

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

MAY 8 1989

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name **FORT ASSINNIBOINE**
other names/site number **ASSINIBOINE or ASSINABOINE**

2. Location

street & number **Star Rte #36, Box #43; County Road 82nd Avenue West** not for publication **N.A.**
city, town **Six miles Southwest of Havre** vicinity
state **Montana** code **30** county **Hill** code **041** zip code **59501**
(One-half mile Southeast of U.S. Highway #87)

3. Classification

| | | | |
|--|--|-------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Ownership of Property | Category of Property | Number of Resources within Property | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> private | <input type="checkbox"/> building(s) | Contributing | Noncontributing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-local | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district | <u>18</u> | <u>1</u> buildings |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-State | <input type="checkbox"/> site | | sites |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal | <input type="checkbox"/> structure | <u>1</u> | structures |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> object | <u>19</u> | objects |
| | | | <u>1</u> Total |

Name of related multiple property listing: **N.A.**
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register **-0-**

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official *Marcell Steffy* Date 4-26-89
State or Federal agency and bureau MT SHPO

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. *Bruce J. Noble, Jr.* 5/31/89
 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 the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

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Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DEFENSE - MILITARY FACILITY

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

OTHER - Northern (Montana)Agricultural Research Center**7. Description**

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

OTHER - 19th and early 20th CenturyMilitary.

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Quarried Limestonewalls Brick and Sandstone (1 bldg)roof Asphalt, slate & wood shingles

other _____

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

I. PRESENT APPEARANCE

Of the original 104 Fort buildings, there are only 18 that remain today, besides the Fort marker, flag pole and a farm storage building constructed in the 1930's by the W.P.A. (and miscellaneous small sheds). Six are loosely grouped on the south end of the approximately one-tenth mile wide by half-mile long parade grounds, one near the west entrance of the Fort grounds proper, four to the east near the lower Post Road, and the remaining seven scattered around the middle and north perimeters of the parade grounds. Shelter-belt trees (planted after the Fort's closure) now separate about one-third of the southern part of the parade grounds from the other two-thirds, which is flat, wide-open prairie. Foundation remains mark most of the former building locations, particularly north of the shelter-belt trees.

The buildings' current conditions and descriptions are as follows:

1. The 1905, 64'x43' guard house (a replacement) with a 43'x60' rear wing, is in good condition, with the roof repaired per the Sect. of the Interior Standards, and it is currently used for seed storage. The single story brick building has a hipped roof of slate shingles and a single dormer with a hip roof centrally located on the front facade; the dormer has two square windows that light the attic space. A continuous wood porch runs across the front. The main floor contained the 50-inmate-capacity prison, a guard room, a sergeants' and officer-of-the-day room. The concrete walled basement housed the boiler room, a kitchen, the dining, storage and tool rooms. The jail's bars were removed after closure, and placed in the original and subsequent Havre City jails.
2. The 1889, 23'x75' library*(the 2nd) is in good condition and it is used as the agricultural research center office. The single story brick building, originally a large single room, is now broken up into office spaces. It has a wood-shingled hip roof with a long, wooden front porch and two 10'x15' wings on the north and south, and two 5'x10' wings on the east and west. The foundation is of limestone.
3. The 1886, 27'x90' "Hop Room" (officers amusement hall) with a 25'x44' south wing, is in poor condition, and is in need of major repair. The building is currently used for vehicle storage. It has a wood shingle hip roof and is the only post building made of native sandstone.

* (records indicate it also served as a postoffice for a period of time)

See continuation sheet

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Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 1

I. PRESENT APPEARANCE CONTINUED:

4. The 1881 Company (Lieutenants) officer's quarters (apartments) is in fair to good condition with a flat asphalt-coated roof (once tin), and is partially used for staff living quarters. The two story 150'x30' brick building with three wings, is basically in an "E" form, with the short 30'x35' legs built to the rear. The foundation is of limestone. It contains six apartments in a row-house type of construction. There is a wooden porch running the full length of the building front. The most unique feature is a single octagonal three-storey turret on the southwest corner which faces onto the parade grounds. The top of the turret, a story above the flat roof of the main building, ends in in a brick battlement, rising immediately above projecting or corbeled brick courses. The roof cornice is also corbeled out slightly. The continuous cornice gives the illusion of being supported on brick pilasters that break up the front facade at intervals between pairs of apartments. There are three tall, narrow, double-hung windows for each apartment on the second floor front facade and two on the lower floor. The windows in the turret, with stone sills and lintels, are similar to the others. The entries to each pair of apartments are located side by side. Each entry door has side lights and a transom light. A wide hallway and staircase are flanked by three rooms on the first floor: a parlor with a fireplace, a dining room and a kitchen. There are four rooms for each apartment on the second floor off a second floor hallway.
5. The 1880 Company officer's (Captains) quarters (duplex) is in fair to good condition, with new wood shingles, and is used for staff living quarters. It is a brick, 35'x50' building with a 35'x35' rear wing, and has a second floor contained within a wooden shingled mansard roof. The foundation is of limestone. The basic plan of each half is a stubby "L" shape and together they form a stubby "T." There is a continuous porch across the front. Dormer windows admit light to the second floor, there are three of those windows on the side of the building and three across the front. The central dormer window on the front facade has a double window unit divided by a wide jamb. These windows are very tall and narrowed and flank the party wall of the duplex. The other dormers are of the same size, but have only a single double-hung window in each. Each apartment has a double-hung window on the front facade of the first floor and three on the sides. The entry to each unit is adjacent to the party wall, and consists of a single door with a transom light. Each unit contains eight rooms, four per floor. There is a fireplace in each apartment.
6. The 1905, 37'x28', Noncommissioned officers quarters (duplex) is in fair condition, and has had several internal changes. It is also used for staff living quarters. The two-story brick building with a concrete foundation has a steep slate gable roof, which runs parallel to the front facade. The main entry of each apartment is at opposite ends of the front porch, and each unit contains seven rooms. Between the doorways are four double-hung windows, evenly spaced. Similar windows are located on the second floor above the first floor windows. Those units are set in flattened brick-arched openings.

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I. PRESENT APPEARANCE CONTINUED:

7.a., b., c.

The three 25'x75' (5625 square foot) commissary root cellars were built in 1902. All three face east. The northern-most two are in a ruined condition. The third is in good condition (S). The north and south cellars have cement floors while the middle one has a dirt floor. The south cellar has a wood frame with sod roof and native rubblestone walls and facade. The entry is central to facade and has a heavy wood lintel. Entry has original wood doors. They are now used for grain and silage storage.

8. - 9.

The 1883 field and staff officers 18'x48' carriage houses-stables, with brick walls, wooden shingled hip roof, and stone foundations, contained two stables with stalls for four animals, a carriage, and a half-story hay loft above. Eight is in poor condition, and is used for general small tool storage, and nine is in a serious state of deterioration with no roof or support frame left, and is not used. It is perhaps borderline between being a contributing or noncontributing building resources.

10. - 11. - 12.

Three 32'x53' Double Cavalry, Stable, Guard and Shop buildings were built in 1905. All three face east and have open-air porches on the facades. They are generally in poor condition. They are one-story wood frame brick buildings with gableroofs. One roof is wood shingled, while the other two have original slate shingling. Exposed rafters support overhanging eaves. Entries are central to the facades and are reached through porches. All windows and doors have been removed. They have plinthed concrete foundations. The interiors are divided into living and blacksmithing quarters. The blacksmith quarters have entries facing south. Building #11 has had a portion of the north wall removed converting it into a storage facility for antique farm equipment.

13. The 1880, 180'x30' 66-horse-capacity Quartermaster Stables building (originally there were six) was a brick, single story, hip wood shingle roof, earthen floor and limestone foundation. This stable (#4) burned down, and was replaced in 1906 with a larger 34'x233' building which held 73 horses. It is currently used for grain storage.

14. The 1884, 25'x60' Ordnance-fire Equipment Storage building is in poor condition and contains junk. The brick-walled structure has a stone foundation, wood shingled roof, barred windows, and a cellar.

15. The partial 1879 Post Exchange building is in fair condition, and has been significantly altered with the largest portion of the structure destroyed. It has brick walls, a native stone foundation and a wood shingled roof. The main two story 42'x120' (with a bowling alley) had three wings: 24'x40', 22'x32' and 28'x176'. The latter, parallel to the south, is what remains today.

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I. PRESENT APPEARANCE CONTINUED:

16. The 1905, 34'x104', 100-ton capacity ice house is in good condition, has a new wood shingled roof and other recent repairs, it is now used as a barn. The building has a concrete floor, brick walls and a stone foundation.
- a. The 1890 (estimate) erected, 90' flag staff, and shrouds are anchored in cement. It was built and erected by American Hoist & Derrick Co. of St. Paul, MN. It is in good condtion, and still used.
- b. The 67"x48'x10" Fort Marker is sandstone with an 8" high concrete base. It is in poor condition, and its inscribed face is deteriorating rapidly. It gives the Fort's beginning construction date, commander and troop designation, builder, etc. Where it was originally located, when made etc., is not known. It was found by the agricultural station in a pile of debris.

NOTE: Most, if not all, of the structural changes mentioned took place during the 1930's, and no exact dates can be given.

Other than the shelterbelt trees, the buildings, foundation remains and landscape are such that the historic integrity has not been affected seriously, and the Fort site still reflects its 32-year history in spite of the current agricultural research center now operating there.

II. HISTORIC PHYSICAL APPEARANCE:

Following the recommendation of Lieutenant General Phil H. Sheridan, commander of the military division assigned to the Missouri River area, Congress appropriated \$100,000.00 to establish a fort in northern Montana. In 1878, Colonel John R. Brooke (who later won renown in the Spanish-American War, serving for a time as governor-general of Cuba and commanded the military department of the east) was detailed to select a site. After thorough inspection of the entire region, a site was selected on the elevated left bank of Beaver Creek about four miles south of its junction with the Milk River, 71 miles northeast of Fort Benton and 28 miles west of the Indian Agency of Fort Belknap. The location was regarded for many years as one of the most important points in the northwest.

The fort was named Fort Assiniboine, presumably after the name of a tribe of Yankton Sioux that inhabited that area. The name means "Stone Boilers," referring to their method of cooking with heated stones. In 1884 the War Department changed the spelling of the name to Assinniboine.

Fort Assinniboine was the largest post ever constructed in Montana. The size of the entire installation, including hay and coal-field reservations, was a total of 220,000 acres. The wall-less, offensive fort, meant to be a permanent post, was carefully planned and well built to withstand the elements. Construction in 1879 and 1880 provided 74 buildings. Bricks manufactured on the post and locally quarried stone were used extensively as building materials. Other materials were shipped from the East. Subsequent construction eventually increased the number of buildings to 104.

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II. HISTORIC PHYSICAL APPEARANCE CONTINUED:

The Fort succeeded Fort Shaw as the headquarters post for the District of Montana and was a regimental training facility.

The following description of the fort appeared in the River Press, Wednesday, April 13, 1881:

"Fort Assinaboine (sic), as seen by a traveler going from (Fort) Benton first comes in sight about six miles distant, not in full view, but only the towers and the flag that waves over the post. Soon event these are lost sight of as we proceed along the bottom lands, and five miles are passed before it is seen again. Suddenly, as we ascend upon a gentle rise of ground, the entire scene bursts upon us without warning, and its perspective presents an air of grandeur from its ~~startling~~ contrast with anything we see in the far west. Its magnitude, really conspicuous, makes upon an unprepared mind a threefold impression, which is only in a small degree lessened as we approach closer.

"The post, as laid out, is a rectangle, a little over a half mile long and perhaps one-third as wide. The massive buildings with the high and ornamented towers add a feature that lends a peculiar charm to the whole. Within this parallelogram are all the quarters, each facing inward toward the parade ground, to be separated from it by neat picket fences next to the buildings, and a row of trees, leaving between them a pleasant roadway.

"The road enters at the sutler's store, with the company quarters on the left; on the right are the officers' quarters, and they each take up an entire side of the parallelogram. The hospital is at the end, and the whole presents a handsome appearance from the beauty and regularity of the architecture and the perfect neatness displayed everywhere.

"The post is under the command of Col. Black, a splendid soldier and agreeable gentleman and one who has spent thirty-eight years in the service of the government. He is a strict disciplinarian, but for all that is well liked by the command.

"...Some ideas of the magnitude of the post may be had from the following dimensions, obtained through the courtesy of Capt. Hoyt:

"On the right of the parade ground, and nearly in the center of the garrison, are the quarters of the commandant and two field officers - a group of three really handsome houses, each the exact counterpart of the other. They are 41x36 feet with a wing 17x28, with a one-story brick wall, capped by a mansard roof, and a nice wide veranda embellishing the whole.

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II. HISTORIC PHYSICAL APPEARANCE CONTINUED:

"The interior is well-planned, leaving a wide, roomy, stairway and large, pleasant, well-lighted and thoroughly ventilated apartments, replete with modern improvements.

"On either side of the above are arranged five double houses, built in the same style of architecture as those already mentioned, with the exception of being built for two families. They are necessarily much larger, being 49x34-6 with a wing 35x34-6, making large and comfortable quarters for company officers.

"There are also two large and magnificent blocks, one at either end of the officers' row. These blocks are each 150x34-6 feet, with three wings extending directly back, each addition being 29-6x38-8. These buildings are two stories, with flat tin roofs, and are each designed for six company officers. They are surmounted by ornamental towers and present a strikingly handsome appearance.

"The barracks, number 5, each being 203½x25, two stories high and are embellished by a nice wide veranda the entire length of the building. In each one of the buildings are quartered two companies with ample room. The first floor is used for a camp, offices, dining rooms, kitchens and store-rooms. The rooms have good, high ceilings, are well lighted, thoroughly ventilated and are kept scrupulously clean and nice.

"The hospital is a magnificent structure, being 141x37, two stories high, with kitchen and dining room in the rear, with two rooms 46x24, 1½ stories high. A very handsome veranda around the entire building gives it a unique appearance.

"Headquarters are situated almost directly opposite the commanding officer's residence, and is 48x26-6, two stories high, with veranda across the entire building; and is a good, substantial structure.

"The guard house, an essential and necessary structure at all posts, is located close to the sutler store and is very handy to run the boys in when they become belligerent.

"Almost directly in the rear of the officers' rooms are two buildings, 90x30 feet each, in which the laundresses are located. These quarters are entirely too small, and others should be erected with more room and greater conveniences.

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II. HISTORIC PHYSICAL APPEARANCE CONTINUED:

"The telegraph office is immediately in the rear of the headquarters, and is 30x17 with two rooms. Here the urbane Wheaton presides at all times. But a short distance from this office is the magazine, 18x13 and one story high.

"The quartermaster's storehouse is perhaps 100 yards in the rear of the barracks, is 200x25 in width, and is divided into offices, clothing rooms and a general storehouse.

"The commissary storehouse is 200x25 feet in length, with an office, issuing of sales room and two storerooms; under this is a cellar 50x22. This building is under the immediate supervision of Sergeant Smith, an able, fully competent and agreeable gentleman. There is also another large storeroom with basement, used jointly by the commissary and quartermaster departments.

"There are also four large one-story stables, 180x30, with stabling capacity for 300 animals: two of these are used by the cavalry and the other two by the quartermaster. There is also an immense grainry (sic) 200x25, with a capacity of holding one million bushels of oats.

"The quartermaster has a blacksmith, carpenter, wheelright and saddler shop, in which he employs citizens entirely. The shops are all pleasantly situated, good large rooms, well lighted and ventilated.

"There is also a splendid root cellar, 100x20, 7-foot deep and covered with 1½ foot of earth; although they have had an unusually hard winter we were informed they had not lost anything by frost.

"The buildings throughout are splendid structures, replete with every convenience, and those who were in charge of its construction cannot be complimented too highly on the efficient and able manner in which they discharged their duty...

"C.A. Broadwater & Co, are the post sutlers, and carry a large and well assorted stock of merchandise. They have a splendid storeroom, two very large warehouses, an officers' clubroom and a large saloon..."

Colonel C.S. Otis, commander of the 20th infantry at Fort Assinniboine in 1888, described the sanitary facilities at the fort at some length. The "closets" were brick and were 30-feet long and 8½-feet wide. The seat along the back wall was continuous with boxes beneath it which could be removed. The post scavenger had the nightly job of emptying the boxes and scattering the contents on the prairie at a distance from the fort. The urinals consisted of a long metal trough which emptied into a kerosene pail. This system was replaced in the 1890s with an elaborate sewer system featuring brick-lined tunnels.

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II. HISTORIC PHYSICAL APPEARANCE CONTINUED:

Water for the fort was obtained from nearby Beaver Creek which was dammed. A steam-driven pump sent the water through an eight-inch system throughout the fort. Several wells were drilled on the grounds to provide additional water.

In May of 1911, Congress issued an order to close Fort Assinniboine and military activities ceased. In 1916, the southern part of the reserve was set aside as the Rocky Boy Indian Reservation. The fort buildings and section of land on which the buildings were standing, were purchased by the State of Montana for \$500,000. The state then purchased an additional 2,000 acres at a cost of \$2.50 per acre. The first plan, to convert the property into an agricultural college, was never realized and the grounds and buildings were turned over to Montana State College to use as the Agricultural Experiment Station.

Buildings determined unnecessary for the purposes of the Station were dismantled. Much of the brick was reused to build structures in Havre and, reportedly, in building Pershing Hall on the Northern Montana College campus.

8. Statement of Significance

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

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nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G N.A.

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

EXPLORATION - SETTLEMENT

Period of Significance

1879-1916

Significant Dates

1879-80

1885

1887-89

1898 1903

1911 1916

Cultural Affiliation

N.A.

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Army/Colonel J.G.C. Lee, Chief Quartermaster, Dept. of the Dakota, St. Paul, MN, and L.K. Devlin civilian employee, Quartermaster Corps., Foundations Superintendent.

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

Fort Assinniboine clearly meets several of the evaluation criteria for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places (36 CFR Part 60). The property is significant in American history, architecture and culture, and is of state and local importance. It possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. The property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history, the development of northern Montana and with lives of persons significant in our past. It embodies distinctive characteristics of a type, period and method of construction.

The latter part of the 1870s in Montana was marked by friction between the Indians and whites. The battle of the Little Big Horn occurred in 1876, followed by the withdrawal of Sitting Bull and his band of Sioux to Canada. From there they made occasional forays across the border to hunt. In 1877 Chief Joseph and the Nez Perce led the army in a chase all across the Territory of Montana before they were captured near the Canadian border. These incidents, the need to protect supply routes, discourage international bootlegging, and others helped build sentiment for establishment of a military post north of the Missouri River. An Act of Congress was passed June 18, 1878, authorizing a fort for the purpose of protecting the citizens of Montana from Indian raids. By June 28, 1878, Colonel J.R. Brooke had chosen a site for the new fort.

In the following spring the 18th Infantry was ordered to the site from Atlanta, Georgia. The post was laid out and formally established on May 9, 1879. The post was laid out in the form of a rectangle and by points of the compass lies nearly northeast and southwest.

Colonel Brooke originally recommended the use of adobe as suitable for the construction material of the fort; however, brick was finally decided upon as the better material for walls, and kilns were operated not far from the site. Other material, aside from brick and stone, was shipped up the Missouri River and freighted to the post by ox and mule teams. Colonel Lee was in charge of construction work and so vigorously were matters carried on that the Indians, watching the progress of the construction, declared that Fort Assinniboine rose out of the ground. By fall the barracks were close to completion but the troops were moved to other forts for the winter and construction resumed in the

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE CONTINUED:

spring. It was occupied in the fall of 1880. When complete, the fort could accommodate 10 companies; the complement of men was usually about 500. Fort Assinniboine was the largest fort in the Montana Territory and, at the time, one of the largest in the western United States.

The routine was boring--the chief activities were drilling, patrolling the countryside and constructing more buildings. A regimental band, weekly parades, dances, plays, concerts, a library, a bowling alley and a gymnasium helped alleviate the boredom and the discomforts caused by millions of mosquitoes, poor water, summer heat and winter cold.

The construction of the Fort and the defining of its reserve brought changes in northern Montana's Indian Reservations, attracted the cattlemen and the railroad, resulted in the building of towns, like Havre, and the development of a major dry farming region. This pattern, in varied ways, occurred previously throughout the United States in the carrying out of our Manifest Destiny.

Fort Assinniboine had a tremendous military importance both for American foreign policy viz-a-viz Canada and for the effect it had on the outcome of the Northwest (Riel's) Rebellion in Canada in 1885. The fort is situated in the middle of the southern half of the area traditionally occupied by the Cree and their allies, the Assinniboine, the traditional and strongest native military power in the northwest and central areas of Canada. One of the major Cree bands, called the Prairie People and later to settle at Rocky Boy, Montana, occupied the area just north of the Missouri River prior to the establishment of Fort Assinniboine. However, the Cree were traditional allies of the British and apparently the Americans felt as a matter of policy that the frontier would be more secure if they were pushed out of the area. They accomplished this through aiding the Cree's traditional enemies, the Blackfoot and Gros Ventres. By 1885 the Cree military force in northern Montana had been broken through the power of the U.S. military. This was crucial to the outcome of Riel's Rebellion. The Canadians were free to act with impunity in destroying the armed forces of Riel and the provisional government, and then the armies under Chief Poundmaker, and to attempt to destroy Big Bear's band. Big Bear's band, under the leadership of Little Bear, staged a retreat from northern Saskatchewan through land controlled by thousands of Canadian troops until December of 1885 when they received diplomatic asylum from the United States at Fort Assinniboine. Survivors of this epic march contend that it was more remarkable than Chief Joseph's retreat. Thus, the establishment of Fort Assinniboine destroyed not only the Cree military might south of the border, but by that destruction also doomed the provisional government in Saskatchewan and probably ended the dreams of the Metis people, and the Cree, to an independent native state in the area. The winter of 1886-1887 was one of extraordinary severity and the renegade Cree Indians from across the border camped near the post. Famine and pestilence made inroads upon their members and they even sacrificed their dogs to appease the pangs of hunger.

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE CONTINUED:

The presence again during the years of 1887, 1888 and 1889 of an unusual number of foreign Indians and half-breeds about Belknap and the Bearpaw Mountains caused some apprehension. As the Sioux in South Dakota became restless and defiant, the manner of the border Indians also changed. When the outbreak at Pine Ridge occurred, a large part of the garrison at Fort Assinniboine was hurried eastward and the military force at Fort Peck was greatly strengthened.

When the Spanish-American War broke out in 1898 the post was almost stripped of men. At that time it was garrisoned by the 10th Cavalry (negro). (Units of the U.S. Army's four negro regiments were almost continually stationed at the fort between the mid-1880s and 1911.)

In 1903, after the Spanish-American War, Fort Assinniboine was reopened by the 2nd Infantry. Routine was resumed with no events of any importance to interrupt it. The Indians were quiet. On February 16, 1911, a fire destroyed the water tank. Congress decided not to appropriate the money needed to rebuild it, and on May 31, 1911, the War Department ordered Fort Assinniboine closed. Notice was given that the lands would be open for homesteading in another year. One suggestion for the disposal of the buildings at the fort was that the land and buildings be given to Chief Rocky Boy and his band. The State of Montana, however, purchased the buildings and the section of land on which the buildings were standing for \$500.00 and purchased an additional 2,000 acres for \$2.50 per acre. The state planned to develop the property into an agricultural college. In April 1916, 30,900 acres of Fort Assinniboine land were set aside as a permanent reservation for the Rocky Boy's band of Chippewas and other homeless Indians of Montana. In a final bill, the Indians were given 56,035 acres of Fort land. The state's plan was never realized and the grounds and buildings were turned over to Montana State College to use as the Agricultural Experiment Station.

Although many of the original buildings were razed with material salvaged and sold for use by the local community, the evidence is still most visible. The few remaining buildings still indicate the size, construction and importance of the fort to the history of the area.

Although the parade ground is now nearly deserted, the married officers' quarters, the library, the noncommissioned officers' quarters and several of the other buildings still stand and are used for nonmilitary purposes. The site lacks the purposefulness and bustle of a military post but it still fulfills an important need for the people of Montana. It does so both historically and as a functioning experiment station without any significant loss to the original military post's integrity.

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Photographic Index

Fort Assinniboine
Vicinity of Havre, Montana
Hill County

Photographer: Ray Watson

Location of Negatives: Jim Magera, 41 Beaver Creek Blvd., Havre, MT 59501

Date of Photographs: November 20, 1988

- Photograph #1: **Fort Assinniboine Marker**
Photograph #2: **Flag Pole**, looking northwest
Photograph #3: **Post Guard House** (building #1), built 1905, looking west
Photograph #4: **Post Guard House** (building #1), built 1905, looking southwest
Photograph #5: **Post Library and Post Office** (building #2), built 1889, looking west
Photograph #6: **Officers' Amusement Hall / "Hop Room"** (building #3), built 1886, looking northeast
Photograph #7: **Company Officers' (Lieutenants') Quarters** (building #4), built 1881, looking north
Photograph #8: **Noncommissioned Officers' Quarters** (building #6), built 1905, looking southwest
Photograph #9: **Root Cellar** (building #7c), built 1902, looking west
Photograph #10: **Root Cellar** (building #7b), built 1902, looking northwest
Photograph #11: **Officers' Carriage House/Stable** (building #8), built 1883, looking southwest
Photograph #12: **Officers' Carriage House/Stable** (building #9), built 1883, looking southwest
Photograph #13: **Double Calvary Stables** (building #10), built 1905, looking north
Photograph #14: **Double Calvary Stables** (building #11), built 1905, looking southeast
Photograph #15: **Double Calvary Stables** (building #12), built 1905, looking west
Photograph #16: **Double Calvary Stables** (building #12), built 1905, looking southwest
Photograph #17: **Quartermaster Stables** (building #13), built 1880, looking west
Photograph #18: **Quartermaster Stables** (building #13), built 1880, looking northwest
Photograph #19: **Ordnance Fire Equipment Storage** (building #14), built 1884, looking northwest
Photograph #20: **Post Exchange** (building #15), built 1879, looking southwest

9. Major Bibliographical References

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See continuation sheet

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: Northern Agricultural Research Center; National Archives & Records Service, Government Land Office, Bureau of Indian Affairs, H. Earl Clack County Museum, Montana State University & Fort Assinniboine Preservation Association, Havre.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 160 acres, rural

UTM References

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

T32N, R15E, SW $\frac{1}{4}$, S28. The West and southern boundaries are distinguished by an unpaved county road-82nd Avenue West; the entire $\frac{1}{2}$ mile by $\frac{1}{2}$ mile property follows section lines and is marked in the southeast corner by a U.S.G.S marker.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The arbitrary boundary is believed large enough to include all the Forts' buildings, structures and significant property that has been associated with the military post.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Gary Wilson, Treasurer/Board Member; Toni Hagener, Vice-Chairman/Board Member;
 organization Fort Assinniboine Preservation Association date _____
 street & number 301 Main Street telephone 265-4383, 265-8336, 265-5205,
 city or town Havre state MT zip code 59501

NAME/TITLE Elinor Clack, Tour Guide Coordinator/Board Member

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National Park Service

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MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES CONTINUED:

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National Park Service

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Boundary Justification:

Fort Assinniboine was found to meet the criteria for listing in the National Register of Historic Places as a result of a consensus determination of eligibility made by the Montana State Historic Preservation Office and the Western Area Power Administration in 1984. The consultants who prepared the determination of eligibility material noted that historic features such as the Indian scouts' quarters, a cemetery, the clay source area for brick making, the fort's garden, two trash dumps, and a portion of the fort target range were located within a 1,004.8-acre parcel of land, which was designated as the bounded historical property for planning purposes. However, this determination was not based upon intensive survey of the entire fort property and little inventory information is available today upon which to base an evaluation of the significance of the acreage beyond the identified 160-acre parcel included in the this nomination. The Fort Assinniboine Preservation Association members contend that the historic fort target range was eradicated when Highway 87 was rebuilt in 1972 and a major gravel quarrying operation near the fort destroyed the Indian Scouts' quarters and the cemetery in 1975. It is currently thought that the historic fort garden area and the trash dumps are likely located outside of the nominated 160-acre parcel, although their exact location has not yet been determined.

A comprehensive survey of approximately 1000 acres at Fort Assinniboine will be undertaken by the Fort Assinniboine Preservation Association during the summer of 1989, with federal Historic Preservation Fund grant assistance. At the conclusion of that inventory effort, a revised nomination for the Fort Assinnibione Historic District will be prepared by professional consultants, and will include an assessment of the significance under criterion D of the extant historical archaeological remains located on the fort property. The Montana State Historic Preservation Office expects to submit a revised nomination for Fort Assinnibione to the National Register within the next year. The present nomination is limited in scope to the significance of Fort Assinniboine as a military post, which was established in 1879 and sold to the State of Montana in 1916. The proposed 160-acre boundary delineated in this nomination includes the parade grounds and all of the known standing historic buildings at the fort.

