

PH0020141

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: ALABAMA
COUNTY: LIMESTONE
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE MAY 8 1973

1. NAME

COMMON:
SULPHUR TRESTLE FORT SITE

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
T 1 S, R 4 W, SECTION 32

CITY OR TOWN:
1 MILE SOUTH OF ELKMONT

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:
5th

STATE: **ALABAMA** CODE: **01** COUNTY: **LIMESTONE** CODE: **083**

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input checked="" 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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Comments _____ Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
ROBERT W. ANDERSON

STREET AND NUMBER:
703 14th AVENUE S. E.

CITY OR TOWN:
DECATUR

STATE:
ALABAMA

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
LIMESTONE COUNTY COURTHOUSE

STREET AND NUMBER:
COURTHOUSE SQUARE

CITY OR TOWN:
ATHENS

STATE:
ALABAMA

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
NONE

DATE OF SURVEY: Federal State County

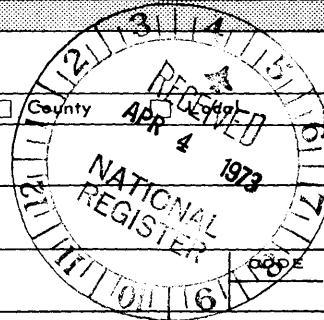
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

STATE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



STATE: _____
COUNTY: _____
ENTRY NUMBER: _____
DATE: _____

FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION

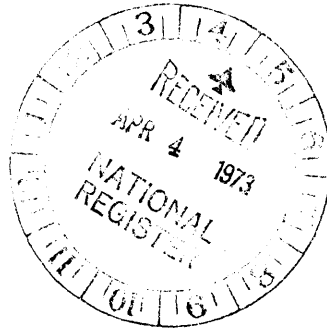
CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>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

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The fort site at Sulphur Trestle is located seven miles north of Athens, Alabama, on the Louisville and Nashville railroad line. The fort is south of Sulphur Creek and just west of the train tracks. About four hundred yards of trenches still remain and are in reasonable good condition. The fort and the houses were burned by General Nathan Bedford Forrest after the fort was surrendered to him.

In 1864 the fort was a square redoubt about 70 yards long on each side. The parapet was built of logs with several feet of hard-packed dirt on the outside. The fort was five or six feet high. A deep trench was dug around the parapet. Inside the fort were the powder magazine, officer's quarters, and sheds for supplies. South of the fort the enlisted men lived in tents.

A historic/recreational park is planned for the site.



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

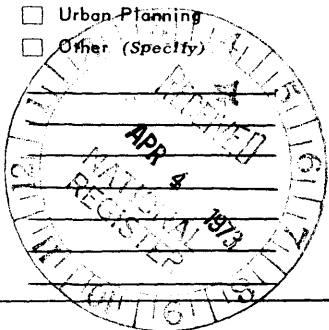
PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<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) **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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation	
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation			



STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

✓ Sulphur Trestle Fort in Limestone County was the site of a major military action in September 1864 between Confederate General Nathan Bedford Forrest and the Union garrison guarding the railroad trestle over Sulphur Creek. ✓

The Union Army had captured the Tennessee River Valley in 1862; however, their control was subject to numerous raids by Forrest, General Joe Wheeler and others. The North-South railroad from Nashville to Decatur was an important part of the supply line to General Sherman in Atlanta as it intersected the Memphis and Charleston railroad which went through Atlanta.

General Forrest left his headquarters in Verona, Mississippi on the 16th of September, 1864, with the mission of destroying the rail lines north of Decatur, Alabama. He crossed the Tennessee River near Florence and headed for Athens which was under the command of Colonel Wallace Campbell. General Forrest joined forces with General P. D. Roddy west of Rogersville. Together they had a 4,500 man fighting force. Forrest struck four miles south of Athens and destroyed the railroad tracks. On September 23, Forrest surrounded Athens. Colonel Campbell burned the commissary building and withdrew to his fort. Not wishing to attack Campbell's fort in a frontal assault, Forrest decided to try trickery. He requested an interview with Campbell and while they talked, Forrest paraded the same men and cannons past Campbell again and again and convinced Campbell that he had a large army. In his official report, Campbell estimated that there were more than 12,000 troops and 18 cannons lined up against him. Against seemingly overwhelming odds he surrendered.

After sacking the stores of Union sympathizers in Athens and sending his prisoners south, Forrest moved north and camped six miles above Athens on the night of the 24th.

The next Union outpost on the rail line was located at Sulphur Trestle an 80 foot high wooden bridge nearly 200 yards long. There were two blockhouses on the southern end of the bridge and a fort on a nearby hill. The fort was defended by two companies of black troops, the 11th U. S. Colored Troops and the command of Colonel Lanthrop. The use of ex-slaves and free Negroes was an experiment designed to free the regular Union troops for front line duties. Lanthrop was reinforced by 128 men

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Dunnivant, R. Jr., Series of Articles in "Athens News Courier"
Athens, Alabama, March - April 1967.

Summersell, Charles G. Alabama. Montgomery, Viewpoint Publications,
1970.

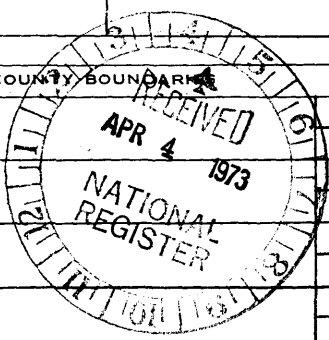
10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

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	° ' "	° ' "		34° 54' 41"	86° 58' 20"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **5 acres**

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
W. Warner Floyd, Executive Director

ORGANIZATION: **Alabama Historical Commission** DATE: **March 29, 1973**

STREET AND NUMBER:
305 South Lawrence Street

CITY OR TOWN: **Montgomery** STATE: **Alabama** CODE: **01**

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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: Miles B. Howard Jr.

Title: SLO for Historic Preservation

Date: March 30, 1973

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

Robert A. Utsey
Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 5/8/73

ATTEST:

W. M. ...
Keeper of The National Register

Date: 4 27 73

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
ALABAMA	
COUNTY	
LIMESTONE	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	MAY 8 1973

(Number all entries) SULPHER TRESTLE - CONTINUED SIGNIFICANCE

of the Ninth Indiana ^{VAL}Calvary under Colonel Lilly and 60 men of the Third Tennessee Regiment under Colonel Minnis. Lanthrop was ordered to "hold the fort at all hazards and to the last extremity."

On September 25, Forrest surrounded the fort and began shelling it. Colonel Lanthrop was killed at the start of the fight and was replaced by Colonel J. B. Minnis. At around nine a.m. Colonel Minnis was struck by a piece of shell and replaced by Colonel Lilly. When they arrived, Forrest sent General Buford out to meet them and to turn them back. At this point, Forrest demanded unconditional surrender which Lilly refused. Forrest then offered terms and Lilly took them to Colonel Minnis who had recovered sufficiently to resume command. Minnis held a council of war and all officers except Minis voted to surrender. Within an hour the terms were accepted. The Confederate had killed over 200 men and captured over 800 more as well as 700 small arms, 2 artillery pieces, 16 wagons, 300 horses and various stores.

Forrest had the trestle and fort burned and then moved North to Tennessee.

