Project Completion Report: Archeological Excavations at the 1866 Infantry Barracks, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, Wyoming, Phase 1

by
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This report “Project Completion Report: Archeological Excavations at the 1866 Infantry Barracks, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, Wyoming, Phase 1” has been reviewed against the criteria contained in 43 CFR 7.18(a)(1) and upon the recommendation of Dr. Danny N. Walker, Wyoming Assistant State Archaeologist, has been classified as “Not Available” where “Not Available” means making the report available to the public does not meet the criteria of 43 CFR Part 7, Subpart A, Section 7.18 (a) (1).
Project Completion Report
Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit (RM-CESU)

Project Title: Evaluative Archeological Testing of 1866 Infantry Barracks to Develop Treatment Plan Foundation Stabilization

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Principal Investigator: Danny N. Walker

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Project Summary, including descriptions of project deliverables, work accomplished and/or major results. If the information is restricted (e.g. location of endangered species or cultural resources), indicate the title and location of the final report. Also add web sites where project-related information may be found.

Fort Laramie was a hub of activity during the 19th century as it was first associated with the fur trade, and then with a military presence. The Oregon Trail goes through the National Historic Site and Fort Laramie is the beginning of the Bozeman Trail. Standing historic structures and historic records at Fort Laramie NHS have defined the site's historic resources since the park was established as a national monument in 1938. There is little information about structures with no surface evidence, remains associated with travelers on the Oregon and Bozeman Trails, or Native Americans (treaties of 1851 and 1868). The extant standing structures are contributory elements to the National significance of Fort Laramie, but no evaluations have been made for many of the remaining visible foundation, surface features and subsurface features, known to have been pres-
ent from military and photographic records. Significant known archeological sites and features are rapidly being threatened by inadequate protection from natural erosion and deterioration or from man-caused disturbances. Their immediate detailed documentation is necessary to preserve important information about the park’s periods of significance. The NPS must maintain its significant resources in good condition. Without this project, Fort Laramie NHS will not be able to assess and treat deteriorating sites or develop procedures to ensure their long-term preservation.

The 2009 project presented here was focused on providing background archaeological data on one of these inadequately recorded features: the 1866 Infantry Barracks foundation area. This area has seen increased natural erosion and a reduction in stabilizing vegetative cover in recent years because of the on-going drought in the area. The lack of vegetative cover and natural erosion has resulted in numerous artifacts becoming exposed with the resulting concern about visitors picking up souvenirs. The barracks foundation is presently included under PMIS51303 for evaluative testing and development of a stabilization plan. The work proposed here will provide basic archaeological background information on the current condition of the foundation, its constructions methods, and an indication of artifact density within and outside the foundation for eventual development of such a stabilization plan. Originally, this project was designed to be a single year project. Based on 2009 results, additional monies were provided to the project for a second year of investigations, thus converting the project to a multi-year project, starting in 2009 with final report due in 2012.

This project will also aid the park in better management of interpretive issues to the general site visitor. Most visitors are not aware over 250 structures were known to have been built by the U.S. Army at the site and believe the 26 standing structures are the total extent of the fort occupation. Interpretation of park resources will change as a result of this project, to the betterment of the resource. Long term planning for protection and interpretation of the historic resources at Fort Laramie can be better developed after this project identifies evaluates these resources.

**ARCHEOLOGICAL PROJECT LOCATION**

Besides the main historic fort area itself (48GO1), several other archeological sites and foundations have been recorded and investigated within the boundaries of Fort Laramie National Historic Site. Several areas of Fort Laramie have also been previously investigated using geophysical techniques (De Vore 1990, 1992, 1996, 1997a, 1997b, 1998; Heimmer 1989; Heimmer et al. 1988a, 1988b; Somers 1998; Weymouth 1976,
1979; Walker and De Vore 2009). Between 2002 and 2005, several areas and features identified during the latest geophysical survey were archaeologically tested, adding a larger database to what had been previously excavated by National Park Service personnel between 1938 and 1990. Numerous pictures are available in the Fort Laramie archives depicting the 1866 Infantry Barracks at various stages of use and disuse (discussed below), but the foundation is one readily seen on the ground surface. Exact dimensions of the structure were provided in the yearly Quartermaster report for 1879 (Figure 1), with later recording by the Civilian Conservation Corps in 1938-1939 (Figure 2) and various aerial photography in later years (Figures 3 and 4). These latter photographs document how the east foundation of the kitchen wing (closest to the riverbank) has deteriorated over the recent years. Erosion and foot traffic wear is obvious, especially with the color infrared photography of 2006 (Figure 4). The western foundation (the actual barracks) appears to have had little change or erosional impact, at least since the late 1920s (Figures 5 and 6).

In 2009, 24 one-by-one meter test units were excavated within the foundation area, primarily on the northern end of the foundations due to time constraints (Figure 7). These units were placed to where (1) both sides of the foundation could be examined; (2) areas within the foundation could be examined; or (3) areas between the two foundations could be examined. The latter units were actually placed over the trench remnant from the 1878 waterline placed to bring drinking water to the barracks.

ARCHEOLOGICAL PROJECT PERSONNEL
Dr. Danny Walker, Wyoming State Archaeologist’s Office (Principal Investigator; logistics, remote sensing; excavation; report writing and analysis).

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ENVIRONMENTAL DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT AREA
The project area is located within the boundaries of the original military post established in 1849. Fort Laramie National Historic Site is located approximately one mile west of the confluence of the North Platte and Laramie Rivers in Goshen, County, Wyoming (Figure 1). The area lies within the Western Nebraska and Eastern Wyoming Upland subdivision of the High Plains section of the Great Plains physiographic province (Fenneman 1931:17-19; Stephens et al. 1971:87). This portion of the upland is characterized by undulating tableland and rolling to steep hills. Narrow, steep valleys dissect the area and drain into the North Platte River, the Laramie River, Six Mile Creek, Deer Creek and its tributaries, and Cherry Creek. Elevation of the project area lies at approximately 1300 meters above mean sea level.

The project area lies within three major soil types (Table 1). The area on the north, around the Hospital building, consists of Manter and Anselmo fine sandy loams, 0 to 3 percent slopes (Stephens et al. 1971:31, Sheet 2). These soils formed in wind-lain
sands. The native vegetation consisted of blue grama, needle-and-thread, and western wheatgrass before dry land farming and irrigation in the twentieth century (Stephens et al. 1971:94). Just off this upper geomorphic terrace, lies the Glenberg fine sandy loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes, soil mapping unit (Stephens et al. 1971:Sheet 2). The Glenberg series consist of “deep, well-drained, nearly level to very gently sloping soils on the flood plains along Bear Creek, Horse Creek, the North Platte River, and the Laramie River” (Stephens 1971:23). The soils were formed in water-laid sand. Native vegetation consisted of short and intermediate grasses prior to dry land farming and irrigation in the twentieth century (Stephens et al. 1971:23-24). Closer to the river, on a yet lower river terrace, lies the Bankard loamy fine sand, with 0 to 3 percent slopes, and mixed alluvial land soil mapping units (Stephens et al. 1971:Sheet 4). The Bankard series consist of “deep, excessively drained, nearly level to gently sloping soils on flood plains and low terraces” (Stephens et al. 1971:12). The soils occur along the North Platte and Laramie Rivers and formed in sandy alluvium. Native vegetation consisted of needle-and-thread, blue grama, thread-leaf sedge, and scattered cottonwoods. Soils classified as mixed alluvial land consist of “well-drained, nearly level to hummocky sands and gravels on flood plains, mainly along the North Platte and the Laramie Rivers” (Stephens et al. 1971:35).

The climate of the area is semiarid; however, the Laramie River has an appreciable effect on the local climate. The river valley acts as a funnel for the predominantly westerly winds warm as they move downslope. Cold air is seldom trapped as it is generally pushed east by this downslope movement of warm air. The diurnal and seasonal temperature variations, however, may vary widely because of the high elevation and dry air. Cold temperatures in winter occur occasionally as arctic air moves down from Canada but they do not last long in the project vicinity. Based on meteorological data collected at the Torrington Experiment Farm, the mean summer temperature recorded for July is 72.6 degrees F with a record high recorded in 1939 of 107 degrees F, while the mean winter temperature recorded for January is 26.5 degrees F with a record low recorded in 1942 of -33 degrees F. The project vicinity has a mean annual precipitation of 13.52 inches. Peak precipitation occurs between the last part of May to the first part of June. A secondary peak occurs around the middle of September (Alyea 1971:87, 90-94).

The project vicinity lies in the transition zone between the Saskatchewan and Kansas biotic provinces (Dice 1943:24-27). Dominant native grasses consisted of blue grama and buffalo grass that were nutritious forage plants although other intermediate grasses were also common. A variety of forbs, shrubs, and cacti were also present (Brown 1985:57). Cottonwoods and other deciduous trees occurred along the larger rivers includ-
ing the North Platte and the Laramie Rivers. Bison was the dominant animal until the late nineteenth century importation of cattle and sheep occurred. Other mammals present in the region during the prehistoric and early historic period included pronghorn antelope, wolves, prairie dogs, and jack rabbits (Shelford 1963:344-347). Numerous other smaller mammals, reptiles, birds, and insects (e.g., grasshoppers) abounded in the short grass prairie region.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

OVERALL RESEARCH DESIGN

The present project was designed to examine the archaeological research potential of the 1866 Infantry Barracks. Previous archaeological investigations and other entities have examine many of the other visible foundations surrounding the Fort Laramie Parade Ground (Walker and De Vore 2009), but at the start of the project in 2009, it appeared the 1866 Barracks had not been previously disturbed since the fort’s abandonment in 1890. Thus, archaeological studies at the barracks, if the deposits were undisturbed, would yield significant archaeological data on the life styles of the 1880s U.S. army infantryman.

GEOPHYSICAL FIELD METHODOLOGY

A magnetic survey is a passive geophysical technique used to measure the earth's total magnetic field at a point location (Clark 1996:64-98; Heimmer and De Vore 1995:11-20). Its application to archaeology results from the effects of magnetic materials on the earth’s magnetic field. These anomalous conditions, which depart from the uniform magnetic field generated by the earth, result from magnetic materials and minerals buried in the soil or underlying bedrock. Iron artifacts have a very strong effect on the earth’s local magnetic field. Other cultural features affecting the earth’s local magnetic field include fire hearths and soil disturbances (such as pits, mounds, wells, pithouses, dugouts, etc.). Geological features, such as iron ore deposits, also affect the earth’s magnetic field.

The magnetic survey during the 2009 Infantry Barracks Project was conducted with a Geoscan Research FM36 fluxgate gradiometer (Geoscan Research 1987). The gradiometer consists of a control unit that contains the electronics, power source, and memory. The control unit is attached to the vertical sensor tube containing two fluxgate magnetometer sensors. The sensors are set at approximately 0.5 meters apart from one another. Two readings are taken at each point along the survey traverse, one at the upper sensor and one at the lower sensor. The difference or gradient between the two sensors is calculated and recorded in the instrument's memory. With a built-in data logger, the
The survey area was covered by a sequence of traverses adjacent to one another (Geoscan Research 1987:43-48) and conducted in a zigzag fashion beginning at the southwest corner of each grid unit. The zigzag method reduced the time required to conduct the survey by eliminating the return walk back to the beginning of the next traverse. The traverse interval for the area was one-half meter (E-W) intervals along the 20 meter wide grid. Grid lines were established with 20 meter ropes. The ropes are divided into 0.5 meter intervals by different colored adhesive tape. Two ropes are placed across the baseline at the bottom and top of each grid unit between the east and west corner stakes. The remaining nineteen ropes were laid out along the traverse direction beginning at the first line between the north and south corner stakes. The last line (n=20) ended in the traverse line before the north and south stakes at the east end of the 20 by 20 meter grid unit.

Upon completion of the area survey or when the memory of the instrument was filled, individual grid unit data files were downloaded into a laptop computer and processed using the GEOPLOT ver. 2.01 software (Walker and Somers 1994). Data from each grid unit were stored in separate grid files. Grid files were then combined into composite files for further processing and display. Shade, dot density, and trace line plots were generated each evening as the field work progresses. The composite files were then exported in the XYZ format for processing and display in SURFER for Windows (Keckler 1994). Contour, 3D surface, and shaded plots were generated. Data analysis and interpretation occurred after the data from the instruments had been transferred to a computer.

A sample trigger (Geoscan ST1) is connected to the front of the control unit of the fluxgate gradiometer (Geoscan Research 1987:110-116). This trigger enables the gradiometer to collect and record measurements at 1 m, 0.5 m, 0.25 m, or 0.125 m intervals. A beep is sounded by the unit every meter while clicks are made at selectable rates of 1, 2, 4, or 8 per meter. The operator maintains a pace along the survey line by ensuring the “beep” coincides with the meter tape mark on the 20 meter rope. The sample trigger was set to a sampling interval of eight measurements per meter. A total of 6400 magnetic gradient measurements were recorded for each 20 by 20 meter grid unit with one-half meter traverses and 8 samples per meter. Similar surveys on prehistoric and historic sites have shown this sampling technique to yield high resolution results. It required approximately 25-30 minutes to complete the magnetic survey of each individual grid unit with these settings.

Before the start of the magnetic survey, a zero reference point was selected for the survey. The zero reference point was generally one of the corner stake locations. This
reference point was used to balance the instrument and to align the sensors before the start of the survey and following the downloading of the data when the memory was filled (with the identified settings and data collection methodology, this occurred after every two 20 by 20 meter grid units).

FIELD METHODS

The following procedures were employed during the hand testing phase of the investigations. Excavation units were oriented to magnetic north (as was the entire grid system) and tied into the principal mapping datum of N1000/E1000 m for Fort Laramie National Historic Site. All elevations were measured relative to this principal mapping datum of the site, with an arbitrarily established elevation of 100.00 m. Both shovel shaving and trowels were used as appropriate. Excavations ceased when culturally sterile deposits were reached.

The southwest corner of each unit was used as the mapping reference point for the individual units. Elevational control was maintained through either a builder's level or transit. All fill (sediment) was dry screened through 1/4” mesh hardware cloth, with selected units screened through 1/8” mesh hardware cloth. Features were recorded and otherwise described according to standard archeological procedures used by the Wyoming State Archaeologist’s Office for such analyses. All artifacts, except select foundation materials, bricks, wood fragments, and other large pieces of structural remains, were collected for laboratory analysis. Any uncollected artifacts were counted and described (including noting brick makers’ marks) in the field. Notes were taken for each level excavated, describing both cultural and natural materials located, sediments, or other noteworthy observations. Black and white photographs, color photographs, color slides and digital prints were taken as appropriate. Following completion of excavations and investigations, all units and backhoe trenches were backfilled.

Levels

Excavations were conducted within natural stratigraphic levels, using arbitrary ten or five cm levels within the natural stratigraphic levels. That is, if a natural level was reached before the end of an arbitrary level, a new level was established at the top of the new natural level. Generally, ten cm arbitrary levels were used, unless the quantity of artifacts within the test unit was so great that a five cm level provided greater control.

Natural levels

Natural levels were defined as usually more or less homogenous layers, with differential proportions of sand, loam, clay, pebbles, etc., that varied from layer to layer.
Each natural level was described by its color (although there were exceptions), texture and structure. The texture depended on the proportional representation of each constituent (sand, gravel, clay, etc.). A level might be described as composed of sand enclosing many quartz gravels. The structure of the sediment is described as the way the constituents of the layer were organized. For example, a layer may be formed of sand cemented by carbonates. A natural level is rarely horizontal and varies in thickness. It is for this reason that excavators continually checked the stratigraphy and noted any variation in structure, texture, and color on their form.

**Archeological levels**

These levels are what remain of each human occupation of the site. A single natural level may contain one or more archeological levels. Occupation floors consist of the remains of an occupation that have not been subsequently disturbed. A true occupation floor is in the same state as when it was abandoned by the site occupants. This is a rare state of affairs, as multiple disturbances have usually deformed the original floors. Diffuse archeological levels are more common. These mark an occupation surface that has been slightly disturbed by solifluction or other disturbance. They appear as a greater density of objects at a particular level. It is most important to try to maintain separation of different archeological levels during excavation and in the laboratory.

**Arbitrary levels**

Arbitrary levels varied between five and ten cm deep, with some other depths as well, within a natural or archeological level that provide for greater excavation control, primarily in the recovery of the screening materials. If a new natural level was encountered before completion of an arbitrary level, then excavations stopped in that arbitrary level. If the natural level sloped, continued excavation required partial units of additional arbitrary levels before completion of the first natural level and initiation of the second natural level. That arbitrary level, in turn, will begin with a partial unit to a depth of the first arbitrary level, to “level off” the excavation floor.

**Data Control**

**Horizontal Data Control**

Horizontal measurements were taken from the southwest corner of the unit, that is, all measurements were to the north and to the east. For most artifacts, measurements to the nearest centimeter were sufficient. However, if in situ diagnostic artifacts smaller than one cm were recovered, horizontal control was to the nearest mm. All excavations were by one meter x one meter units; however, some units were excavated in 50 x 50 cm quads, depending on the situation. In these cases, artifacts were still mapped horizontally
from the southwest corner of the one meter x one meter test unit.

**Vertical Data Control**

For most units, vertical control was taken by using a transit or builder’s level. Vertical depth was recorded as above or below site datum, not ground surface. Each day, in the morning and at noon, the builder’s levels were recalibrated back to the main site datum, set arbitrarily at 100 m above datum. For the most part, vertical control was taken on the bottom of the mapped artifact. If artifacts were “taller” than ten cm, then both top and bottom depths were taken and recorded.

**Depth Control**

Surface elevations (relative to the site datum) were taken at the beginning of each test unit on the ground surface, at 50 cm intervals, producing nine measurements per unit. A separate surface map was prepared for these data. Depth measurements were then recorded at the bottom of each level after that. Separate maps were prepared for each level. The final map for the test unit showed the final depth measurements for the unit.

**Mapping Forms**

**General Mapping Form**

Mapping was done as accurately and clearly as possible. The grid on the mapping form used represented one square meter, with smaller squares on the form representing five cm. North was always to the top of the map. Each item recorded on the back of the mapping form as a point plotted item also appeared on the front of the form on the map. All items were drawn accurately in position, using the measured coordinates. If possible, object numbers were written inside the outline, otherwise beside it so it is clear to which object it belongs. If the item was larger than ten cm in maximum dimension, a provenience point was marked on the item with a marker. This was the point measured to and recorded on the mapping form. Rocks or other materials that were not collected were drawn as accurately as possible and not just sketched. Also, both top and bottom vertical measurements were taken on such items.

Maps and screen bags were changed every time a new natural or arbitrary level was started. All artifact bags, point-plotted or screening, were placed in a “UNIT BAG,” with the outside of that unit bag marked with the same information described below for the individual artifact bags.

The back of the mapping form contained the main recording information for the level. Specific comments about the level were recorded by the excavator, including features, associations, soil types, rodent disturbance, etc. Each object recovered from a unit was
assigned an Object Number, starting with “1” for the unit and continuing consecutively for the remainder of the unit. Each mapped artifact received a separate object number. This included all level screening bags. If more than one screening bag was filled from a level, a separate object number was assigned to each level bag. Artifacts smaller than five cm in maximum dimensions were not mapped. Identifiable artifacts smaller than this mapping cutoff were recovered in the dry screen. Depth above or below datum was recorded for each object as the vertical control of each artifact as described above. Horizontal control of each artifact was recorded as cm N and cm E. Object description was recorded as the artifact name, screen bag, etc.

At the end of each excavation day, or upon completion of a level or test unit, all artifacts and information on the bags were checked against the information on the mapping form, to eliminate possible mistakes and correct them before the artifacts were stored. All completed maps, notes, forms, records and associated artifacts were given to the crew chief upon completion of a test unit. Each individual excavator was responsible for the accurate recording of data, and the location and collection of the artifacts within their respective units.

Each mapped item was placed in its own individual bag, which was labeled with the following information site name: site number; unit designation; object number; level number; level below datum; object name; excavator’s name (not initials); and collection date. This information was written on each field bag in either ball-point pen or “sharpie.”

**Unit Record Form**

Unit Record Forms were filled out for each excavation unit. This form was used to track the completion of all data recording for the unit and was the first form started for each unit. The following information was recorded on this form. “Completed” was noted as “yes” or “no” depending on whether the arbitrary or natural level was completed or whether the bottom of the unit was below the known cultural levels upon ending work in the unit. “Forms Completed,” again “yes” or “no,” meant that all forms had been completely filled out for the unit. “No. Bags” was a count of the total number of bags with artifacts for that particular level. “Photo Nos.” was filled in if something from that particular level had been photographed. Negative numbers were provided from the photo log at the time of photographing. If no photographs were taken, these columns remained empty.

**Wall Profile Form**

As is normal in most archeological excavations, most unit walls were profiled. The main introductory heading information on this form was the same as that for the mapping form. One cm on the profile form equaled ten cm of the wall profile. At least one profile
was completed for each unit and often a second one at 90 degrees was completed. This form was also used for feature profiles.

**Photographic Log Form**

The Photographic Log form was used to keep track of all photographs taken with the official site camera(s). All photographs were taken with a scale included in the frame of view. Each roll was numbered consecutively throughout the field season, by color.

**LABORATORY METHODS**

All collected artifacts, field notes, maps, profiles, photographs, and other records were transported to the Wyoming State Archaeologist’s Office and the Department of Anthropology, University of Wyoming, in Laramie, for cataloging, analysis, and report preparation. Prehistoric artifact analyses were consistent with other investigations prepared by the Wyoming State Archaeologist’s Office (see Walker 1990). All artifact material collected was identified and analyzed as to type, function, or usage. Descriptions were made of excavation results from each hand test unit. These detailed all cultural materials and features found in those specific units, and any other noteworthy observations.

Historic artifact analyses were consistent with previous archeological investigations at Wyoming historic sites, specifically recent studies at Fort Laramie National Historic Site (Walker 1998, 2004). These have employed an artifact classification system similar to that used by South (1977a, 1977b). South (1977a) was among the first to use a standardized classification system to simplify the comparison of artifactual assemblages among different structures and occupations. This system is a functional classification system and consists of several artifact types organized into eight artifact groups. These groups include kitchen, architecture, furniture, arms, clothing, personal, tobacco pipes, and activities. South (1977a) designed this system to understand and describe eighteenth and nineteenth century agricultural and urban occupations in the southeastern United States. In its original format, it is not completely applicable to nineteenth century western military forts. It has been adapted and used at military sites (Fawcett 1981; Marcel Kornfeld, personal communication, 1994). Several categories are useful and others can be adapted as the analysis proceeds.

Cataloging and preparation for artifact storage was completed as detailed by Jessup (1992), using the Re-Discovery computer program designed for National Park Service museums. This work was done under the direct supervision of the Fort Laramie National Historic Site Curator. After cataloging and analyses were completed and report(s) submitted, all collected and curated artifacts will be transferred to Fort Laramie National
Historic Site for permanent storage using storage procedures outlined by the National Park Service (1984, 1990). These materials are thus made available for interpretive and educational purposes. Most other archeological collections from Fort Laramie National Historic Site are already curated and housed on-site or at the Midwest Archeological Center in Lincoln, NE.

PREVIOUS WORK

Previous archeological work conducted at Fort Laramie National Historic Site is documented in the Cultural Sites Inventory (Midwest Archeological Center 1979, 1989, 1998), the project files at Fort Laramie National Historic Site and the Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office, Cultural Records Office. Most archeological investigations conducted at the park have been limited to inventories and data recovery investigations associated with development and restoration projects. The earliest professional excavations were conducted in the summer of 1939 by G. Hubert Smith (Smith 1939). The first use of geophysical techniques occurred in 1976 when Dr. John Weymouth conducted a proton magnetometer survey of the Ward and Guerrier Trading Post (Weymouth 1976, 1979). Walker and De Vore (2009) provide a comprehensive review of previous investigations over the years between 1938 and 2005.

SITE FILE SEARCH - DATE AND RESULTS

The results of the file search of the SHPO’s CRO and the MWAC CSI indicated several archeological projects (Table 2) had been conducted within the park boundaries and several locations (Table 3) contained archeological sites within the park boundaries or the immediate vicinity of the park. Sites 48GO1 (Fort Laramie), 48GO15 (prehistoric fire hearth), 48GO16 (Ward and Guerrier Trading Post), 48GO17 (prehistoric fire hearth), 48GO380-385 (homesteader era farms) and 48GO471 (Fort Laramie Folsom site) were identified as being within the park boundaries.

The park was created as a National Monument by Presidential Proclamation No. 2292 on July 16, 1938 (53 Stat. 2461). It was established “for the purpose of improving, preserving, and conducting such lands and structures as a public historical site; and . . . the lands and structures are of great historic interest and constitute a historical landmark; and . . . it would be in the public interest to reserve such lands and structures as a national monument” (National Park Service 1993:117). The Monument was enlarged by an Act of Congress (74 Stat. 83), Public Law 86-444, on April 29, 1960, and renamed the Fort Laramie National Historic Site. On November 10, 1978, an Act of Congress (92 Stat. 3477),
P.L. 95-625, amended the 1960 act and increased the size of the historic site (National Park Service 1993:3). Four additional in-holding land purchases occurred during the 1980s while an additional area was added to the park in 2007. The park was increased to its present size of 832.85 acres in 2007 (Steve Fullmer, personal communications 2010).

Fort Laramie National Historic Site (48GO1) was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on October 15, 1966. Although the National Register nomination (Cana-day 1983) and the park’s enabling legislation identify the fort as nationally significant under Criterion A for the fort’s role in the Western development of the United States, the nomination does not address the archeological potential and significance of the site.

THE 1866 INFANTRY BARRACKS 2009 EXCAVATION RESULTS

The magnetometer survey conducted over the 1866 Infantry Barracks in 2009 confirmed the location of the foundation, but also revealed other anomalies around the barracks as well (Figure 8), primarily a long linear metallic anomaly running along the west wall of the kitchen wing, from near mid-point to the north end (Figure 8, lower). Excavations revealed this was a six-inch cast iron pipe running along the base of the foundation at the original ground surface probably for drainage of slop waters.

Three major observations resulted from the 2009 excavations at the 1866 Infantry Barracks. First, the idea the barracks foundation may contain undisturbed archeological sediments from the dating from 1890 abandonment of Fort Laramie was shown to be true. Presence of hundreds of intact historical specimens throughout the excavation area showed there had been little to no disturbance of the sediments since 1890. For instance, a large number of bottles were found just below the ground surface (Figure 9) in most excavation units, lying in their primary depositional positions, including one exposed on the ground surface after the winter (Figure 10). This is highly suggestive no archeological excavations ever occurred at the barracks similar to other projects at the fort over the years. This provides us an excellent opportunity to look in detail at the lives of the enlisted men billeted in the structure in 1890. In theory, what is present is what the last occupants walked away from after leaving the fort.

Second, one of the major goals of the 2009 was to provide a preliminary analysis of the condition of the barracks foundation itself (Figure 11). Several units were placed to expose both sides of the foundation (Figure 12). All such units revealed the foundation was more extensive than originally thought. Other rock foundations at Fort Laramie have been recorded as a single or double course of rock. The barracks foundation was found to have actually been constructed almost one meter tall (Figure 13) and of fairly good
construction. The 1866 Barracks was an adobe structure (Figures 14 and 15) and therefore of fairly good weight and a strong foundation would have been necessary. A close-up photograph from 1885 (Figure 15) shows the foundation in detail, also extending around a meter above the ground surface. Today, the ground surface is even with the top of the foundation (Figures 6 and 11). At first, excavators had calculated a large amount of sediment had blown against the foundation over the years. However, the adobe construction material became a more viable explanation of the higher ground surface after an 1899 photograph was located in the Fort Laramie archives (Figure 16). This photograph was taken about 5 years after the original purchaser of the structure in 1890 had sold the wood in the building to other homesteaders. Without the protection and structural support of the roof, the adobe walls began disintegrating in place, covering the foundations. This also provided the sediments to cover the various cultural items left in the barracks on its abandonment.

Third, excavations revealed portions of the south foundation of the kitchen wing were not as extensive as the rest of the kitchen wing, which in itself was not as strong as the barracks foundation itself. This is to be expected, because the walls of the kitchen wing were not as tall as the barracks and therefore the weight would have been less, thus requiring a smaller foundation. In addition, the central portion of this south foundation (Figure 17) appeared to be missing stones, and this was found to be the case. This area of the barracks was the area of concern because erosion across the foundation was continually exposing artifacts to the general public. It appears the missing foundation stones in this area is what allowed the erosion to occur. Nothing was present to prevent slopewash from occurring downslope toward the river and across the walking path south of the foundation (Figure 18). It is likely these foundation stones were removed during the homesteader era at Fort Laramie, in a manner similar to those of the 3-Company Barracks on the east end of the parade ground. Their present location is unknown.

NATIONAL REGISTER SUMMARY
The National Register of Historic Places district nomination for Fort Laramie National Historic Site concentrated on the history of the military post and the architecture present at the park. The nomination does not include the archeological resources associated with the fur trade, military, homesteading and National Park Service periods at Fort Laramie. Geophysical investigations conducted by the National Park Service and other interested parties (Walker and De Vore 2009) have provided additional information concerning buried archeological resources related to the military occupation of the National Historic
Site. The present project occurred within the National Register of Historic Places district boundary (Canaday 1983). Geophysical investigations have provided data suggesting the archeological deposits associated with the military post of Fort Laramie are highly likely to yield information important to the history of Fort Laramie and its association with the western expansion of the United States during the nineteenth century. Data are also now present detailing significant archeological data on the homesteader period (1890-1938) also exists within the National Register boundaries as presently defined.

At the same time, the preliminary results of the 2009 investigations at the 1866 Infantry Barracks show, even within known, visible foundations, a great amount of archeological data is present and waiting for proper investigations and interpretations. Similar results locating and describing buried archeological data away from foundations were recorded in 1994-1996 (Walker 1998) and within and without other foundations in 2002-2005 (Walker and De Vore 2009). The archeological potential at Fort Laramie National Historic Site remains high and must continue to be considered into the future.

**SUMMARY MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS**

Consideration should be given to developing a stabilization plan for the south foundation wall of the kitchen wing of the 1866 Infantry Barracks at Fort Laramie National Historic Site. The missing stones are what is allowing erosion to occur from the interior of the barracks south toward the river in this central part of the kitchen wing. Most surface artifacts recorded in the barracks area are eroding in this area. The remaining areas of both wings are horizontal and little to no erosion can occur. The remaining areas are also highly stabilized with grass and other vegetation, also preventing additional erosion. Once this south kitchen wall is rebuilt and stabilized, erosion and exposure of artifacts in this area should cease.

**LOCATION OF ARTIFACTUAL MATERIALS**

Artifacts collected during the 2009 excavations at the 1866 Infantry Barracks are presently being curated and cataloged at the University of Wyoming, Department of Anthropology. Upon completion of the project, they will be returned to Fort Laramie National Historic Site for final storage. All supporting documentation and data files are presently in the possession of the Principal investigator (Walker). Eventually, copies will be curated with Fort Laramie National Historic Site and the Midwest Archeological Center, Lincoln.
REFERENCES CITED

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Brown, Lauren

Canaday, Tami

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Dice, Lee R.
Arbor.

Fawcett, William B.


Fenneman, Nevin M.


Geoscan Research


Heimmer, Don


Heimmer, Don, Clark Davenport, John Lindeman, and John Gilmore


Heimmer, Don H., and Steven L. De Vore


Jessup, Wendy Claire


Keckler, Doug

Midwest Archeological Center

1979  *Fort Laramie National Historic Site Cultural Sites Inventory*. Unpublished cultural resource management project report prepared for National Park Service by Midwest Archeological Center. On file, Midwest Archeological Center, National Park Service, Lincoln, Nebraska.

1989  *Fort Laramie National Historic Site Cultural Sites Inventory*. Unpublished cultural resource management project report prepared for National Park Service by Midwest Archeological Center. On file, Midwest Archeological Center, National Park Service, Lincoln, Nebraska.


National Park Service


Shelford, Victor E.


Smith, G. Hubert


Somers, Lewis E.


South, Stanley A.


York.

Stephens, Fraser, Ernest F. Brunkow, Charles J. Fox, and Halvor B. Ravenholt


Walker, Danny N.


Walker, Roger, and Lewis Somers


Weymouth, John W.


**PREPARED BY**: Danny N. Walker, PhD, RPA; Wyoming State Archaeologist's Office, Wyoming Department of State Parks and Cultural Resources, Department 3431, 1000 East University Avenue, Laramie, WY 82071
Figure 1: 1879 Quartermaster Corps map of Infantry Barracks, showing dimensions and distances to other structures in area. Actual location and dimensions of barracks shown in red, compared to 1875 Quartermaster map. (Courtesy Fort Laramie National Historic Site).
Figure 2: 1938 Civilian Conservation Corps topographic map of project area, with foundation superimposed in its proper location. (Courtesy Fort Laramie National Historic Site).
Figure 3: 1973 aerial photograph of Fort Laramie Parade Ground, showing location and general condition of the 1866 Infantry Barracks. (Courtesy Fort Laramie National Historic Site).
Figure 4: 1996 color infrared aerial photograph of Fort Laramie Parade Ground, showing location and general condition of the 1866 Infantry Barracks. Note erosional area on the southwest corner of the barracks complex, compared with the 1973 black and white aerial photograph. (Courtesy Fort Laramie National Historic Site).
Figure 5: 1927 photograph of the New Guard House, showing the 1866 Infantry Barracks foundation in the foreground. (Courtesy Fort Laramie National Historic Site).
Figure 6: 2009 photograph of the New Guard House, showing the 1866 Infantry Barracks foundation in the foreground. ( Wyoming State Archaeologist’s Office photograph).
Figure 7:  2009 unit excavation map, showing location of test units relative to barracks foundations.
Figure 8: Magnetometer map showing magnetic anomalies in and around 1866 Infantry Barracks. Line of five blue circles west of kitchen wing is 6-inch diameter drain pipe.
Figure 9: Bottle recovered from test unit at 1866 Infantry Barracks. Note how close bottle is to present ground surface. (Wyoming State Archaeologist's Office photograph).
Figure 10: Medicine bottle recovered from ground surface, June, 2009 at 1866 Infantry Barracks. (Wyoming State Archaeologist’s Office photograph).
Figure 11: 1866 Infantry Barracks foundation, looking west. Note mounding of sediments on either side of foundation. (Wyoming State Archaeologist's Office photograph).
Figure 12: South foundation wall of kitchen wing, 1866 Infantry Barracks, showing placement of excavation units on either side of foundation wall. (Wyoming State Archaeologist's Office photograph).
Figure 13: Excavation unit showing south foundation wall of barracks wing, 1866 Infantry Barracks. Note height of foundation. (Wyoming State Archaeologist’s Office photograph).
Figure 14: Closeup of 1866 Infantry Barracks in 1883. Note position of kitchen wing versus barracks wing. (Courtesy Fort Laramie National Historic Site).
Figure 15: 1866 Infantry Barracks in 1885. Height of barracks foundation can be seen as an offset below the adobe wall. (Courtesy Fort Laramie National Historic Site).
Figure 16: Looking across 1866 Infantry Barracks in 1899, toward Old Bedlam and rest of Officer’s Row. Note mounding of collapsed adobe bricks and mounding of dissolved sand and clay. Courtesy Fort Laramie National Historic Site).
Figure 17: Excavation units across south foundation wall of kitchen wing, 1866 Infantry Barracks. Eroded area exposing artifacts can be seen just behind spoil pile. (Wyoming State Archaeologist's Office photograph).
Figure 18: Close-up of excavation unit along south wall of kitchen wing, 1866 Infantry Barracks. Compare with Figure 12 for original full height of foundation. (Wyoming State Archaeologist's Office photograph).
### Table 1: Soil types and characteristics found at Fort Laramie National Historic Site, Wyoming.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MAP SYMBOL</th>
<th>MAPPING UNIT</th>
<th>SOIL ASSOCIATION</th>
<th>PARENT MATERIAL</th>
<th>NATIVE VEGETATION</th>
<th>LANDSCAPE POSITION</th>
<th>PERMEABILITY</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ak</td>
<td>Alkali and saline land</td>
<td>Haverson-Bankard</td>
<td>Soils with concentration of alkali or soluble salts</td>
<td>Salt-tolerant plants</td>
<td>Flood plains, terraces and foot slopes, and in upland swales</td>
<td>Ranges depending on soil texture</td>
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<tr>
<td>BfA</td>
<td>Bankard loamy fine sand, 0 to 3 percent slopes</td>
<td>Haverson-Bankard</td>
<td>Sandy alluvium</td>
<td>Needle-and-thread, blue grama, threadleaf sedge, and scattered cottonwoods</td>
<td>Flood plains along the North Platte and Laramie Rivers and along Horse Creek</td>
<td>Rapid</td>
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<tr>
<td>BoA</td>
<td>Bayard and Otero fine sandy loams, 0 to 3 percent slopes</td>
<td>Haverson-Bankard</td>
<td>Sandy alluvium (Bayard) and wind-lain sands (Otero)</td>
<td>Blue grama and needle-and-thread (Bayard/Otero) and Indian ricegrass (Otero)</td>
<td>Nearly level stream terraces</td>
<td>Moderately rapid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DcD</td>
<td>Dix complex, 0 to 10 percent slopes</td>
<td>Haverson-Bankard</td>
<td>Very gravelly alluvium</td>
<td>Blue grama, needle-and-thread, threadleaf sedge, sagewort, and cactus</td>
<td>High terraces above the North Platte River, the Laramie River, Horse Creek, and Bear Creek</td>
<td>Rapid</td>
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<tr>
<td>DcE</td>
<td>Dix complex, 10 to 45 percent slopes</td>
<td>Haverson-Bankard</td>
<td>Very gravelly alluvium</td>
<td>Blue grama, needle-and-thread, threadleaf sedge, sagewort, and cactus</td>
<td>High terraces above the flood plains of the North Platte River, the Laramie River, Horse Creek, and Bear Creek</td>
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<tr>
<td>DwA</td>
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<td>Dunday-Trelona-Dwyer</td>
<td>Wind-lain sands on uplands and water-lain soils on fans and foot slopes</td>
<td>Prairie sand-reed, needle-and-thread, and blue grama</td>
<td>Uplands in the central and eastern part of Goshen County</td>
<td>Rapid</td>
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<tr>
<td>DwC</td>
<td>Dwyer loamy fine sand, 3 to 10 percent slopes</td>
<td>Dunday-Trelona-Dwyer</td>
<td>Wind-lain sands on uplands and water-lain soils on fans and foot slopes</td>
<td>Prairie sand-reed, needle-and-thread, and blue grama</td>
<td>Uplands in the central and eastern part of Goshen County</td>
<td>Rapid</td>
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<tr>
<td>GbA</td>
<td>Glenberg fine sandy loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes</td>
<td>Haverson-Bankard</td>
<td>Water-lain sand</td>
<td>Short and intermediate grasses</td>
<td>Flood plains along Bear Creek, Horse Creek, the North Platte River, and the Laramie River</td>
<td>Moderately rapid</td>
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<td>HaA</td>
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<td>Moderate</td>
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<td>HgA</td>
<td>Haverson loam, gravel substratum variant, 0 to 3 percent slopes</td>
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<td>Loose sand and gravel at depths between 20 and 40 inches</td>
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<td>MeA</td>
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<td>Wind-lain sands (Manter) and wind-lain sandy material (Anselmo)</td>
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<td>Moderately rapid</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mu</td>
<td>Mixed alluvial lands</td>
<td>Haverson-Bankard</td>
<td>Sands and gravels</td>
<td>Grasses, shrubs, and trees</td>
<td>Flood plains, mainly along the North Platte and Laramie Rivers</td>
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Table 2: Project file search, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, by Wyoming Historic Preservation Office, Cultural Records Office.

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Project located in T26 N, R64 W, Sec.29. N; NNSW

Total Acres Surveyed: 0
### Table 2: Project file search, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, by Wyoming Historic Preservation Office, Cultural Records Office (continued).

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<th>Project Name</th>
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### Table 3: Results of site file search, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, by Wyoming Historic Preservation Office, Cultural Records Office.

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<th>Recorded by</th>
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<td>WRC/HISTORIC DIVISION</td>
<td>HISTORIC FORT</td>
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