

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:
South Dakota

COUNTY:
Marshall

FOR NPS USE ONLY

ENTRY DATE
MAY 10 1973

1. NAME

COMMON:
Fort Sisseton

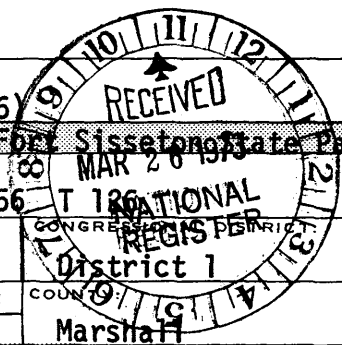
AND/OR HISTORIC:
Fort Wadsworth (changed by Army in 1876)

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
NE 1/4 NE 1/4 Sec 10 R 56 T 18N

CITY OR TOWN:
Britton

STATE: **South Dakota** CODE: **46** COUNTY: **Marshall** CODE: **091**



3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <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	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
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 type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input checked="" 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. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
State of South Dakota, Department of Game, Fish and Parks

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: **Pierre** STATE: **South Dakota** CODE: **46**

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Marshall County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: **Britton** STATE: **South Dakota** CODE: **46**

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Advisory List to the National Register

DATE OF SURVEY: **1969** Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
U.S. Dept. of Interior, NPS, Office of Archaeology & Historic Preservation

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: **Washington** STATE: **D.C.** CODE: **11**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input 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

Fort Sisseton was built in 1864 by order of General Pope to provide protection for friendly Indians, immigrants, and settlers. The original log buildings were gradually replaced by stone and brick structures, all of which stand today in various conditions of reconstruction, stabilization, or repair. Following its abandonment the fort was turned over to the state. The buildings were allowed to deteriorate until the 1930's when a transient camp was set up nearby and men were set to work restoring the stables, replacing the original flat roof with a hipped gable. Later, WPA projects were more historically accurate and the present structures are not significantly altered by their efforts. Included in the Fort Sisseton site are 15 masonry buildings, 9 building sites, several cisterns or cistern sites, and breastwork remains.

Site 1. North Barracks (1866)

Today this building contains the visitor center, lounge, and audio-visual rooms. It is 45' x 182' and is built of split field stones. The building was designed to house two companies of soldiers, about 150 men. In 1934 when reconstruction began, only the exterior walls and remnants of the interior walls still stood.

Site 2. South Barracks (1866)

This building is the same size as the north barracks; however, it never had an attached porch. Inside you can see the wall mountings where the soldiers' bunks were hung. This building served as a storage area for commissary supplies during the later years of the fort's active life. The interior walls were never replaced during reconstruction.

Site 3. Oil House

This stone building was used to store oils for lamps, machinery, and other needs of the fort. North of this building and inside the breastworks are depressions that mark the sites of the toilets, cisterns, and a bakery that were located east of the barracks. The trading post was located across the road from a break in the embankment that marks the original east fort entrance.

Site 4. Guard House

Originally the guard house was built with two rooms and two cells designed to hold about 20 persons. The building is made of brick manufactured by the troopers. There was a wooden porch on the west side of the guard house when it was first constructed.

Site 5. Magazine (1866)

This building was used to store gun powder and ammunition. The stone and brick construction has preserved the building in near-original condition.

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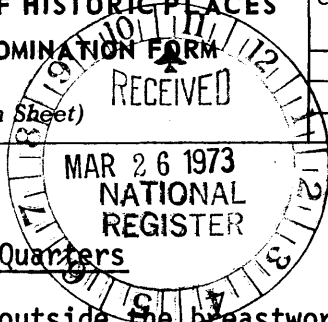
SEE INSTRUCTIONS



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(Number all entries)

7. Description (Fort Sisseton)

Site 6. Commissary Sergeant's Quarters

One of the few buildings built outside the breastworks, this building is also built of split field stone. It is often mistakenly called the "lookout post." Originally a porch was attached over the south entrance. 25 feet west of the commissary sergeant's quarters was the quartermaster sergeant's quarters. About 100' southwest of this site is a depression that marks the remains of a 3-room root cellar. This cellar was used to store some of the produce raised in the 3 gardens maintained by the fort's personnel. One garden was for enlisted men, one for use of the hospital patients, and one for the post officers.

Site 7. Adjutant's Office

The adjutant's office is a small, one-story brick building.

Site 8. Officers' Quarters

The front of this brick building has been restored much to its original appearance. The back, or west side, of the structure shows evidence where sheds and kitchens were removed and never replaced. Officers and their families lived in this building. Southwest of the officers' quarters and inside the corner of the breastwork is a depression that marks the site of the first powder magazine. It was a log structure with stone foundation and was 17' x 15'. It was replaced by the brick and stone magazine after 1866.

Site 9. Commanding Officer's Residence (1866)

This 2-story brick building housed the fort commander. The rear of this facility also shows signs where kitchens and sheds have been removed and not replaced. The original structure and plans call for the restoration of these wooden additions.

Site 10. Doctor's Quarters

A wood shed lean-to is missing from this building that housed the fort's doctor and his servants. Directly west of the doctor's residence and inside the earthworks are depressions that mark the sites of hospital toilets and death house. During periods when the ground was frozen, bodies of deceased personnel were kept in the death house until graves could be dug.

Site 11. Blockhouses

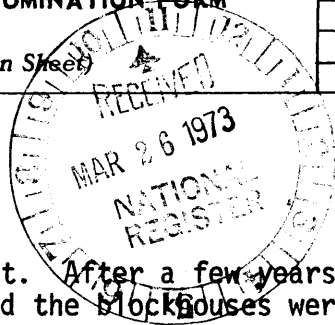
Log blockhouses each 28' x 28' were built on the southeast and northwest corners of the breastworks. Signs of the rock foundations of the 2-story

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7. Description (Fort Sisseton)

Site 11. Blockhouses, continued

log structures are still evident. After a few years, the fear of conflict on the frontier was lessened and the blockhouses were used for storage.

Site 12. Hospital

Originally this brick building was rectangular in shape, 33' wide and 60' long, and 1 1/2 stories high. It was remodeled into a larger structure during the latter years of the fort's active life. In 1967 the east wall of the hospital was remodeled to save it from further deterioration.

Site 13. Library-Schoolhouse

This one-story brick building was originally 40' x 60' in a cross design. It was one of the last of the fort's facilities to be constructed. It first served as the library, and 94 volumes were stocked. In 1878 it was decided that a school was needed, and the post library was chosen for this facility. Later it served as a telegraph office, and court martials were also conducted in this building. Today it serves as the park ranger's residence.

Site 14. Stable

This structure was also built outside the ditch enclosure. It is constructed of split field stone and is 35' x 219'. The roof was a flat gable design, but was remodeled to the present gambrel roof style by the WPA workers who undertook extensive restoration at the fort in 1934. The stable was designed with 78 stalls. Its prime service was to house the mules used to operate the saw mill. In 1873 the animals on the post were listed as 2 horses and 22 mules. The site of the fort's cemetery is 1/4 mile west of the barn. The remains of the deceased were removed to another military cemetery on a more permanent post prior to the closing of Fort Sisseton. A rail fence has been reconstructed around the cemetery site. Several of the wooden posts are part of the original rail fence.

Site 15. Carpenter's and Blacksmith's Shops

In 1934 when the restoration of many of the fort's buildings began, these buildings were in ruin. A display of blacksmith tools of the era may be viewed from the doorway of the blacksmith shop. Directly east across the highway is the site of the fort's saw mill. Logs were hauled from as far away as Sica Hollow, over 20 miles, to be sawed into lumber for construction at the fort. The ice house was located south of the saw mill, near the shore of the Kettle Lakes. Ice cut during the winter months was stored to

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7. Description (Fort Sisseton)

Site 15. Carpenter's and Blacksmith's Shops, continued

be used as drinking water during the summer months when the water in the lake became warm and bitter-tasting. Rain water was also collected and stored in 100-barrel cisterns located at various places inside the breast-works. Many of these cisterns were in usable condition as late as the mid-1930's when most of them were removed and used by farmers in the vicinity. Following the high bank of the lake shore south of the ice house is a depression that marks the site of the lime kiln. It was 8' across in a semicircular shape. The kiln was used to make brick for construction at the fort. Further south from the kiln site, and nearly opposite the original east entrance to the fort, are depressions marking the site of the fort's trading post.



9. 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) **established in 1864**

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 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

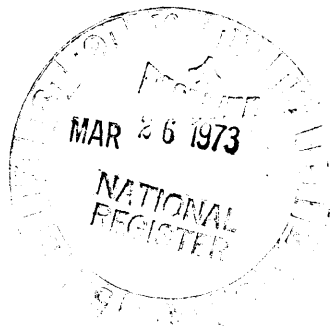
Established in 1864, Fort Sisseton protected immigrants, settlers, and friendly Indians from hostile Santee Sioux. Originally built to provide escort service for Idaho miners and to keep the peace among opposing Indian factions following the Minnesota Uprising of 1862, Fort Sisseton's role gradually changed to one of protecting the various elements of settlement--surveyors, railroad crews, and homesteaders. The fort was abandoned in 1888 when nearby reservation lands had been homesteaded and less-"civilized" Indian bands had been successfully confined west of the Missouri River.

The fort was originally named Fort Wadsworth in honor of a Civil War general but, upon the discovery in 1876 that another Fort Wadsworth existed in New York State, the name was changed to Fort Sisseton after the area's Sisseton Sioux tribes.

Fort Sisseton's history is not dramatic in the conventional "cowboy and Indian" sense, but the experiences of those who lived there offer a view of the hard work and frustration connected with human adaptation to a prairie environment. Also, Fort Sisseton was part of an important chain of posts stretching from Minnesota to the upper Missouri designed to control hostiles and expedite migration to the far frontier. Thus the fort is a manifestation of governmental policy as well as military necessity.

All of Fort Sisseton's permanent buildings remain standing in excellent to fair condition. The site, including 35 acres of surrounding prairie, is owned by the State of South Dakota and under the direction of the Department of Game, Fish and Parks. The Department opens the fort to visitors during the summer months. At this date, a bill is pending in the South Dakota Legislature appropriating funds for further restoration.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

A Narrative Report for Fort Sisseton State Park, prepared by the National Park Service at the request of the South Dakota Game, Fish & Parks Dept., Division of Forestry and Parks.

Hummel, Edward A., "The Story of Fort Sisseton," South Dakota Historical Review, Vol. 2, #3, October, 1937, pp. 126-144.

Schell, Herbert, History of South Dakota, University of Nebraska Press, 1961, pp. 50, 54, 66-68.

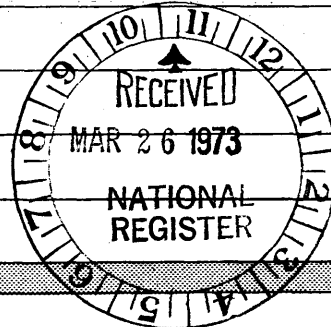
10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				OR	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	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NE	45°	39'	40"	97°	31'	54"			
SE	45°	39'	32"	97°	31'	48"			
SW	45°	39'	32"	97°	31'	54"			

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **35**

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



NO WORK SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: **Paul Putz, Research Historian**

ORGANIZATION: **South Dakota Historic Preservation** DATE: **2-28-73**

STREET AND NUMBER: **W. H. Over Dakota Museum, University of South Dakota**

CITY OR TOWN: **Vermillion** STATE: **South Dakota** CODE: **46**

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name: **Dr. James E. Gillihan**
 Title: **State Liaison Officer**

Date: **3-21-73**

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

Robert H. Utley
 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: **5/10/73**

ATTEST: **W. Putz**
 Keeper of The National Register

Date: **5-9-73**