins, 1987.

animals confined in BLM pens. By law, the BLM has the prerogative to destroy such animals after a 45-day period, but has seldom done so because of public sentiment. The Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board has recommended a five-step process for the disposition of excess equines. Step 5 entails euthanasia for an unadopted or unplaced animal after 90 days.

The Adopt-A-Horse Program has suffered from an inability to monitor horses after adoption, and several abuse cases have been reported and prosecuted. The BLM has been sued for tacitly allowing the "adoption" of large numbers of horses for slaughter purposes and for authorizing the sale of animals to zoos for exotic-animal food. It is possible that current restrictions regarding the disposition of animals will be changed if over-population remains problematic. The Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board has recommended the field destruction of excess or unadoptable (e.g. old, sick, crippled) animals rather than processing them through the Adopt-A-Horse program.¹⁶

One innovative new program that has dramatically increased wild horse adoptions has been developed by the BLM and the Colorado State Penitentiary at Carson City, Colorado. Here minimum security inmates halter break and gentle BLM horses prior to their being offered for adoption; a few are broken to ride. The penitentiary has been able to produce 150 gentled horses every 60

¹⁶ A North Dakota abuse case involving the adoption of wild horses made headlines in 1988. A Sheyenne rancher persuaded 100 people to adopt 4 horses each; he then purchased the animals for slaughter sale. Most died of starvation on his ranch. See Bismarck Tribune, 2 March 1988.

days, and there is a long list of inmates waiting to join the program. This effort has been so successful that six other correctional facilities are developing similar programs in concert with the BLM (Vorhes, 1986).

A recent trend in BLM management is the preservation of "historic" horse types, i.e., horses that display Spanish Mustang characteristics or that represent a local type extant at the time of the 1971 WFRHB Act. In Burns, Oregon, the BLM has selected for animals displaying "primitive" coloration such as dun horses with dorsal stripes and striped legs. Managers of the small Pryor Mountain herd have been concerned about inbreeding and have introduced outside horses, but have selected outside stock "based on the roan, mouse, and buckskin coloring characteristic of the small, compact horse now found in the Pryor Mountains" (1984 HMPPM). BLM Range Conservationist Bill Phillips has pioneered the agency's interest in "historic" horse types and has researched and written about the origin of regional wild horse types in the U.S. However, no wholesale adoption of this approach is expected to occur, as the BLM is charged with protecting all horses declared "free and wild roaming" under the 1971 Act, and the desirability of selecting for certain types is controversial (Symanski, 1985).

Federal management of feral equines is coming under increasing scrutiny. The established programs are considered to have failed in both a fiscal and a pragmatic sense. During a visit to the BLM wild horse facilities in Rock Springs, Wyoming, during the spring of 1989, I was informed that the future of feral equines in

this country will depend increasingly on the creation of private, non-profit refuges.

In sum, the federal management of wild horses is complex and controversial. Only a few of the critical problems have been touched upon here, chiefly those related to population increases. A tremendous amount of research involving habitat use, reproductive biology, social behavior, and management techniques remains to be accomplished.

Chapter 3: Genealogy of the THRO Horses

[1] Notable Lineages

Several lineages of horses have had a considerable social and genetic influence on the park herd from the time of the 1954 round-up through the present. These lines are notable for their genetic success, as measured by the number of their descendants, or for some peculiarity of type. A brief discussion of some of these lines follows, based on information provided by Tom and Alvin Tescher, Gerald Barnhart, and John Griggs. Evaluative comments regarding particular horses are those of Tom Tescher, who also provided genealogical data. Numerical identifications of individual horses follow the 1987 census record.

The "Original" Greys

The Teschers and others recall several bands of grey horses that ranged north of the present park boundary along Government Creek circa 1930-1955 and that were considered to be wild and of unknown origin. The Teschers say that this line of greys were not the draft horse type, but smaller and more fine-boned, and extremely wary and difficult to capture. Alvin Tescher remembers a "sharp headed, pink-nosed" grey stallion that had a forelock falling below his nostrils and an exceedingly long mane and tail.

Alvin admired this horse because he was uncatchable and would always manage to re-collect his own mares after local cowboys had dispersed several bands while chasing them through the badlands.

The grey stallion described by Alvin Tescher and several mares (4-5) were shot by a local rancher (Oyhus) around 1950. When the northern part of the park was fenced, another band of the greys were inadvertantly enclosed within the park boundary. Some of the early THRO staff were aware of a distinction between these horses and trespass domestic stock, as evidenced by the following statement by former Ranger Robert Morey (SR; THRO 1953-1957):

I was told by the Chief Ranger, Harvey Reynolds (1950), that there were two bunches of wild horses--about 20 head in each bunch. They ranged in and out of the South Unit on Grazing District lands along Government Creek and in the park around the head of Jones Creek, Buck Hill area. As they were building the north boundary fence, some local ranchers attempted to eliminate the horses. They shot one of the herd stallions and a couple old lead mares and were able to corral the rest of that band. The other band ranged in and out of the park during fencing and by chance were in the park when the north fence was closed between the road and east boundary. Probably about 1951 or 1952.

As trespass stock was removed from the park throughout the 1950s, the grey group remained; many of the horses discussed in the Management Section during the 1960s were from this lineage (e.g., pp. 96, 116). A grey stallion first observed by Tom Tescher in 1949-1950 dominated throughout much of that decade. This horse had a malformed back leg, which Tom Tescher believes to have been a birth defect. Nevertheless, the stallion was the "wildest" and most successful in the park, maintaining mares and eluding capture for fifteen years. The horse escaped from traps on several occasions, once climbing an eight-foot corral. It was

roped and removed by Tom Tescher in 1965. A blue roan bald-faced stallion (1960-1980) that was exceptionally wild and that contributed to the blue roan lineage (see below) was sired by one of the grey stallions (either the horse observed by Tescher in 1949-1950 or a second, smaller grey). Several grey stallions and mares extant in the park during the 1970s were descended from this line (see Photos No. 2 and No.11); an entire band, the "White Bunch," was sold in 1978 (see Photo No. 6). A pink-nosed grey stallion (f. circa 1963; removed) has several direct descendants extant in the park: A-6 (mare), C-2 (mare), C-3 (mare), and E-1 (stallion). The "Painted Canyon stallion," B-1, also goes back to this line of greys through his sire, the "Hereford stud," which came out of the "White Bunch" (see below).

Park memoranda state that the feral horses are descended from "two mares which escaped from the Barnhart ranch and a white stud of unknown ancestry" (e.g. 1976 Resource Management Plan). The "white" stallion was almost certainly the "wild," crippled grey that was dominant throughout the 1960s and that ran with a black and white mare and a red roan mare, both of which had been owned by L. M. Barnhart.

The Barnhart Horses

L. M. Barnhart moved to Medora from Grassy Butte in the mid-1940s and often grazed his rodeo and saddle stock in the park until his death in 1961. Most significant of these were two mares: one black with a bald face and a white spot on the right side, the other a bald-faced red roan. Tom Tescher remembers the

black mare as having been "stylish" although both mares were small, common, "Indian type" horses.

These two mares ran with a crippled grey stallion from a line of greys that had been in the badlands prior to NPS jurisdiction (see above). As mentioned, this trio is often credited with providing the genesis of the park herd. While that is an overstatement, they and their offspring have impacted the horses down to the present.

The Barnhart mares and the grey stallion influenced the genetic make-up of the park horses primarily through two black and white (overo paint) colts foaled by the black mare in 1960 and 1961. The younger of the colts, described by Tom Tescher as "snip-nosed" and as the uglier of the pair, retained 2-4 mares until circa 1980, when the stallion became crippled and was shot by NPS personnel along I-94 (see Photo No. 5). A "good looking" grey stallion, probably related to the paint through the "original" grey line, "ran second" to the paint stallion; this band ranged between Goens Dog Town and I-94. The older paint colt out of the Barnhart mare was less prolific and lived with one or two mares and several bachelor stallions. It is probable that he sired a black, bald-faced stallion removed from the park and sold to a stock contractor in 1981 (see Photo No. 10). In old age this stallion was a loner in the vicinity of Paddock Creek; the horse died of natural causes in the winter of 1975.

In 1969 the "snip-nosed" paint stallion sired a blue and white colt from a white mare. From a second white mare the same year, the stallion sired a blue and white paint filly. Both of

these half-siblings matured as grey horses. The filly was later called the white "Lindbo mare" because the Teschers once roped her on Lindbo Flats. At one time the "Lindbo mare" ran with the "White Bunch" of grey and white horses that was eliminated in 1978. Leo Kuntz, Jr., owns a black, blue-eyed mare (f. 1974) out of the "Lindbo mare" captured and sold by the Thompsons after the 1978 round-up (see Photo No. 120). Kuntz also owns a gelded roan horse out of the 1974 black mare.

The blue and white paint colt (f. 1969), roped and ear-marked by the Teschers in the early 1970s, acquired two mares in 1972. One was a brown Thoroughbred-type filly (f. 1970) that probably wandered from Ralph Mosser's ranch as a weanling and was henceforth known as the "Orphan Brown mare" or the "Good Brown mare." This brown mare had foals by the paint (grey) stallion until that horse was removed in 1981 (see attached list). The Arabian Tiger Tu (D-6) then acquired the mare, but she died foaling in 1984. Three offspring of the brown mare are owned by Leo Kuntz: a grey gelding, a blue roan mare, and a bald-faced roan overo gelding (see Photos No. 123 and No. 127). The roan gelding, known as "Bad Toe," is Kuntz's race horse in the Great American Horse Race circuit. Bad Toe's conformation and color, particularly the bald face and spotted sides, typify one of the major park horse lines.¹

Another product of the grey stallion and the "Orphan Brown" mare is a "nice, cute-headed" blue and white paint mare, E-2. Although many horses have been born in the park with this color-

¹ Irregular white body spots, bald faces, and blue eyes are characteristic of the overo paint.

tion, E-2 is one of the few to retain this rare coloration into maturity. In 1985 E-2 produced a blue and white colt (H-3) by the Arabian (D-6), and in 1988 produced a blue and white filly by E-1, a black stallion.

In 1979 the grey stallion was cut by wire and temporarily crippled, and a subdominant stallion that "ran second" to the grey horse assumed control of the mares. This horse, foaled in 1979, was known locally as the "Hereford stud" by virtue of having had a wide bald face as a colt. The "Hereford stud" was out of the old-line "White Bunch" and was probably sired by a "good looking, small-nosed" grey stallion that did not produce many offspring and was sold in 1981 (see Photo No. 11). The "Hereford stud" was born a paint but faded to grey and also had one blue eye. Out of the "Orphan Brown" mare the Hereford stallion produced a grey colt, now known as the "Painted Canyon stud," B-1. The "Painted Canyon" stallion has a tendency to sire bald-faced and/or overo offspring, but in 1984 he sired a "look-alike" grey colt (F-2; see Photo No. 109) from a steel grey mare (C-3).

Another Barnhart horse possibly impacting the park herd was a part- Arabian blue roan stallion. This horse was brought to Medora by L. M. Barnhart in the mid- to late-1940s and escaped into the badlands. The Barnhart family recaptured the horse several times but were finally unable to locate the stallion. It is possible that this horse either died or was removed by another party, as Tom Tescher does not recall the stallion.

The most famous horse captured in the park was the rodeo bucking horse "Whizz Bang," at one time owned by world champion

saddle bronc rider Casey Tibbs. Whizz Bang, a buckskin, was out of a buckskin Barnhart or Cooper mare and was possibly sired by a grey park stallion. Whizz Bang was removed from the park as a colt during the 1954 round-up.

The red roan Barnhart mare also had several foals while in the park. The only one that Tom Tescher clearly remembers was a blue roan mare with a wide, bald face, believed to have been purchased by Kuntz in 1981.

Upon the death of L. M. Barnhart in 1961, Tom Tescher purchased the black and the roan mare from Mr. Barnhart's widow. The mares were removed from the park in 1965 (see Management Section); the black mare suffered a broken leg when snared and was destroyed, and the red roan was sold to slaughter. Tom Tescher waived claim to their offspring in 1973. See attached list for other owned and branded horses that Tescher recorded in the park, 1950-1965, and that were removed.

The Blue Roan Line

Sometime just prior to or after the 1954 round-up (informants disagree on this point), a blue roan Quarter Horse mare purchased by Bub Nunn from the Binyon Ranch of Jordan, Montana, was released into the park by local cowboys to "upgrade" the herd. In the late 1950s, L. M. Barnhart began trapping and selling park horses, sometimes using aircraft to chase them into a trap the Teschers had rebuilt on the north side of the park. After one such round-up, the Nunn mare was hurt while being driven

into Medora and was left lying by the railroad tracks with a presumed broken neck. Informants disagree as to whether the mare died or recovered and returned to the badlands. However, neither she nor her body was seen again.

The Teschers believe that the Nunn mare was responsible for introducing the blue roan color into the park herd. However, blue roan horses appear in photographs of the 1954 round-up (see Plates No. 23-28), and Gerald Barnhart recalls attempting to capture a mature blue roan stallion in the early 1950s. Other informants (e.g. Griggs, Schwint) have stated that blue roans were present in the badlands circa 1920-1954. Thus, the origin of this coloration remains obscure.

In 1962 or 1963 Tom Tescher made a horseback reconnaissance of the park. After climbing a gumbo butte ("Look-Out Butte") in the northwest corner of the park, he observed the following horses: two "wild" grey stallions, two young black and white paint stallions (out of the black Barnhart mare), two or three "wild" grey mares, a blue roan mare with a young filly, a young blue roan colt with a bald face and a white right front foot, a second, smaller blue roan stallion, and several other mares, none of which were branded.

Mr. Tescher made two assumptions: that the blue roan mare was a daughter of the missing Nunn mare; and that she had in turn foaled the young blue roan stallions (born circa 1960) and sired by one of the "wild" grey stallions. Whatever the origin of the blue roan mare and the blue, bald-faced stallion, together they produced a line or family of horses that dominated until the 1986

round-up. If biological fitness is measured by reproductive success and the ability to survive changing pressures, this line adapted well to the social and natural environment. Both the stallions and mares have been socially dominant, long-lived, and prolific. They also tend to be large, heavy horses. The Teschers attribute this characteristic to the Nunn mare, which they describe as having been "stout" and having weighed around 1100 pounds. Only a few horses of this once abundant line can be mentioned here.

The bald-faced blue roan stallion observed as a colt by Tescher (f. 1960) greyed with age and was considered by the Teschers to be the dominant horse in the park until dying of natural causes in the winter of 1980. By 1977 this stallion was crippled but continued to maintain a group of 11 horses. This horse was considered extremely tough and "uncatchable" by local cowboys, who also felt that he was "better looking" than most of the horses. Tom Tescher later found the bones of this stallion south and east of Buck Hill. The lower jawbone of this animal was removed for study by researcher Elena Hovland during the summer of 1989.

The blue roan mare observed by Tescher in 1962 became known as the "Old Blue mare" and was the oldest mare in the park until removed by the Thompsons after the 1978 round-up. This mare was a member of the band controlled by the bald-faced blue horse (f. 1960), a presumed "mother-son" union. The first recorded offspring of these two blue roans was a colt born in 1966 (see attached list of the mare's produce). Known as the "Scarred Blue stud" because of battle scars on the right stifle, this stallion

had a band of twenty horses, the largest group in the park, when captured and sold during the 1978 round-up.

The second offspring of the "Old Blue" mare and the blue (aged grey) stallion was a black, star-faced filly foaled in 1967 and now owned by Leo Kuntz (see Photo No. 121). The star-faced mare ran with the "Scarred Blue" stallion, a full sibling. Their offspring included two nearly identical blue roan colts, foaled in 1973 and 1974.

Both of the blue roan colts became dominant stallions (see Photo Nos. 8 and 9). In 1980 the black star-faced mare (f. 1967) produced a blue roan, star-faced filly sired by the 1974 blue roan stallion (her son). This filly is now B-2 and has also produced blue roan offspring. The 1974 blue roan stallion was captured in the 1981 round-up and sold to a rodeo stock contractor.

In 1983 the white "Lindbo" mare produced a strip-faced blue roan colt sired by the 1973 blue roan stallion. That colt is now D-1, a stallion with a small band of horses (see Photos No. 92-99).

During 1984, the 1973 stallion controlled a band of twenty-five horses, over one quarter of the total population, then distributed among seven dominant stallions. In 1986, the 1973 stallion controlled seventeen horses, the largest group in the park, but collapsed and died from presumed heart failure during the round-up that year.

A blue roan daughter of the "Old Blue" mare produced a blue roan colt by the blue bald-faced (aged grey) stallion (f. 1960) in 1980. The colt had a white left front foot and controlled a band

of 12 horses when removed in the 1986 round-up as a mature, six-year-old horse. This stallion was purchased by the author and then resold to Leo Kuntz (see Photos No. 23 and 113). The dam of the stallion ("Nocona") became grey with age but retained a black spot on the right shoulder. This mare bled to death in 1986 from injuries sustained while escaping from the corral following the round-up, leaving an orphan colt (A-13 in 1987; see Photo No. 64).²

The "Scarred Blue" stallion (f. 1966) and the black star-faced mare (f. 1967) (siblings) produced a grey colt in 1979; the colt, purchased by Leo Kuntz following the 1981 round-up for \$700, is the highest selling park horse to date. This horse, called "Jumping Mouse," is regarded by Tom Tescher as a "freak" because of his unusual size (see Photo No. 116). As a sire, Jumping Mouse has produced overo paint offspring, some with blue eyes, from solid-colored domestic mares (see Photo No. 117). The origin of this genetic predisposition is unknown (but see below).

The "Old Blue" mare and her yearling filly were among a group of 10-12 horses caught and sold by the Thompsons following the 1978 round-up. One direct descendant of the "Old Blue" mare remains in the park, B-3. B-3, a black bald-faced mare, was sired by the blue (aged grey) bald-faced stallion (1960-1980). This mare has also produced bald-faced and overo paint offspring, so it might be assumed that either her sire or dam carried this genetic

² This identification is somewhat tentative. The blue roan mare with the black spot is known to have been in the park in 1986 and has disappeared. She is not believed to be at Kuntz's ranch and, although Tom Tescher was not certain at the time, he now believes her to have been the mare that died.

trait. B-3 produced three bald-faced black colts sired by an "old line" dappled grey stallion roped by the Teschers and sold by the park in 1982. These black colts were purchased by Leo Kuntz. B-3 has subsequently produced four sorrel and white and another black and white spotted offspring sired by B-1.

Several horses from the blue roan lineage (e.g. C-1) remain in the park; see 1987 census and genealogy lists.

The Griggs Mares

In the late 1960s a pregnant unregistered grey Quarter Horse-type mare owned by John Griggs escaped into the park. A few years later, John Griggs succeeded in recapturing the mare and either a yearling or a weanling filly. A red roan filly (f. 1971) from the Griggs mare remained in the park. In 1974 the red roan mare produced a brown "Thoroughbred-type" filly. By the bald-faced blue (grey) stallion (f. 1960), the brown mare foaled a bald-faced red-grey filly in 1977 (now A-8). The brown mare also produced a blue star-faced filly purchased by Kuntz in 1981. In 1978, the red roan Griggs mare was captured and sold by the Thompsons. According to Tom Tescher, the brown mare was always in poor condition and was missing in the spring of 1979. In 1980, the bald-faced red-grey mare (A-8) produced a grey and white filly with a white left front foot (now A-7). In 1981 the red-grey mare (A-8) produced a black and white filly, and in 1982 produced a black and white filly with a spot on the right side and a crop ear. In 1983, the red-grey mare produced a strip-faced dark grey filly. The fillies foaled in 1981-1983 have been sold to Leo

Kuntz, as was a brown 1985 colt out of the 1982 piebald mare and by a red roan stallion sold by to Kuntz in 1986.

The Brookman Stallion

In 1981 the Teschers and other local ranchers donated to the park a bay Shire and paint-bred colt purchased from the Brookman rodeo string of Wolf Point, Montana. THRO round-ups in 1981, 1982, and 1986 and other removal efforts succeeded in eliminating most of the mature dominant blue roan stallions (see Management section). Since reaching sexual maturity, the "Brookman stallion," A-1, has become the dominant stallion in the park, controlling a band of 20 horses in 1988.³ A-1 is larger and heavier than the park horses, and, unlike the other introduced domestic animals, has adjusted well to the park environment. The Brookman stallion is mentioned here because his offspring may be expected to dominate the park herd (at least numerically) in the future.

Inbreeding Among the THRO Horses

Inbreeding among the feral horses has been a long-standing concern at THRO, as evidenced by frequent mention in park memoranda and documents. THRO staff identified inbreeding as a problem in the 1970 Wild Horse Management Plan and have continued to do so in virtually every subsequent park document pertaining to the horses (see Management section). This concern provided the

³ As noted elsewhere, A-1 might be considered less successful than C-1, one of the park-born stallions. Band A has increased in size through reproduction, while Band C has increased through the recruitment of new mares. Also, A-1 lost several mares during 1988-1989.

basis for the park's policy of removing park-born stallions between 1978 and 1986 and replacing them with domestic animals (see Management section).

The question as to whether inbreeding occurs among wild horses is somewhat controversial and is beyond the scope of this report. However, a number of observations pertinent to this issue at THRO may be made on the basis of the herd's genealogical history. The presence of undesirable or maladaptive traits and a low reproductive rate are two indices of inbreeding (Frei, 1977). During the 1960s, when park policy sought complete elimination of the herd and the horse population was reduced to an all-time low of approximately sixteen animals, informants (Tescher, Northrup) report that a few horses exhibited deformed legs and hump-backs. Tom Tescher recalls a naturally crippled grey stallion that was able to control a harem of mares and elude capture during that decade. Also, the 1970 Wild Horse Management Plan indicates poor reproductive success among the horses during the period 1965-1970, when a total of only ten foals were produced. Informants could recall only one "deformed" park horse since circa 1970, a blue-grey, hump-backed mare purchased by Leo Kuntz in 1981 and since sold to slaughter (see Photo No. 118).

During the 1970s, when blue roan horses predominated numerically and most dominant stallions in the park were of the blue roan lineage, THRO memoranda cited this color conformity as an index of inbreeding (e.g. 1978 Feral Horse Reduction Plan). By examining genealogical records of the horses, it is apparent that inbreeding did occur (see above), but there appears to be no evi-

dence of deleterious effects. On the contrary, the blue roan horses reproduced well, and the dominant stallions in the park were of this lineage. Color homogeneity within bands of wild horses is a common phenomenon (see Frei, 1977; Berger, 1980; Symanski, 1985), and the blue roan coloration is produced by a dominant, although relatively rare, gene (see Appendices B and C). The mating of two blue roan horses can result in a lethal gene combination or dead foal (see Spoonberg, Appendix B), but the increase in the horse population since 1970 would indicate that this has been a negligible problem.

Many authorities discount inbreeding as a problem among wild horses. Berger (1980) points out that both colts and fillies leave their natal group upon reaching sexual maturity, a phenomenon observed among the THRO horses (compare 1987 and 1988 census reports). Frei (1977; see Management section) states that inbreeding is not necessarily deleterious, and he found no evidence of inbreeding problems among the THRO horses extant at the time of his evaluation (1977). Breeders of domestic horses utilize both in-breeding and line-breeding techniques in order to concentrate desired characteristics. For example, veterinarian Dr. J. K. Northway, who developed the breeding program for the King Ranch Quarter Horses, bred Solis (by Old Sorrell) first to mares by Old Sorrell (his "sisters") and then to his own female offspring. When questioned about this program, Dr. Northway replied:

We call it concentrating desirable blood. You know, young man, I have a definition that covers this close breeding business. When you do it, I call it inbreeding. When I do it, I prefer to call it linebreeding (Widmer, 1959: 47).

Inbreeding is a concern among populations that are confined and where the population is limited artificially, such as on THRO and BLM wild horse ranges (see Herd Management Plan, Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Range). However, it would appear that the problem of inbreeding among the THRO horses has been ameliorated as the herd has been allowed to increase since 1970. This population increase has presumably provided young horses with the opportunity to emigrate from their natal groups at sexual maturity and to join more distantly related bands.

[3] 1987 Census and Genealogy: Band A

A-1. Bay stallion, blaze, f. 1980 (the "Brookman stallion")	Introduced 1982 (Tescher donation) Shire and Paint breeding
A-2. BLM sorrel and white paint stallion, f. 1979	ID # 81807716; introduced 1982
A-3. Red roan mare, f. 1980	By "Fat Grey" stallion f. 1969 (sold 1981) and out of bald-faced blue mare (sold 1981, Kuntz)
A-4. Black bald-faced mare WLF, ⁴ f. 1980	By black bald-faced stallion f. 1973 (sold 1981) and out of bald-faced red-grey Griggs mare (A-8)
A-5. Dark grey mare, light tail, f. 1979 or 1980	By pink-nosed grey stallion f. 1963 and out of white "Lindbo" mare f. 1970 or out of "wild" white mare f. 1963
A-6. White mare, crop ear, f. 1979 (formerly blue and white)	By pink-nosed grey stallion f. 1963 and out of white "Lindbo" mare f. 1970
A-7. Grey mare, dark mane and tail, f. 1981	By black bald-faced stallion f. 1973 and out of A-8
A-8. White mare, f. 1977 (formerly red-grey)	By blue bald-faced stallion WRF (turned grey) f. 1963 and out of brown Griggs mare f. 1974
A-9. White "Fat Grey" mare, f. 1968 (trapped and released by Teschers 1973)	By pink-nosed grey stallion f. 1963; dam unknown

⁴ Abbreviations are used for leg markings in this section. "WLF" means "white left front," "WLH" means white left hind," and so forth.

A-10. Blue filly, star, f. 1985	By blue roan stallion f. 1973 (died 1986) and probably out of A-6, A-8, or A-9.
A-11. Blue filly, grey face, f. 1985	unknown
A-12. Red roan colt, f. 1985	By red roan stallion f. 1979 (sold 1986) and out of A-4
A-13. Sorrel and white colt, f. 1986	By A-1 (?) and out of blue-grey mare died at the horse trap 1986
A-14. Blue filly, small star, f. 1987	By A-1 or blue roan stallion f. 1973 (died 1986) and out of A-6
A-15. Blue colt, f. 1987	By A-1 or "Nocona" blue roan stallion f. 1980 (sold 1986, Kuntz) and out of A-9
A-16. Bay and white paint colt, f. 1987	By A-1 or 1973 blue roan stallion (died 1986) and out of A-8
A-17. Buckskin colt, f. 1987	By A-1 (?) and out of A-5
A-18. Red roan filly, f. 1987	By A-1 and out of A-3

Comments

Band A is the largest group of horses in the park and seems to be the most mobile. A-1 is the most successful of the introduced stallions and is the heaviest stallion in the park. A-1 has had mares since 1984, but the present group is primarily a result of the 1986 round-up.

A-2 has associated with A-1 since they ran together as bachelors following their introduction in 1982. A-2 "runs second" to A-1 and is extremely active in this subdominant role. A-2 is not permitted to breed mares and is extremely deferential to A-1. However, A-2 keeps the group herded together (see Photos No. 48 and No. 49) and defends the mares against non-member stallions. This pattern of behavior between a dominant and subdominant stallion is typical of wild horses (Berger, 1980). It is questionable whether A-1 could maintain such a large harem of mares without the cooperation of a subdominant male.

In 1985 and 1986, A-6 and A-8 were associated with the blue stallion (f. 1974) that died during the 1986 round-up; their 1987 offspring may have been sired by the blue horse. In 1986 A-9 was with the blue stallion ("Nocona") removed during the round-up and purchased by McLaughlin (now owned by Kuntz).

There are five grey mares in Band A; both the author and Tom Tescher have experienced difficulty differentiating between A-8 and A-9. The identity of A-9 is not absolutely certain. This mare appears to be younger than 20 years old, and at one time Tom Tescher thought that the mare he had always called the "Fat Grey" had been sold in 1986. However, he now feels the identification of this mare as the "Fat Grey" is secure.

A-7 produced a white, stillborn foal in 1987 (see Photo No. 58).

In 1987, A-11 was observed to be extremely lame on the left front foot. With limited mobility, this mare attracted the attention of opportunistic bachelor stallions, which A-2 and A-1 were obliged to discourage by fighting. On one such occasion on 17 September, A-1 defended his possession of this mare and then forcibly bred her, although the mare could barely stand. In 1988 this mare had been recruited to the harem of C-1.

The dam of A-13 (a grey mare with a black spot on the shoulder) died while escaping from a pen following the 1986 round-up; A-13 survived as an orphan.

1987 Census and Genealogy: Band B

B-1. Tall grey stallion, f. 1979 ("Painted Canyon Stallion")	By "Hereford" stallion and out of "Orphan Brown" TB mare from Mosser's ranch
B-2. Blue mare, small star, f. 1980	By blue roan stallion f. 1974 (sold 1981; Photo No. 9) and out of black star-faced mare f. 1967 (Kuntz)
B-3. Black bald-faced mare, f. 1976	By blue bald-faced stud WRF (turned grey), f. 1963, and out of "Old Blue" mare
B-4. Sorrel and white bald-faced colt, f. 1986	By B-1 and out of B-3
B-5. Blue filly, star, f. 1986	By B-1 and out of B-2
B-6. Sorrel filly, star, WLH, f. 1987	By B-1 and out of B-3
B-7. Blue colt, star, f. 1987	By B-1 and out of B-2
B-8. Sorrel Quarter Horse stallion, f. 1982	Introduced 1983; donated by Tom Tescher

Comments

Band B is the most visible group in the park, frequenting the upland flats near I-94. B-1, known as the "Painted Canyon Stallion," is a favorite of Tom Tescher's and among THRO staff, and this group is seldom harassed during round-ups. Band B (with some membership changes) has been extant since 1984.

B-8, an introduced domestic stallion, has "run second" to B-1 since 1985. However, B-8 appears to be less integrated into this role than A-2, another subdominant stallion. B-1 assumes responsibility for herding and defending this social unit, and B-8 is kept at a distance. In the fall of 1987 B-8 was injured in a fight (with B-1 or C-1) and traveled alone throughout the fall and winter of 1987-88. B-8 rejoined Band B in the summer of 1988.

B-2 was one of two fillies that were released with the Arabian (D-6) in 1982.

B-3 is representative of early park bloodlines and according to Tom Tescher is the "wildest" and most dominant mare in the park. On one occasion during the summer of 1987 when all of the bands took flight together after being spooked by horseback riders, this mare led all of the park horses (see Photo No. 110).

Two young horses approaching sexual maturity were observed to leave this band in the spring of 1987. A sorrel and white filly out of B-3 (f. 1985) migrated to a neighboring group, Band C. A red roan colt out of B-2 (f. 1985) joined the bachelor group (F-5). These horses were photographed while still with Band B in April (Photos No. 68-71).

1987 Census and Genealogy: Band C

C-1. Blue roan stallion, f. 1982 Heavily built ("Target")	(Tentative) By blue roan stallion f. 1973 (died 1986), and out of the "Fat Grey" mare (A-9)
C-2. Dark blue mare, small star, f. 1980	By pink-nosed grey stallion, f. 1963, and out of blue-grey strip-faced mare, f. 1976 (both sold 1981)
C-3. Iron grey mare, f. 1979	By pink-nosed grey stallion, f. 1963 and out of "wild" white pink-nosed mare, f. 1963 (sold 1981)
C-4. Dark chestnut bald-faced filly with white side spot and face, f. 1984	By B-1 and out of B-3
C-5. Sorrel and white bald-faced filly, f. 1985	By B-1 and out of B-3
C-6. Brown colt, star, f. 1986	By B-1 and out of C-2
C-7. Brown filly, star, f. 1987	By B-1 and out of C-4
C-8. Sorrel filly, strip, f. 1985	By B-1 and out of C-2
C-9. Bay filly, star, WLF, WRH, f. 1987	By B-1 and out of C-3

Comments

This group ranges the Peck Hill/Painted Canyon area west of Band B and is difficult to approach. Band C has developed since the 1986 round-up. Prior to that event, C-1 ran in the vicinity of Peck Hill with B-8 (Tescher's Quarter Horse) and A-11 (a blue roan filly).

C-1 is a thick, heavy representative of the blue roan line. THRO staff have desired the elimination of this stallion; hence the nickname "Target." Since the 1986 round-up, C-1 has acquired and steadily expanded a harem of mares. C-1 has engaged in fights with B-1 and with bachelor stallions on a number of occasions.

After the Fall 1986 round-up, C-1 acquired two mares from Band B: C-2 and C-4. C-1 acquired a third mare from Band B, C-3, when the mare temporarily left Band B to foal in the early spring of 1987.

C-2 was one of the two fillies released with Tiger Tu (D-6) in 1982.

C-3 had a paint colt in 1986 that became separated from her during the round-up and that disappeared.

C-5 left her natal group, Band B, in the spring of 1987 and joined Band C.

1987 Census and Genealogy: Band D

D-1. Blue roan stallion, strip, f. 1983	By blue roan stallion, f. 1973 (died 1986), and out of white "Lindbo" mare
D-2. Bay Quarter Horse mare, star, f. 1980	Introduced 1983; donated by the Teschers
D-3. Bay colt, star, f. 1985	By D-6 and out of D-2
D-4. Bay colt, strip, f. 1986	By D-6 and out of D-2
D-5. Bay filly, star, f. 1987	By Buckskin BLM #80808271 (sold 1986) and out of D-2
D-6. Bay Arabian Stallion, f. 1980	Introduced 1981; donated by Les Sellnow

Comments

Band D has developed since the 1986 round-up. During 1987 this group remained primarily in the Biocourt Spring/Lindbo Flats area.

D-1 is superior in conformation (by modern standards) to the other blue roan stallion, C-1; but unlike Band C, which has steadily increased in membership, Band D has lost membership since 1986.

D-2 is a registered Quarter Horse, but her second dam was removed from the park in the 1950s and was out of a buckskin Cooper mare. The dam of D-2 was AQHA registered by inspection.

D-6 is a registered Arabian stallion donated by Les Sellnow. Since being released in 1981, D-6 has been only marginally successful at adapting to the social and natural environment. In 1982 D-6 was injured and temporarily removed for treatment. In 1984-85, D-6 had two mares, D-2 and E-2, both of which produced foals. In early 1986 these mares were usurped by park-born stallions, and D-6 associated for a time with the bachelor stallions at an age (6) when stallions are approaching their social and reproductive prime. D-6 is not well integrated into Band D and remains primarily on the periphery of the group (see Photos #94-99). D-6 is readily approached by humans and will initiate human contact.

1987 Census and Genealogy: Band E

- | | |
|---|--|
| E-1. Black stallion, f. 1980
("Midnight") | By pink-nosed grey stallion,
f. 1963, and out of blue star-
faced mare, f. 1975 (both
sold 1981; mare owned by
Kuntz), out of black star-
faced mare, f. 1967 |
| E-2. Blue and white paint mare,
f. 1981 | By grey (originally paint)
stallion, f. 1969, and out of
"Brown Orphan" TB mare, f.
1970 |
| E-3. Dark grey, bald-faced
mare, f. 1983 | By blue roan, dark-headed
stallion, f. 1977 (dead), and
out of A-8 |
| E-4. Buckskin filly, star and
snip, f. 1986 | By Buckskin BLM stallion
#80808271 (sold
1986) and out of E-2 |
| E-5. Buckskin colt, strip,
f. 1987 (July 21) | By Buckskin BLM stallion
#80808271 (sold 1986) and out
of E-2 |

Comments

Band E has developed since the 1986 round-up. During 1987 this group remained in the Biocourt Spring/Lindbo Flat area.

E-1 is representative of old park breeding and traces back through both the sire and dam to the "original" grey horses present prior to 1947. E-1 is the smallest park stallion and one of the most difficult to approach. Bill Phillips of the BLM and Bill Valentine of the Spanish Mustang Registry consider this horse phenotypically mustang on the basis of photographs.

Prior to 1986, E-1 had two mares, one of which was removed and one of which died during the round-up. During that event, E-1 was driven to within a few feet of the trap gate, then ducked back underneath the helicopter and escaped. A black mare running with E-1 hit the fence and broke her neck, dying instantly.

E-2, an unusual blue and white paint, exhibits a strong preference for the Lindbo Flat area and has affiliated with a number of stallions in that area, including the Arabian (D-6) and the buckskin BLM horse sold in 1986. E-2 was bred by E-1 on 30 July 1987.

E-3 had a bay, star-faced filly in 1986 that became separated from her during the round-up and that was taken to the sales facility in Dickinson, where it died from injuries sustained after capture. E-3 was dry in 1987.

1987 Census and Genealogy: Band F (Bachelor Stallions)

F-1. Black stallion, f. 1983 or 1984	(Tentative) By grey stallion roped and removed 1982 and out of C-2
F-2. Grey stallion, f. 1984	By B-1 and out of C-3
F-3. Blue and white stallion, f. 1985	By D-6 (Arabian) and out of E-2
F-4. Dark grey stallion, f. 1983 or 1984	(Tentative) By grey stallion roped and removed 1982 and out of B-2
F-5. Red roan stallion. f. 1985	By B-1 and out of B-2
F-6. Bay stallion, star, f. 1984	By blue roan stallion, f. 1974 (died 1986), and out of A-9

Comments

These horses were sometimes observed in one group, sometimes in smaller groups of 2-4 animals, and sometimes alone. F-2 was observed several times with either F-1 or F-4 (see Photo No. 109). There could be another (bay or brown and out of C-4) bachelor stallion that was observed several times alone and at a distance.

[4] 1988 Census: Band A*

A-1. Brookman stallion, f. 1980	
A-2. BLM paint stallion, f. 1979	
A-3. Red roan mare, f. 1980	
A-4. Black bald-faced mare, f. 1980	
A-5. Dark grey mare, f. 1979	bred 2 April 1988
A-6. White mare, crop ear, f. 1979	
A-7. Grey Griggs mare, f. 1981	
A-8. White Griggs mare, f. 1977	
A-9. White "Fat Grey" mare, f. 1968	dry in 1988
A-10. Blue roan filly, star, f. 1985	out of A-6, A-8, or A-9?
A-11. Red roan filly, f. 1987	out of A-3
A-12. Sorrel and white colt, f. 1986	orphan
A-13. Brown and white colt, f. 1986	out of A-8
A-14. Blue colt, star, f. 1987	out of A-9
A-15. Buckskin colt, f. 1987	out of A-5
A-16. Blue filly, star, f. 1987	out of A-6
A-17. Brown filly, blaze, WRH, f. 1988	out of A-6
A-18. Brown filly, baldface WLF, WRH, f. 1988	out of A-10
A-19. Blue and white paint colt, f. 1988	out of A-8
A-20. Red roan colt, f. 1985	out of B-2
A-21. Black colt, baldface, f. 1988	out of A-7

*The 1988 census of THRO horses was provided by Tom Tescher. Genealogies are provided in the 1987 census.

Comments

Tom Tescher found a 1988 pinto colt by A-1 and out of A-4 in a wash-out by Sheep Butte Spring in the late spring of 1988. The mare had rejected the colt, and Mr. Tescher gave the colt to his son Doug to raise.

A-5 died foaling in the spring of 1989.

1988 Census: Band B

- B-1. Painted Canyon stallion, f. 1979
- B-2. Blue mare, small star, f. 1980
- B-3. Black, bald-faced mare, f. 1976
- B-4. Sorrel and white colt, f. 1986 out of B-3
- B-5. Sorrel filly, star, f. 1987 out of B-3
- B-6. Blue colt, star, f. 1987 out of B-2
- B-7. Piebald paint colt, f. 1988 out of B-3
- B-8. Black filly, star, f. 1988 out of B-2
- B-9. Sorrel Quarter Horse stallion,
f. 1982 (Tom Tescher donation)

1988 Census: Band C

C-1.	"Target" blue roan stallion, f. 1982	
C-2.	Black mare, small star, f. 1980	
C-3.	Iron grey mare, f. 1979	
C-4.	Chestnut and white filly, f. 1984	out of B-3
C-5.	Sorrel bald-faced filly, f. 1985	out of B-3
C-6.	Sorrel filly, strip, f. 1985	out of C-2
C-7.	Bay filly, star, WLF, WRH, f. 1987	out of C-3
C-8.	Brown filly, star and snip, f. 1987	out of C-4
C-9.	Blue filly, f. 1985	was A-11
C-10.	Blue filly, star, f. 1986	out of B-2
C-11.	Dark colt, f. 1988	out of C-3
C-12.	Dark filly, star and snip, f. 1988	out of C-2
C-13.	Dark filly, f. 1988	out of C-6
C-14.	Dark colt, f. 1988	out of C-10

Comments

C-9 and C-10 have joined Band C since 1987. This band is increasing. In one sense, C-1 is the most successful stallion, as he is the only one increasing his harem through "recruitment." In contrast, Band A is increasing through reproduction.

1988 Census: Band D

- D-1. Blue roan stallion, strip, f. 1983
- D-2. Bay Quarter Horse mare, f. 1980
- D-3. Bay colt, f. 1988 out of D-2
- D-4. Bay filly, star, f. 1987 out of D-2
- D-5. Bay Arabian stallion, f. 1980

Comments

Two young stallions out of D-2 (1987: D-3, D-4) left Band D and became bachelor stallions in late 1987 or early 1988.

D-2 was found dead near Boicourt Spring in August 1988.

F-8, a 1986 colt out of D-2, was found dead at Boicourt Spring in September 1988.

1988 Census: Band E

E-1.	Black stallion, f. 1980	
E-2.	Blue and white paint mare, f. 1981	
E-3.	Dark grey bald-faced mare, f. 1983	
E-4.	Buckskin filly, star and snip, f. 1986	out of E-2
E-5.	Buckskin colt, f. 1988	out of E-2
E-6.	Dark colt, star, f. 1988	out of E-3
E-7.	Blue and white filly, f. 1988	out of E-2

1988 Census: Band F (Bachelor Stallions)

- | | | |
|-------|---|------------------------------------|
| F-1. | Black stallion, f. 1983 or 1984 | |
| F-2. | Grey bald-faced stallion, f. 1984 | |
| F-3. | Blue and white stallion, f. 1985 | |
| F-4. | Grey stallion, f. 1983 or 1984 | |
| F-5. | Red roan stallion, f. 1985 | By B-1 and out of B-2 |
| F-6. | Bay star-faced stallion, f. 1984 | Out of A-9 |
| F-7. | Bay star-faced stallion, f. 1985 | Out of D-2 |
| F-8. | Bay strip-faced stallion, f. 1985 | Out of D-2 |
| F-9. | Brown star-faced stallion, f. 1986 | Out of C-2 |
| F-10. | Red roan stallion, WLH, WRH,
sold 1986 and f. 1985 | By red roan stallion
out of A-4 |

Comments

F-7, F-8, F-9, and F-10 left their natal bands in late 1987 or early 1988.

F-8 was found dead at Boicourt Spring in September, 1988.

[5] 1988 Age and Sex Distribution

<u>Year</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Stallion</u>	<u>Mare</u>
1988	weanling	7	16
1987	1	5	6
1986	2	3 or 4	2
1985	3	4	4
1984	4	4	1
1983	5	1	1
1982	6	2	0
1981	7	0	2
1980	8	3	4
1979	9	2	2
1978	10	0	0
1977	11	0	1
1976	12	0	1
1969-75	13-19	0	0
1968	20	0	1

Total = 61 or 62 head; possible unobserved bachelor

Comments

Bachelor stallions F-1 and F-4 foaled in either 1983 or 1984 were counted as 1984 foals.

Two 1988 mortalities from Band D (D-2 and D-4) and removed orphan foal from Band A not included.

Note absence of males foaled 1968-1978 and 1981 due to selective removals during 1981 round-up.

[6] Owned Horses in Park Observed by Tom Tescher

Circa 1950-1960*

1. Old grey freckled mare, blotched brand. Family of greys with her, including a 2-year-old stallion.
2. Cliff Rue mares, branded "OU"
 - a. bay mare (sold for slaughter)
 - b. black mare (shot)
3. Frank Kessell chestnut mare; flaxen mane and tail, branded "ƴ" and/or "S/m"
4. Walt Ray mares, branded "8"
 - a. bay, star
 - b. bay, strip
5. Bill Neuens--one or two old black geldings, branded "Σ"
6. Grey gelding, 20-30 years old, branded "Ω"
7. Grey gelding, 20-30 years old, branded "Ɔ"
8. Oyhus grey gelding, branded "|<|"
9. Talkington bay mare, branded "H"
10. Rasmussen sorrel mare, branded "E┐"
11. Nunn blue roan mare, branded "J"
12. Barnhart mares (2), branded "C"
13. Griggs white mare, unbranded

*John Griggs remembers his mare as having entered the park a decade later, so this date may be tentative. I have also received contradictory information as to whether the Nunn mare was released before or after the 1954 round-up.

Tom Tescher mentioned that the Talkington and Rasmussen mares produced paint colts.

[7] Produce of Orphan Brown Mare (TB) (1970-1982)
with Blue and White (matured grey) ear-marked stallion, f. 1969
(sold 1981)

- 1973 Grey stallion (transferred from park to B. Lowman to Kuntz)
- 1974 Paint stallion (shot by NPS on Lindbo property)
- 1975 Blue and white paint stallion (sold to stock contractor)
- 1976 Roan bald-faced stallion (Kuntz)
- 1977 Blue roan mare (Kuntz)
- 1978 Paint stallion (sold by NPS to stock contractor at auction, 1978, then died)
- 1979 Grey stallion (B-1) by Hereford stud*
- 1980 Blue roan stallion (found crippled during 1981 round-up and shot by NPS)
- 1981 Blue and white filly (E-2)
- 1982 Blue and white filly
- 1983 Dry
- 1984 Orphan Brown mare died while foaling

*In 1978 the blue and white, ear-marked stud was incapacitated by a wire cut and was temporarily displaced by the grey, bald-faced "Hereford" stud that "ran second" to the dominant horse.

[8] Produce of Old Blue Mare, f. circa 1957-59; sold 1978
With Baldfaced Blue and Grey Stallion, f. 1960; d. 1980*

- 1966 Blue roan stallion (scarred)
- 1967 Black mare, star (Kuntz)
- 1968 Dark grey filly
- 1969 Dry
- 1970 Black baldfaced colt (sold to Gold Seal Zoo)
- 1971 Dark baldfaced filly (trapped at Mosser's; sold to
slaughter)
- 1972 Blue roan stallion (shot in 1976)
- 1973 Blue roan stallion (roped and removed 1973)
- 1974 Blue roan colt (died)
- 1975 Dry (Many mares in all bunches were dry in 1975.)
- 1976 Black mare, baldface (now B-3)
- 1977 Blue roan filly, star (sold with her in 1978)
- 1978 Old Blue mare trapped and sold by Thompsons; was oldest
mare in park

*Possibly a mother-son union

[9] Summary

Horses born in the park since the 1954 round-up can be traced to three major lines: the original "wild" greys, the black Barnhart mare and the crippled grey stallion, and the blue roans, most of which descended from the "Old Blue" mare. During the 1960s, stallions from the grey line were predominant, but most horses of this lineage were removed by 1978. Blue roan stallions dominated throughout the 1970s, but a concerted effort was made to eliminate these horses in preparation for the introduction of domestic stallions in the early 1980s. Since reaching maturity, the introduced "Brookman stud" has become dominant by virtue of controlling the largest group of horses (twenty in 1988). However, the stallions that controlled mares in 1988 do represent each of the major known lines. E-1 (black stallion) combines the "old grey" and blue roan lines; D-1 (blue roan) the Barnhart and blue roan lines; C-1 (blue roan) the blue roan line; and B-1 (grey) represents the "old grey" line through his sire.

Inbreeding has been documented among horses of the blue roan lineage during the late 1960s and early 1970s. However, inbreeding does not seem to have affected the reproductive and social success of the blue roans. The recent genealogical history of the park herd provides no evidence of inbreeding, and horses born with physical deformities have not been reported since circa 1970, when the population was very low.

The social organization of the horses changed in 1989; current behavioral and census data on the horses has been collected

by Elena Hovland of Montana State University. Once completed, MSU's report is expected to contain detailed behavioral and organizational data on the horses, information that was beyond the design of the present undertaking.

Summary

History of the THRO Horses

The free-roaming horses at Theodore Roosevelt Park are descended from horses that inhabited the Little Missouri Badlands when the park was created in 1947. Those horses were of two types: domestic ranch stock and "wild," unclaimed animals. Both domestic horses and a wild contingent had been present in the badlands since at least 1880. Area ranchers grazed their own livestock in the badlands and frequently chased and captured unclaimed horses for use or sale.

Most horses extant in the park area from 1940 to 1954 were rodeo or saddle stock owned by local ranchers. During the Roosevelt era of large-scale cattle ranching (1880-1900), ranchers raised horses on the open range, gathering and branding them periodically. After most of the range was fenced in the early twentieth century, local stockmen continued to use the badlands as a grazing area, particularly during the winter. This practice continued until the park's establishment and fencing, 1947-1958. In 1954 a cooperative round-up was staged by the NPS and area ranchers with the purpose of removing trespass horses. Nearly all branded and/or claimed animals were removed at that time (150-200 head). However, isolated reports of trespass grazing continued, with decreasing frequency, through 1984.

Also present in the park during the 1940s and 1950s were small groups of wild, unclaimed horses. Ranchers and cowboys from the Medora area report observing such animals in the badlands as early as 1920. Informants state that an earlier generation of cowboys frequently chased and captured wild horses in this area during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Individuals such as William "Badlands Bill" McCarty and Fred Gorham are reported to have made a portion of their living capturing and selling horses from the badlands during the period 1900-1935, and a few horse trap sites from this period remain visible in the park (see Photo No. 33). At least one large-scale wild horse round-up is reported to have taken place circa 1915. The Tescher brothers and other local cowboys frequently captured and sold wild or unclaimed horses during the period 1940-1960.

Wild horses were first reported in the Medora area in 1881 by Theodore Roosevelt, who stated that the animals were estrays from Indian groups or ranches. Indian and ranch horses of the nineteenth century were primarily Spanish mustangs or mustang-crosses. Mustang-based horses of western North Dakota included the "Montana" or Cayuse, the Texas cow pony, and horses obtained from Indian groups. The stamina and thriftiness of the "bronco" or Indian type made them ideally suited as ranch mounts in the rugged badlands environment. Wealthy stockmen such as the Marquis de Mores, A.C. Huidekoper, and Theodore Roosevelt used such horses as their foundation stock for saddle horses. There would have been little difference between wild and domestic horses of nineteenth-century western North Dakota.

Over time, ranch horses of the Indian or "bronco" type were crossed with Thoroughbreds, Quarter Horses, and other breeds to produce a more aesthetically pleasing animal. However, the "bronco" type seems to have endured well into the twentieth century. Virtually all informants stated that the ranch or saddle horse of the period 1900-1940 was the "common" horse of no particular breeding, often described as an "Indian type." Several informants described typical early twentieth-century ranch horses as rangy, bald-faced roans. Gerald Barnhart stated that his father once purchased a Thoroughbred horse, but the animal stepped into a prairie dog hole and was crippled. In contrast, informants describe the "common" horse as an animal that could withstand continual hard work with little or no care and could travel tremendous distances through the badlands.

By 1930 the changing nature of ranch life no longer required a horse with such characteristics. Removed from the rigors of open range work and released from a dependence on horse power by mechanization, ranchers placed increasing emphasis on the appearance of a horse, and the roping arena became the "proving ground" for a horse's abilities. The American Quarter Horse, bred for short bursts of speed and quick stops, became the western ideal. Long popular in the Southwest, by 1941, when the breed was officially organized, the Quarter Horse had become the standard ranch horse in the North and far West (Denhardt, 1967).

Ranch horses extant in the park at the time of the 1954 round-up are reported to have been "common" horses, Quarter Horses, and some with Thoroughbred blood. Tom Tescher states that

the "good" saddle horses "were always taken in and out." Therefore, it would seem that horses that were truly abandoned in the badlands were the older, "common horse" variety, which had become undesirable. These horses were described by informants as "broom-tails" and "mustangs." The only owned and identified horses left in the park after the 1954 round-up were the two Barnhart mares, which both Gerald Barnhart and Tom Tescher have described as "Indian ponies."

The origin of the "original greys" that remained after 1954 and that had been wild for many years is unknown. It is possible that these horses were descended from groups of animals reported to have been in the badlands since the nineteenth century. Such horses could have survived both because they were undesirable and because non-domestic horses were more difficult to catch. Tom Tescher reports that the "wilder" stallions were virtually impossible to capture prior to the use of helicopters, and the Tescher brothers state that they "didn't even try" to chase some groups for that reason. During the period 1900-1940, when people captured horses in the badlands, a primary market for these animals was the slaughter house. Horseback riders would have captured the slower and less agile horses, such as abandoned work or draft stock or other formerly domestic animals. Although it is known that draft horses were abandoned in the badlands circa 1920-1930, the Teschers do not recall such animals. Feral horses in the badlands came under increased pressure after the park was established and the NPS attempted to eliminate them in the period 1947-1970. The 1954 round-up was designed to remove all free-roaming horses,

but Tom Tescher states that of the captured animals, "99% were branded." It is reasonable to assume that only the hardiest and "wildest" horses survived repeated attempts at capture during this period.

When capturing horses for use or for sale as saddle stock, local cowboys did not select for the "Indian type." The "Indian type" was partially identified by color, as Indians exhibited a preference for roans, paints, and bald-faced horses. Roe states that "the range prejudice against pintos was very strong. . . . The plainsman regarded the pinto with contempt because the Indian liked it" (1955: 170-171). When A. C. Huidekoper (H.T. Ranch) purchased 60 Sioux mares from the Marquis de Mores, he attempted to choose solid-colored horses (Huidekoper, 1955: 64). However, many of the mares were roans, and when they were cross-bred, many of the offspring had bald faces and other white markings (Noyce, 1959). Harry Roberts stated that many of the Sioux-Thoroughbred cross horses at the HT had "plumb white heads. There were a lot of bald-faced horses in the old days; they reminded people of Herefords; they didn't like that." According to informants' descriptions, many of these early horses were probably overo paints, horses with white faces and irregular white body markings. Denhardt (1947: 196) states,

Pintos have never been extremely popular with North American horsemen. Perhaps one of the main reasons is that with one exception, and that exception does not occur in North America, practically every recognized

breed refuses to allow spotted horses in the stud-books.¹

Regarding horse round-ups in the badlands circa 1945-1960, Gerald Barnhart stated that "bay was the ideal; people didn't try to catch the others." Bruce Northrup commented that during the 1950s, the horses people tried to catch in the park were the offspring of Walt Cooper's Quarter Horse stallion "Dick Thomas."

Photographic and descriptive evidence for the feral preservation of a type of horse present in nineteenth-century western North Dakota is convincing. The feral horses in Theodore Roosevelt National Park are predominantly roan, grey, or overo paint (white markings such as side spots), and many have bald faces. Except for being larger in stature, their conformation is consistent with that of the Indian pony: large heads, short backs, steeply sloping croups, strong, straight legs and feet, and an over-all rough or "common" appearance deemed undesirable in the modern horse. Many of the horses at THRO bear a strong resemblance to horses illustrated in nineteenth-century photographs and drawings. For example, compare the grey mare in Photo No. 117 or the blue roan mare in Photo No. 122 with Remington's drawing "Northern Plains Cowboy," Figure 4. A line of blue roan stallions (Photos No. 114 and 115) appear nearly identical to the mount of Sioux warrior Long Dog, shown in Figure 10. Overo paint horses in

¹ This prejudice has fallen away. For the past decade the American Paint Horse Association has been the fastest growing breed registry in the United States. Horses registered by the APHA are not the "Indian type" but are almost wholly of Quarter Horse breeding. Because the Quarter Horse was partially founded on the Indian or mustang type, occasionally animals of this breed are born with overo paint markings and blue eyes ("crop outs"). Selective breeding has produced a paint horse that conforms to the Quarter Horse ideal with paint coloration.

the park (e.g. Photos No. 73, 123) approximate in build and color the Sioux horse in Figure 11. Roan horses in the park are very similar to nineteenth-century Medora ranch horses shown in Plates 9, 10, 12, and 16. Most striking are two photographs of the Marquise de Mores (Plates 9 and 10) with a large-headed, bald-faced roan that is very nearly the prototypical park horse. Compare this horse with E-3 (Photos No. 102, 103, and 107), the mares in Photo No. 11B, the Kuntz horse "Bad Toe," Photos No. 123-125, B-3 (Photo No. 74), or A-5 (Photo No. 37).²

Medora-area ranchers in the late nineteenth century, including De Mores, Huidekoper, and Roosevelt, selectively bred and/or kept the Indian pony for sale and use. Those men ran their horses on the open range, and it is possible that some of their stock became feral. Dobie (1952: 90) claims that descendants of the Sioux-Thoroughbred crosses of De Mores and Huidekoper were still used as ranch and saddle stock in the Medora area during the 1930s. However, it is not necessary to hypothesize a direct line of feral descent between those horses and the extant park animals to conclude that the THRO horses are representative of an early North Dakota ranch type. Informants state that the "common" or "Indian type" horse was the standard ranch mount a decade later. Therefore it is unlikely that a dramatic divergence in type between wild and domestic horses occurred until circa 1930-1940, even with the continual introduction of ranch stock to the feral herds. Although feral and domestic horses of the early twentieth

² This characterization of the THRO horse phenotype is much less accurate than it was prior to the round-ups of 1978, 1981, and 1986 and the introduction of outside stallions.

century seem to have remained essentially the same as their nineteenth-century counterparts, admixture with other breeds undoubtedly increased over time. For example, the saddle horse of Sam Rhodes shown in a photograph probably taken during the 1920s (Plate 20) bears a resemblance to the park horses (compare with Photo No. 125) but is more muscular and compact, possibly due to a Quarter Horse cross. Wild or feral horses, while mixing with a variety of abandoned or loose ranch stock, probably remained true to the "Indian type" through the selective pressures of round-ups. Still, occasional cases of admixture did occur, as with the Griggs mare that escaped into the park during the early 1970s.

We may conclude that wild horses and, to a lesser extent, ranch horses found in the Little Missouri Badlands circa 1940 were of the same general type used in Medora during the late nineteenth century. Phenotypically, the park horses strongly resemble the nineteenth-century horse, and informants identify the extant animals as "old time ranch horses." This type of horse gradually lost favor during the twentieth century and has today been completely eclipsed by the American Quarter Horse. "Common" or Indian-type horses remained in the park because "they weren't worth catching" and because they were harder to capture than domestic stock.

The Tescher brothers attempted to "upgrade" the herd by removing "mustang type" horses that they considered "poor" during the period 1945-1975 (mares and young stallions). THRO accelerated this process by selectively removing blue roans, "older type" horses, and dominant park stallions and replacing

them with domestic animals such as a purebred Arabian (D-6) during the period 1978-1986.³ The goal of this policy has been to change the appearance (phenotype) of the horses to achieve a closer conformity to modern standards of conformation and hence a higher sale value for culled animals. As a consequence, the extant horses appear more like modern saddle horses than they did a decade ago (compare Photos No. 1-21 with photos of extant animals). Although some extant horses exhibit the conformation of the older or "original" park type circa 1954 (e.g. A-5, A-3, A-14, B-3, C-1, E-1, E-3), most others (e.g. B-1) now look entirely "modern." The most tenacious aspect of the park horse "type" seems to be patterns of coloration: roan, grey, and overo paint. A factor in the preservation of the "older type" horse in the park has been the inability of introduced stallions (with the exception of A-1) to successfully compete against the park-born horses in terms of reproductive success (the acquisition and maintenance of mares).

In sum, the original feral horses at THRO were descended from a type of ranch horse common in the Medora area from 1880 to 1930, which was based on the Indian horse or mustang, often cross-bred. This type survived primarily (but not wholly) in a feral state after becoming undesirable as saddle animals. Admixture with modern and domestic horses has occurred, but some park horses remain phenotypically similar to horses observed in southwestern North Dakota during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

³ Many of the removed park horses were purchased by Leo Kuntz, Jr., of Linton, North Dakota.

Management of the THRO Horses

Management of the feral horses at THRO has changed throughout virtually every administration since 1947. With the exception of the McCaw superintendency of 1960-1963, until 1970 the goal of the park was total elimination of the horses. A large-scale round-up was conducted in 1954, and numerous small-scale removal efforts were attempted throughout the ensuing twenty years. The removal policy was supported by the NPS regional administration and was pursued most forcefully by Superintendent Warren Hotchkiss throughout 1964-1966. During that time the horse population was reduced to approximately 16 known animals.

Public and local opposition to removal of the horses, coupled with the discovery of historic documentation establishing the presence of wild horses in the Little Missouri Badlands during the nineteenth-century, motivated superintendent Arthur Sullivan to reverse the elimination policy during his tenure of 1966-1970. A Wild Horse Management Plan developed in 1970 established the policy of protecting a designated number of horses at THRO "in the interest of historical accuracy."

Since 1970, the most consistent policy regarding the horses has been "comprehensive management," i.e., the periodic reduction of horses through a round-up process each time herd numbers surpass a designated level. The 1970 Wild Horse Management Plan established 40 head as the ceiling figure. By 1978 the population had risen to approximately 75 animals. A Proposed Feral Horse

Reduction Plan and Environmental Review stipulated that the horses would be reduced "at intervals of from every two to four years to maintain the herd at from 35 to 60 head."

A round-up was staged on 5 and 6 September, 1978; Tom Tescher was contracted to provide riders, and one helicopter was used. Extremely hot weather and a long drive to the buffalo corrals contributed to the deaths of seven horses, and 14 were removed and sold at Stockman's Livestock Exchange on 12 September. A rancher adjacent to the park trapped approximately 10-12 horses that broke through the fence during the action and subsequently sold them for slaughter.

Horse corrals were constructed in the northeast corner of the park during the summer of 1981, and a second round-up was staged on 5 October. Tom Tescher and a helicopter were contracted to assist. A total of 32 horses were removed, reducing the population from approximately 71 to 39 head. Twenty-eight horses were sold at Stockman's Livestock Exchange on 13 October. This round-up received regional news coverage and generated some local opposition to park policies.

By 1986 the horse population had increased to approximately 97-100 animals. Two helicopters and Tom Tescher were contracted, and a round-up was conducted on 23 and 24 August. Eighty head were captured, and 54 animals were sold at Western Livestock Company on 2 October 1986. During the round-up the horse trap and pens sustained substantial damage.

A total of approximately 103 horses were removed from the park through round-up and sale during the period 1970-1986. In

addition, approximately 30 horses were roped and sold by local ranchers (most with park approval) or were removed through direct reduction. A 1988 census revealed 61-62 horses in the park.

As expressed in park memoranda and documents, several management objectives have yet to be clearly formulated. Major concerns include defining the desired number of horses, defining the desired type of horse, evaluating the extent of inbreeding within the population, and determining the ecological role of the horses. No research had been undertaken prior to 1987, and the park has not collected or recorded annual census and genealogical data on the horses that would reveal changes in herd composition and numbers. Therefore, while these concerns have been common to all administrations since 1970, they have been differentially addressed.

Inbreeding has been specified as a concern in virtually all THRO documents regarding the horses since the 1970 Wild Horse Management Plan. At that time the horse population was only 26 animals, the herd having been drastically reduced during the previous decade. Indications of inbreeding cited by park documents include the occurrence of crooked legs, a preponderance of grey and blue roan horses, and horses with poor overall conformation. A 1977 evaluation of the park horses by BLM Range Conservationist and Wild Horse Management Specialist Milton Frei found no evidence of inbreeding among the park horses, as determined by appearance and vigor. This report was cited in only one subsequent THRO document, most of which continued to assert significant levels of inbreeding among the horses. Genealogical research con-

ducted for the present report has documented the occurrence of inbreeding among the horses during the early 1970s, when population levels were extremely low. However, the resultant offspring were physically sound and became socially dominant animals, as indicated by significant reproductive success. Inbreeding appears to have virtually ceased with the population growth that has occurred during the past two decades. (See "Genealogy" section and the 1984 Natural Resources Management Plan and Environmental Assessment.)

The concern with inbreeding among the horses resulted in the development of a policy to remove dominant park stallions and to replace them with introduced animals. The introduction of replacement stock was first suggested in the 1970 Wild Horse Management Plan, but Superintendents James B. Thompson (1969-1972) and John Lancaster (1972-1978) were conservative in their approach to this issue. During Thompson's administration, several Spanish Mustang breeders lobbied for the introduction of that type of horse. Thompson resisted the suggestion on the grounds that mustangs would be "historically inaccurate," and he argued that area residents were opposed to the introduction of horses that would change the historic park type. He stated that the chief criterion for the introduction of outside horses was to "acquire animals with a good amount of color to break up the preponderance of greys, blacks, and whites that exists within the present horse herd." The Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Refuge was notified that THRO would be interested in acquiring two of their surplus stallions.

Superintendent John Lancaster (1972-1978) established the legalization of ownership of the herd as his top priority regarding the horses, and succeeded in accomplishing this in 1973. Second, he was interested in replacing park stallions with new stock "to forestall inbreeding problems." With regard to the introduction of outside horses, Lancaster stated that

. . . We would not want to corrupt the present herd with introductions of any special breed until or unless it can be firmly established by professional genealogists that the present herd does indeed contain Spanish mustangs.

A Resource Management Plan developed in 1976 recommended the removal and subsequent replacement of park stallions on the grounds that "an inbred herd would not be aesthetically pleasing and would reflect poor management judgment." Horses targeted for removal were defined as "older studs or animals displaying noticeable physical deformities." Introduced animals should be "of the same general domestic stock that is now present" and "of mixed colors to provide contrast within the herd."

The 1978 Proposed Feral Horse Reduction Plan and Environmental Review focused on the need to forestall environmental degradation by reducing the horse population. During the subsequent round-up, two dominant stallions were removed and one was shot, but the 34 horses removed from the park were about equally divided by sex.

The policy of replacing park horses by introducing new animals was implemented during the Wickware administration (1978-1986). The expressed rationale supporting this decision was to increase color variation in the herd and to improve the sale

potential of the horses by creating a more desirable type of horse according to current standards of conformation. Initially the plan was to introduce outside mares. In 1981, Wickware began the introduction of new stallions by negotiating the donation of a purebred Arabian colt with breeder Les Sellnow of Brainerd, Minnesota.

The Wickware administration recognized that the successful introduction of new stallions could not be accomplished without removing dominant park stallions:

The goal of increasing the genepool will succeed only if the stud is dominant enough to take mares from the present stud or if he is assisted to this end by having the competition removed. . . . We plan on taking just such measures.

The primary goal of the ensuing 1981 round-up was to remove dominant stallions (i.e., those with the largest and most stable mare bands). This objective was realized, as many of the dominant stallions were removed by round-up and direct reduction on 8 and 9 October. The implementation of the "replacement" policy received news coverage and met with some local opposition.

During 1982 at least four more stallions were removed or destroyed. The possibility of introducing mares was again raised but was not pursued.

Six young stallions were released during 1981-1982: a registered Arabian, a registered Quarter Horse, three wild horses obtained from the BLM, and a Shire-Paint horse purchased by Medora ranchers from a Montana stock contractor.

The 1984 Natural Resources Management Plan and Environmental Assessment addressed horse management at THRO in some detail. The

plan cited a need for research in order to formulate specific policies, and called for the regular monitoring of the herd and the development of interpretation. The plan recommended the removal and replacement of park-born horses. At the same time, the plan acknowledged that the preservation of "a historic badlands horse herd, with the animals being direct descendants of the horses which were found here when the park was founded" was an alternative approach. In the same discussion, the plan noted that two mechanisms for the selection of horse types at THRO have operated: biological fitness and success, and human preference. Cultural factors that have no effect on biological fitness, such as a desire for a wide range of color patterns, have directed changes in the genetic and phenotypic changes in the herd.

During 1981-1986, the park selectively removed the most biologically and socially successful stallions in order to facilitate their usurpation by the introduced domestic animals. To date, approximately 150 horses descended from stock present in 1947 have been removed from the park. However, only one of the introduced stallions has been able to successfully collect and maintain a harem of mares. Two of the introduced stallions were badly injured in fights with park horses and had to be removed; three others have assumed sub-dominant roles within bands controlled by dominant park-born horses. The Arabian has adapted poorly. A-1, the most successful introduced stallion, controlled 25 horses in 1988, nearly one-half of the entire population (62 or 63). This horse alone can be expected to make a significant impact on the genealogical future of the horses (see "Genealogy").

His offspring are large and strong, and may sell well as potential rodeo stock.

In sum, the National Park Service was not prepared to manage wild horses when the park was established in 1947, and no research had been undertaken to guide that process prior to 1987. Park policy has changed from total elimination of the horses to the protection of a designated number; but more specific decisions regarding the herd have fallen upon the judgment of succeeding superintendents and staff. Future decisions regarding the number and type of horses to be conserved, methods of herd reduction, the continuation of introductions, etc., are decisions pending study; such research must provide the basis for establishing policies and developing a Wild Horse Management Plan.

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