

Clay Spur Bentonite Plant and Camp, Laboratory  
Clay Spur Siding on the Burlington Northern  
Railroad  
4 miles northwest of Osage  
Weston County  
Wyoming

HAER No. WY-23-F

HAER  
WYO,  
23-OSAG.V,  
1-F-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Engineering Record  
Rocky Mountain Regional Office  
National Park Service  
U. S. Department of the Interior  
P. O. Box 25287  
Denver, Colorado 80225

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

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Clay Spur Bentonite Plant and Camp, Laboratory

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Location: Clay Spur Siding on the Burlington Northern Railroad, 4 miles northwest of Osage in Weston County, Wyoming

Date of Construction: Unknown

Present Owner: N. L. Baroid  
Alzada Star Route  
Belle Fourche, South Dakota

Present Use: Abandoned; site to be razed

Significance: The Clay Spur Bentonite Plant and Camp is associated with the early 20th century bentonite mining industry in Wyoming and the United States. The Clay Spur Bentonite District was the center of the pioneer Wyoming bentonite industry and remained the premier Wyoming producing district until reserves began to dwindle in the 1950s. The plant embodies the distinctive engineering technology of the bentonite industry. The camp also reflects early twentieth century company town architecture with simple buildings and floor plans that could be quickly and cheaply constructed and adapted to many different uses.

The laboratory is a one-story wood frame building, 30.3 feet north-south by 14.3 feet east-west, with a gable roof covered with asphalt shingles. The building rests on a poured concrete foundation. Exterior walls are covered with flush horizontal wood siding. The east elevation has an open porch with a leanto roof supported by square wooden posts with a wooden deck. A red brick interior chimney protrudes from the ridge of the roof. The 8 feet by 10 feet wood frame addition on the north elevation has a leanto roof and was once covered with tarpaper. Windows are a combination of three-light hinged units and one over one-light double-hung units, all with wooden frames. The interior of the laboratory has plaster board walls and a wood floor. Bentonite lab samples are stored on shelves, and there is a laboratory sink. A sign outside the main entrance on the east elevation reads "Lab Personnel Only." This is one of the three original buildings remaining in the Clay Spur Camp, and it was

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constructed sometime prior to 1930. It originally served as a bunkhouse, but its function changed to a storehouse/laboratory by 1940 and to a laboratory by 1957.

Historian: Robert Rosenberg  
Historical Consultant

July 1989

**NOTE:** For further information, see Clay Spur Bentonite Plant and Camp,  
HAER No. WY-23.