

478

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

10-1001-103

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

## 1. Name of Property

historic name: Hornaday Camp

other name/site number: 24GF362

## 2. Location

street & number: Montana Highway 200

not for publication: n/a  
vicinity: n/a

city/town: Sand Springs

state: Montana code: MT county: Garfield code: 033 zip code: 59077

## 3. Classification

Ownership of Property: private

Category of Property: site

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>1</u>	<u>          </u> building(s)
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u> sites
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u> structures
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u> objects
<u>1</u>	<u>          </u> Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

Name of related multiple property listing: n/a

**4. Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this  X  nomination   request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  X  meets   does not meet the National Register Criteria.   See continuation sheet.

Maude Sheffy 1-28-91  
Signature of certifying official Date

MT SHPO  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property   meets   does not meet the National Register criteria.  
  See continuation sheet.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

**5. National Park Service Certification**

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register Antoinette Rice 3/26/91  
  See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register  
  See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

for \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Keeper Date

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## 6. Function or Use

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Historic: Domestic/camp

Current: Not in use

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## 7. Description

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Architectural Classification: n/a

Materials:            foundation: n/a  
                         walls: n/a  
                         roof: n/a

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Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Hornaday Camp site is the location of the final base camp for the 1886 Smithsonian expedition whose mission it was to acquire buffalo specimens. Described and referred to by expedition leader William T. Hornaday in his journals and articles as the "camp on the Big Porcupine," the site was occupied from November 5 or 6 to December 13, 1886.

The site is situated at an elevation of 3,340 feet on a low cut-off terrace above a bend in McGinnis Creek. Eroding bluffs rise in an arc to the west and northwest approximately 50 meters away. The camp site is sheltered from prevailing winds, yet receives maximum daylight. Also, the camp site is not visible from uplands.

General topography of the area is one of ravines, rolling uplands, and small buttes. A major landmark visible to the southeast is known as McGinnis Butte, approximately one-and-three-quarter miles distant. The view from the camp today is primarily to the south and southeast, and is restricted by the stream channel cut into surrounding terrain. Vegetation consists of sparse grasses and some small sagebrush.

The McGinnis Creek bed has filled in during recent years, probably as a result of the construction of stock dam 200 meters downstream. Colluvial deposits have accumulated at the back of the terrace, in some places extending out to the foot of the terrace. Surface visibility is high although surface sediments are primarily very recent. The present stock pond apparently covers an active spring, as there is no well pump and the pond remains full when the stream bed is dry.

The only extant cultural feature visible on the surface today is a dugout or depression, measuring approximately 5 meters across, and situated at the southeast edge of the terrace. Associated with this feature was a single exposed sandstone slab. Further exposure of the slab and shovel probing in the area revealed several other buried slabs descending and to the west. The water table was encountered at approximately 70 cm below the surface, hindering further testing and the possible discovery of a floor level. The slabs are not natural to the immediate area but may have derived from an outcrop on the bluff top, 200 meters to the north of the feature.

The location of this feature and its appearance are consistent with a cook shack depicted in a sketch of the Hornaday camp that appeared in an 1887 The Cosmopolitan magazine article. This cook shack was shown to be a roofed dugout with a south facing entrance accessed by steps cut into the ground. In the sketch, smoke rises from a chimney at one side of the roof. The cook shack was also described by Hornaday in the accompanying article: "in the head of a deep gully close by [our sibley tent] that had just started to eat its way up through level ground we made a very comfortable "dug out" to serve Mack [Pvt. Patrick McCanna, the cook] as a kitchen, dug an ample fire-place at one side of it, and roofed the whole thing over with poles, gunny bags, rubber blankets, and dirt."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>"The Passing of the Buffalo, II" The Cosmopolitan, Vol. IV, No. 3, November, 1887, p. 232.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7

Hornaday Camp

Page 1

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In addition to the above, a collapsed rock cairn was observed on the top of the bluff above the camp location. This may be associated with a later use of the area by shepherders, as several early 1900s cans were also observed on the bluff top.

Responding to a distinct reading from a metal detector, on June 13, 1990, Doug Coffman recovered a single collapsed tin can at a depth of 12 to 14 inches below the surface in a location approximately 15 meters northwest of the dugout feature described above. The can appears to have a high tin content, suggesting 1870s to 1880s vintage. It is short (only about 3 inches tall) and the top is removed; it appears to have been suitable for fruit packaging.

The sediments of the terrace are predominately clayey as revealed in several shovel and trowel probes. Based on the depth of the can described above, considerable deposition has occurred in the last 100 years--a combination of overbank clays and colluvium. Although there are no imminent threats to the integrity of the site, continued use of the area by cattle may enhance erosion in the area of the suspected dugout. However, problems in excavation are expected because Hornaday was described by his biographer as a "meticulous man" and the broadcast of debris scatter typical of contemporary historical camps may be missing.

To further explore the potential eligibility of this property under criterion D, controlled metal detector survey using high quality equipment may be used to determine the possible location of additional subsurface deposits. Based on results of such a survey effort, subsurface testing may be conducted. The location of the dugout may be excavated during times when the water table is at its lowest.

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## 8. Statement of Significance

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Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: State-wide

Applicable National Register Criteria: A, B

Areas of Significance: Conservation

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): n/a

Period(s) of Significance: 1886

Significant Person(s): William T. Hornaday

Significant Dates: 1886

Cultural Affiliation: n/a

Architect/Builder: n/a

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State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Hornaday Camp qualifies for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under criteria A and B for its association with historic buffalo hunting on the northern Plains, William T. Hornaday, the Smithsonian expeditions, and the wildlife conservation movement of the late 1800s. The site may also possess significance under criterion D as an historic archaeological site, but the quality of information potential must yet be substantiated by further testing to determine the nature and extent of preserved material remains.

William Temple Hornaday was an internationally renowned collecting naturalist, field zoologist, museum taxidermist, author, zoological park founder and director, and wildlife preservationist and conservationist. His two Montana buffalo hunting expeditions in 1886, one in the spring and one in the fall, inspired his involvement in the latter two fields and enhanced his reputation in all of the others. The Hornaday Camp site in Montana is likely the only property remaining that bears a direct and personal association with William T. Hornaday. Hornaday's later residences and studios in New York and Washington, D.C. are no longer extant.

Hornaday was 31 years old when he came to Montana, but he had already traveled around the world gathering the most extensive and varied vertebrate collection of zoological specimens ever assembled by one person. The skins and skeletons of the buffalo he brought back to the Smithsonian were an important addition to the mounted specimens Hornaday had previously made available to the natural history museum in the United States and abroad.

Hornaday had been selected Chief Taxidermist of the Smithsonian in 1882 because he was considered to be the best taxidermist in the United States, and the realistic looking American Bison Group he mounted after his return from Montana was regarded by his peers as the highest achievement of museum taxidermy up to that time. Moreover, Hornaday's American Bison Group was so popular with museum officials that it broke down the resistance to habitat groups as a way of displaying museum specimens. The rule of severe simplicity had reigned in which animals were mounted individually on wooden pedestals, but now they were replaced by family groups of animals displayed in settings that resembled the animals' natural habitats. Because Hornaday's perfection of the habitat group, natural history museums were transformed from scientific storehouses to institutions of public education where the entire populace could learn from natural history exhibits. The large bull in the American Bison Group, among others, was taken by Hornaday while staying at the Big Porcupine Creek campsite. This magnificent animal, one of the largest on record, was later used as the model for the buffalo portrayed on the ten dollar bill issued in 1901.

The calf in this group is also of special significance, for Hornaday had picked it up alive on the plains during his spring hunt in 1886 and attempted to raise it in captivity. Although it died, the realization he gained from his experiences in Montana as to how close the buffalo had come to extinction led Hornaday to found the National Zoological Park in Washington, D.C. in 1890, the first zoological park in the world established for the purpose of breeding endangered species in captivity.

To publicize the plight of the buffalo, Hornaday had written The Extermination of the American Bison, with a Sketch of its Discovery and Life History, which was published by the Smithsonian Institution the previous year. Hornaday's bison memoir is significant because it was the first full length history of the buffalo and it contains many valuable observations of the bison in its wild state. But Hornaday's treatise on the buffalo had a larger importance than that, for throughout its pages he scathingly denounced the

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8

Hornaday Camp

Page 1

wantonness of its near extermination and sounded the alarm that other species were well on their way down the path trod by the buffalo. Countless excerpts from his book were published in the newspapers and magazines, creating for the first time a national awareness of the threat of extinction which America's wildlife faced. For this reason, Hornaday's seminal work marks the effective beginning of the wildlife preservation movement in America.

Hornaday continued his efforts to preserve the buffalo. When he became founding director of the New York Zoological Park in 1896, he made wildlife conservation and the preservation of endangered species, such as the buffalo, one of the principal objectives of that distinguished institution. He was also president of the American Bison Society which was responsible for the creation of a number of buffalo preserves in the West, the first one being the National Bison Range which was established in Montana in 1909.

But the preservation of the American bison was only a small part of Hornaday's forty-year crusade for wildlife. Through his many publications and personal efforts, he became the driving force behind key national and international laws and treaties which provided protection for wildlife. These include laws which outlawed market hunting and hunting plumed birds for the millinery industry, placed the hunting of migratory birds under federal control in both the U.S. and Canada and provided protection for the Alaskan fur seal. There is no doubt that Hornaday was the father of wildlife preservation in America and in the world, for that matter.

A prolific writer, Hornaday authored over twenty books and many articles. His stories about his adventures with animals were read by millions. But he also wrote about other themes. In "The Cowboys of the Northwest," The Cosmopolitan, 2 (December 1886), 219-228, he provided a profile of the Montana cowboy and in the first part of his novel, The Man Who Became a Savage, 1896, Hornaday described life on the cattleman's frontier in Montana.

The Hornaday expedition for buffalo was sent West in the fall of 1886 under the auspices of the U.S. National Museum of the Smithsonian Institution. The mission of the expedition was to obtain high quality specimens of wild American bison at a time when it was recognized that the species was facing extinction. The leader of the expedition was William Temple Hornaday, Chief taxidermist at the U.S. National Museum. Participating members were William Harry Brown, assistant graduate student from the University of Kansas, Privates Patrick McCanna and C.S. West (Fort Keogh), and three cowboys: Irvin Boyd, L.S. Russell, and James McNaney.

During the hunt, which lasted from late September through mid-December, 1886, Hornaday described taking over 20 bison from a large area straddling the crest of the Missouri-Yellowstone Divide. The total take was listed by Hornaday as 22 buffalo skins, 11 buffalo skeletons, 44 buffalo skulls, and a large quantity and variety of skins and skeletons belonging to antelope, deer, coyote, grouse, rabbit, and other animals.<sup>2</sup> The buffalo specimens were used in taxidermic displays at the National Museum, or incorporated in the permanent zoological collections of the Smithsonian Institution and other national museums.

The expedition's main camp, which Hornaday referred to as the Camp on the Big Porcupine, was used by the seven members of the expedition for approximately 6 weeks, from about November 5 or 6 until December 13. This site was the expedition's third and most important base camp. Members hunted out from it in all directions, returning periodically

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<sup>2</sup>ibid., 1887, *The Extermination of the American Bison*, p. 40.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8

Hornaday Camp

Page 2

with meat, hides, and skeletons of bison, and with carcasses of other animal specimens. Specimens were prepared at the camp for taxidermic mounting and trans-shipment back to the Smithsonian.

Though the expedition used other campsites in the vast hunting range, these were used only briefly, and were lacking in amenities such as water and shelter from the wind. These other camps rated only brief mention in published accounts of the hunt. The camp was also central to the success of the expedition. In his accounts, Hornaday extols the virtues of the site as an "oasis" in the wilderness and provides considerable descriptive detail on its location.

Initial discovery of the pool of clear water that attracted the team to the camp location is attributed by Hornaday to Jim McNaney, a former buffalo hunter whom Hornaday recruited as a scout and hunter for the expedition. The expedition was supplied out of Fort Keogh with wagons, horses, canned goods (tomatoes, beans, applesauce, etc.) and camping supplies.

The most compelling of the historic information suggesting the present site to be Hornaday's camp is a sketch of the camp (see enclosure) published in the 1887 Cosmopolitan magazine article. Camp features depicted in the sketch include a wagon, a wood pile, a Sibley tent, and a pile of packaged supplies. Also in the lower right of the foreground is a dugout, roofed feature that can be identified as a cook shack. The terrain as depicted in the sketch is a terrace above a coulee with prominent cutbanks, backed by rising eroded bluffs with a distinctive conical butte in the far background. The identified site location today closely follows that of this 1887 sketch, allowing for some exaggeration of contours in the drawing and assuming infilling of the coulee and colluvial erosion of the bluff. The major discrepancy is the butte in the background. Text and map references for this butte, called Smithsonian Butte by Hornaday and known as McGinnis Butte today, clearly place it south of the camp and not north as depicted in the sketch. One must conclude that the placement of the butte in the sketch is an artistic convention and not a literal documentation of topography.

A probable analog for the dugout feature in the Hornaday camp is provided in a photograph entitled "Buffalo hunters' camp near Sheridan, Kansas."<sup>3</sup> Depicted in this photograph is a dugout with a triangular peaked roof supported in the middle left by a pole upright and in the lower right by a similar pole. The roof appears to be manufactured of overlapping milled boards, possibly taken from a dismantled wagon, which are overlain by canvas, with an earth cover. A barrel situated at the rear of this dugout may have functioned as a chimney. An excavated entryway is evident. Other comparisons may be made with published contemporary photographs made by Huffman<sup>4</sup> that illustrate buffalo hunters' camps in Montana and show features ranging from a log cabin, a dugout with a sandstone slab front wall, to a coulee with a hide thrown over the top. Other descriptions<sup>5</sup> indicate the use of dugouts but provide insufficient detail to make comparisons.

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<sup>3</sup>Nebraska State Historical Society Photo Archives; see copy in Garavaglia, Louis A. and Charles G. Worman, Firearms of the American West 1866-1894, U. of New Mexico Press, 1985, p. 150.

<sup>4</sup>Brown, Mark H. and W.R. Felton, The Frontier Years, Bramhall House: New York, 1964.

<sup>5</sup>Brown, Mark H., The Plainsmen of the Yellowstone, Bison Books: Lincoln, Nebraska, 1973.

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## 9. References

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- Brown, Mark H., The Plainsmen of the Yellowstone, Bison Books: Lincoln, Nebraska, 1973.  
Brown, Mark H. and W.R. Felton, The Frontier Years, Bramhall House: New York, 1964.  
Ibid. Before Barbed Wire, Bramhall House: New York, 1965.  
Dolph, James A., "William Temple Hornaday: Bringing Wildlife to Millions - The Early Years, 1854-1896," PhD dissertation, University of Michigan.  
Garavaglia, Louis A. and Charles G. Worman, Firearms of the American West 1866-1894, U.of New Mexico Press, 1985.  
Hornaday, William T., "The Extermination of the American Bison," Report of the U.S. National Museum, Smithsonian Institution, Section II Government Printing Office, 1889.  
Ibid. "The Last Buffalo Hunt," Sunday Oregonian, Portland, Oregon: May 1, 1887.  
Ibid. "The Passing of the Buffalo," The Cosmopolitan, Vol. IV, No. 2, October, 1887, and Vol. IV, No. 3, Nov. 1887.  
Ibid. "Our Last Buffalo Hunt," in A Wild-Animal Round-up, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1925.  
Peterson, John M. (ed.), "Buffalo Hunting in Montana in 1886: The Diary of W. Harvey Brown," Montana, The Magazine of Western History, Vol. XXXI, No. 4: 2-13, 1981.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other - Specify Repository: \_\_\_\_\_

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## 10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of Property: Approximately 8 acres

UTM References:	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	13	317460	5204480
B	13	317590	5204460
C	13	317490	5204280
D	13	317340	5204320

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Verbal Boundary Description: The eastern boundary for the nominated property follows the western bank of McGinnis Creek and the western boundary follows the 3400' elevation line along the top of the bluffs immediately above the camp site. The northern boundary runs between UTM points A and B while the southern boundary runs between UTM points C and D. The boundary encompasses that portion of the terrace upon which the Hornaday Camp was located.

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Boundary Justification: The nominated land area is thought to encompass the land upon which the Hornaday Expedition established its camp in the fall of 1886 based upon historical documentation and on-the-ground inspection.

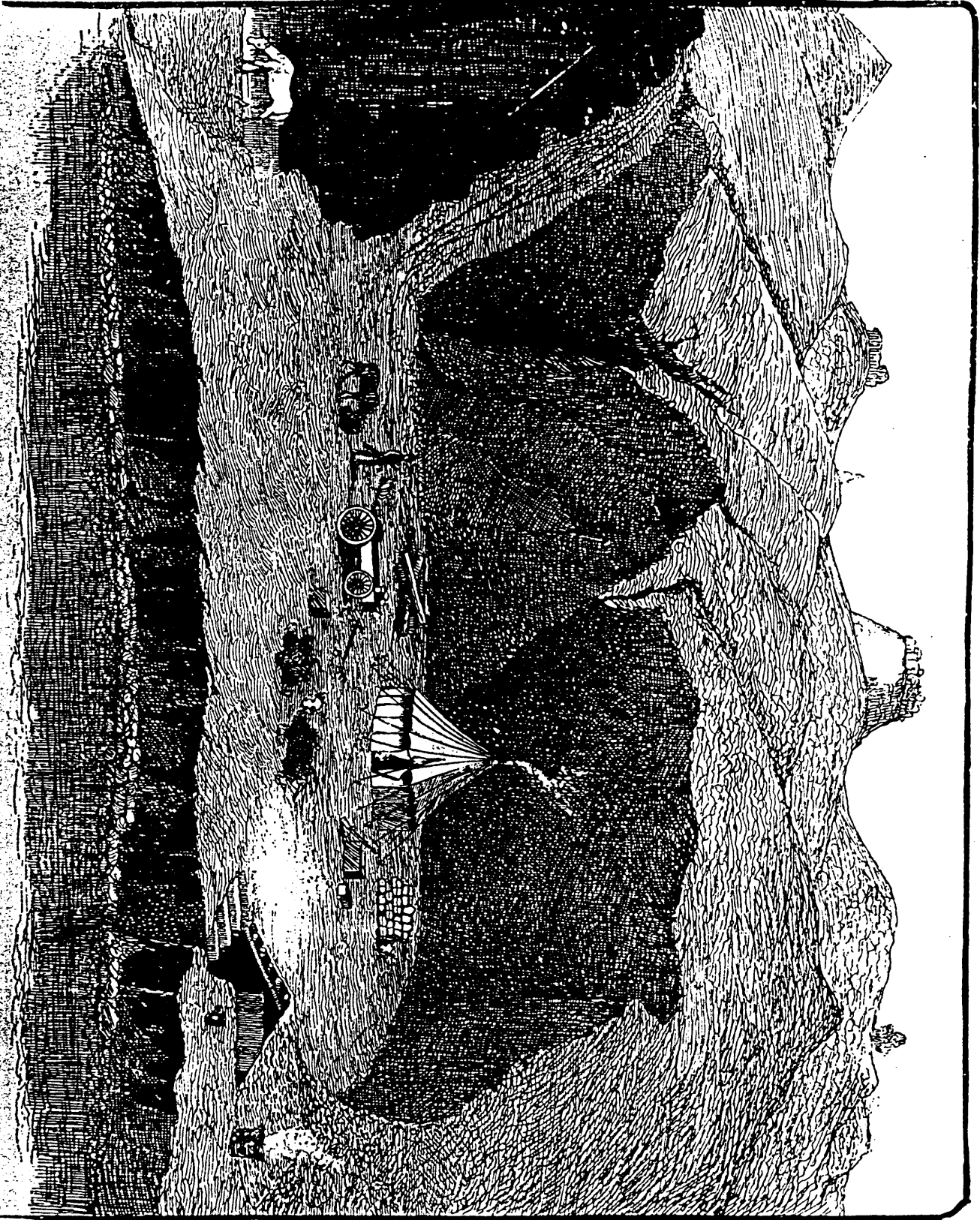
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## 11. Form Prepared By

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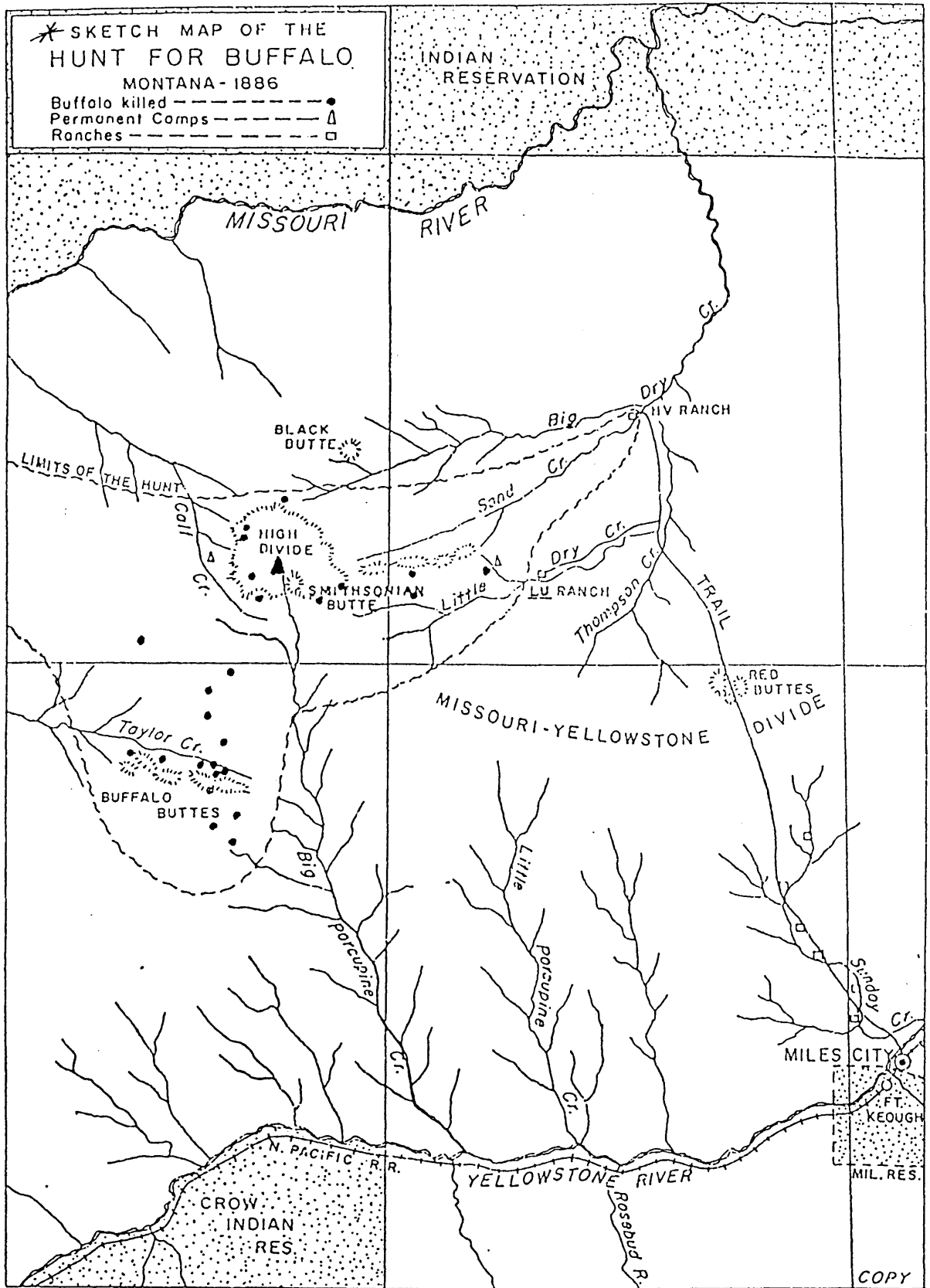
Name/Title: Doug Coffman, John Taylor, Dr. Mark Baumler and Dr. James A. Dolph  
Organization: State Historic Preservation Office Date: October, 1990  
Street & Number: 225 North Roberts Telephone: 406-444-7715  
City or Town: Helena State: MT Zip: 59620





CAMP ON THE BIG PORCUPINE.

William T. Hornaday, "The Passing of the Buffalo," *Cosmopolitan* magazine, Vol. IV, No. 2, October, 1887.



Sketch from "The Extermination of the American Bison," by William T. Hornaday, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1887.

△ Hornaday Camp