

PH0294535

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: Kern
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE OCT 31 1976

1. NAME

COMMON:
Robbers Roost

AND/OR HISTORIC:
Bandit Rock

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: *near jct of CA 14 and CA 178*
3 miles west of the Junction of Highway 14 and 178 (Freeman Junction) T. 27 S., R. 37 E., Sec. 13 M.D.M.

CITY OR TOWN: *Inyo Kern Co.* CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: **18**

STATE: **California** CODE: **06** COUNTY: **Kern** CODE: **029**

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site <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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) Recreation Grazing
Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No			

4. AGENCY

U.S. Bureau of Land Management

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)
Bakersfield District

CITY OR TOWN: **Bakersfield**

STREET AND NUMBER: **800 Truxtun Avenue**

STATE: **California** CODE: **06**

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Office of County Assessor

STREET AND NUMBER:
1415 Truxtun Avenue

CITY OR TOWN: **Bakersfield**

STATE: **California** CODE: **06**

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

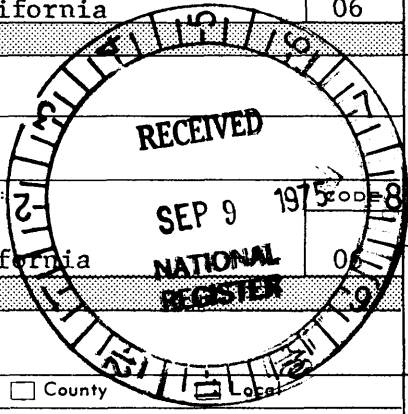
TITLE OF SURVEY:
None

DATE OF SURVEY: Federal State County

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE:



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: **California**

COUNTY: **Kern**

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

(Check One)

Excellent Good Fair Deteriorated Ruins Unexposed

(Check One)

Altered Unaltered

(Check One)

Moved Original Site

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Robbers Roost is a prominent landmark west of Freeman Junction, easily seen from Highway 14. The jagged rocks mark the early-day hideout of Kern County's most notorious bandit gang, lead by Tiburico Vasquez.

The massive rock, at an elevation of 4,000 feet, not only provided an excellent view for miles in every direction across the desert landscape, but also provided a ready-made hideout. The many crags, crevisses, and caves gave protection from the severe desert weather, in addition to providing a hiding place.

The steep, rugged lookout remains today much in the same condition as it did when the notorious bandit Vasquez used it as his hideout.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian 16th Century 18th Century 20th Century
 15th Century 17th Century 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1874 - 1875

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
Culture conflict and lawlessness. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input 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 type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The historic and scenic landmark of Robbers Roost was the lookout of Tiburico Vasquez the notorious bandit.

Vasquez conducted several holdups in 1874 at Coyote Holes (intersection of Highway 178) and 14) before his hanging the following year in San Jose.

A Mexican gentlemen of adventure, Vasquez reaped a harvest of monetary gains as he rode the mountain, coast, and desert roads. His first appearance upon the desert scene was in the early months of 1874. No early desperado in California banditry rivaled his record except Joaquin Murietta. Vasquez started his career about the middle of the century, culminating it in 1875.

Before coming to the inner regions of California, he had served a number of years in prison. A freeman in 1863, feeling the state owed him a living, he returned to his lawlessness. He joined infamous bandit groups and about 1871 became leader of his own band. Made bold by success, he planned operations in the desert country from which tales were coming of rich mines and wealthy travelers.

The vicinity of Cerro Gordo in Inyo County was the goal of the gang. They planned to secure their loot by highway robbery: money and jewels were easier to get away with than heavy bullion.

Vasquez made his first appearance at Coyote Holes, a stage station where the Walker Pass road met the freight road to Los Angeles.

The site of Vasquez' local camp was in the craggy peaks south of Coyote Holes station. From that day on, this jagged rock easily seen from Highway 14 has been known as Robbers Roost.

Vasquez and his gang continued to operate along the highways until army detachments from camp Independence made an effort to capture them. This discouraged Vasquez and he left the desert region and returned to the Los Angeles area.

The bandit was finally captured there and returned to San Jose where he was tried for murder, convicted, and hanged on March 19, 1875. He had made an enemy of one of his gang by finding favor with the man's wife. The husband

(con't)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Bailey, Richard C. - Explorations in Kern. Kern County Historical Society, Bakersfield, 1962. pp 80-81.

Peirson, Erma. - Kern's Desert. Kern County Historical Society, Bakersfield, 1956. pp 22-24

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	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		35° 35' 28"	117° 56' 56"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **5**

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
None			
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: **Richard D. Conrad, Nat. Resource Technician** DATE: **10/31/73**

BUSINESS ADDRESS: **Bureau of Land Management**

STREET AND NUMBER: **800 Truxtun Avenue** PHONE: **323-7676, ext. 271**

CITY OR TOWN: **Bakersfield** STATE: **California** CODE: **06**

12. CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION **NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

State Liaison Officer recommendation:

Yes
 No
 None

[Signature]
 State Liaison Officer Signature

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 Local

[Signature] **SEP 5 1975**
 Federal Representative Signature Date
Deputy Assistant Secretary
 Title

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

[Signature]
 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date **10/31/73**

ATTEST:

[Signature]
 Keeper of The National Register

Date **10/31/75**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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(Continuation Sheet)

STATE California	
COUNTY Kern	
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	OCT 31 1975

(Number all entries)

8 Statement of Significance (contd.)

was responsible for advising the law enforcement officers of his whereabouts.

The California desert has known many other bandits but Vasquez and his gang were the most notorious.

