

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC Sutter's Fort

AND/OR COMMON

Sutter's Fort State Historic Monument

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

L Street between 26th and 28th

___ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Sacramento

___ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

California

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- ___ DISTRICT
- ___ BUILDING(S)
- ___ STRUCTURE
- ___ SITE
- ___ OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- ___ PRIVATE
- ___ BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- ___ IN PROCESS
- ___ BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- ___ UNOCCUPIED
- ___ WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- ___ YES: UNRESTRICTED
- ___ NO

PRESENT USE

- ___ AGRICULTURE
- ___ MUSEUM
- ___ COMMERCIAL
- ___ PARK
- ___ EDUCATIONAL
- ___ PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- ___ ENTERTAINMENT
- ___ RELIGIOUS
- ___ GOVERNMENT
- ___ SCIENTIFIC
- ___ INDUSTRIAL
- ___ TRANSPORTATION
- ___ MILITARY
- ___ OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME The State of California, Department of Parks and Recreation

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Sacramento

___ VICINITY OF

STATE

California

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

County Recorder's Office

STREET & NUMBER

901 G Street (P.O. Box 1206)

CITY, TOWN

Sacramento

STATE

California

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

___ FEDERAL ___ STATE ___ COUNTY ___ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT
 GOOD
 FAIR

DETERIORATED
 RUINS
 UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Only one of Sutter's original buildings remained in 1891, when salvation of the fort began. That was the two-story building at the center of the fort which served as the main house in which migrants lived. Restoration, based upon this building and the remnants of the walls, as well as the descriptions of men who had seen the fort in its day, led to the earliest reconstruction of a fort generally similar in appearance to the original. However, subsequent (historic) and archeological research in the late 1950's has developed more accurate information. The original fort, for instance, was much larger than the reconstructed one we have today. It extended some 150' beyond the present east walls. It also contained a number of buildings which were not known to exist in 1890. The original fort was 330' long, and varied in width from 120' to 183' in width. Its high adobe walls ranged from 18 to 36 inches in thickness, and enclosed some 25 buildings.

The only remaining original building is the two-story adobe with gable roof at the center of the quadrangle. Its five rooms, originally used to shelter the new migrants, are now given over to the display of pioneer artifacts. Around the perimeter are constructed rooms, within which one can again see pioneer artifacts displayed in such crafts as blacksmithing, rifle-making, and repairing, and baking, as well as areas of housing and domestic functions like a library and a dining room. All of the exhibits aim to retain an atmosphere of the pioneer era of Sacramento's history, just at the beginning of the '49er gold-rush days.

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 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 1839-44, 1890-91

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Sutter's Fort, at Sacramento, California, was the most strategically located site in Northern California in the 1840's. It was towards this point that most of the immigrant trails converged, either coming south from Oregon, or after crossing the Sierras going West. Sutter's Fort represented the beginning of civilization, in the minds of the pioneers who had trekked across vast reaches of wilderness in search of their new land. The kindness and hospitality offered at Sutter's Fort by John Sutter is legendary, and in numerous ways, the site played an invaluable aid in the American settlement in California.

HISTORY¹

John Augustus Sutter, born in Baden, Germany of Swiss parents, came to the United States in 1834 at the age of 31. He had travelled widely, and continued to do so in America, moving to St. Louis where he kept a store for a time, to Fort Vancouver and then the Hawaiian Islands, to the Russian Colony at Sitka, Alaska, and finally in 1839 to Yerba Buena, California.

There, he at once obtained permission of Governor Alverado to found a settlement in the Central Valley. Securing three small vessels, Sutter sailed up the Sacramento River into the American River, landing about two miles above the confluence of the two, in August, accompanied by ten Kanakas (non-Hawaiian Polynesians) and three white men. On a knoll about two miles from the landing place, Sutter began building a large quadrangular adobe fort, the outer walls of which were completed in 1844. He began to conquer the Indians in the region to obtain laborers for his various enterprises, and after becoming a naturalized Mexican citizen in 1840, received a land grant of nearly 50,000 acres.

In December 1841, Sutter purchased Fort Ross and its equipment from the Russian American Fur Company, including plows, rakes, harnesses, halters, reins, carts, 50 cannon, 1700 cattle, 940 horses and mules, and 900 sheep. In return, he agreed to pay \$30,000 plus a stipulated amount of agricultural produce. In order to supply the latter, Sutter desperately needed labor, and, more importantly, he needed skilled workmen to oversee and direct his Indians.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Zollinger, James P., Sutter; The Man and His Empire (New York, 1939).
 Bancraft, Hubert H., History of California (San Francisco 1884-90).
 Cauhey, John, California (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1953).
 Dana, Julian, Sutter of California (New York, 1939).

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 8 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A 1,0 | 6,3,3 | 2,8,0 | 4,2,7,0 | 2,2,0
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B | | | |
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C | | | |

D | | | |

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Operated as a State Historic Site by the government of California, Sutter's Fort occupies two full city blocks in the city of Sacramento, covering approximately 6 acres. The State Park is bounded on the north by "K" Street, on the south, by "L" Street, on the east by 28th Street, and on the west by 26th Street. These boundaries, taken as the inside curbs-lines of the above mentioned streets, also define the extent of the National Historic Landmark. Within the area, are a number of reconstructed and newly-constructed buildings associated with Sutter's Fort, and with the Indian Museum located adjacently.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY Original Form prepared by: James Dillon, Archi. Historian

NAME / TITLE rewritten by: Cecil McKithan, Historian

ORGANIZATION Historic Sites Survey Division, National Park Service	DATE December 1977
STREET & NUMBER 1100 L Street, NW.	TELEPHONE 523-5295
CITY OR TOWN Washington	STATE D. C.

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL STATE LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

Landmark
 Designated: Jan. 20, 1961
 date
Boundary Certificate:
George K. ...
 DATE: April 10, 1978

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER	
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION	DATE <u>11/24/78</u>
ATTEST:	DATE
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER	

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In November 1841, the first band of overland migrants, 33 persons from the United States, arrived in desperate condition. Sutter immediately hired them to help him with his farming. This was a tactic Sutter employed over and over again, when 65 more migrants arrived in 1843, 46 in 1844, 250 in 1845, and 500 in 1846. He fed them, clothed them, and sheltered them at the fort, and many were quite willing to go to work for him, at least temporarily.

By the end of 1845, Sutter had ranches, a tannery, gristmill, spinning and weaving shops, a hat factory, a blacksmith shop, carpenter shop, cobbler, sawmills, and a salmon cannery. Sutter, however, lost control of his army of Indian farm workers in 1846, when John Fremont conscripted them into his California Battalion to fight in the Mexican War. The U.S. Army also took possession of his fort that year, holding it until March 1847. When Sutter got his Indians back that year, he went back to business as usual, in order to try to pay off his debt to the Russian Company. He was constructing a mill, however, at Coloma, California in January 1848, when his foreman, James Marshall discovered gold there. The Gold Rush began immediately, and Sutter lost all of his workers who fled to the gold fields. For a time, Sutter rented rooms at the Fort to the 49'ers and to merchants servicing them, but he soon went off to the gold fields himself.

Sutter's Fort began to deteriorate rapidly after 1849, and only a last-minute effort saved what remained in 1889. It was then purchased by the Native Sons of the Golden West in 1890, and restored by the State of California in 1891-93. In 1937 it became a part of the State Park System, and is administered today as Sutter's Fort State Historic Monument.

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1. Extracted largely from earlier file reports for the National Historic Landmarks Program.

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They, however, do not contribute to the national significance of the landmark. The surrounding environment is entirely residential, quite unlike the historic surrounding of this frontier post.