

CORRECTION; BLAIR CABIN, Part 1 Volume, per interviews with Blair relatives, LaPreal, Calvin and Virginia Blair, and an unpublished manuscript written by Art Blair, the 2nd. son of Ed Fenwick Blair and Effie Jane Eynon Blair, titled "The History of Edward Fenwick Blair". The above interviews were conducted by Judy Clayton, publisher of the "Teton Views" weekly paper, and she published two articles in her paper on June 22, 1999, titled "Views of the Valley; Discovering Ed Blair's Homestead Cabin" and "Looking Back; The Life and Times of Settler Ed Blair".

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1. THE CABIN IS THE BLAIR CABIN. This cabin was built by Ed Blair, on his homestead, between 1889 and 1893. He filed for this homestead some time after coming to the valley in 1889, at age 34. He did not 'prove up' on his homestead and later sold the property to Mort Ely, who is on record as owning the first patent on the property. It later became the property of Amasa James, then was owned by Marshall Morgan, and finally by Paul Walton.

2. He came to this area to be a hunting guide and sometime before 1893, he carried mail over the Pass to the valley from Victor, Idaho and while in Victor stayed in the home of John and Eliza Eynon, parents of Effie Jane. They married November 3, 1893, she was 21 and he 38, and he brought her to his cabin after their marriage that year.

3. He was born July 19th, 1855, in the County of Northumberland, England and died June 4, 1926, in Jackson just short of his 71st birthday. Ed and his parents sailed from Liverpool, England and arrived in New York on June 14, 1956. They traveled to the Great Salt Lake valley as members of the Capt. Jesse Murphy wagon train and arrived in Salt Lake on August 30, 1960.

4. Ed and Effie moved to Victor in 1895 where they filed on a homestead on Trail Creek at the mouth of the canyon. Here Ed operated a sawmill of his own. In a few years he sold the mill and they moved back to Jackson where he operated a saw mill for Mr. M. V. (Mose) Giltner. Ed later bought the mill from Mr. Giltner. The mill was located in a large clearing a quarter of a mile below Crator Lake. Ed still later moved the mill to another timbered area south of Schofields ranch on Mill Creek. Ed still later moved the mill to the state line on the west side of the Pass about one mile in on the WY line. He finally sold the mill to Charley Cluff of Victor. Ed & Effie also sold the ranch in Idaho and moved to Oregon where they stayed for about a year and a half. They then returned to Victor where Ed took a job with the Forest Service. In the summer of 1917 they moved to Jackson and lived the remainder of his life. After moving to Jackson, Ed and Effie operated the Jackson Hotel and Livery Stable for a few years. In 1922, he and Effie purchased the J.R. Jones home, located at the corner of Simpson and Willow, the present location of the Learning Center and part of the Teton County Jail, but after his death was moved to 230 E. Hanson and is still lived in today.

NOTE; ABOVE DOCUMENTATION IN BLAIR FILE AT JHHS & MUSEUM.

Wyoming Historic Site Inventory Form

Teton County Historic Site Survey

1. **Site Name:** Blair Cabin

Historic names of property:

2. **Location:** located on Paul Walton Ranch, just north of Hwy 22, west of Walton Road

Street and Number:

City Wilson State WY

Zip: 83014

3. **Property Owner:** Paul Walton Ranch. Contact ranch foreman, Mr. Bill Cawley

Address:

Phone:

4. **Ownership of Property** (Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

5. **Category of Property** (Check only one box)

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

6. **Number of Resources within Property**

<u>Contributing</u>	<u>Noncontributing</u>
<u> 1 </u>	<u> </u> buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u> objects
<u> 1 </u>	<u> </u> Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register _____

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

National Register Status:

Eligible x Unevaluated _____
Not eligible _____ District Potential _____

7. Function or Use

Historic Function

Current Functions

Homestead cabin

abandoned

8. Description

Architectural Classification
vernacular log cabin

Materials
foundation fieldstone _____
roof wooden planks and sod _____
walls log with mud chinking _____

other _____

9. Describe present and historic physical appearance:

The Blair Cabin is barely standing, but its vestiges remain all that is left of one of the earliest habitations in the valley which we can still find. Constructed in approximately 1893 for the purpose of homesteading, the rectangular cabin measures 22' along its east elevation and 15' along the south. Logs are square notched at the corners and chinking—mud supported by willows—remains in places. The gable roof of wood planks still holds sod, and purlins project slightly beyond both the south and north elevations. The cabin holds one feature that is uncommon for this valley in two ways: the entry is located under the west eave, rather than under a gable and while other dwellings may position their entrances on the south or east elevation, and occasionally even on the north, it is rare to find one with the entry to the west where it receives the full brunt of the prevailing weather.

Moreover, the east elevation has no fenestration while the north and south each hold horizontal windows (or the plain surrounds for windows, no enclosure remaining), and the west elevation bears a similar opening to the south of the entry in the center.

The interior of the cabin has been partitioned into two sections in modern times, dividing the northern third from the remainder. Notably, some of the logs, especially in the lower portions of the west elevation, show clear signs of having been hewn by a broadaxe. Not all logs show this amount of effort, not unusual as design intentions and realities of construction pressures often collide. An open metal pipe, approximately one foot square, penetrates the planks and sod of the roof in the southeast corner to serve as a chimney, or, more exactly, as an unregulated vent in the roof, through which a chimney may have passed. Flooring is dilapidated with clear signs of animal presence inside the structure.

As one approaches the cabin from the south the building appears to be in worse shape than it actually is. The logs which were west of the window have fallen as a unit inward and have thus placed significant pressure on the southwest corner where they were joined; bearing testimony to the strength of the corner, though, they and the building corner remain intact, though the corner is greatly stressed and bent. That pressure obviously has stressed the west elevation but even there the elevation north of the entry remains generally erect, as do the other two elevations.

Photos: Please attach black and white photos

Blair Cabin. West and south elevations.



Blair Cabin. East and north elevations.



10. *Statement of Significance:*

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

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

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

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

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

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions). Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.

A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

B removed from its original location.

C a birthplace or a 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.

Areas of Significance	Period of Significance	Significant Dates
<u>settlement</u>	<u>1893-1950</u>	<u>1893</u>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Architect/Builder _____
 Associated Individual _____
 Cultural Affiliation : _____

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The initial wave of settlement in Teton County came in the 1880s and 1890s and this cabin is directly associated with that settlement effort. While an intrepid few succeeded in this project, many were the homesteaders who began their effort only to fail. This cabin represents one of those who did not succeed in securing a homestead. While a search has not yet been made of Government Land Office records to determine if Blair filed for such a homestead, local records indicate clearly that he did not prove up and gain title to the land. In such circumstances negating legal documentation, of course, physical evidence of the building and local lore become critical in establishing the significance and authenticity of the structure. And one must be cautious in suggestion and tentative in conclusions. This much can be said with accuracy: It has been established from a variety of local oral sources that Ed Blair, who had delivered the mail in Victor and other communities of Idaho, brought his newly-wedded bride from Idaho to this area (i.e., east of the Snake River in this immediate vicinity) in 1893 either with or at the same time as prominent early settlers Robert and Grace Miller. It is also known that Blair operated a Snake River ferry less than a half mile west of this location. It is believed, though with less precision, that subsequently, although at an unknown date, the Blair family returned to Idaho. (Yet another source indicates that Ed Blair committed suicide with a .22 rifle on the C. Wilson homestead in South Park, though that likewise gives no date or other specific and cannot be confirmed.) While the cabin bears the marks of very early construction (square notched logs, willow and mud for chinking, and sod roof), as one researcher on site noticed, the planks for the roof clearly show the circular marks of a saw, indicating that they had been milled rather than split, a possible anachronism for such an early structure. Yet further investigation reveals that Ed T. Blair not only operated a ferry nearby but in 1897 operated a sawmill which Steven Leek purchased from miners and moved to the foot of Teton Pass. And indeed, Blair subsequently operated sawmills in Teton Basin in Idaho. Thus, it is not conclusive that this cabin is, in fact, the Blair cabin, but there are substantial reasons to believe that it is so and there is no compelling evidence to suggest that it is not.

In later years, the cabin was used by a variety of temporary residents including local Wilson resident, Harry Seaton, who lived there while attending high school in the late 1930s and early 1940s. Others may have done so also, but the record is unclear.

11. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Fern K. Nelson, *This Was Jackson's Hole: Incidents and Profiles from the Settlement of Jackson Hole* (Glendo, 1994).

Doris B. Platts, *The Pass: Historic Teton Pass and Wilson, Wyoming* (Jackson, 1988).

Interview, Mr. Bill Cawley, foreman of Paul Walton Ranch, April 26, 1998.

Interview, Mr. Paul Walton, October 4, 1997.

Interview, Mrs. Roberta Seaton, April 24, 1998.

"Scant History of the Settlement of Jackson Hole as Far Back as now Known," document included as an appendix in Walcott Watson, "History of Jackson's Hole Wyoming Before the Year 1907," master's thesis, Harvard University, 1935. This item, which reports the suicide of Blair, should be used with great caution. It is not clear that in fact it was prepared by Watson or if he included it from another source. Aside from the lack of dates and other precise citations, it is essentially a morbidity table and has not been given a cursory proofing, with "berried" for "buried," "tow" for "two" and has no apparent pattern of organization, whether chronological or topical.

12. Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State Agency

Federal Agency

Local Government

University

Other

Specific repository(ies)

Jackson Hole Historical Society Collections

13. Geographical data:

Acreage of property: less than one acre

USGS Quad or City Base map: Teton Village

Section SE ¼ NE ¼ section 24

Township 41N

Range 117 W

UTM References:

Zone 12 513842 Easting 4816527 Northing

Verbal Boundary Description:

Cabin is bounded by a fence on south and east and stream on west and north.

Boundary Justification:

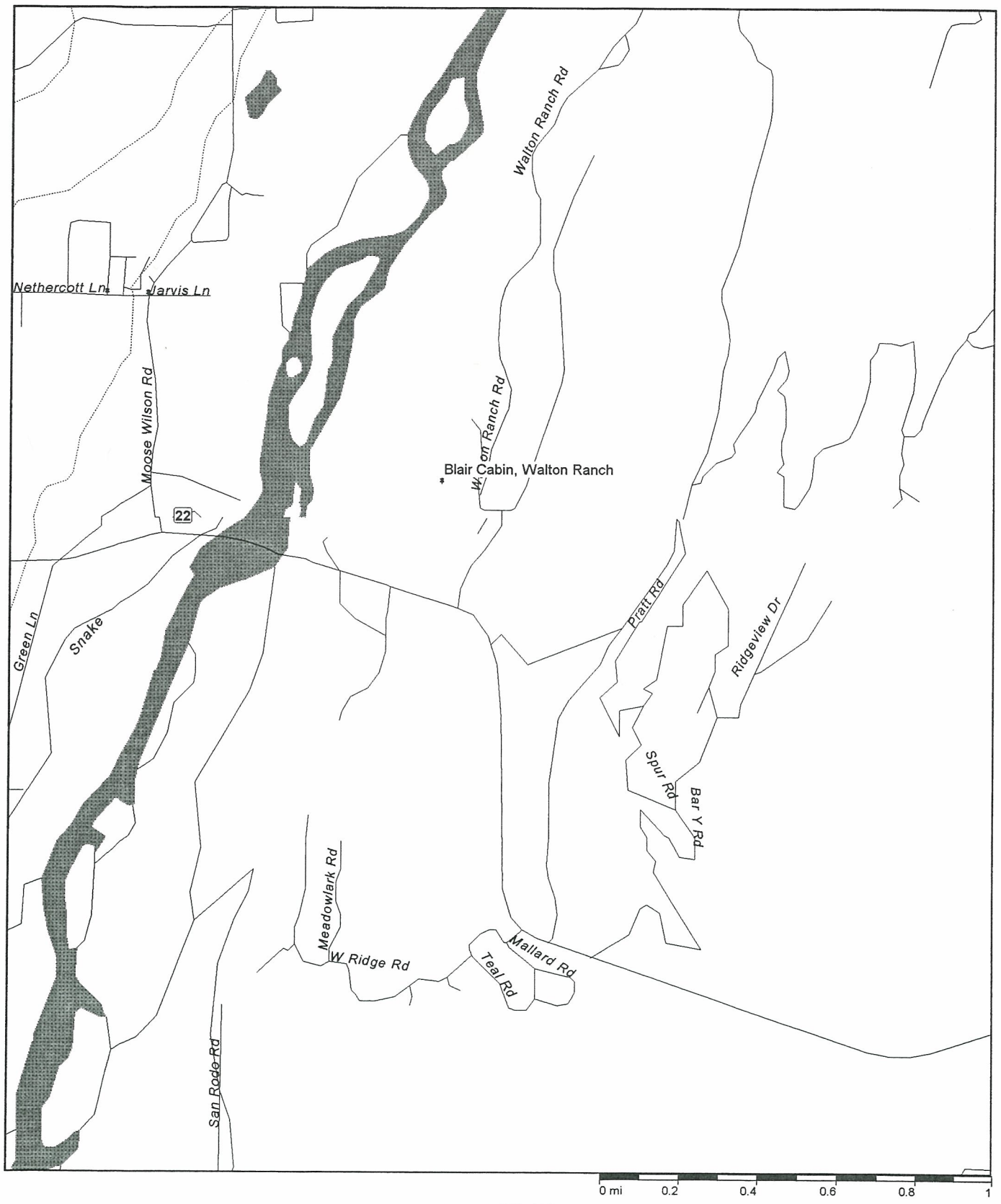
Historic site conforms to bounds described above.

14: *Form prepared by:*

Michael Cassity, who gratefully acknowledges the assistance of Ms. Robin Hartnett and Norm Hofley in examining the site.

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August 1, 1998



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Blair Cabin
Teton County Historic Survey, 1997-1998