

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	JUL 3 1984
DATE ENTERED	AUG 3 1984

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Big Hole National Battlefield
AND/OR COMMON

N/A

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

N/A W of Wisdom on RT 43

N/A NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Wisdom vis.

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

001

STATE
Montana

CODE
30

COUNTY
Beaverhead

CODE
001

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

AGENCY

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: *(If applicable)*

National Park Service, Rocky Mountain Regional Office

STREET & NUMBER

655 Parfet Street, P.O. Box 25287

CITY, TOWN

Denver

N/A - VICINITY OF

STATE

Colorado 80225

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Beaverhead County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

N/A

CITY, TOWN

Dillon

STATE

Montana

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

"Historical Research Management Plan for Big Hole National Battlefield"

DATE

1967-1968

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR

SURVEY RECORDS Library, Rocky Mountain Regional Office, National Park Service,

CITY, TOWN

Denver

STATE

655 Parfet
Colorado

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	E	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR			DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED			
<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS			
<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED			

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Big Hole National Battlefield is astride a western tributary valley of the Big Hole basin in southwestern Montana. Vegetation varied from thick stands of second growth lodgepole pine on the slopes of Battle Mountain on the north to willow swamps and grasslands on the banks of the meandering North Fork of the Big Hole River which courses the middle of the valley. Battle Mountain forms the northwest side of the valley, while Ruby Bench forms the southeast side of the valley. Battle Mountain exposes the face and is covered with a mixed lodgepole pine forest; however, the lower slope has a treeless sage brush open area. Ruby Bench is a tableland formation, mostly of glacial alluvial deposits, covered by sage brush and grass. Trail Creek and Ruby Creek cross the west boundary and join to form the North Fork of the Big Hole River, which leaves the battlefield to the northeast. The topography of the Battlefield is quite varied within the small area. Except for some irrigation ditches and abandoned roads, the land looks much as it did when the battle occurred in 1877.

Historic features within the battlefield include:

Nez Perce Camp Site Located on the east bank of the northeasterly flowing North Fork Big Hole River on a grassed portion approximately a half mile wide. The initial attack was made here and here two-thirds of the casualties occurred. Ranching activities have obscured or removed evidence of the burials and it was not until 1937 that accurate knowledge of the camp rather than hearsay was obtained. (Aubrey L. Haines, "Historical Research Management Plan for Big Hole National Battlefield," National Park Service, November 1967, p. 19.)

Siege Area Located on an alluvial fan on the west side of the North Fork Big Hole River at the base of Battle Mountain. Existing today are some thirty depressions varying in size, shape, and distinction in the Siege Area sometimes called the Gibbons Entrenchment Area. Many other depressions in the area have characteristics resembling man-made entrenchments, yet have not been identified as such and are probably naturally caused. The shape is a rough parallelogram with the long axis running northeast to southwest and containing approximately four acres.

Howitzer Capture Site Situated on a prominent ridge one-quarter mile southwest of the Siege Area. It is approximately one-half acre. A trail leads to it from the Siege Area. The howitzer itself is in the museum and not included in the nomination.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES August 9-10, 1877

BUILDER/ARCHITECT N/A

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

On October 4, 1877, a starving band of Nez Perce Indians surrendered to the military at Bear Paw Mountain, Montana. It was the end of a very weary 1,170-mile flight across the northwestern United States and the beginning of the legend of Chief Joseph. Frustrated by the inability of the U.S. Government to deal with their culture and the hardship of being forced onto a reservation, a group of Nez Perce left their ancient lands in northeastern Oregon and began a flight which would last four months and cover some 1,170 miles. They began their flight hoping to find peace in Montana, or if that did not work, then in Canada. Instead, they found a trail of skirmishes between themselves and the military which would be known at the Nez Perce War. Although Chief Joseph is associated with this period of history, he was actually a minor chief and did not gain significance until the end when the major chiefs were either dead or humiliated. Ollicot, Looking Glass, and Toohoolhoolzote actually commanded the Nez Perce throughout most of the flight. Maj. Gen. Oliver O. Howard and Cols. John Gibbon and Nelson A. Miles doggedly followed the Nez Perce but time and time again were forced to withdraw and wait for reinforcements as the Indians displayed an amazing grasp of strategy and tactics which won for them the admiration and sympathy of the Eastern newspaper readers. Unfortunately, the dreams of the Nez Perce to reach a peaceful haven were destroyed by such battles as the one at the Big Hole in Montana.

Militarily, the Battle of the Big Hole was a victory for the Nez Perce who turned almost certain defeat into victory. Although defeated, the Army knew that they had inflicted irreparable damage to the fighting abilities of the Nez Perce--the loss of 30 warriors put them as a distinct disadvantage in any future encounters.

In 1883, the War Department reserved four sections of unsurveyed land "to mark the burial place of the soldiers who fell in the engagement." At this time the Soldier Monument was placed on the battlefield. According to Executive Order 1216, signed by William Howard Taft in 1910, the area known at Big Hole Battlefield Monument was placed under the protection of the military. Big Hole National Battlefield was the first War Department area reserved under the 1906 Antiquities Act War Department Bulletin No. 27, July 17, 1915, gave the battlefield status as a national monument. This status was rescinded on March 20, 1925, according to War Department Bulletin No. 2 as the Secretary of War did not have the authority to create a national monument. In 1939, President Franklin Roosevelt proclaimed and affirmed definite boundaries of the battlefield. In May 1963, legislation was passed which changed the designation from National Monument to National Battlefield and established the present boundaries.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Brown, Mark H. The Flight of the Nez Perce: A History of the Nez Perce War. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1967.

Haines, Aubrey L. "Historical Research Management Plan for Big Hole National Battlefield." National Park Service, November 1967.

(see continuation sheet)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 571.61

UTM REFERENCES

A | 12 | 29,4 | 2,2,0 | 5,0 | 5,9 | 0,9,5 |
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B | 12 | 29,4 | 6,2,0 | 5,0 | 5,7 | 1,8,0 |
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C | 12 | 29,3 | 1,5,0 | 5,0 | 5,7 | 1,1,0 |

D | 12 | 29,3 | 1,5,0 | 5,0 | 5,7 | 5,0,5 |

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nomination corresponds to the boundary of Big Hole National Battlefield exclusive of the area south of UTM references B and C as indicated on the Big Hole Battlefield Quadrangle map included with the nomination. The area excluded (see Description) includes the development area which was added in 1965 and has no historical significance.

(see continuation sheet)

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

11 FORM PREPARED BY

Revised by: Susan A. Tenney
 NPS-RMR-PR
 8/1/84

NAME / TITLE

Alfred W. Schulmeyer, Superintendent, and Paul L. Hedren, Historian

ORGANIZATION

DATE

National Park Service, Big Hole National Battlefield

May 19, 1977

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

P.O. Box 237

(406) 689-3155

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Wisdom

Montana 59761

12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES

NO

NONE

Marcella Sheffy 6-1-84
 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is National State Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE Edmund C. Beardsley

TITLE Chief Historian NPS

DATE June 20, 1984

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Carol O'Shull

DATE 8-3-84

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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CONTINUATION SHEET	DESCRIPTION	ITEM NUMBER	7	PAGE	1
Battle Zone	The land connecting the several sites. This includes the Twin Trees Area and the Retreat Area. The Twin Trees Area is a steep slope on Battle Mountain containing two old-growth Douglas firs standing two thousand feet northeast of the Siege Area. From this vantage point a lone sniper is supposed to have harassed the retreating whites. The Retreat area is situated between the Indian Camp and the Siege Area. In this swampy area the retrograde movement of the whites was made.				
Soldier Monument	Located in the Siege Area, it consists of six tons of New Hampshire granite divided into three sections joined with concrete mortar. The base is a granite slab approximately six feet square. The upper edges are chamfered, sloping in to receive the second section. This section is approximately four feet four inches square and three feet six inches in height. The sides of the last section slope inward and form a truncated pyramid. The monument was erected by the Army in 1883 to commemorate the soldiers and volunteers who died here. the inscription reads: "TO THE OFFICERS AND SOLDIERS OF THE ARMY/AND/CITIZENS OF MONTANA/WHO FELL AT/ BIG HOLE/AUGUST 9th 1877/IN BATTLE WITH NEZ PERCE INDIANS."				

These above named areas will be managed to preserve the historic resources or to restore the scene as it was at the time of the battle. Access to these resources is by way of the Battle Area Road and parking area (about one mile) and walking trails to the Nez Perce Camp Site.

Also in the park, but in the Visitor Center and not on the nomination, is the Indian Head Monument commemorating the Nez Perce who died or were wounded in the Battle of the Big Hole and the flight of Chief Joseph through the northwest. The monument, originally located in the Siege Area, is a shaft of rose-colored synthetic stone five inches square which extends upward six feet from a small stepped stone base imbedded in a three-foot square concrete slab. A small bronze plaque is on the shaft at eye level. At the top is sited a small sculptured head of Chief Joseph in full headress measuring about five inches through the neck. The monument was sculpted by Alonzo Lewis of Seattle and is one of two left of the original twelve which were placed at battlefields along the Nez Perce Trail in 1928 by L.V. McWhorter, the author of Hear Me, My Chiefs! a book about the Nez Perce. The inscription reads: "TO THE/EVERLASTING/MEMORY/OF THE/BRAVE WARRIORS/CHIEF JOSEPH'S BAND/WHO FOUGHT ON/THESE GROUNDS/IN THE/NEZ PERCE WAR/OF 1877/ERECTED BY/THE NEZ PERCE INDIANS/AND THE/CHIEF JOSEPH MEMORIAL/ASSOCIATION/JUNE 1928." It was due to vandalism and weathering that the monument was moved into the Visitor Center on Ruby Bench.

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CONTINUATION SHEET DESCRIPTION ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

Within the boundaries of the national battlefield are two areas which do not contribute:
a) When the battlefield was enlarged in 1963, the top of Ruby Bench was added to provide a development area. This area was not a part of the original battlefield and is considered noncontributing. The developed zone contains the entrance road, Visitor Center, employees' residences, and associated access and utilities. b) Although the park owns the land, the deed reserves the private use of four irrigation ditches and the right of access to maintain and repair them. These ditches are later in time than the battle and do not contribute historically to the battlefield. Three ditches are on the slope of Ruby Bench, which includes a service access road. Each ditch has a different combination of right claimants. The private water right owners' vehicles wander this special use zone at will.

The one-half-mile Big Hole Battlefield Trail is a part of the proposed Nez Perce Trail (Nee·Me·Poo). Although the precise location is not known, this Nee·Me·Poo trail extends from the vicinity of Wallowa Lake, Oregon, to Bear Paw Mountain, Montana. The 1,170-mile trail is the route used by the nontreaty Nez Perce Indians during the summer and fall of 1877 in their attempt to escape the United States Army and seek peace in Canada. Nee·Me·Poo (also Nimipu) is the traditional name of the Nez Perce and means "the people."

Although archeological surveys were done in 1961 and 1966 and preconstruction surveys were completed in 1974 and 1978, there have been no formal archeological surveys completed according to Executive Order 11593. A List of Classified Structures Inventory was completed in June 1976 by Lance Olivieri, a cultural resources consultant, under the supervision of Historical Architect Rodd Wheaton. Mr. Olivieri used the criteria established by the National Register of Historic Places for his evaluations.

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CONTINUATION SHEET SIGNIFICANCE ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 1

The Soldier Monument and Indian Memorial Monument were positioned in the Siege Area to commemorate the men of the 7th Infantry, civilians, and Nez Perce killed in the battle. As monuments to the participants in the battle, both are excellent objects representing the conflict between Euro-American expansion and the American Indians' determination to preserve their culture.

Big Hole National Battlefield is a memorial to the Nez Perce bands and the soldiers of the 7th United States Infantry who participated or died in the Battle of the Big Hole, August 9-10, 1877. It was the turning point in the Nez Perce War which started June 15, 1877, and ended October 5, 1877, after a war-weary trail of 1,170 miles. Its national significance is an example of Indian-White relations which illustrate the human price of the westward expansion of the nation.

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MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL

CONTINUATION SHEET REFERENCES ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 1

- Josephy, Alvin M., Jr. Chief Joseph's People and Their War. Yellowstone Library and Museum Association, 1964.
- _____. The Nez Perce Indians and the Opening of the Northwest. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965.
- Malone, Michael P. and Roeder, Richard B. Montana: A History of Two Centuries. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1976.
- McWhorter, Lucullus V. Hear Me, My Chiefs! Caldwell, Idaho: The Caxton Printers, 1952.
- _____. Yellow Wolf: His Own Story. Caldwell, Idaho: The Caxton Printers, 1940.
- Olivieri, Lance. "List of Classified Structures Inventory: Big Hole National Battlefield." June 1976.
- Utley, Robert M. Frontier Regulars: The United States Army and the Indian 1866-1891. New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1973.
- Wood, Henry Clay. Status of Young Joseph and His Bands of Nez Perce Indians. Portland: Asst. Adj. General's Office of HQ of Department of Columbia. 1876.

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CONTINUATION SHEET GEOGRAPHICAL DATA ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE 1

E.	12	292	750	5057	510
F.	12	292	780	5058	720
G.	12	293	180	5058	710
H.	12	293	190	5059	110

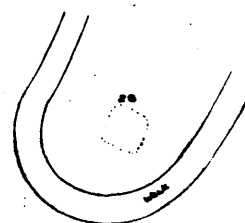
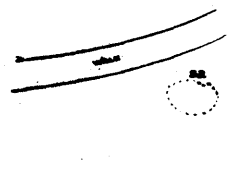
Verbal Boundary Description
(continued)

The boundary begins at Point A which is the northeastern corner of the battlefield boundary and proceeds 5,000 feet south to Point B which is on contour line 6224. From Point B the boundary follows contour line 6224 for 3,600 feet in a southwesterly direction to Point C which is part of the battlefield boundary. From here the boundary follows the battlefield boundaries. From Point C it is 1,350 feet north to Point D. From Point D to Point E it is 1,350 feet due west. From Point E the boundary proceeds north 4,000 feet to Point F. From Point F it is 1,350 feet east to Point G. From Point G the lines proceed north for 1,300 feet to Point H. From Point H to Point A it is 3,350 feet in an eastward direction.

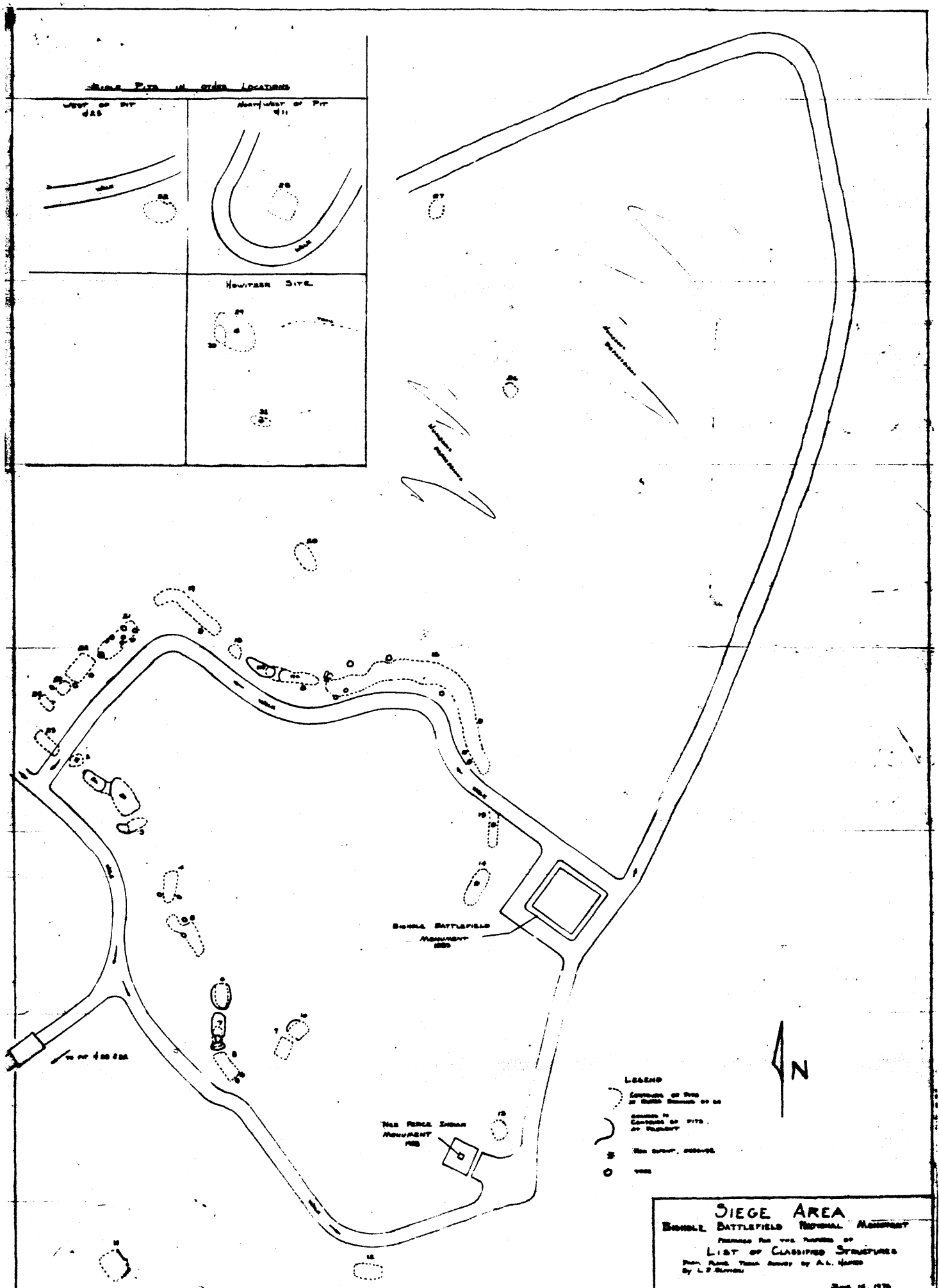
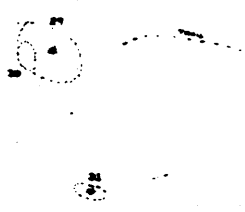
Mine Pits at other Locations

WEST OF PIT #45

NEARBY PIT #11



HOWITZER SITE



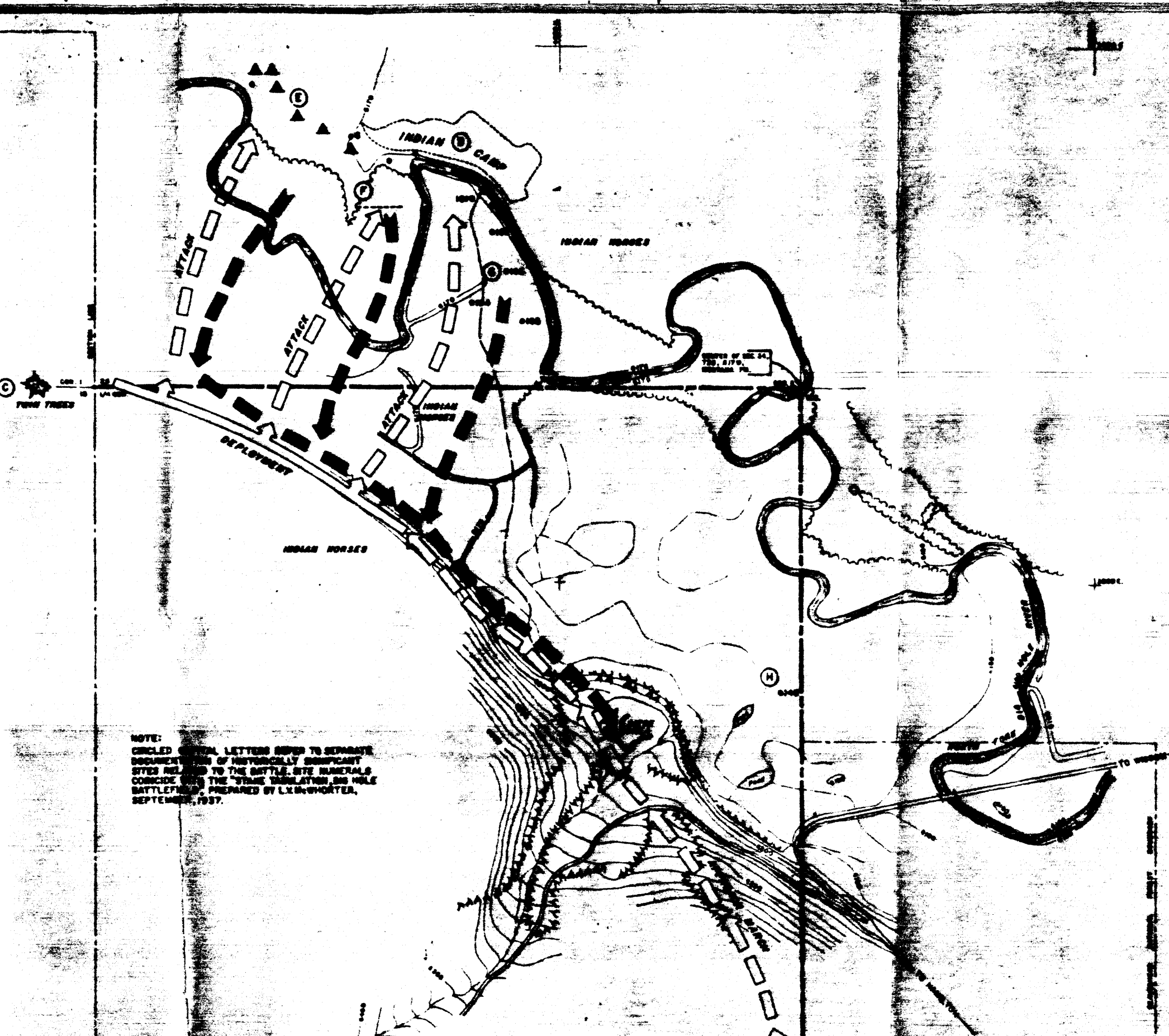
BOHLE BATTLEFIELD MONUMENT #10

THE FENCE LINE MONUMENT #12

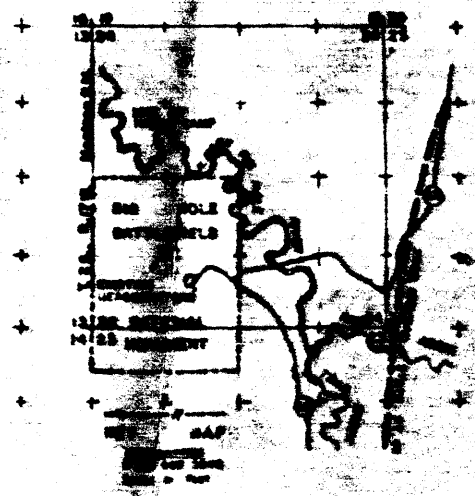
- LEGEND**
- Contours of pits at 2000 meters or so
 - Contours of pits or trenches
 - The enemy, unknown
 - mine



SIEGE AREA
BOHLE BATTLEFIELD NATIONAL MONUMENT
 PREPARED FOR THE PURPOSE OF
LIST OF CLASSIFIED STRUCTURES
 FROM PLANS TAKEN DURING BY A.L. HARRIS
 BY L.P. STUBBS
 Aug. 16, 1970
 201/1718



NOTE:
 CIRCLED CAPITAL LETTERS REFER TO SEPARATE
 DOCUMENTS OF HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT
 SITES RELATED TO THE BATTLE. SITE NUMERALS
 COINCIDE WITH THE "STONE TELETYPE BIG HOLE
 BATTLEFIELD" PREPARED BY LYNN SHORTER,
 SEPTEMBER, 1937.



DESIGNED BY
 DRAWN BY
 CHECKED BY
 DATE

TRAIL
 ROAD
 TRENCH
 APPROACH MARCH
 RETREAT

EXISTING PROPOSED
 TRENCH
 ROAD
 TRAIL
 TREE

ORIENTED BY
 SCALE 1 IN 100
 0 100 200 300

PREPARED BY
 CHECKED BY
 DATE

NOTE:
 HISTORICAL INFORMATION FROM A DRAFT
 BY A. L. HARRIS, MAY 1968

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
 NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
 BRANCH OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
 WESTERN OFFICE, DIVISION OF DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION

HISTORICAL BASE MAP
 PART OF THE MASTER PLAN
 BIG HOLE BATTLEFIELD NATIONAL MONUMENT

2001-5
 11/15/68