

PH 0047147

Form 10-306
(Oct. 1972)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM
FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: California
COUNTY: Inyo
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE DEC 31 1974

1. NAME

COMMON:
Eagle Borax Works (H.S.-1)

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
Death Valley National Monument

CITY OR TOWN:
Death Valley

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:
33

STATE:
California

CODE
06

COUNTY:
Inyo

CODE
027

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> Comments _____ _____	

4. AGENCY

National Park Service

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)
Western Regional Office

CITY OR TOWN:
San Francisco, CA

STREET AND NUMBER:
Box 450 Golden Gate Ave., 36063

STATE:
California

CODE
06

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Death Valley National Monument

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:
Death Valley

STATE:
California

CODE
06

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY:
 Federal
 State
 County
 Local

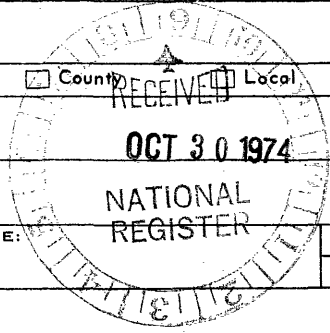
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

STATE:
California

CODE



STATE: **California**

COUNTY: **San Francisco**

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DATE

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SEE INSTRUCTIONS

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Preservation recommended

This borax plant originally consisted of a furnace and boiler to heat water, a tank in which the borax was dissolved, vats for crystallization of the borax, and attendant water pipes. Nearby was a stone structure used as quarters for the plant's operators.

Today the plant consists of little more than the fire box for the furnace and a mound of earth. Another mound of earth apparently denotes where the stone building stood. Through the years the equipment of the works has disappeared and wind and water have taken their toll. Moreover, tamarisks, trees exotic to Death Valley have taken over from the native mesquite and arrowweed.

Boundary: The historic land embraced in this site includes a rectangular piece of land formed by extending lines from the borax ruins north 1000 ft., east 500 ft., and west 700 ft.

Class VI lands: 54 acres

Cost: \$19,000 estimate (stabalize in present condition)
remove tamarisks and restore original vegetation.



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8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century | |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **1882**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

2nd Order

In 1880 Isidore Daunet and several companions attempted to cross Death Valley in the summer and became stranded. Daunet and a companion sought help and upon returning found 3 of those left behind dead from dehydration; at one point Daunet saved himself from the same fate by killing one of his animals and drinking its blood. On this adventure Daunet noticed the presence of borate in Death Valley.

Daunet had migrated to this country from France in 1860 at the age of ten. He came to San Francisco and remained there until 1863 when he became a prospector. He had been prospecting in the Panamint Mountains when he and his six companions had made the unwise attempt to cross Death Valley in mid-summer.

In 1882 he entered into partnership with J.M.McDonald, M. Harmon, and C.C. Blanch to work in the borate field just north of Bennetts Well. He hauled in the necessary machinery and equipment and set up operation, utilizing water from a nearby spring. Their first shipment, by wagon to the railhead at Daggett, of crudely refined borax, consisted of 37 tons, and brought but eight cents a pound, although one San Francisco authority considered it "about equal to the best refined article." But their technique apparently improved, and by the end of 1883, the partners had shipped a total of 260,000 pounds of borax, subsequent shipments of which had brought 10 cents and higher per pound.

The Eagle Borax claim consisted of 320 acres valued at \$800 composed of 16 claims of 20 acres each. Improvements on the land were valued at \$1000 in 1883 and \$1,150 the following year.

The state mineralogist report that the product was hauled to Calico Station (Daggett) by way of Panamint Valley, Willow and Granite Spring, Black Ranch and Grapevine.

According to Ed Stiles in later years, he hauled the first load of borax from Eagle in the fall of 1882. When the freighting business dropped off to nothing because of the arrival of the railroad, a contract was entered with one of the agents for the borax operation to

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

F. Ross Holland, Jr., and Robert Simmonds, "Historic Structures Report, Eagle and Harmony Borax Works," National Park Service (HHA-WSC), 1971

Benjamin Levy, "Death Valley National Monument; Historical Background Study," National Park Service, Division of History, April, 1969.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

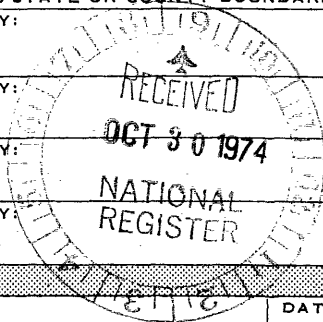
LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
NW	Degrees Minutes Seconds 36 ° 12 ' 15 "	Degrees Minutes Seconds 116 ° 52 ' 03 "		Degrees Minutes Seconds " " "	Degrees Minutes Seconds " " "	
NE	36 ° 12 ' 17 "	116 ° 51 ' 49 "				
SE	36 ° 11 ' 54 "	116 ° 51 ' 45 "				
SW	36 ° 11 ' 52 "	116 ° 52 ' 00 "				

NO UTM
HL

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 54 acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



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11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: **F. Ross Holland, Jr., Historian** DATE: **June 1971**

BUSINESS ADDRESS: **Denver Service Center, NPS**

STREET AND NUMBER: **7200 W. Alameda Ave.** PHONE:

CITY OR TOWN: **Denver** STATE: **Colorado** CODE: **08**

12. CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

State Liaison Officer recommendation:

- Yes
- No
- None

[Signature]
State Liaison Officer Signature

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

[Signature]
Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Liaison Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The recommended level of significance is National State

Date **DEC 31 1974**

Local
[Signature] 4/10/74
Federal Representative Signature Date
ACT. REG. DIR.
Title

ATTEST:
[Signature]
Keeper of The National Register

Date **DEC 31 1974**

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE California	
COUNTY Inyo	
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(Number all entries)

8. Statement of Significance (cont.)

haul the refined borax to the railhead. Stiles was instructed to take a 12-mule team and 2 wagons, one in tow, to the Death Valley site. Stiles hauled the plant's initial shipment which consisted of six tons of borax, taking 11 days to get to the railhead at Daggett. His wagons carried water which was replenished at springs along the way. Stiles said he hauled 4 of 5 loads for the Eagle Company before the freight company sold the wagons to W.T. Coleman, of Harmony Borax Works fame.

Daunet married Clotilde Gerraud on Oct. 1, 1882, and for a while his business and personal life went well. The plant in Death Valley continued to produce, and in May 1884, just before the roof fell in, reportedly employed 11 men who made enough borax to keep "three large teams steadily employed" transporting the product to the railhead. The plant operated continuously, except for the summer months when the weather was too hot to permit crystallization of the borax in the cooling vats.

In May 1884, unfortunately business troubles began to pile up and Daunet's marriage deteriorated. After two men swindled him out of \$11,000 and his wife served him divorce papers, Daunet put his pistol to his head.

With the death of Daunet the business quickly folded and in time the property was sold. The land and property lay idle until 1901 when it was relocated as a mining claim and a few months later conveyed to U.S. Borax Company who held the site in their reserve borate lands until sold to Borax Consolidated LTD, in 1922. In 1956 the land was transferred to Death Valley Hotel Company and later conveyed to the National Park Service.

Eagle Borax Works was the site of the first borax plant in Death Valley and the complex was a typical marsh-type operation. The works offers a valuable interpretive opportunity to display the pioneer beginnings of borax mining and processing in the United States which is so closely related to Death Valley.

