

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

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:	Oklahoma
COUNTY:	Comanche
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY DATE:	DEC 31 1974

1. NAME	
COMMON:	Medicine Bluffs
AND/OR HISTORIC:	

2. LOCATION			
STREET AND NUMBER: West Range, NW of New Post, Fort Sill, N of Under Wolf Ford, E of Four Mile Crossing, and bounded on N by Medicine Bluff Creek.			
CITY OR TOWN: Fort Sill		CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: Hon. Tom Steed, 4th District	
STATE: Oklahoma	CODE 40	COUNTY: Comanche	CODE 31

3. CLASSIFICATION				
CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP		STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Public Acquisition:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work In progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
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 checked="" 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			
U. S. Army			
REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)	STREET AND NUMBER:		
HQ, US Army Field Artillery Center			
CITY OR TOWN: Fort Sill	STATE: Oklahoma	CODE 40	

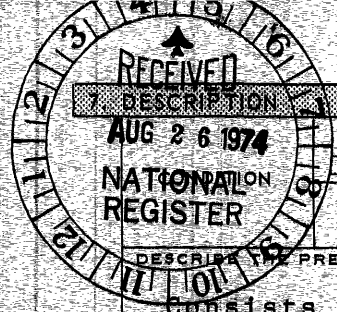
5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION			
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC: Director of Facilities Engineering			
STREET AND NUMBER: 1950 Barbour Road, HQ US Army Field Artillery Center			
CITY OR TOWN: Fort Sill	STATE: Oklahoma	CODE 40	

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS			
TITLE OF SURVEY:			
DATE OF SURVEY:	<input type="checkbox"/> Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> State	<input type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Local
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:			
STREET AND NUMBER:			
CITY OR TOWN:	STATE:	CODE	



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Encl 2



7. DESCRIPTION

AUG 26 1974

NATIONAL REGISTER

(Check One)

Excellent Good Fair Deteriorated Ruins Unexposed

(Check One)

Altered Unaltered

(Check One)

Moved Original Site

DESCRIPTION OF THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Consists of four contiguous porphyry bluffs forming a crescent a mile in length on the south side of Medicine Bluff Creek, which is a tributary of Cache Creek and Red River. The Bluffs are immediately northwest of the main post of Fort Sill. The north side of Bluff No. 3 consists of a sheer cliff 310 feet high, rising abruptly from the creek. It is evidently the result of an ancient cataclysm in which half of a rock dome was raised along a crack or fault. The summits of the bluffs are rounded. The escarpment has a columnar structure, with parallel flutings traversing the face in a vertical direction from top to bottom.

Presently used as observation points and training areas for FA troops and for scenic purposes. The bluffs retain their original appearance, changed only by observation huts, rappelling facilities, and vehicle trails on the south side.

Randolph Keim reconnoitered the site with GEN Grierson in Dec 1868 preparatory to Fort Sill's establishment there, and described it as follows: "At eleven o'clock in the morning, we reached Medicine bluff. Our Indian guide contemplated this wonderful exhibition of nature with awe and reverence. To the interpreter he said, pointing to the conical summit of the central elevation, "there the great spirit sometimes dwells-- there the Comanche goes to drive out the bad spirit." As for ourselves we were wonder struck with the sublimity and magnificence of the scene. The bluff was a mile in length, forming a perfect crescent. At the base of the perpendicular scarp, which constituted the concavity of the crescent, coursed a beautiful stream about twenty yards in width, called Medicine Bluff creek. In some places the creek seemed bottomless, so that looking into its crystal waters, it had the appearance of a basin of ink, and again pursuing its way in more shallow spots became pure and sparkling. From the very brink of the creek rose the vertical sides of the bluff three hundred and ten feet in height by actual measurement. The sides had the appearance of a trap-rock, and the strata stood almost perpendicularly. At the central and highest point, the strata met, separating in the descent. The surface of this face of the bluff was regular and perfectly smooth. A minute species of moss covered the sides with a garb of pale green, which might easily have been mistaken for the rock. By far the larger portions of the face was perfectly bare, though at some places a few stunted cedars had found a lodgment in the crevices. On the opposite side of the creek, in several places, the banks were forty and fifty feet high, rocky, and overhung the stream; but they were, however, mostly low, stretching off into an alluvial plain. "

(Keim, Sheridan's Troopers, pp. 235-236).

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)

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <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 checked="" 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

Prominent landmark noted, described, and explored by all early expeditions and held in deep reverence by the Indian tribes of this area from time immemorial. General Marcy and his Red River Expedition of 1852, and Generals Sheridan, Custer, and Grierson on campaign of 1868-69 are historically associated. The Bluffs are rich in legend as well as history. Fort Sill was established adjacent to the Bluffs January 8, 1869.

The significance of the Bluffs in the Indian mystique derived in part from the fact that there are four of them, and four was a sacred number to the tribes of the region. A medicine men's rock cairn stood on the summit of Bluff No. 3. Here the sick were brought to be healed or disposed of by the supernatural and young warriors in lonely vigils presented their shields to the rising sun for power. Legends say that this was also a famous place for Indian suicides. The enormous fissure in the Bluffs was known as the "Medicine Man's Walk."

The first U.S. expedition to explore the sources of Red River, the Marcy Expedition, camped opposite the Medicine Bluffs on 19 July 1852. BG (then CPT) Randolph B. Marcy and GEN (then LT) George B. McClellan explored the area with a Company of the 5th Infantry and Delaware Indian scouts. GEN Marcy recommended the site as an ideal location for a military post to control the South Plains tribes.

When Fort Sill was established near the bluffs in 1869 it was known to the Indians as "The Soldier House at Medicine Bluffs." Today the Medicine Bluffs continue to dominate the immediate skyline of the Fort Sill landscape as they have for ages past.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Marcy, R.B., Exploration of the Red River, Senate Executive Document 54, Thirty-third Congress, first session, pp. 72-74, plate no. 11 (Washington, 1853).
 Keim, De B. Randolph, Sheridan's Troopers on the Borders, Philadelphia: Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, 1870, 235-246.
 Nye, W.S., Carbine & Lance, The Story of Old Fort Sill, Centennial Edition, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1969, 17f, 75f, 84f, 88, 293-94.
 Hooker, Forrestine C, Cricket: A Little Girl of the Old West, NY: Doubleday & Co., 1925, pp. 317-327.

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 34 ° 41' 23"	Degrees Minutes Seconds 98 ° 25' 25"		Degrees Minutes Seconds ° ' "	Degrees Minutes Seconds ° ' "	
NE	34 ° 41' 00"	98 ° 24' 19"				
SE	34 ° 40' 14.42"	98 ° 24' 00' 30"				
SW	34 ° 41' 07"	98 ° 25' 34"				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 170 acres

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Mr. Gillett Griswold, Director DATE: 23 Apr 1974

BUSINESS ADDRESS: US Army Field Artillery & Fort Sill Museum

STREET AND NUMBER: HQ US Army Field Artillery Center PHONE: 351-5123

CITY OR TOWN: Fort Sill STATE: Oklahoma CODE: 40

12. CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

State Liaison Officer recommendation:
 Yes
 No
 None
Ann H. Shick
 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

Thomas B. Coche 8/19/74
 Federal Representative Signature Date

Director, Real Property & Natural Resources, OASD (I&L)

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

W. R. Woodruff
 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 12/31/74

ATTEST:
Atty George T. Emery
 Keeper of The National Register
 Date: Dec 31, 1974

H/3
 14
 554480
 3837280
 552580
 3837340
 552190
 SEE INSTRUCTIONS
 3838520

SCALE
1:25,000



98° 25' 00"

34° 40' 00"

RESERVATION

FORT SILL



