NPS Form 10-900
(Oct. 1990)

OMB No. 10024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. Name of Property

historic name Arthur Simmons Stables Historic District
other names/site number Clark & Potts Combination Sales Barn, Lee Brothers Barn, B. B. Tucker Stables, Dincara Stables, Arthur Simmons Stables

2. Location

street & number 621 and 701 West Boulevard [N/A] not for publication
city or town Mexico [N/A] vicinity
state Missouri code MO county Audrain code 007 zip code 65265

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this [x] nomination [ ] request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property [x] meets [ ] does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant [X] nationally [ ] statewide [ ] locally.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments [ ].)

Mark A Miles 10.15.04

Signature of certifying official/Title Mark A. Miles/Deputy SHPO Date

Missouri Department of Natural Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property [x] meets [ ] does not meet the National Register criteria.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments [ ].)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is: Signature of the Keeper Date

[ ] entered in the National Register.
See continuation sheet [ ]
[ ] determined eligible for the National Register.
See continuation sheet [ ].
[ ] determined not eligible for the National Register.
[ ] removed from the National Register.
[ ] other. (explain:)
See continuation sheet [ ].

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

[X] private
[ ] public-local
[ ] public-State
[ ] public-Federal

Category of Property

[ ] building(s)
[X] district
[ ] site
[ ] structure
[ ] object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
6	0	buildings
0	0	sites
5	0	structures
0	0	objects
11	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing.
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed on the National Register.
N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE: animal facility
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE: storage
DOMESTIC/single dwelling

Current Functions

VACANT
DOMESTIC/single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

OTHER: commercial horse stables
OTHER: ranch style house

See continuation sheet [ ].

Materials

foundation CONCRETE
walls WOOD: weatherboard
roof ASPHALT
other

See continuation sheet [x].

Narrative Description
See continuation sheet [x].

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

[X] A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history

[ ] B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

[ ] C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

[ ] D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

Property is:
[ ] A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

[ ] B removed from its original location.

[ ] C a birthplace or grave.

[ ] D a cemetery.

[ ] E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

[ ] F a commemorative property.

[ ] G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

See continuation sheet [x].

Areas of Significance

Agriculture

Period of Significance

1887-1954

Significant Dates

1887

Significant Person(s)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography

See continuation sheet [x]

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

[ ] preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested

[ ] previously listed in the National Register

[ ] previously determined eligible by the National Register

[ ] designated a National Historic Landmark

[ ] recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey
_____

[ ] recorded by Historic American Engineering Record
_____

Primary location of additional data:

[x] State Historic Preservation Office

[ ] Other State Agency

[ ] Federal Agency

[ ] Local Government

[ ] University

[ ] Other:
Name of repository:
_____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 5.7 acres

UTM References

A. Zone	Easting	Northing	B. Zone	Easting	Northing
15	595800	4335460	15	595940	4335460
C. Zone	Easting	Northing	D. Zone	Easting	Northing
15	595940	4335260	15	595800	4335260

[x] See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description
(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification
(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title See Continuation Sheet
organization _____ date June 2004
street & number _____ telephone _____
city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional Items
(Check with the SHPO or FOP for any additional items)

Property Owner
(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FOP.)
name James Simmons
street & number 9317 Highway 15 telephone 573-581-2395
city or town Mexico state Missouri zip code 65265

7. Description, continued.

Description continued,

Materials

foundation STONE
walls WOOD: shingle
BRICK
ALUMINUM

Summary:

The Arthur Simmons Stables Historic District is located on West Boulevard in Mexico, Audrain County, Missouri. The district covers approximately six acres, and contains eleven resources, all of which are contributing. The Arthur Simmons Stables and the other resources in the district represent the only remaining historic resources associated with the horse training and sales industry in Mexico, Missouri. In addition to the Simmons Stables, the district includes two smaller frame stables, two frame outbuildings, a one-story house, two practice tracks, two metal grain bins and a wood fence.

All of the resources in the district are highly intact, and appear today much as they did during the 1887-1954 period of significance. The only significant changes to resources in the district are dormer additions to Arthur Simmons Stables, and shed additions to the Hook Barn. All of these changes occurred during the period of significance. With the exception of the addition of a modern overhead garage door on the south end of the Arthur Simmons Stables, the agricultural buildings in the district retain all or most of their early doors, windows, and early weatherboard sheathing. The Arthur Simmons House is also very much intact. Furthermore, all of the resources in the district were in use in their original capacity until 2001. All of the agricultural resources are now vacant, but the house is still in use.

Elaboration:

The Arthur Simmons Stables Historic District is centrally located in the town of Mexico, Missouri. Originally situated on the outskirts of Mexico in Audrain County, the buildings in the district are now part of a well-developed residential neighborhood. Included in the district boundaries are a large gable-roofed, frame horse stables, two smaller, frame horse stables, a one-story, stone veneer house, two frame outbuildings, two practice tracks, two metal grain bins and a wood fence. (Figure One) The district, which covers approximately six acres, is bounded on the west by Grove Street, and on the south by West Boulevard. Alleys on the north and east

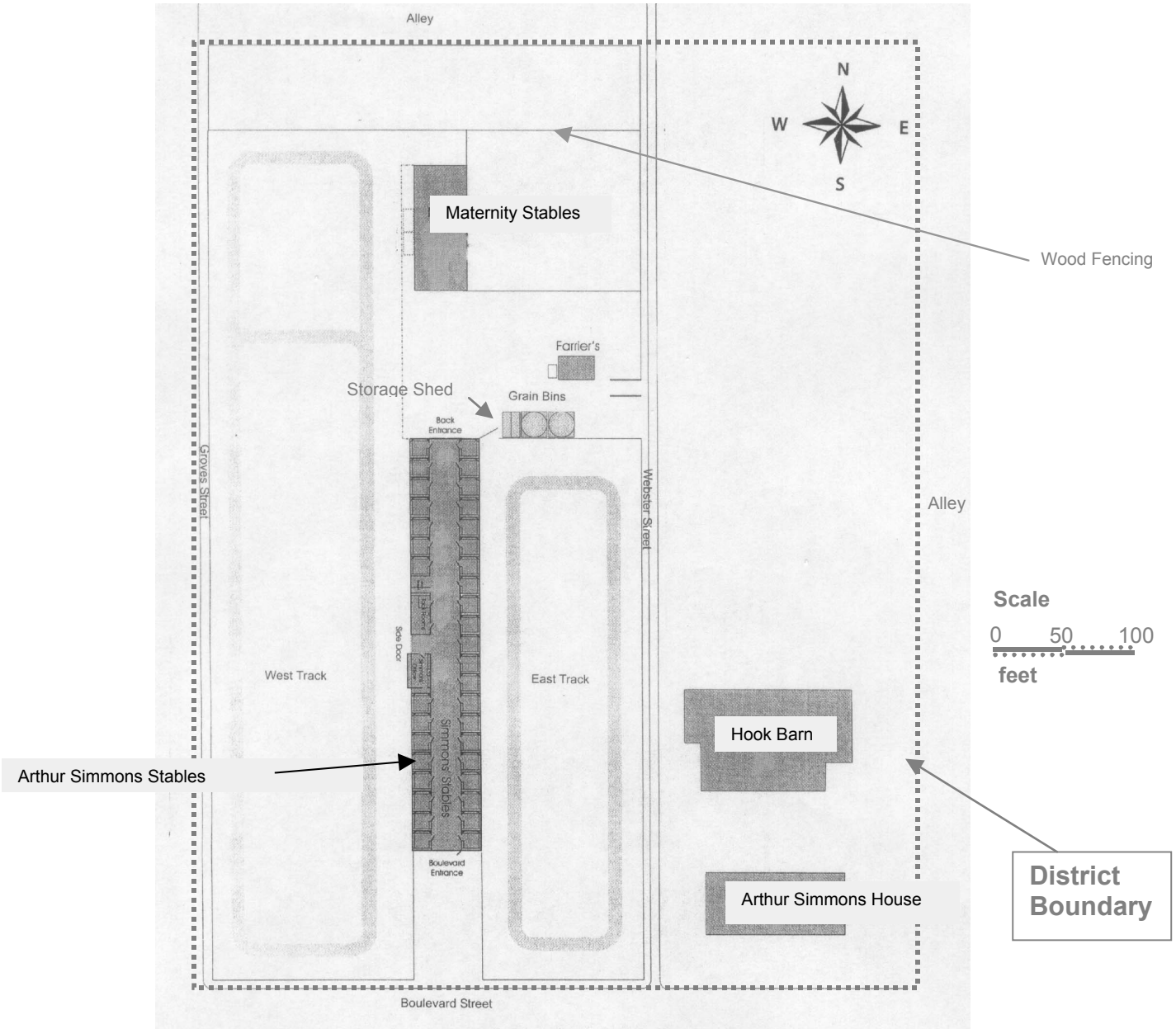
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

Arthur Simmons Stables Historic District
Audrain County, Missouri

Figure One: Site Map
Drawn by: Robert Worstell, 2003



sides of the district separate the Simmons property from late nineteenth and early twentieth century houses that face Grove Street and Muldrow Street. The district occupies a level tract of land, much of which is covered by grass.

The principal building in the district is the large, 36-stall, horse stables, which has been known since 1948 as the Arthur Simmons Stables. Originally constructed in 1887 as the Clark and Potts Combination Sales Barn, the building was in continuous use as a horse training and sales facility from the time it was constructed until 2001. There are ten other resources in the district that were associated with the care, breeding and training of horses. The maternity stables, located to the north of the main stables, was built in 1949 and contains 16 stalls.[1] Two frame outbuildings and two metal grain bins are also located to the north of the main barn. One of the outbuildings was used as a farrier's shop, and the other was used for storage. The Hook Barn, located to the east of the main barn, was originally built for breeder/trainer John T. Hook in the mid-1930s. It contains 30 stalls and was purchased by Arthur Simmons in 1951.[2] Flanking the main barn on the east and west are two practice tracks. These tracks are surrounded by white wood fencing. The fencing, which also extends around a yard to the east of the Maternity Stables, is counted as one contributing structure. There is also a one-story house within the district boundaries. Located to the east of the main barn, the stone veneer, Ranch style house was constructed for Arthur Simmons in 1951.

The buildings in the Arthur Simmons Stables Historic District form a cohesive grouping of intact resources, which look today much as they did in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Altogether, there are eleven resources in the district: six of which are contributing buildings and five are contributing structures. There are no non-contributing resources in the district. As a group, the resources in the Arthur Simmons Stables Historic District are representative of the nationally recognized horse breeding, training and sales industry in Mexico, Missouri. Although some of the buildings are in need of considerable attention, all of the resources in the district retain a high level of integrity in all areas of consideration: location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, setting and association.

Individual Resource Descriptions

1. Arthur Simmons Stables, 701 West Boulevard, 1887, 1943. (Photo Nos. 1-3)

The Arthur Simmons Stables, the largest building in the district, was constructed in 1887 and remodeled in 1943. It is a long, rectangular, frame building approximately 242’ in length and 42’ in width. The stables has a post and beam structural system. Each of the 4” x 6” interior support posts is set on a 30" square of limestone; the outside wall posts are supported on concrete piers. Cross beams are reinforced with diagonal bracing. The building has an asphalt-

[1] "To Add Another Barn For Simmon's Horses," Mexico Ledger, February 16, 1949.
[2] "Simmons Purchases Hook Stable," Mexico Ledger. December 24, 1951.

shingled gable roof, which is pierced by four gable-roofed dormers. The dormers are not original; they were added in 1943. The exterior walls of the stables are sheathed in vertical wooden siding with cedar shingles in the gable ends.

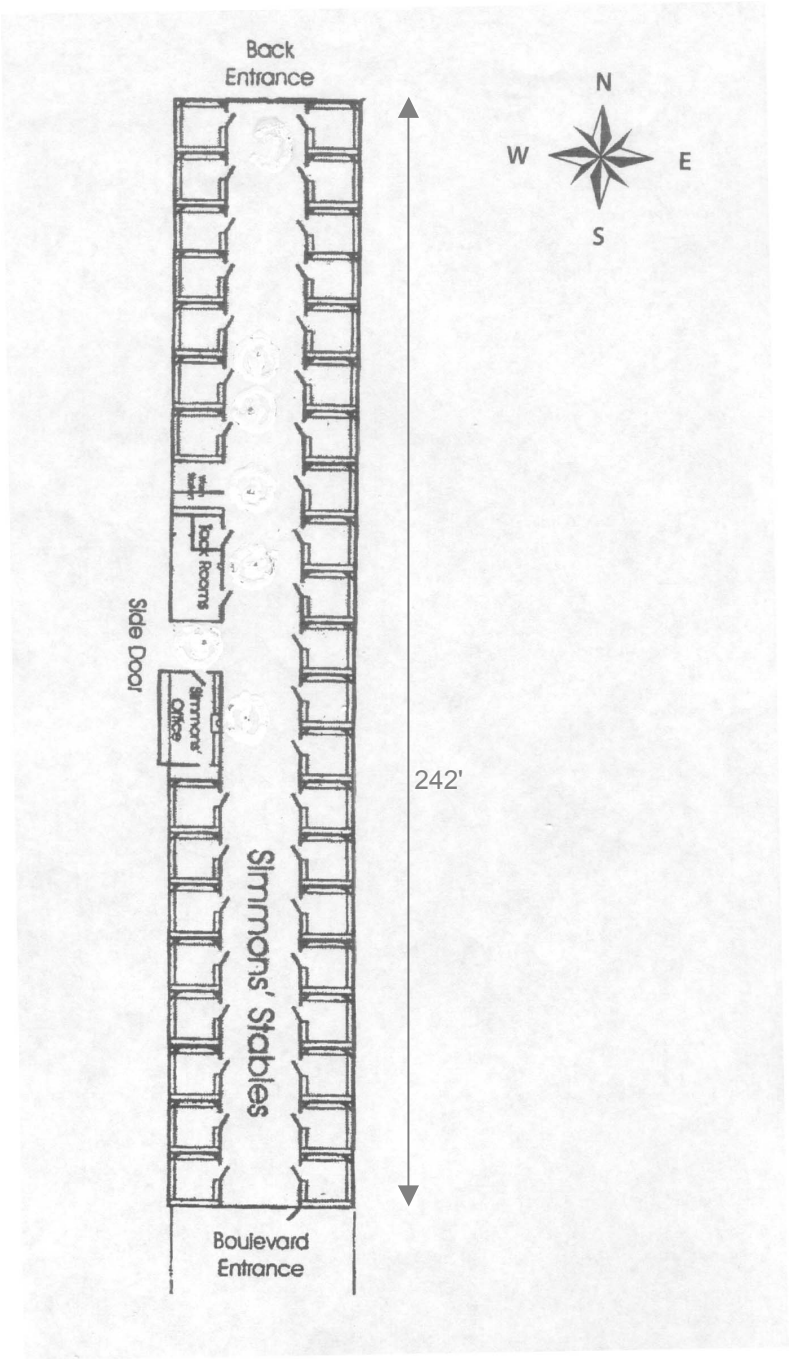
The south elevation of the stables, which faces West Boulevard, features a large central entrance filled with a modern overhead garage door. Centered above this entrance is a large fan-shaped window, which was originally glazed with colored glass. However, many of the muntins are missing or damaged and no glass remains. The north elevation also features a large central entrance, but the original, double sliding doors are still in place. The doors are wood framed and are sheathed with vertical board siding. Each door has three single pane windows. Centered in the gable end is a small three-light, fixed sash window.

The east and west elevation of the stables are both divided into five bays. There are two outer bays, which are each pierced by six small windows, a center bay, and two dormer bays in between the center and outer bays. Each of the dormer bays has a gabled roof, two windows on the first floor and three sets of paired 6/6 double-hung windows on the second floor. On the east elevation, the center bay features five small windows. On the west elevation, the center bay has a small window, a large, metal overhead door and a small shed-roofed projecting bay. The one-story projecting bay, which was probably constructed in 1943 when the dormers were added, is rectangular. It is approximately three feet deep and has five, 6/1 double-hung windows along its west elevation. With the exception of the bay addition, the windows on the first floor of the Arthur Simmons Stables are a mix of one-light and four-light sash that slide in wooden tracks. However, some of the window sashes are partially or completely missing.

The interior of the stables features an earth-floored center aisle, approximately 18’ wide that runs the length of the stables and thirty-six 12’ wide stalls. There are 21 stalls on the east side of the building, and 15 stalls on the west side. (Figure Two) There is also a wash rack, office, and tack room near the middle of the building on the west side. Concrete floors have been added to the office, tack room, wash stall areas and to a portion of the center aisle on the south end. In addition, haylofts run down both sides of the building over the stalls. Portholes in the loft allowed the easy feeding of the horses with the hay stored in the loft. There are catwalks on the north and south ends to traverse to or from the east or west loft for feeding. Each loft holds about 2,500 bales of straw or hay.

The Arthur Simmons Stables has experienced years of deferred maintenance resulting in the deterioration of some of the post and beam structure. This deterioration has caused the east wall of the building to bow, and it has caused some deflection in the roof structure. There are also several places where the roof structure is compromised, and the building is open to the elements. However, a structural assessment of the building has been done and none of this deterioration appears to be irreversible. The Arthur Simmons Stables is a contributing building.

Figure Two: Plan of the Arthur Simmons Stables.
Drawn by: Robert Worstell, 2003



2. Maternity Stables, 1949. (Photo Nos. 4-5)

The Maternity Stables is a 30' wide by 90' long frame stables with a gable roof. It was constructed in 1949.[3] The building is sheathed with vertical board siding, and the roof is covered with asphalt shingles. The main entrance to the building is a large sliding wood door in the center of the south elevation. Centered above the entrance, there is an opening to the hayloft which is covered by two small hinged doors. Flanking the sliding door, on each end of the south elevation, there are small window openings, which appear to have originally been filled with six-light sash. The fenestration of the north elevation is identical to the south elevation with the exception of louvers in place of doors in the gable end. The east and west elevations of the Maternity Barn are identical. Both have nine, equally-spaced window openings which are filled with wooden louvers.

The Maternity Stables contains 18 box stalls flanking a central aisle. Wood fencing extends around the east side of the Maternity Stables to form a small exercise yard. This fencing is connected to the fencing that surrounds the East and West Tracks. The Maternity Stables is a contributing building.

3. Hook Barn, ca. 1935, ca. 1948. (Photo Nos. 6-8)

The Hook Barn is a gable-roofed, frame stables with four shed-roofed frame additions. It is located approximately 200' east of the Arthur Simmons Stables and was constructed in circa 1935.[4] The main entrance to the Hook Barn is located in the west gable end of the building and has a sliding wood door. The south elevation of the Hook Barn has twelve irregularly-spaced windows. Half of the east and west elevations and all of the north elevations of the main portion of the Hook Barn are obscured by shed-roofed additions. These additions are more like attached buildings rather than additions since the access to each of these spaces is via an external entrance rather than from inside the main portion of the Hook Barn. The additions were in place by 1948, the year Arthur Simmons purchased the property.

Like the Arthur Simmons Stables and the Maternity Stables, the Hook Barn also has a central aisle flanked by individual box stalls. The shed additions contain individual horse stalls and tack rooms. The Hook Barn is a contributing building.

4. Farrier's Shed, ca. 1949. (Photo No. 9)

The Farrier's Shed is a small, one-story, frame building with a gable roof. According to the current owner, Jim Simmons, this building was constructed shortly after the stables was

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[3] "To Add Another Barn For Simmon's Horses," Mexico Ledger, February 16, 1949.

[4] Workers of the Writers' Program of the Works Projects Administration in Missouri, Missouri: The W.P.A. Guide to the Show-Me State. (St. Louis: Reprint by the Missouri Historical Society Press, 1998), p. 557. (Original, Missouri State Highway Department, 1941).

purchased by Arthur Simmons in 1948. The 14' wide by 20' long building, which is located approximately 60' northeast of the Arthur Simmons Stables, is sheathed with vertical board siding and has two small window openings on each elevation. There is also a wood sliding door on the south elevation. The Farrier's Shed is a contributing building.

5. Storage Shed, ca. 1949. (Photo No. 10)

The Storage Building is a small, one-story, frame building with a gable roof, which is located approximately 10' northeast of the Arthur Simmons Stables. The building, which is 10' wide and 16' long, sits on stone blocks, is sheathed with weatherboard siding and has a narrow door, constructed of weatherboards, on the north elevation and on the west elevation. The Storage Shed is a contributing building.

6. Grain Bin #1 and #2, ca. 1949. (Photo No. 10)

Grain Bin #1 and #2 sit side by side and are located approximately 20' northeast of the Arthur Simmons Stables. According to the current owner, Jim Simmons, these bins were purchased and installed shortly after the stables was purchased by Arthur Simmons in 1948. Each of the aluminum grain bins is 14' in diameter and has a conical, standing seam metal roof. Each bin is set on top of a rectangular, frame platform that is enclosed on all four sides with vertical board siding. Grain Bin #1, the closest bin to the Arthur Simmons Stables, is approximately 10' feet tall, and sits on a 3' tall platform. The platform has two hinged vertical board doors on the north side. Grain Bin #2 is approximately 8' tall and sits on a 5' tall platform. The platform under Grain Bin #2 has a single door on the north elevation and a small window centered on each of the south and east elevations. Grain Bin #1 and #2 are contributing structures.

7. East and West Tracks, Wood Fencing, ca. 1945 (Photo Nos. 1-2)

Two wood fenced exercise tracks surrounded by wood fencing flank the Arthur Simmons Stables. The construction date for these resources was set from historic photos which show the fencing in place by 1945. The east track is a quarter- mile oval-shaped, cinder-covered track for exercising horses. This track, which runs north and south was in use until 2001. The west track is also an oval-shaped, track, but it does not have a cinder covering. It is a half-mile, track running north and south from the front to the back of the property, which is also fenced with wood fencing. This track has not been used for many years. The wood fencing that surrounds the two tracks also extends around the back of the property and around a small yard to the east of the Maternity Barn. There are also sections of fencing to the north of the Hook barn and to the east of the Farrier's Shed, and there is a wood livestock loading ramp attached to the fencing east of the Farrier's Shed. The fencing is approximately three feet tall and has three horizontal rails. The two tracks and the wood fencing are counted at three contributing structures.

8. Arthur Simmons House, 1954. (Photo No. 11)

The Arthur Simmons House is a one-story, Ranch style house. The house has a concrete foundation, stone veneer exterior walls and a gable roof with a small cross gable. The cross gable shelters a projecting bay on the east side of the front elevation. This projecting bay has a large three-section bay window. The window has a large picture window flanked by 1/1 double-hung units. Windows throughout the rest of the house have 1/1 double-hung wood sash and stone sills. The house has an attached, two-car garage. The Arthur Simmons House is a contributing building.

Summary:

The Arthur Simmons Stable Historic District on West Blvd. in Mexico, Missouri encompasses one of the oldest, largest and most significant horse training facilities in the United States. As such, the district is nationally significant under criterion A in the area of AGRICULTURE. The primary building, constructed in 1887 as the Clark and Potts Combination Sales Barn, was instrumental in the development of the city into the "Saddlebred Horse Capital of the World." By the mid-1950s, the facility grew to encompass 11 resources, and was one of most recognized training centers in the American Saddlebred industry. During its 117-year history, the stables produced champion horses and was associated with world-famous trainers and riders such as Tom Bass, John T. Hook and Arthur Simmons.[5] The dedication of early owners to recording bloodlines and producing quality horses helped establish the American Saddlebred Horse as a separately recognized breed.[6] Owners also supplied horses to two presidents, police departments in major metropolitan areas such as New York City and Chicago, and sold horses and mules to the U.S. Government for use during WWI.[7] The stables were in continuous use until 2001 and during this time influenced the breed standards for American Saddlebreds and the method of training and showing the breed. The period of significance is 1887 to 1954, the date of original construction through the 50 year cut-off date. The historic name for the district, the Arthur Simmons Stables Historic District, was chosen because the property did not take its current form until Arthur Simmons purchased the Clark and Potts Sale Barn property and the John T. Hook Stables property and combined them into one large property with multiple stables and outbuildings.

Elaboration:

On April 23, 1836, Rev. Robert C. Mansfield and James H. Smith founded the town of Mexico. At that time, it was part of Monroe County. Audrain County was formed a few months after the town was established, and Mexico was designated as the county seat.[8] Mexico and Audrain County remained sparsely settled for several decades. However, the coming of the railroad radically affected the growth of Audrain County and of the town of Mexico. As Howard L. Conard, the author of the Encyclopedia of the History of Missouri notes,

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[5] Lynn Weatherman, "The Big Old Barn on the Boulevard," Saddle and Bridle. August, 1978, p. 160.
[6] L. M. White, " The Heart of the Saddle Horse Story of Missouri," Missouri Historical Review. Vol. 50, January 1956, p 122.
[7] History of Audrain County Missouri: An Update 1936 - 1986. (Mexico: Audrain County Historical Society, 1986), p. 336.
[8] Walter Williams (ed)., History of Northeast Missouri. Volume I (Chicago and New York: Lewis Publishing Company, 1913), p. 186.

> For about twenty years the town enjoyed little prosperity and could boast of only a few hundred inhabitants until May 1858 when the North Missouri (now Wabash) Railway was completed to it. Then ensued a short era of prosperity.[9]

The North Missouri Railway proved to be a major asset to the area, making Mexico the transportation center for the surrounding area. This status was confirmed when a second railroad, the Louisiana and Missouri River Railroad, was completed through Mexico in 1872.[10] Although its growth was retarded during the Civil War, Mexico's population jumped from 960 in 1860 to 2,602 in 1870.[11]

After the Civil War, Mexico developed rapidly with new banks and businesses to serve the city and the county's growing population. Farming and cattle raising were of primary importance early on, but in the late nineteenth century, the production of fire-clay products and the breeding, training and sale of Saddlebred horses began to dominate Mexico's economy. By the early twentieth century, Mexico had become known as the Fire-Brick Capitol of the World and as the Saddlebred Horse Capitol of World.[12] The superior quality of horses bred and trained in Mexico combined with the large number of horses sold and shipped from Mexico stables to owners all over the world resulted in the town's recognition as a horse breeding and training center.[13]

During the mid-nineteenth century, fine breeding Saddle Horses were brought into the state primarily from Kentucky as well as from Virginia, New York and England. Many Kentucky farmers migrating to Missouri brought an advanced knowledge of stock breeding as well as their own blooded livestock. Thus, Saddlebred Horses were in Missouri well before the breed was formalized in 1891, and Missouri horses helped shape the breed's present form. [14]

One person in particular, C. T. Quisenberry, is credited with the genesis of the Saddlebred Horse industry in Missouri. In 1867, Quisenberry came to Audrain County from Kentucky and brought with him the area's first shorthorn cattle, Shetland ponies and fine saddle horses. According to Leta Hodge, the author of A Gathering of Our Days: Selected Writings on the History of Mexico and Audrain County, Missouri, Quisenberry had a large round barn and a track next to his home, Graceland, in Mexico.

> Here he held sales and trained horses. His Kentucky-bred American Saddle Horses, particularly the prize-winning Missouri Clay, attracted admiring crowds as they went through their paces. He urged local dealers to invest in good saddle horses, to

[9] Howard L. Conard, Encyclopedia of the History of Missouri. Vol. IV, (New York, Louisville and St. Louis: The Southern History Company, 1901), p. 371.
[10] Williams, p. 208.s
[11] History of Audrain County Missouri: An Update 1936 - 1986, p. 1.
[12] Leta Hodge, A Brief History of Mexico and Audrain County. Mexico: Audrain County Historical Society, 1989, p. 1.
[13] Herschel Schooley, Audrain Centennial History. (Mexico: McIntyre Publishing Co., 1937), p.103.
[14] Joe Pfeffer, "Not Just For Art's Sake," The National Horseman, November 2001, p. 120.

> breed them and to train them in the gaits so desirable in this horse and buggy era. He promoted horse races and horse shows. To him goes at least partial credit for the seeds of the saddle horse industry that would one day make Audrain "The Saddle Horse Capital of the World."[15]

As more settlers from Kentucky, Tennessee and Virginia moved into Missouri, horse sale barns and horse breeding organizations began to be organized around the state. The first annual sales of saddle horses began in Missouri in the 1870s.[16] Saddle horse breeding, training and sales were concentrated in the east-central part of the state around Mexico and Audrain County. By the turn of the twentieth century, the rivalry between Kentucky and Missouri in the breeding, training and showing of champion horses was firmly entrenched and continues today. A 1954 newspaper article about the American Royal Horse Show in Kansas City demonstrates this rivalry. The author, Howard Turtle, notes that "At the moment, a point of embarrassment is that the champion 5-gaited saddle horse is a resident of the rival state, Kentucky."[17] Despite this rivalry, the American Saddle Horse Association, which is based in Lexington, Kentucky, acknowledges Mexico's once dominant position in the Saddlehorse industry. A brochure entitled "As Old As America," which chronicles the history of the Saddlehorse and the American Saddle Horse Association, notes that

> Hundreds of horse trainers plied their trade, particularly in rural areas. Mexico, Missouri, once home to the historic black horseman Tom Bass and headquarters for trainers John Hook, Art Simmons, and a host of others, had a legitimate claim to the title 'Saddle Horse Capital of the World.'"[18]

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[15] Leta Hodge, A Gathering of Our Days: Selected Writings on the History of Mexico and Audrain County, Missouri. (Mexico: Audrain County Historical Society, 1997), p. 75-77.
[16] White, p. 122.
[17] Howard Turtle, "Mexico Talks of Its Horses and Seeks Ribbons at Royal," Kansas City Star. October 10, 1954.
[18] "As Old As America." (Lexington, KY: American Saddle Horse Association, 1999) p. 9.

The American Saddle Horse

The modern American Saddle Horse descends from the Narragansett Pacer, the American version of the English Pacer. In the early nineteenth century, Kentucky breeders crossbred the Naragansett Pacer with Thoroughbreds to get the first American Saddle Horse also known as a Kentucky Saddler, or Saddlebred.[19] Kentuckians wanted horses that could to plow the field, jump streams and fences for hunting, pull fancy carriages to town on Sunday and also win races at the county fairs. American Saddle Horses were bred to be fine high stepping, picture-perfect riding horses, and they quickly became the most popular riding horse in America.[20]

By 1850, the foundation sires for the American Saddle Horse breed had been born. Their names were Gaines Denmark and Harrison Chief.[21] However, the American Saddle Horse breed was not formalized until 1891 when the National Saddle Horse Breeders' Association was organized in Louisville, Kentucky. Joseph A. Potts, one of the two original owners of the Simmons Stables, was one of two men from Audrain County who were among the original directors of the National Saddle Horse Breeders' Association.[22] According to the 1892 Register of the National Saddle Horse Breeders' Association,

> The objects of this association shall be to collect, record and preserve the pedigrees of saddle-horses in America, and the publication of such register in such form as shall be adopted by the Association and such other matters pertaining to the breeding, exhibiting and sale of saddle-horses as may be deemed advisable.[23]

One of the first tasks of the Association was the selection of a foundation stock for the breed. As Earl R. Farshler notes in the book The American Saddle Horse that "the progenitors only of what were known to be saddle strains of horses were selected for the foundation list.[24]

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[19] I. B. Nall (ed.), The Register of the National Saddle Horse Breeders' Association. Volume I, (Louisville: Courier-Journal Job Printing Co., 1892), p. 20.
[20] Earl R. Farshler, The American Saddle Horse. (Louisville: The Standard Printing Company, 1933), p. 158-172.
[21] Ibid.
[22] Nall, p. 9.
[23] Nall, p. 5.
[24] Farshler, p. 170.

The original foundation stock list, with justifications for each horse on the list, was published in the 1892 Register of the National Saddle Horse Breeders' Association. The original list was comprised of the following fourteen stallions:

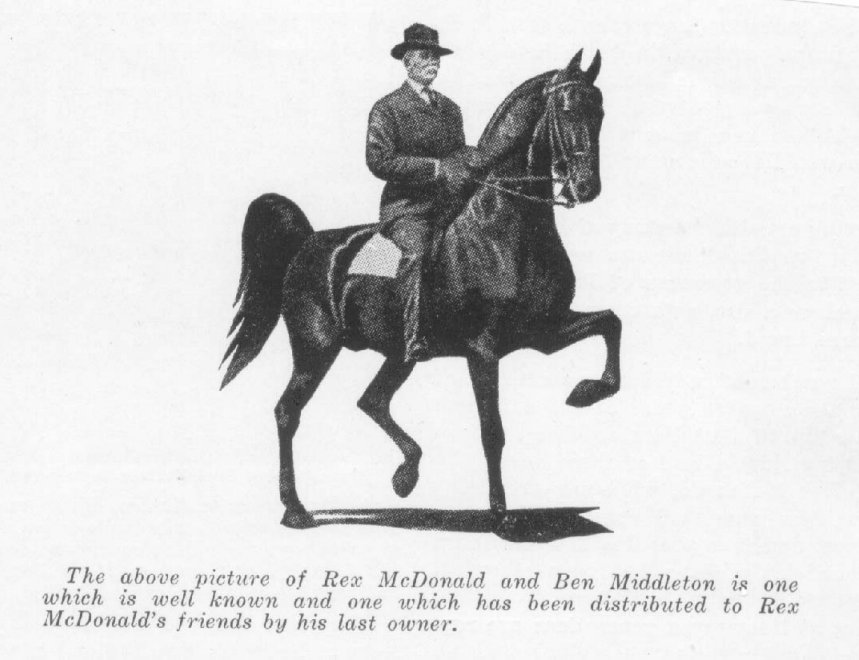
Denmark
Cabell's Lexington
John Dillard
Brinker's Drennon
Vanmeter's Waxy
Tom Hall
Coleman's Eureka
Texas
Sam Booker
Prince Albert
Peters' Halcorn
Varnon's Roebuck
Copperbottom
Stump the Dealer

The following description of the American Saddle Horse appeared on a flyer for the retirement ceremony for the stallion, Will Shriver, which took place at the American Royal Show on November, 20, 1976.

> The ideal American Saddle Horse is beautiful, with much quality and fineness. He averages from 15 hands to 16 hands in height (a hand is four inches) and his average weight is from 1,000 to 1,200 pounds. He should have a well-shaped, finely chiseled head, large bright eyes, neck should be long, fine, fitting onto the head with a small throat latch and into a sloping shoulder. He should have prominent withers, a short and level back, clean flat-boned legs, long sloping pasterns, and well-formed feet. The American Saddle Horse is shown in three major divisions: five-gaited, three-gaited, and fine harness. He is also shown as a pleasure horse and makes an excellent hunter and jumper. [25]

[25] "Will Shriver and the American Saddle Horse" Retirement Ceremony Flyer, American Royal, November 20, 1976.

Figure Three. Rex McDonald
Source: Rex McDonald, p. 33.



The above picture of Rex McDonald and Ben Middleton is one which is well known and one which has been distributed to Rex McDonald's friends by his last owner.

Rex McDonald 833 was, and still is, the most famous Saddle Horse to come out of Mexico. (Figure Three) He was the one of the most successful show horses ever produced, and there are still those who would say he was the greatest ever.[26] Though a son of two Kentucky-bred horses, Rex McDonald was foaled in 1890 in Auxvasse, Missouri.[27] During his lifetime, Rex McDonald won more shows than any other Saddle Horse, and he was the progenitor of hundreds of champions.[28] According to an article entitled "Mexico Talks of Its Horses and Seeks Ribbons at Royal" which was published in the October 10, 1954 issue of the Kansas City Star,

[26] White, pp. 128-131
[27] Bob Sowell, "Rex McDonald Still 'The Horse' In Saddle Lore," Columbia Missourian. August 31, 1949.
[28] Martha C. Moore, Memories of Rex McDonald. (St. Louis: Saddle and Bridle, 1931),

> Rex Denmark became the sire of the finest line of saddle horses in the world, including the incomparable Rex McDonald, and a principle reason why the town of Mexico has become known as the world's "Saddle Horse Capital.[29]

After his retirement in 1910, Rex became a local celebrity to rival trainer Tom Bass. He would lead every parade in Mexico and people came out to Ben Middleton's stable to see him.[30]

Clark and Potts to Jim Simmons - The evolution of the "big barn on the Boulevard."

Cyrus F. Clark was born in New Hampshire in 1847. He came to Missouri in 1867 and settled in Mexico. Initially, he worked in the area as a teacher, but for most of his life he practiced law and served as Vice-President of the Southern Trust Company. While serving in the state legislature, Clark wrote the statute that established the Missouri State Fair, and he served on the Board of Trustees of Hardin College.[31] In an article about Clark from the St. Louis Republic that was reprinted in the Mexico Ledger on January, 31, 1889, he was noted to be the wealthiest member of the state legislature.[32] Clark was also a very active farmer, rancher and horseman. Clark's avocation for horses led to the business partnership with his brother-in-law, Joseph A. Potts.

Joseph A. Potts was born in 1856 into a wealthy Audrain County family. He grew up in the tradition of fine Saddle Horses and was an unabashed promoter of the breed. Potts also served in the Missouri legislature and was, for many years, the President of the Missouri State Board of Agriculture.[33] In the mid-1880s, along with his brother-in-law, he founded the Potts & Clark Combination Sales Company, which held horse sales several times a year. These sales became more and more popular, drawing buyers from all over the nation.[34] (Figure Four) Nowhere was the quality and number of horses equal to those the Mexico Horse Sales collected each year. Soon Clark and Potts was the biggest horse establishment in Mexico, the home of dozens of big horse dealers such as Hamilton Bros., R. E. "Bob" Hisey, W. T. Freeman & Son.[35]

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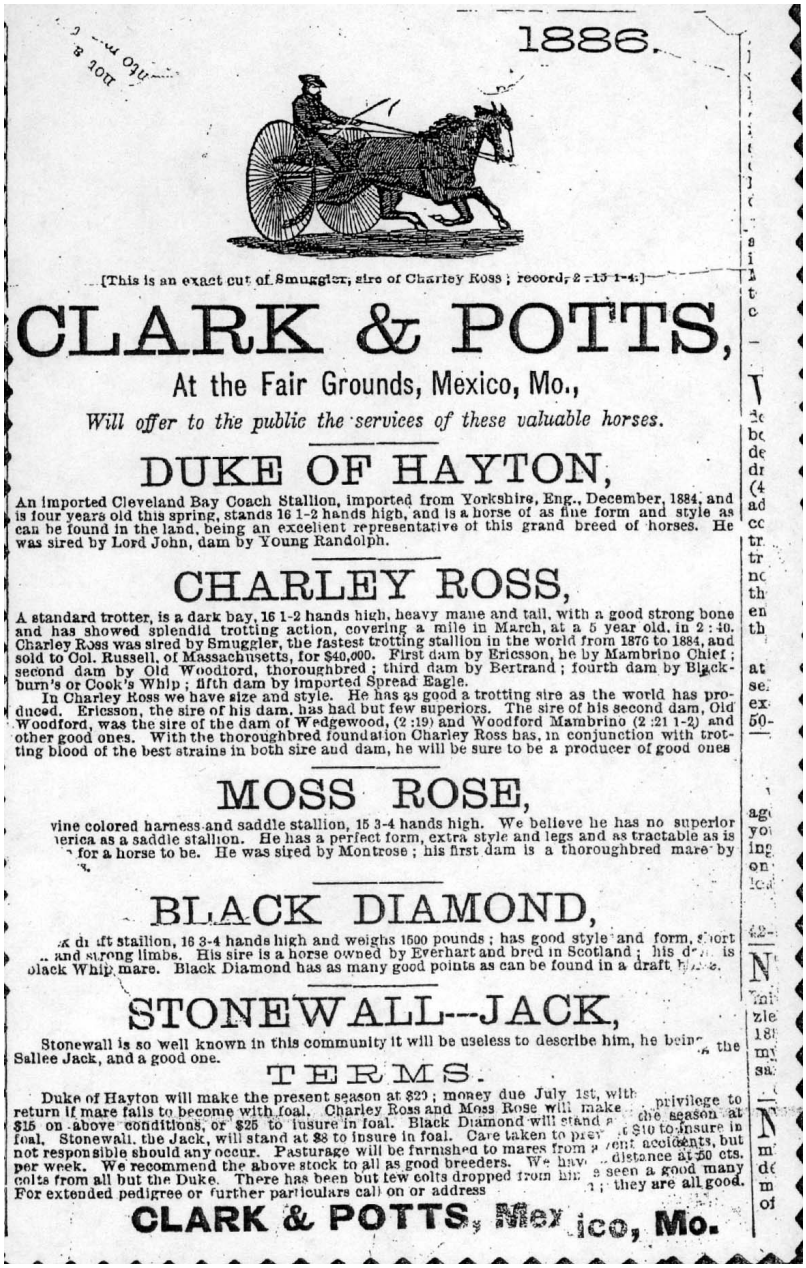
[29] Howard Turtle, "Mexico Talks of Its Horses and Seeks Ribbons at Royal," Kansas City Star. October 10, 1954.
[30] Hodge, pp. 119-121.
[31] Obituary for Cyrus F. Clark. Undated newspaper clipping from a scrapbook at the Audrain County Historical Society. (The exact date of the article is unknown. However, it is known that the article was published in the Mexico Ledger in December, 1934
[32] "Clark of Audrain," Mexico Ledger. January 31, 1889.
[33] "J. A. Potts Dies Suddenly" Newspaper clipping dated 1925 from a scrapbook at the Audrain County Historical Society.
[34] "The Horse Sale Closes," Mexico Ledger. May 2, 1896.
[35] MO State Gazetteer

Figure Four: Newspaper Advertisement for a sale by Clark and Potts, 1886
Source: Scrapbook from the Audrain County Historical Society.



1886.

[This is an exact cut of Smuggler, sire of Charley Ross; record, 2:13 1-4.]

CLARK & POTTS,

At the Fair Grounds, Mexico, Mo.,

Will offer to the public the services of these valuable horses.

DUKE OF HAYTON,

An imported Cleveland Bay Coach Stallion, imported from Yorkshire, Eng., December, 1884, and is four years old this spring, stands 16 1-2 hands high, and is a horse of as fine form and style as can be found in the land, being an excellent representative of this grand breed of horses. He was sired by Lord John, dam by Young Randolph.

CHARLEY ROSS,

A standard trotter, is a dark bay, 16 1-2 hands high, heavy mane and tail, with a good strong bone and has showed splendid trotting action, covering a mile in March, at a 5 year old, in 2:40. Charley Ross was sired by Smuggler, the fastest trotting stallion in the world from 1876 to 1884, and sold to Col. Russell, of Massachusetts, for $40,000. First dam by Ericsson, he by Mambrino Chief; second dam by Old Woodford, thoroughbred; third dam by Bertrand; fourth dam by Blackburn's or Cook's Whip; fifth dam by imported Spread Eagle.

In Charley Ross we have size and style. He has as good a trotting sire as the world has produced. Ericsson, the sire of his dam, has had but few superiors. The sire of his second dam, Old Woodford, was the sire of the dam of Wedgewood, (2:19) and Woodford Mambrino (2:21 1-2) and other good ones. With the thoroughbred foundation Charley Ross has, in conjunction with trotting blood of the best strains in both sire and dam, he will be sure to be a producer of good ones

MOSS ROSE,

vine colored harness and saddle stallion, 15 3-4 hands high. We believe he has no superior ierica as a saddle stallion. He has a perfect form, extra style and legs and as tractable as is for a horse to be. He was sired by Montrose; his first dam is a thoroughbred mare by

BLACK DIAMOND,

k draft stallion, 16 3-4 hands high and weighs 1500 pounds; has good style and form, short and strong limbs. His sire is a horse owned by Everhart and bred in Scotland; his d... is black Whip mare. Black Diamond has as many good points as can be found in a draft h...e.

STONEWALL---JACK,

Stonewall is so well known in this community it will be useless to describe him, he being the Sallee Jack, and a good one.

TERMS.

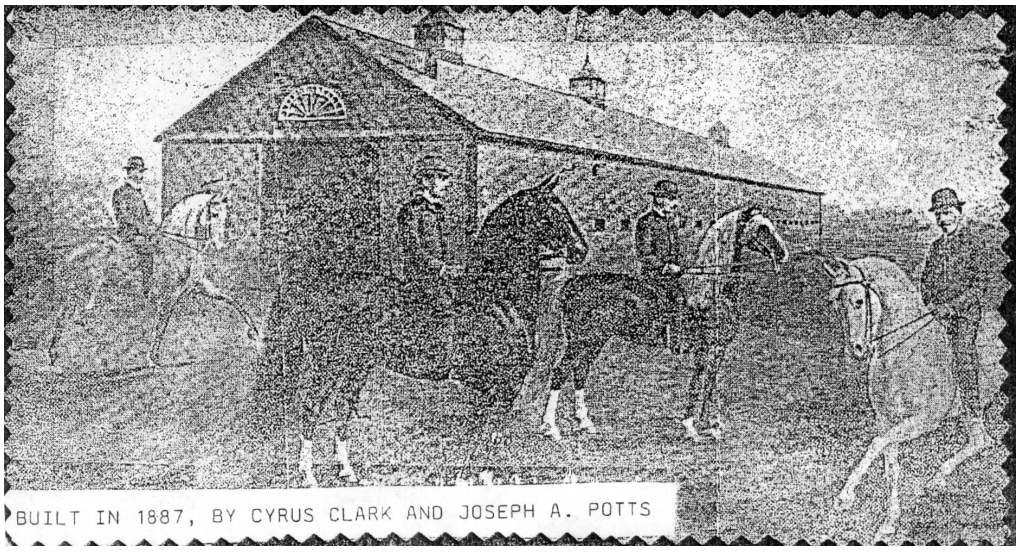
Duke of Hayton will make the present season at $20; money due July 1st, with privilege to return if mare fails to become with foal. Charley Ross and Moss Rose will make the season at $15 on above conditions, or $25 to insure in foal. Black Diamond will stand at $10 to insure in foal. Stonewall, the Jack, will stand at $8 to insure in foal. Care taken to prevent accidents, but not responsible should any occur. Pasturage will be furnished to mares from a distance at 50 cts. per week. We recommend the above stock to all as good breeders. We have seen a good many colts from all but the Duke. There has been but few colts dropped from him; they are all good. For extended pedigree or further particulars call on or address

CLARK & POTTS, Mexico, Mo.

In 1885, Joseph A Potts and Clark began construction of their new stables on West Boulevard Street which was at the time just beyond the southern limits of the City of Mexico. Initially conceived to house Clark's racehorses, the stables was completed in 1887.[36] The stables built by Clark and Potts was probably first used to house Saddle Horses in the early 1890's and the first star of magnitude to be quartered there was Thornton's Star. Potts owned Thornton Star, one of the foundation stallions of the American Saddle Horses, yet to be recognized as a separate breed. Thornton's Star achieved distinction for beating Rex McDonald in the combination class at Jefferson City, Missouri, in 1901.[37]

Many top horsemen of the time received their start under the regime of Potts & Clark. Tom Bass, John T. Hook, George and W. D. Lee all went on to open their own stables in Mexico and became very successful in the horse business. Tom Bass was the son of a William Hayden Bass, a wealthy Missouri planter, and Cornelia Gray, his slave. He began working for Potts in the 1880's and remained with the firm of Clark & Potts until it dissolved 1904. Tom Bass, whose life was chronicled by Bill Downey in the 1975 book, Tom Bass: Black Horseman, went on to become "the most famous Saddlebred trainer in American History, the only one who gained a worldwide reputation, and the only one from the 19th century whose name is still a household word in Saddlebred circles."[38] By 1887, when the old barn was built, Bass had already established

Figure Five: Tom Bass on four horses in front of the Clark and Potts Stables.
Source: Scrapbook from the Audrain County Historical Society.



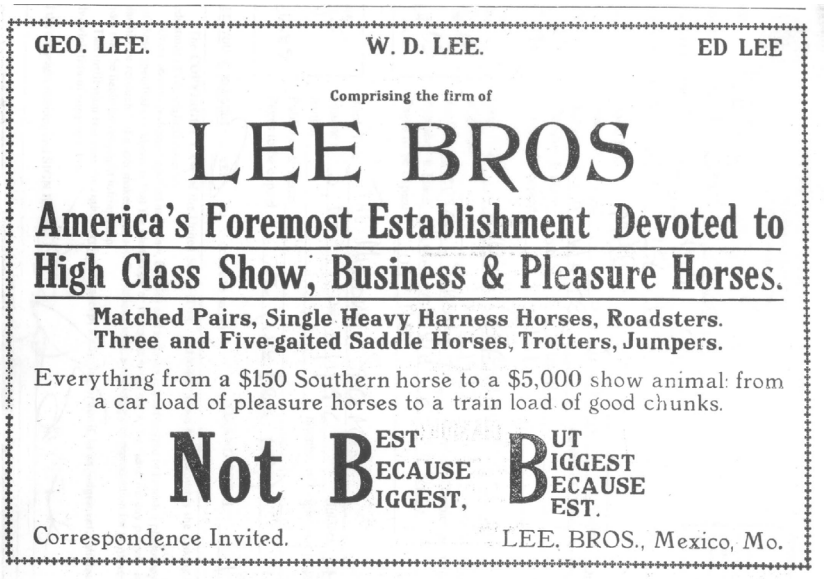
[36] Weatherman, p. 156.
[37] "Rex and Thornton Star," Mexico Ledger. October 17, 1910.
[38] Bill Downey, Tom Bass: Black Horseman, (St. Louis: Saddle and Bridle, 1975), pp. 1-17.

himself in his own much smaller barn (destroyed by fire), but he continued to work for Clark and Potts for decades thereafter. There is a famous “composite” picture of four horses in front of the Potts & Clark barn, each of them ridden by Tom Bass, as if someone had cloned him. (Figure Five) Bass' obituary, which was reprinted in the New York Times, noted that he had "won the applause of Presidents and royalty."[39]

Cyrus F. Clark and Joseph A. Potts dissolved their partnership around the turn of the century, but it was an association, which had made a tremendous impact on the American Saddle Horse industry and which was instrumental in the development of Mexico into a Saddle Horse breeding, training and selling center.[40] Clark continued the operation of the stables with a new partner, Fred Panhorst, until 1906, when Clark leased the stables to George and W. D. Lee.[41]

The Lee Brothers grew up in Mexico, and were given their start in the horse buying and selling business by Cyrus F. Clark. George and W. D.'s "first experience as horse dealers came in the early nineties when Hon. C. F. Clark, vice-president of the Southern Bank of Mexico, financed the boys to buy some horses, the profits to be divided one-third to each of the three."[42] In 1906, the Lee Brothers leased the large stables on the Boulevard from Clark. They continued to

Figure Six : Advertisement for Lee Brothers Stables
Source: The Missouri Stockman. January 1, 1916, p. 22.



[39] "Tom Bass Dies at 73," New York Times. November 21, 1934.
[40] Jack Harrison, Famous Saddle Horses and Distinguished Horsemen. (St. Louis: NP, 1933), p. 371.
[41] "Lee Brothers' Stable of Champions Did Much to Make Mexico World's Saddle Horse Center," Mexico Ledger. November 9, 1936.
[42] Harrison, p. 323.

lease the property from Clark and the Clark estate until 1932, at which time they purchased the property.[43]

The Lee Brothers operated the former Clark and Pott's Combination Sales Barn in a big way, buying and selling thousands of horses. Although the Lee Brother's specialized in Saddle Horses, they sold many types of horses. (Figure Six) The large volume of horses handled by the Lee Brothers was noted in numerous newspaper and magazine articles. In one such article entitled "Lee Bros Sell More Show Horse Champions and Winners Than Any Other U.S. Firm" and published on February 12, 1925 in the Mexico Ledger, the author notes that

> More champion show horses come from Mexico than any other fine horse center in the United States and the firm of Lee Bros., composed of George and Will Lee, are responsible for the greater part of these splendid animals which bring such a worldwide reputation here.[44]

The Lee Brothers shipped horses out of the stables one at a time to weathly buyers around the world and by the carload and trainload. A conservative estimate of 30,000 horses passed through their hands.[45] They supplied horses to the New York City, Chicago, Philadelphia and other large cities police departments. They were also major suppliers to Harry McNair's famous Chicago Saddle Horse sale. They contracted with the biggest dealers in the East to supply the "carriage trade."[46] Many of the horses sold by the Lee Brothers commanded large prices. In 1923, the Lee Brothers sold a five-gaited saddlehorse by the name of Lou Ann to Mrs. Loula Long Combs of Longview Farm outside Kansas City for $6500. The newspaper article about the sale noted that it was "probably the highest price paid in America for a saddle mare in a number of years."[47]

The Lee Brothers also sold thousands of horses and mules to the U.S. Government. During World War I, enclosures near the stables served as a gathering place for the unfortunate horses bound for Europe. The Lee Brothers advertised and traveled all over the state purchasing horses. Trainloads of horses and mules from all over the state were assembled at the Lee Brothers' Stables in Mexico and shipped overseas for the U.S. War Department.[48] The firm also purchased two mounts for presidents of the United States, buying a five-gaited horse for President

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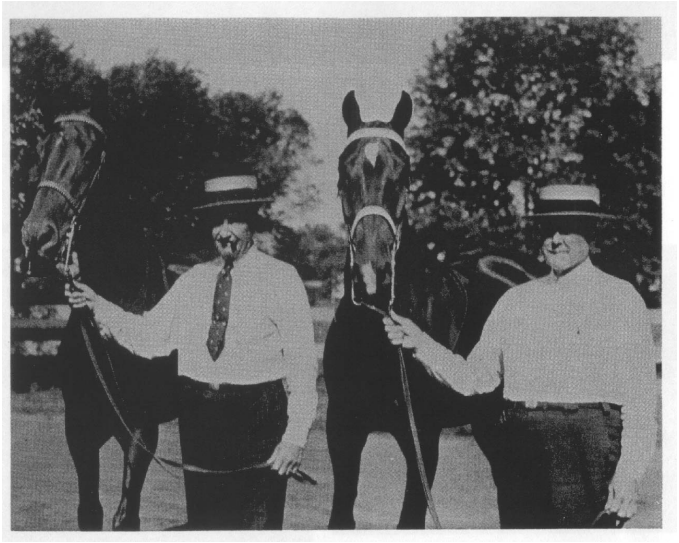
[43] "Lee Brothers' Stable of Champions Did Much to Make Mexico World's Saddle Horse Center," Mexico Ledger. November 9, 1936.
[44] "Lee Bros Sell More Show Horse Champions and Winners Than Any Other U.S. Firm," Mexico Ledger. February, 12, 1925.
[45] "Lee Brothers' Stable of Champions Did Much to Make Mexico World's Saddle Horse Center," Mexico Ledger. November 9, 1936.
[46] Weatherman, 157-158.
[47] "Lee Bros. Sold Mare for $6500," Mexico Ledger. January 2, 1923.
[48] Ibid.

Taft, and purchasing New Deal, a five-year old bay, from Archie Dickey, of west of Mexico for President Roosevelt.[49]

Figure Seven: George and W. D. Lee
Source: The Pictorial History of Mexico, 1880-1959: Saddle Horse and Fire Clay Capital of the World, p. 6.



In addition to being extremely successful horse dealers, the Lee Brothers managed the training of show horses for wealthy owners from all over the country, and both men were highly respected show judges.[50] During the 1930s, George Lee was a regular judge for the saddlehorse category at the National Horse Show Association's Annual Exhibition at Madison Square Garden in New York City.[51] In a book entitled Famous Saddle Horses and Distiguished Horsemen, the author, Jack Harrison, ended a lengthy section devoted to the Lee Brothers with the following compliments.

[49] "Lee Brothers' Stable of Champions Did Much to Make Mexico World's Saddle Horse Center," Mexico Ledger. November 9, 1936.
[50] "George Lee Dies Suddenly At His Home," Mexico Ledger. March 11, 1939.
[51] "Horse Show Opens Here on Wednesday," New York Times. November 6, 1932, "List 124 Classes for Horse Show," New York Times. September 6, 1934, and "Judges Are Picked for Show in Garden," New York Times. August 14, 1937.

To have been in the horse business for more than forty years, to have bought and sold horses and mules of all types as well as to have dealt with all kinds of people from farmer producers to the world's most fastidious exhibitors and extensive dealers, to have dealt in single lots and carloads, by telephone and telegraph as well as by inspection, to have found and recognized in the undeveloped state many of the world's greatest horses and to have enjoyed a measure of financial success and the confidence and respect of a circle limited only by their acquaintance marks Lee Brothers of Mexico, Missouri, as a firm with unusual knowledge of horses and horsemanship and business acumen and integrity.[52]

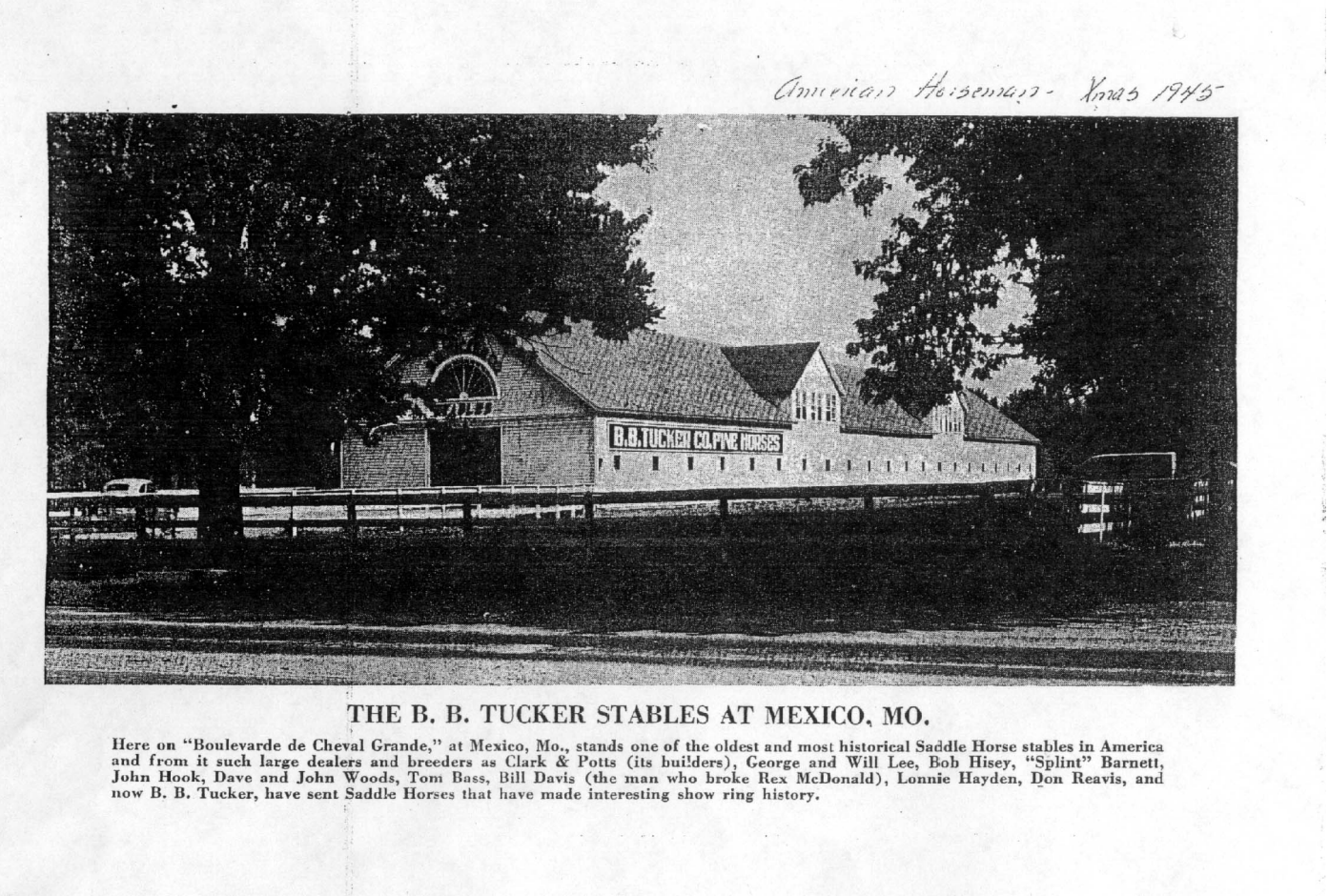
Figure Eight:: Lee Brothers Stables, 1936.
Source: Mexico Ledger. November 9, 1936.

[52] Harrison, p. 325-326.

The Lee Brothers retired from active business in 1939, and George Lee passed away later that year. Robert G. Stewart, a prominent horseman from California, purchased the Lee Brothers Stables shortly before W. D. Lee's death in 1944. However, Stewart only owned the stables for a short time. Between 1943 and 1948, the barn had four short-term owners, Robert G. Stewart, P. W. Woodruff, Jack S. McCracken, and Joe Graham.

Robert G. Stewart owned and operated the stables from 1943 to 1945. During that time, he renamed the property Dincara Stables and brought in Bill Cunningham, a trainer from Oklahoma, as a limited partner and manager of the operation.[53] Stewart and Cunningham extensively remodeled the stables. Figure Eight shows the stables prior to these renovations and Figure Nine shows the stables in 1945 just two years after the renovations were done. The major changes

Figure Nine: B. B. Tucker Stables, 1945
Source: American Horseman, Christmas 1945.



THE B. B. TUCKER STABLES AT MEXICO, MO.

Here on "Boulevarde de Cheval Grande," at Mexico, Mo., stands one of the oldest and most historical Saddle Horse stables in America and from it such large dealers and breeders as Clark & Potts (its builders), George and Will Lee, Bob Hisey, "Splint" Barnett, John Hook, Dave and John Woods, Tom Bass, Bill Davis (the man who broke Rex McDonald), Lonnie Hayden, Don Reavis, and now B. B. Tucker, have sent Saddle Horses that have made interesting show ring history.

included the addition of an office and four large dormers to the stables and a new white paint job. The barn had been red since it was built. [54]

During the short time Stewart owned the stables, Dincara stables "won honors in some of America's leading show horse rings."[55] The stables also made headlines in the horse world when Cunningham purchased seventeen horses sired by the famous horse, Anacacho Denmark, from the Morrison Ranch in San Antonio, Texas. [56]

Between 1945 and 1948, the stables passed through a series of short-term owners including P. W. Woodruff, Jack S. McCracklin, Joe Graham, and B. B. Tucker.[57] Although the stables had several owners in the late 1940s, it was known as the B. B. Tucker Stables during this period and the stables was operated by Tucker. (See Figure 9.) However, apparently none of these short-term owners had completely paid for the property. As a result, when Robert Stewart died in 1948, the stables became part of his estate. Bill Cunningham returned from Oklahoma, where he had gone after Stewart sold the barn, to handle it for the estate. He arranged for the sale of Stewart's horses, which were evidently still trained at the stables in Mexico, and he put the property up for sale.[58] Cunningham advertised the barn for sale in Saddle and Bridle as “The Best Saddle Horse Sales Barn in America,” but the ad also noted that the property was “Located on one of the best streets in Mexico and could be divided into 21 high-class city lots.”[59] Fortunately, Arthur Simmons, who was then operating Almarel Stables, Omaha, Nebraska, rather than a real estate developer, answered the ad. He bought the stables in 1948, worked there the rest of his life and passed the business down to his son, James Simmons.[60]

Approximately twenty years before purchasing the stables on the boulevard, Arthur Simmons had gotten his start in the horse business in Mexico, Missouri. That fact, combined with Mexico's reputation as a mecca for the saddle horse industry, must have made the purchase of the stables irresistible. A 1954 article in the Kansas City Star noted that "Mexico, population 12,000, is supreme as a saddle horse center because there are known to be more than 1,000 saddle horses in a radius of twenty miles."[61]

Arthur Monroe Simmons was born December 24, 1913 in California, Missouri, Simmons attended St. Brendan’s High School at Mexico, Missouri and worked as a stable boy in the Jim Hamilton Stables.[62] During his junior year in high school, the young horseman quit school to work

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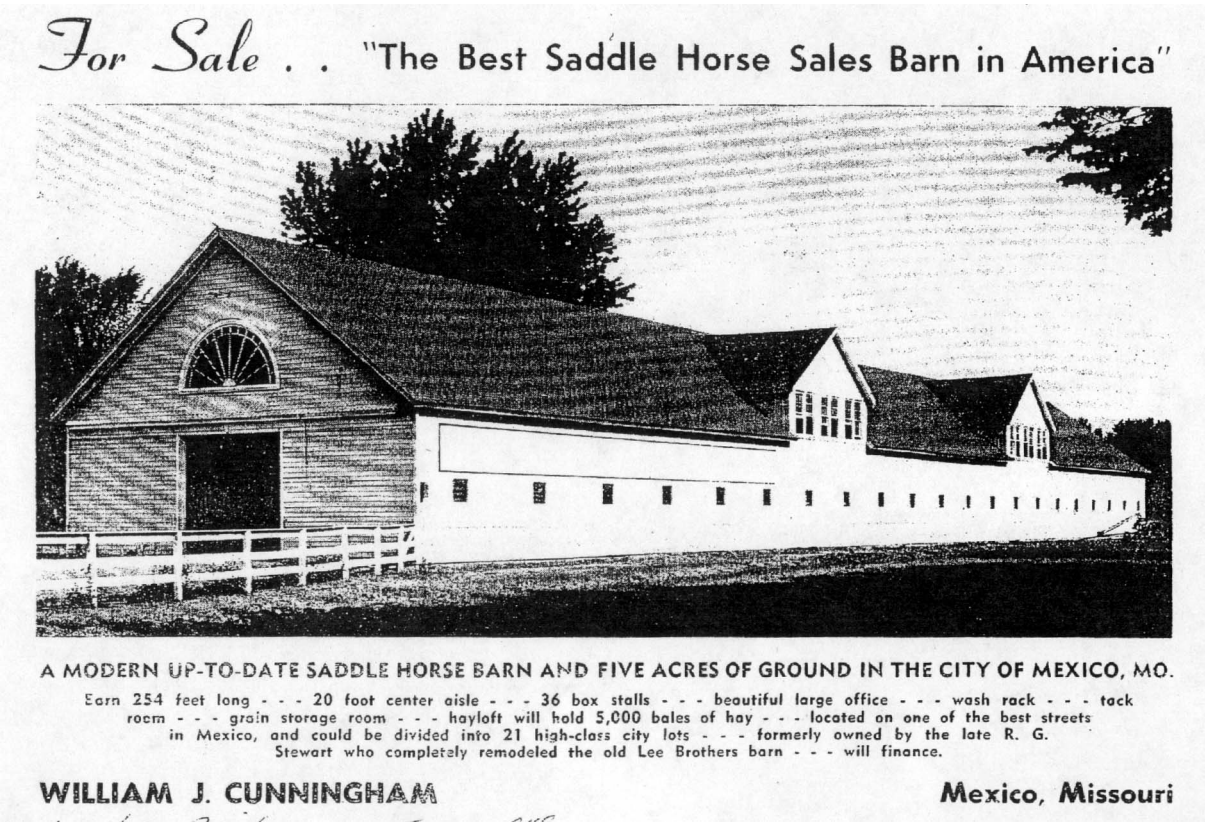
[54] "Dincara Stable Being Repaired: Stewarts Fixing Former Lee Bros. Barn on West Boulevard," Mexico Ledger. October 13, 1943.
[55] "R. G. Stewart Died Sunday in Miami, Fla," Mexico Ledger. February 23, 1948.
[56] "Dincara Stable Buys 17 Horses," Mexico Ledger. March 22, 1944.
[57] "Louisiana Man Buys Dincara Stables Here," April 28, 1945.
[58] "Stewart Horses Will Go Under Hammer June 1," Mexico Ledger. March 23, 1948.
[59] Advertisement for the sale of the stables owned by the late, R. G. Stewart, Saddle and Bridle. June 1948.
[60] "Art Simmons Buys Lee Stable; To Bring Famous Horses Here," Mexico Ledger. December 13, 1948.
[61] Howard Turtle, "Mexico Talks of Its Horses and Seeks Ribbons at Royal," Kansas City Star. October 10, 1954.
[62] "Simmons Purchases Hook Stable," Mexico Ledger. December 24, 1951.

Figure Ten: Advertisement for the "Best Saddle Horse Sales Barn in America."
Source: Saddle and Bridle, June 1948.



full-time in the horse business.[63] Throughout the 1930s, Simmons moved around every few years training and showing horses owned by other people. He worked for Mr. and Mrs. Loren Wicker of Pittsburgh, Kansas, Mr. Earl Martin of Sioux City, Iowa, Mr. Carl Gilman of Auxvasse, Missouri and W. R. Skidmore at Pinetree Farm in McHenry, Illinois. In 1939 and 1940, Simmons and a horse named Gay Divorcee won a number of shows around the country, thereby establishing Simmons as a gifted trainer and rider.[64] In July 1941, Simmons accepted the job of manager and trainer for the Almarel Stables in Omaha, Nebraska. "During his eight years at Almarel, Simmons not only rode some of the greatest show horses in America at the time and won most of the great

[63] "Always Had a Hankering to Locate in Mexico," Mexico Ledger. March 10, 1949.
[64] "Mexico Horseman Art Simmons Died at 81," Mexico Ledger. January 16, 1995.

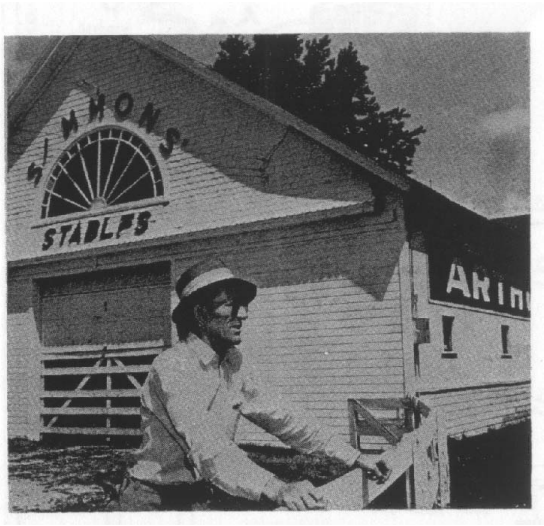
shows in the country, but also he developed and perfected what became known as the 'Simmons Style.'"[65]

On February 20, 1949, the Simmons truckload of show horses slid into Mexico during an ice storm. Simmons brought with him fifty head of horses for his new stables and fifty broodmares and colts. The Mexico Ledger reported at the time of the purchase,

> His (Simmons) arrival here will bring to this, 'The Saddle Horse Center of the World,' many blue ribbon winners and one of the top winning stables in the nation. He will handle horses for owners from all parts of the country, coast to coast.[66]

Shortly after moving to Mexico, Simmons added several buildings on the original stables property. These improvements included a maternity barn, a farrier's shed, a storage building, and two metal grain bins.

Figure Eleven: Arthur Simmons in front of the Arthur Simmons Stables.
Source: The Pictorial History of Mexico, 1880-1959: Saddle Horse and Fire Clay Capital of the World, p. 6.



In 1951, Simmons purchased the land across the street from the Lee barn, which included the John T. Hook Barn. John T. Hook was another highly successful saddle horse breeder, dealer and trainer who grew up around the horse industry in Mexico, Missouri. As an adult, he bought and trained horses for some of the leading stables around the country including Carnation Farms

[65] "Simmons Purchases Hook Stable," Mexico Ledger. December 24, 1951.
[66] Mexico Ledger, February 20, 1949.

in California and Longview Farm near Kansas City, Missouri, returning to Mexico to set up his own stables in the 1930s.[67] An article published in the Mexico Ledger on December 24, 1951 reported that

> The [Hook] addition to the Simmons Stables, adjoining, make the Simmons stables the largest stabling and training facilities for Saddle Horses in the United States.
>
> The Hook barn with approximately 30 box stalls will give Simmons approximately 85 box stalls. It is accepted that "more saddlebred champions have moved in and out of the entrance of the ol' Lee barn than through any other barn door in the world."[68]

From 1949 until 2001 when the Simmons Stables operation was moved to a new facility, Arthur Simmons and his son, James Simmons, bred and trained hundreds of champion horses at the stables on West Boulevard, and they have been consistent winners at horse shows around the country. In an article about Mexico, Missouri which appeared in the January 1965 issue of Missouri Business, the magazine of the Missouri Chamber of Commerce, the author notes that

> the largest saddle horse operation in America today is that of Arthur Simmons of Mexico, whose entries won more than 400 ribbons in shows throughout the nation in 1964. Mr. Simmons has some 80 horses "in tail sets" in his training barn, and more than 110 saddle bred horses at his breeding farm.[69]

Arthur Simmons was also a leader in the horse industry. In 1957, he founded the "Heart of America Saddle Horse Sale in Kansas City, which became the nation's premier public auction."[70] In addition, during his lifetime, Simmons received many of the major awards conferred by the equestrian industry. Arthur Simmons was named Horseman of the Year in 1970 by the American Horse Show Association, and he was inducted into the Missouri State Fair Hall of Fame, the St. Louis National Horse Show Hall of Fame, the United Professional Horseman's Association Hall of Fame, and the World's Championship Horse Show Hall of Fame.[71]

By the mid-1970s, the Arthur Simmons Stables was in its prime, but it was the only major stables left in Mexico. As the author of the article "Simmons Stables Make Mexico Mecca For Horse People," which was published in the Mexico Ledger in 1974, notes,

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[67] Harrison, 327-331 and White, p. 123.
[68] "Simmons Purchases Hook Stable," Mexico Ledger. December 24, 1951.
[69] "Mexico, Missouri: An All America City," Missouri Business. January 1965, np.
[70] "Mexico Horseman Art Simmons Died at 81," Mexico Ledger. January 16, 1995.
[71] Ibid.

> At one time Mexico, Mo., was the home of seven major breeding and training stables. Now Simmons has the only major stable in the area and it is a landmark and a tribute to what went on here in another era.[72]

James Simmons, Arthur's son, took over the management of the Arthur Simmons Stables in the late twentieth century and continues to manage the business today. In 2001, he moved all of the horses and equipment from the old stables into a newly constructed modern training facility just outside of Mexico, and made plans to have to old stables and other buildings on West Boulevard demolished.[73]

Since the announcement of the impending demolition of the Arthur Simmons Stables, a group called the Simmons Stables Preservation Society has formed to try to preserve the building. The group had the large stables assessed for its soundness and for the feasibility of its restoration, and they formed a 501c3 non-profit organization. Members of the group, led primarily by Bobette Balser Wilson and Mary Littrell, have been giving tours of the stables and speaking to local groups in an effort to raise money to pay for the purchase and restoration of the building. The Simmons Stables Preservation Society hopes to turn the property into the American Saddlebred Horse Hall of Fame. For the time being, the Arthur Simmons Stables appears to be saved from the wrecking ball. The owner, Jim Simmons, has given the preservation group a lease for the property and is supporting its preservation.

In an article entitled "For Arts Sake" published in the April 2001 issue of The National Horseman, the author, Joe Pfeffer, states that "More than any other American Saddlebred establishment, this barn was associated with selling or trading, as well as training and showing horses."[74] Numerous other articles cite the Arthur Simmons Stables as the oldest and largest continually operating wood horse stables in the United States. Although this statement was not able to be confirmed, it is clear the Arthur Simmons Stables is the last of the large stables which helped put Mexico, Missouri on the map as one of the most important horse breeding, training and sales centers in the United States.

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[72] "Simmons Stables Make Mexico Mecca For Horse People," Mexico Ledger, October 19, 1974.
[73] Joan Gilbert, "Historic Barn in Final Days," Centralia Fireside Guard. July 18, 2001.
[74] Pfeffer, p. 119.

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10. Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description:
Lots Numbered 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20 of Block "B" the Boulevard Addition in the City of Mexico, Missouri and Lots 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, inclusive, (Being All) of Lot "C" of Boulevard Addition extended in the City of Mexico, County of Audrain and the State of Missouri.

Boundary Justification:
The current district boundaries encompass the land historically and currently associated with the main building in the district, the Arthur Simmons Stables. They include all of the land associated with that property which retains integrity.

11. Form Prepared By

Roy F. Moeller & Bobette Wilson
Simmons Stable Preservation Society
2651 Audrain Road
Mexico, MO 65265
573-581-8873

Becky L. Snider, Ph.D.
507 South Garth Avenue
Columbia, MO 65203
573-256-1105

Photographs

The following information is the same for all photographs:

Arthur Simmons Stables Historic District
621 and 701 West Boulevard
Mexico, Audrain County, Missouri
Martin R. Jones
June 2004

Negatives on file with: Simmons Stable Preservation Society
2651 Audrain Road
Mexico, Missouri 65265

List of Photographs
Camera Angles are indicated on the Photo Key Map

1. Arthur Simmons Stables and East Track, facing northeast.

2. Arthur Simmons Stables and West Track, facing northwest.

3. Arthur Simmons Stables, interior facing north.

4. Maternity Stables, facing northwest.

5. Maternity Stables, interior facing north.

6. Hook Barn, facing southeast.

7. Hook Barn, facing east.

8. Hook Barn, interior facing west.

9. Farrier's shed and fencing, facing northwest.

10. Storage Shed and Grain Bins #1 and #2, facing southeast.

11. Arthur Simmons House, facing northwest.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

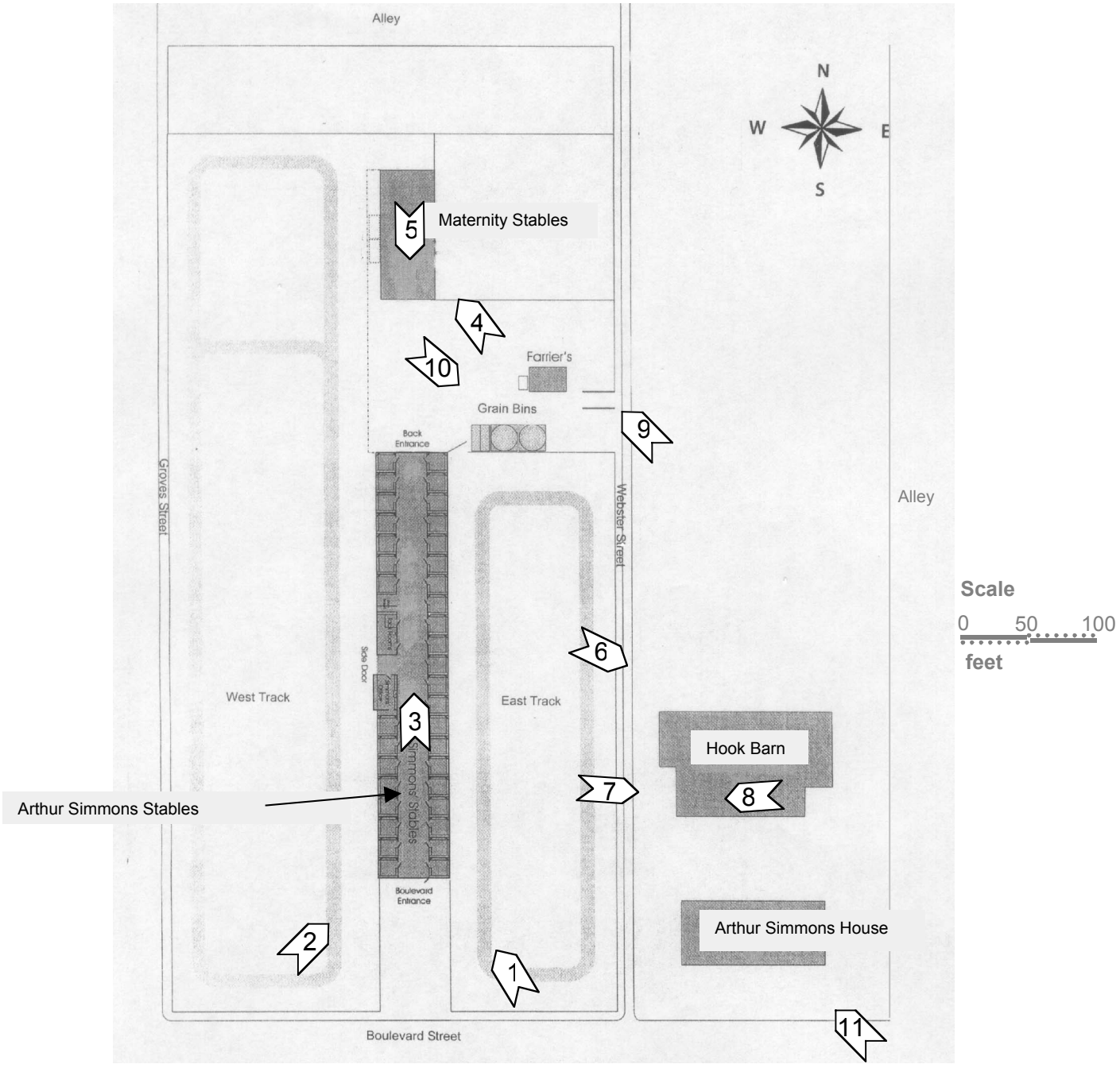
National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

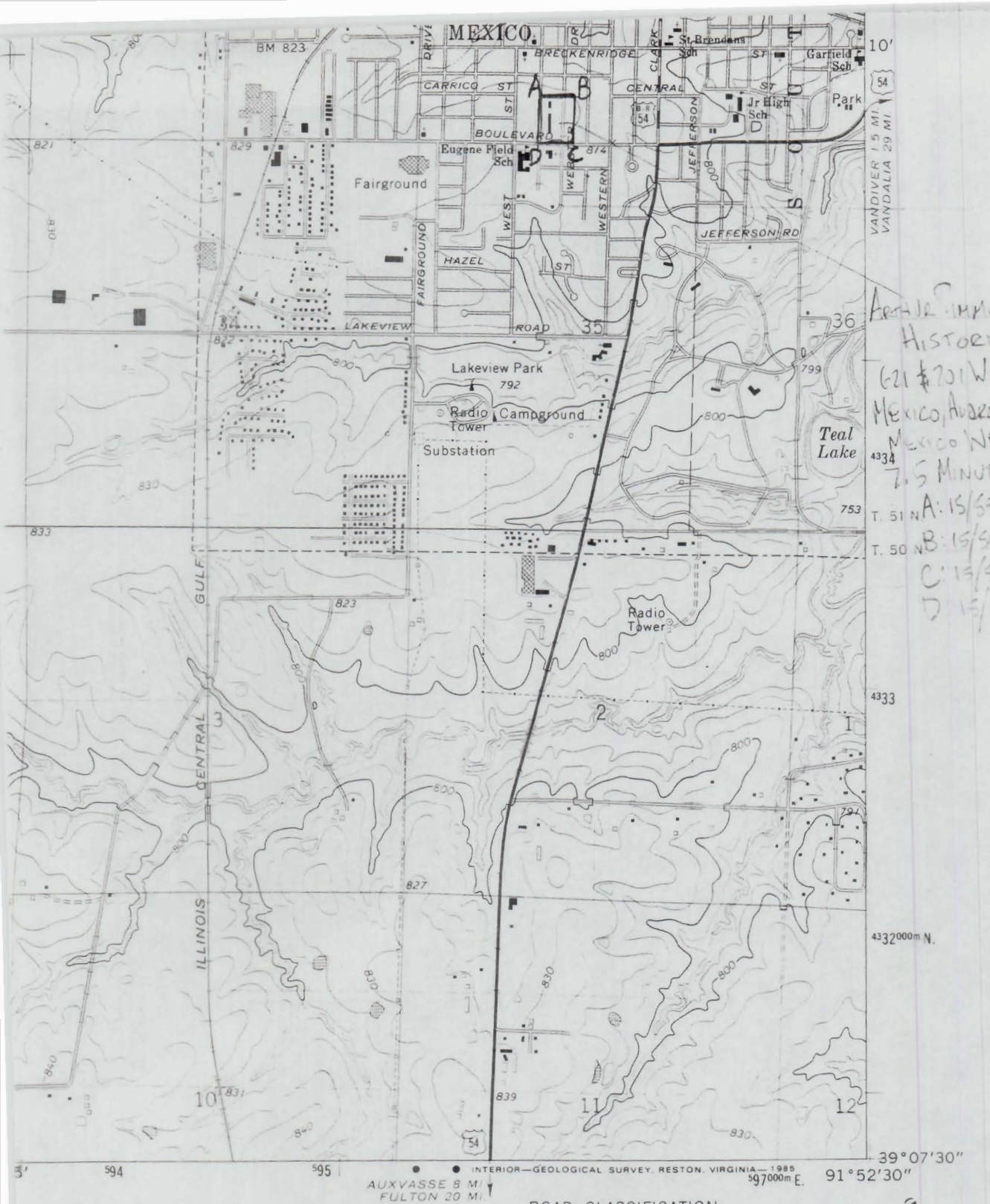
Section number Photographs Page 33

Arthur Simmons Stables Historic District
Audrain County, Missouri

Figure Twelve. Photo Key Map

Drawn by Robert Worstell, 2003 and Becky Snider, 2004





ARTHUR SIMMONS STABLE
HISTORIC DISTRICT
621 & 701 WEST BOULEVARD
MEXICO, AUDRAIN COUNTY, MISSOURI
MEXICO WEST QUAD
7.5 MINUTE TOPO SERIES
A: 15/575800/4335460
B: 15/575940/4335460
C: 15/575940/4335260
D: 15/575800/4335260

INTERIOR—GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA—1985

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Primary highway, hard surface	Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
Secondary highway, hard surface	Unimproved road

Interstate Route · U. S. Route · State Route

QUADRANGLE LOCATION

MEXICO WEST, MO.

39091-B8-TF-024

1972
PHOTOREVISED 1984
DMA 7662 III NW—SERIES V879

SIMMONS
STABLES
PLEASE HELP SAVE THIS 114 YR. OLD
HISTORICAL STRUCTURE
FINANCIAL AID NEEDED - CONTACT:
ARTHUR SIMMONS

SIMONS
STABLES
HISTORICAL STRUCTURE